



## Children and Youth Behavioral Health Work Group – Youth and Young Adult Continuum of Care (YYACC) Subgroup

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*August 07, 2025*

### Glossary of Terms

YYACC: Youth and Young Adult Crisis Continuum  
YAC: Youth Advisory Committee  
BHC: Behavioral Health Coalition  
FYSRT: Family, Youth and System Partner Round Table  
MRSS: Mobile Response Stabilization Service  
FIT: Family Initiated Treatment  
IEP: Individualized Education Program  
SMI: Severe Mental Illness  
SUD: Substance Use Disorder  
WISe: Wraparound with Intensive Services

### Meeting Topics

Welcome, Agenda, Icebreaker  
Feedback Discussion on YYACC Strategic Plan Recommendations  
Planning for 2026 Legislative Recommendations  
Next Steps

### Feedback Discussion on YYACC Strategic Plan Recommendations

The group reviewed a current document with five priority recommendations for the Washington Thriving Strategic Plan: Age of Consent, Life Skills/Transition Age Youth, Care for Crisis, Acute and Long-Term Needs and Severe Mental Illness, and Peer Support.

#### Age of Consent

1. For behavioral health treatment, the current age of consent is 13 years, there are challenges around parental involvement and mandating treatment. The subgroup discussed the following bullet points and concluded that youth ability to consent to care must be preserved. Group requested revised language focusing on intentions rather than specific solutions.
  - a. A youth perspective: having consent at 13 was crucial for a hospital experience, with given choice and control in treatment options
  - b. Provider concerns: Raising the age to 18 could prevent youth from accessing care when parents don't support mental health treatment
  - c. Alternative solutions: Better education about Family Initiated Treatment (FIT), provider training on engaging reluctant youth, focus on developmental rather than chronological age.



- i. Concerns were raised about implementation challenges of developmental age assessments.
- d. Parental perspective: Situations vary, and individualized approaches are needed.

## Life Skills / Transition Age Youth

1. Focus of the recommendation: Services for 18-25 age group and lifeskills preparation for adulthood.  
Subgroup members discussed:
  - a. Emphasis on the need for Community hubs and drop-in centers for support and skill building.
  - b. Utilizing/creating mentorship program opportunities and peer services.
  - c. Virtual and physical service options for rural access (not just phone calls, needs to be responsive to social culture around technology)
  - d. Need for "Third Places"- safe spaces for connection and crisis prevention
  - e. Better coordination of existing youth programs across the state
  - f. Partnership models rather than duplicating services

## Care for Crisis, Acute and Long-Term Needs

1. Focus of the recommendation: Crisis services including hotlines, mobile response, inpatient care, and intensive programs. The group discussed a few points to include, as well as possible solutions.
  - a. Rural Access Challenges. Service closures in Eastern Washington need to be addressed as quickly as possible.
  - b. Need for in-home behavior supports for families with children with autism/intellectual disabilities
  - c. Crisis response should always include peer responders alongside law enforcement
  - d. Micro-grants and direct funding should be included in the continuum of care—as a crisis prevention.
  - e. Mobile Response Stabilization Service (MRSS) preferred over "crisis" terminology. "Crisis" creates a barrier to utilization for some.
  - f. Investment in communities to prevent crisis entry.

## Severe Mental Illness

1. Some members of the group shared lived experiences.
  - a. Poor inpatient experience, with minimal therapeutic contact and inadequate programming
  - b. Challenges accessing care and traumatic treatment experiences in rural areas.
  - c. Emphasis on need for individualized care and avoiding premature diagnoses.
2. Recommendations discussed:
  - a. Developmentally responsive treatment and better staff training for SMI
  - b. Improved step-down services and aftercare planning
    - i. Example: Bridge Housing program for extended recovery support
    - ii. Recovery High Schools
  - c. Focus needed on quality of treatment as well as access

## Peer Support

1. Focus of the recommendation: expanded peer support accessibility across the continuum of care. Elements of an ideal status and barriers were discussed.
  - a. Peer support as a preventative, not just crisis intervention
    - i. Current limited accessibility, most require high service needs to access peers



- b. Individual choice in peer matching and services
- c. Natural helper programs in schools
- d. Adequate compensation and sustainable workforce planning
- e. "Peer on demand:" accessibility similar to crisis hotlines
  - i. Need for peer-run organizations with walk-in availability
- f. Complex trauma support before formal diagnoses
  - i. Reimbursement challenges already exist, with pre-diagnosis nearly impossible
  - ii. Medicaid cuts add complexity

## Planning for 2026 Legislative Recommendations

The group discussed navigating the constraints of the 2026 legislative recommendations. YYACC subgroup recommendations are due to the Children and Youth Behavioral Health Workgroup on October 6<sup>th</sup>, 2025. These constraints include the following.

1. Maximum 3 recommendations per subgroup
2. No appetite for new spending - must be budget neutral
3. New items must align with Washington Thriving strategic plan or focused on protecting and preserving legacy programs and recommendations.
  - a. Legislative topics brought up by the group for exploration:
    - i. BH360: Behavioral Health 360 implementation (Legacy Item)
    - ii. Bridge Housing Program (Legacy Item)
    - iii. Access to Peers
    - iv. Recover High Schools
    - v. Direct Youth Feedback
    - vi. In-Home
    - vii. Parent and youth outreach
    - viii. Rural youth outreach
    - ix. WISe (Wraparound with Intensive Services)
    - x. PAL (Legacy)
    - xi. Rural Education

## Next Steps

1. Subgroup was asked to submit feedback in the document with a deadline for final submission to Washington Thriving on August 13<sup>th</sup>.
2. The subgroup will meet next on August 21, 3:30-5:30PM. *If you are not already on the YYACC mailing list and would like to be added, you can email [cybhwg@hca.wa.gov](mailto:cybhwg@hca.wa.gov) indicating your preference.*