Youth Mental Health Corps

January 2024

WE'RE ON A MISSION TO MAKE A BRIGHTER FUTURE FOR ALL

[Logos of schultz family foundation, Pinterest, AmeriCorps, and America Forward]
Meet youth where they are, and in the places where help is most acutely needed: schools, afterschool programs, community health centers, and youth centered organizations.

Share best practices on healthy social media use, digital safety and wellbeing and online safety with youth, school and community-based organizational staff, parents/care providers and community members.

Offer young people interested in addressing our nation’s youth mental health crisis with an opportunity to provide peer support while obtaining quality training, skills, experiences and credentials to start a career in behavioral health.

Increase the capacity of schools, community-based organizations, and community behavioral health organizations to respond to the growing youth mental health crisis and provide supports for the most vulnerable students.

Overview

The Youth Mental Health Corps is a collaborative initiative that will support youth mental health in schools and communities while giving over 500 young adult on-ramps into behavioral health careers. Its goals are to:
WHY IT MATTERS

By the Numbers

In 2021, U.S. Surgeon General Vivek Murthy released the Surgeon General’s Advisory on Protecting Youth Mental Health, calling for a swift and comprehensive response to the youth mental health crisis.

→ From 2009 to 2019, the share of high school students who reported persistent feelings of sadness or hopelessness increased by 40%, to more than 1 in 3 students.

→ In the last fifteen years, suicide rates among youth ages 10-24 in the US increased by 62%. The second leading cause of death for young people ages 10-14 is suicide.

→ The Center for Disease Control’s 2023 Youth Risk Behavior Survey shows that teen girls are experiencing alarming rates of violence, poor mental health, and suicidal thoughts and behaviors.

→ There are increasing concerns among researchers, parents and caregivers, young people, healthcare experts, and others about the impact of social media on youth mental health.

→ 160 million Americans live in communities that lack adequate mental health services.
In partnership with state commissions, the Youth Mental Health Corps will offer young people between the ages of 18 – 24 years old the opportunity to enter a mental health career path through one of three certification pathways:

**Career Pathways for Members**

- **Mental Health First Aid Certification**
  - Based in schools as peer navigators to students
  - Provide peer support and mental health resource navigation

- **Peer Support / Recovery Specialist Certification**
  - Members with lived experience as peer navigators
  - Based in community health centers and healthcare institutions
  - Provide peer support and navigation

- **Community Health Worker Certification**
  - For members without lived experience
  - Based in youth serving organizations as mental health navigators
  - Provide community mental health resources
Request for Proposals

State commissions have been given the opportunity to apply for a two-year grant to launch their Corps in Fall 2024 or a one-year planning grant to launch in Fall 2025. Proposals will be assessed based on:

→ Certification pathways offered and certification partners
→ Number of AmeriCorps slots committed
→ Local partners, including nonprofit organizations, schools, philanthropies, etc.
→ Strategies to build expertise around mental health careers and the mental health ecosystem for members
→ Strategies to recruit and support a diverse corps of young adults
Founding partners

Schultz Family Foundation, Pinterest, AmeriCorps & America Forward
Opportunities for corporate/private funder sponsorship include:

→ **Sponsor a Statewide Youth Mental Health Corps**: Sponsor the Youth Mental Health Corps in a participating state. Sponsors will enable us to increase the benefits and enhance the experience of young people serving in the Corps.

→ **Invest in Nonprofits Hosting Corps Members**: By 2025, there will be more than 500 Corps members serving in over 100 nonprofits and schools across the country. By supporting our programmatic infrastructure, partners will help us ensure that participating nonprofits and schools have the resources they need to support our members.

→ **Support Impact Measurement for Sustained Change**: The Youth Mental Health Corps is one of the first of its kind to be intentionally designed to benefit those who are serving as well as those being served. By supporting our impact measurement work, partners will help us learn and iterate to ensure we are reaching our goals.
"Far too many young people are struggling with their mental health and unable to get the support they need. We all have a role to play in supporting youth mental health and creating a world where young people thrive."

–U.S Surgeon General Vivek Murthy
Timeline

December 2023
Request For Proposals launch

February 2024
Member support / recruitment partner finalization

May 2024
Youth Mental Health Corps launch and start of member recruitment

September 2024
Youth Mental Health Corps rolls out in communities

January 2024
Proposal submission deadline

February 2024
State selection for launch year and/or planning year grants

August/September 2024
Public event to highlight member states, partners & celebrate Youth Mental Health Corps members