



## INITIATIVE PROGRESS UPDATE

Unity Care is excited to embark on its second year of the (three year) PropelNext Initiative as a 2021 PropelNext Grantee. PropelNext is a program of the Edna McConnell Clark Foundation that helps promising nonprofits convert their passion for serving disadvantaged youth into data-driven insights and practices to increase their impact on young people's lives. The following narrative is our progress report from the previous month.

### OUR PROGRAM MODEL

Unity Care provides minor and non-minor dependent foster youth ages 16-21 with 24 months of housing, case management, mental health, and education and employment support services to aid in their transition to independence and adulthood. This process prepares young people to secure stable housing by attaining education and employment goals that leads to sustainable independence.

### ACCOMPLISHMENTS

In December, Unity Care dove deep into analysis of the data collected during our first four months of data implementation with a goal of 1) gaining insights of the population we serve; 2) monitoring our progress in achieving our outcomes with our youth; 3) ensuring fidelity to our program model across our California programs.

- 1. Population served:** 83% of the youth served are ages 18-21; 100% of youth served need some level of mental health support; and 53% of youth served are experiencing substance abuse challenges.
- 2. Progress towards achieving outcomes:** 69% of youth are enrolled in school and/or have completed a HSD/GED; 96% of youth are either employed or working on activities leading to employment; 45% of youth are currently receiving mental health provided by Unity Care or other outside agencies. The data demonstrates the need for mental health services as youth are less likely to travel to receive mental health support.
- 3. Assessments as a Progress Indicator:** One major way that Unity Care is determining progress with youth is looking at Pre and Post scores of the CANS and Casey Life Skills Assessments that are completed with the youth. These assessments are completed every 6 months. As our program began collecting the baseline data in September and expect to reassess at the 6-month mark. The second set of data will be collected in January when reassessments will be due.
- 4. Fidelity to the model:** Through the collection of case management logs we have been able to determine fidelity through the model in regards to services provided along our 5 Pillars (housing, education, employment, unconditional care, and wellness) and minimum time spent in case management. Data collected suggests that across programs we have achieved 60% fidelity in four months. We are actively working to achieve 100% fidelity.



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### CHALLENGES

- Our data is severely limited by the system we are using to collect the data. Because data input is so cumbersome, we have not been able to easily collect additional data points that may help provide more thoughtful analysis.
- Using excel to analyze data has been an option, but it does not provide us with the robust information we might need.
- Some of the data is also limited by the interpretation of staff at data entry. E.g.: staff may enter county of origin, but not the referral agency limiting our knowledge of the county agency sending us placement referrals.
- The data we collect is unfortunately not easily accessed once it's in the system. This can happen because a new report must be manually created to utilize the data or because the data exists in qualitative form and is not easily quantifiable.

This process has been a useful tool in ensuring that we are being responsive to issues as they arise, better understand our youth population's needs, and also figure out areas where we have gaps in information gathering. For example, as we align our programs across northern California, we have learned that we need to collect more data around the reasons why youth referred for placement are not being accepted into our program. This information would be useful in order to ensure programmatic continuity as well as to communicate the gaps in services to our county partners.

### IMPORTANT UPDATES

Aimee Salazar, our Assistant Director of our Bay Area TAY housing program will be leaving us on Friday January 24, 2020 to take a position with San Mateo County. We are so very thankful to Aimee for her leadership over the last year and wish her the very best in her future endeavors!

We are very happy to announce that Jeff Jefferson, former Regional Director, will be re-joining our TAY housing team as Interim Regional Director — Bay Area on Monday, January 20, 2020. Please join us in giving Jeff a warm welcome back! Our efforts to provide the best possible services to youth and align with our data-driven PropelNext model will continue as planned. We look forward to releasing more updates regarding our plans to enhance services through Clinical leadership.