



The Lost Year: COVID-19 Kids & Mental Health



Stuck at Home, Youth Despair Deepens

Children facing poverty and housing instability, experiencing developmental delays, and limited in English proficiency were already struggling to keep up in schools. Then came the pandemic school year.

In addition to their intersecting disparities, many were unable to continue receiving readily available and integrated resources provided at schools, such as on-site counseling, nurses, and dental care; access to breakfast and lunch; and early intervention programs.

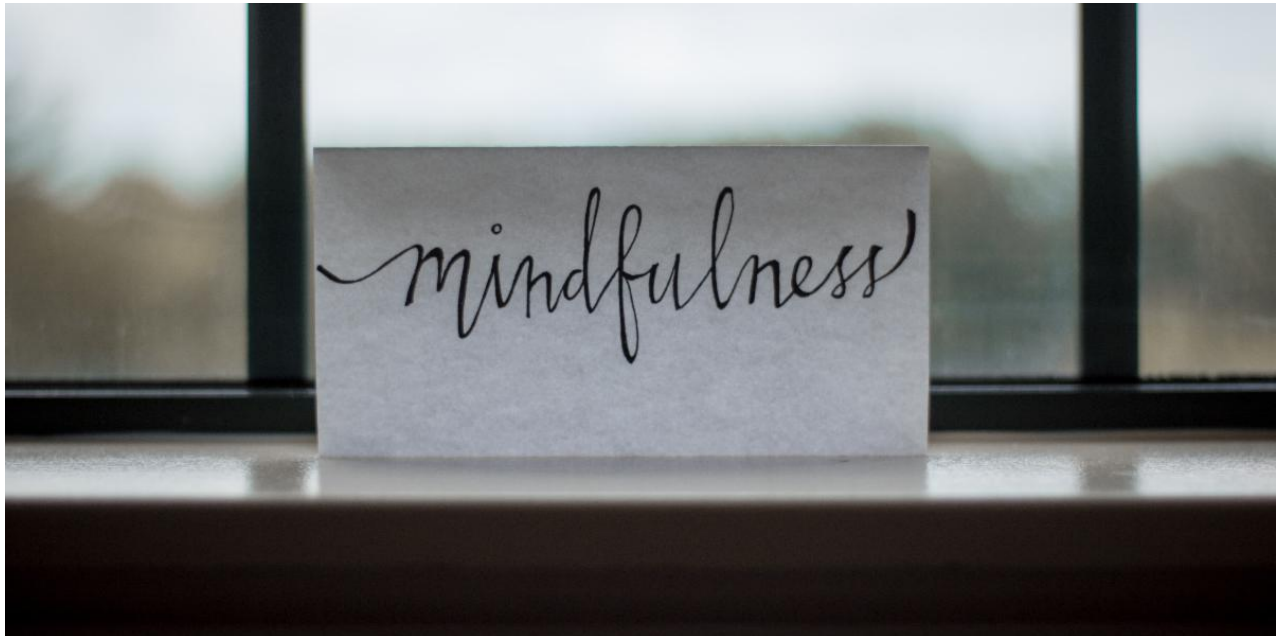
Students were attending virtual classes and many started off lacking access to technology. Deprived of face time with teachers and peers, children experienced social isolation, significantly affecting their mental wellness. Our community partners are greatly concerned that failure to address these factors will contribute to long-term health consequences.



Grantee Stories

Reaching Out to Empower Youth & Families

Two of our existing community partners are using their skills, experiences, and resources to engage youth and parents, empowering them to be more proactive regarding their health. During the pandemic they persevered, quickly adapting and getting creative to continue providing services under restrictive social distancing and safety protocols.



Odessa Brown Children's Clinic

Odessa Brown Children's Clinic supports the resilience of parents and children facing toxic stress, poverty, and racism by offering opportunities to learn mindfulness-based coping and parenting skills. With skill-building and training for self-care, parents and children are better equipped to handle stress in the present and into the future.

"My 12-year-old is a cancer survivor so I wish I had known meditation while we were in the hospital when I was so stressed out... The class has been helpful and reassuring."

- A Parent attending Odessa Brown's Mindfulness and Self-Compassion Program

In response to a pandemic-fueled surge of interest from Black and Latinx parents in their online classes, Odessa Brown plans to expand and adapt its programming to better include those who showed up seeking



Boyer Children's Clinic

Boyer Children's Clinic brings essential early intervention and developmental services to children and families with special healthcare needs who are experiencing housing instability through the CONNECT program in partnership with Mary's Place. This novel approach of bringing services directly to the shelter overcomes barriers to access that would otherwise prevent this population from receiving critical services.

“When someone is concerned about their family's safety or where their next meal will come from, things like attending therapy appointments, choosing a preschool program, or tracking their toddler's developmental milestones can become completely overwhelming.”

- Julia Shure OTR/L, Boyer Children's Clinic

During the height of pandemic-related restrictions, Boyer was unable to provide direct services on-site. They devised technology-based workarounds to ensure that services could continue to be delivered to this vulnerable population. This involved purchasing devices and training families on their use, setting up hotspots for wifi connectivity, and changing service protocols to accommodate virtual delivery. Coming out of the pandemic, Boyer is planning to expand the reach of this program beyond its partnership with Mary's Place and to include a broader population.



Health Equity News & Data

Early Warnings from our Community Partners

PHPDA received a substantial increase in grant applications addressing youth mental and behavioral health in the most recent Major Grant cycle. Based on our reading of the applications, there appears to be an emerging crisis of unmet need for behavioral health services to address depression, anxiety, and suicide rates among young individuals.*

*Compared with 2019, the proportion of mental health-related visits for children aged 5–11 and 12–17 years [nationally increased](#) approximately 24% and 31%, respectively.



We received a total of 52 Letters of Intent for the 2021 New Major Grant application cycle. Of the 52 applicants, nearly a third (32.7%) specifically requested funds for youth, family, and parenting programs. The vast majority of these proposals sought to directly serve families with mental and behavioral health services. Remote schools caused many in our communities to worry about youth and their lack in socialization and many proposals were specific to immigrant populations and families of color because of additional cultural and language barriers.

2021 New Major Grant Awards

Please look for our announcement in July revealing the 2021 Health Equity Fund New Major Grant awardees.

Given the level of the community's concern over youth and family wellbeing, we awarded grants to several programs focusing on youth mental health. They are strength-based, innovative, and community informed; we believe each of their approaches have the potential to generate learnings that could drive system change. Just two examples are Powerful Voices and Somali Health Board:

Power Voices will provide multiple ways to empower girls and gender nonconforming BIPOC youth with resiliency coaching, behavioral health programming, and support.

Somali Health Board will provide culturally appropriate services to reduce stigma surrounding behavioral health services, and empower the Somali community through education to mothers, families, and children with developmental delays.



Calls to Action



You Can Help Empower Youth & Families

Get involved with our local community partners who refused to let the

pandemic curtail their significant work addressing youth and family mental health and wellness.

Give to Odessa Brown Children's Clinic



"...Before I tried to do everything while I was frustrated and tried to do all at the same time. I noticed that wasn't helping. Have a moment and calm yourself down before dealing with a tough situation. Reminding yourself to take a moment to yourself is important."

- A Parent attending Odessa Brown's Mindfulness and Self-Compassion Program

[Give to OBCC](#)

Get Involved with Boyer Children's Clinic



"We offer CONNECT families a set team to create a consistent continuum of care and build trust in familiar faces. This opportunity to collaborate, from pre-referral all the way through discharge, helps to improve outcomes for young children with disabilities or developmental delays."

*- Julia Shure OTR/L,
Boyer Children's Clinic*

[Sign up with BCC](#)

About Pacific Hospital PDA

The Pacific Hospital PDA partners with community organizations to improve access to health care services in Seattle/King County.

In 1981, the City of Seattle chartered the Pacific Hospital PDA, placing in its trust the Pacific Hospital and surrounding campus, a historic Seattle landmark. The Pacific Hospital PDA leases the property. The lease revenues are used to increase access to health resources and to improve health outcomes in King County.

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