

BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

Quarterly news
and updates from
the Idaho
Department of
Health and Welfare

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DHW Blog](#)



Division announces new YES website, other exciting developments

By Jon Meyer
Program Specialist

Idaho's Youth Empowerment Services (YES) system of care rolled out a brand new website in late June. We encourage you to take a look at [YES.idaho.gov](https://yes.idaho.gov).

Months in the making, this new website not only features a brand new custom look and feel, but it streamlines information into easier to

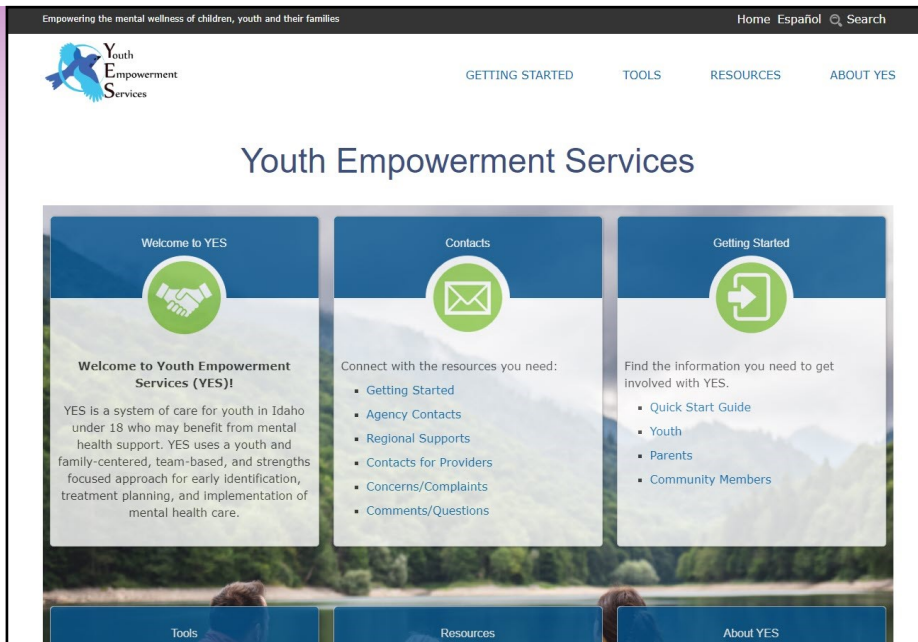
locate, consolidated sites. Where users may have had to click multiple times in the past to view different project information spread across different pages, items like Frequently Asked Questions; Contacts for families, agencies, and providers; and project documentation and reports are now often included on the same page, using expanding menus to allow visitors to easily →

Block Grant Application draft available soon for public review

The application draft for the Community Mental Health Services and Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment Block Grant will be available for the public to review and comment in early August. It will be posted to the [Health and Welfare website](#) on the Behavioral Health Planning Council page, which can be found by conducting a search from the homepage.

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The new homepage

navigate, but still expand the information they are looking for.

Ultimately, the new site maintains a large amount of content and information about YES, its history, and most importantly, how it can help youth and families in need, but is able to do it with significantly fewer pages. We're confident this will create an easier-to-navigate experience for youth and their families, as well as all project stakeholders.

As the YES project continues, this site will continue to evolve and new information will become available, or be updated. Stay up to date and encourage others to as well by subscribing to this [YES newsletter](#), which we aim to distribute once a month as new information becomes available. You can always unsubscribe. You can also read archived newsletters going back to 2018 on

the website.

Our [Getting Started](#) page is a great place for Youth and Families to begin to learn more about YES.

[Tools](#) can help stakeholders understand the practices and procedures behind the YES system of care, as well as find training and learn more about screening and other instruments.

[Resources](#) provides links to videos, training, publications in English and Spanish, and glossaries of Terms to Know to better understand the project. Additional resources available via other organizations are also included.

[About YES](#) features background on the YES system development and its implementation. It is also where you can find YES newsletters, announcements, and contacts for families, youth, providers and more.

Submit comments and Experience Reports with YES

The partners in YES are interested in your feedback and want to hear your stories. Use the forms [on this page](#) to contact us, or submit an Experience Report about your work with YES.

New Idaho TCOM Institute webpage available

The Division of Behavioral Health unveiled a new webpage dedicated to the Idaho TCOM Institute recently. Check out [Idaho TCOM Institute](#), and [contact them](#) if you have questions.

Review the latest project reports

Go to this [page](#):

- To view the [May 2020 Rights and Resolutions Report](#)
- To view the latest [QMIA Quarterly Report](#).



Additional news in the world of YES

By *Shane Duty*
Project Manager

YES seems to have been awoken by the warmth of summer and is alive with activity, including the introduction of a new YES.idaho.gov website. Hopefully, it will be beneficial to call attention to some of the broad focuses currently being pursued.

Dr. Lynn Thull is leading of group of YES partners and stakeholders as they work to form a visions statement and service structure for Care Management/Care Coordination. This group has met twice and is seeking to have recommendations

to sponsors by the end of this month.

In the world of the Child and Adolescent Needs and Strengths (CANS) tool, a cross-agency workgroup along with parent and provider representatives is working to develop strategies around the “One Kid-One CANS” initiative. Currently the group is identifying targets for root-cause analysis which will ultimately generate solution recommendations for sponsors.

Finally, an Out of Home Treatment Continuum workgroup is getting ready to launch. This group will be focused on funding streams,

transitions in level of care, operational process flows and service definitions.

All this works into the latest of version of the Implementation Plan being developed. We have welcomed the assistance of Kathleen Noonan. Kathleen is not only aiding in the writing the Implementation Plan but in facilitating conversations between YES partners and plaintiffs.

There is plenty to be excited about in the YES system of care. The YES team is excited about immediate short and long-term progress to be made!

New COVID-19 crisis counseling services available for Idahoans

By *Division of Behavioral Health Staff*

COVID-19 is affecting every citizen in the state of Idaho on some level, and behavioral health is always critical while experiencing an ongoing traumatic event. As the impacts of COVID-19 progress among Idahoans, so does their need for support and services.


The Division of Behavioral Health, in partnership with the Idaho Office of Emergency Management (IOEM) recently applied for and was awarded a Crisis Counseling Program (CCP) grant offered through FEMA. Under the CCP, Idaho will implement services to assist citizens who are

struggling due to stress brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic and stay-home orders. Examples include but are not limited to: individuals who are unemployed, struggling financially and in need of resources; parents facing the stress brought about by home-schooling; and situations involving domestic violence.

The CCP will include three components:

- The **COVID Help Now** warm line will be operated by BPA Health and will be available 7 days/week, 8 am to 8 pm. Individuals calling COVID Help Now during operational hours will be

greeted by a trained CCP Crisis responder who will offer both immediate assistance to reduce stress as well as referrals to community resources. Calls received during “off-times” will be returned within 24 hours.

- **COVID-19 Crisis Community Resource Specialists (CCRS)** will be hired in all seven (7) regions and will serve as community experts regarding local resources, provide crisis counseling services, and will perform outreach to ensure that local communities are aware of the COVID Help Now warm line and other resources available to them. 

• IOEM will manage a **media campaign** with the goal of providing widespread community education and public outreach about the behavioral health im-

pacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, share available resources and promote the COVID Help Now Line.

The division and BPA Health are in

the process of hiring staff to fulfill the objectives of the CCP program. The goal is to have services available beginning in August.

Emergency COVID-19 grant funds new behavioral health services

The division also applied for and received an emergency grant through the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) that will provide funding for Substance Use Disorder (SUD) treatment and recovery support services for Idahoans uninsured due to the economic devastation resulting from COVID-19.

The services went live on June 15. Individuals impacted by COVID-19 who are seeking recovery from addiction are encouraged to call the division's partner, BPA Health, at 1-800-922-3406 to be screened for eligibility.

Additionally, as part of this grant, Idaho professionals of all types currently on the frontlines of the COVID-19 crisis will have access to

behavioral health services for themselves.

For purposes of this funding, "frontline" is defined broadly, including everyone from medical professionals providing direct services to behavioral health professionals providing services via telehealth and experiencing secondary trauma to individuals who work in a hospital cafeteria and fear contracting the virus and taking it home to their families.

Idaho recognizes that the stress of responding to the COVID-19 outbreak has put frontline workers at increased risk of experiencing secondary traumatic stress reactions. BPA Health will provide a COVID-19 Professional Assistance Program that includes

screening benefit navigation for individuals with insurance, and five sessions of Professional Assistance Program for the uninsured. The toll-free hotline will screen workers for needed behavioral health services, guide them to benefits that they may have access to through their employment, and provide referrals to behavioral health resources.

For individuals without behavioral health benefits through their employment or who have significant financial barriers to those benefits, this program offers up to five sessions of intervention by a licensed professional counselor. This service is also being provided by BPA Health and can be accessed by calling 1-866-536-0239.

Behavioral health prevention programs during COVID-19


By Office of Drug Policy

The COVID-19 pandemic has created challenges for Idaho families. School closures, loss of childcare, employment instability, and increased fear for our health and safety are just a few of the stressors impacting parents, and research tells us that parental factors can influence behavioral health risks in children.

Substance use prevention is a primary focus for the Idaho Office of Drug Policy (ODP), so ODP recently partnered with the Boise State University Institute for the Study of Behavioral Health and Addiction to provide information and tools to help support parents and families during the COVID-19 crisis and beyond.

Online and printed resources were

developed to support caregivers, children, educators and prevention providers. E-mail blasts went out each week, from May 5 through June 30, with daily messages during Prevention Week (May 11- May 15). **Educational presentations and TIPS** covered the following topics:

- G-R-E-A-T Principles for Structuring Time at Home with 

Your Kids

- Social Emotional Wellness for Children
- Brain-Based Wellness
- Bullying and Cyberbullying Basics for Parents
- Stress and Substance Use
- Self-Care

Prevention Week Videos mirrored the 2020 Prevention Week daily themes to focus on major substance use and mental health topics:

- Preventing Underage Drinking and Alcohol Misuse
- Preventing Illicit Drug Use and

Youth Marijuana Use

- Preventing Youth Tobacco Use (E-Cigarettes and Vaping)
- Preventing Suicide

Additional Companion Handouts and Youth Activity Sheets offered social/emotional games, materials and activity ideas for families to use at home. These materials were included as inserts in outgoing food boxes provided by the Idaho Food Bank, and disseminated by ODP's primary prevention grantees, reaching literally thousands of homes across the state.

All videos and handouts are available on the RADAR website [here](#)

and the [Tuesday TIPS playlist on the ODP YouTube Channel](#) – make sure to subscribe!

All Youth Activity Sheets can be found [here](#).

Production of the COVID-19 and Beyond series was supported by SAMHSA Substance Abuse Block Grant funds. For more information about the Substance Abuse Prevention Block Grant, contact Marianne King at Marianne.king@odp.idaho.gov

For more information about ODP's projects and prevention efforts, contact Jessie Dexter at jessie.dexter@odp.idaho.gov.

Permits required for retailers of vape & electronic smoking devices

*By Alacia Handy
Program Specialist*

Because of a change in Idaho Code that took effect July 1, retailers including vape shops who sell nicotine, tobacco, or electronic smoking device products are now required to obtain a permit to legally sell them in the state of Idaho.

[The Idaho Legislature has updated Section 39-5700](#). It is now called the Prevention of Minors' Access to Tobacco Products and Electronic Smoking Devices Act.

The changes expanded the type of products that will now fall under this statute. Retailers who sell any substance containing, made of, or derived from tobacco or nicotine; or electronic smoking devices, components, parts, or accessories will be required to obtain a permit in order

to legally sell these products in the state of Idaho.

All products that fall under the updated definition will be enforceable through inspections, citations, and fines for non-compliance.

There are some product exceptions; for example, products authorized for sale by the Food and Drug Administration's (FDA) Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act as drugs, devices, or combinations of products are exempt from enforcement under the code. In other words, products that have been reviewed and determined by the FDA to be intended for use in the diagnosis, cure, mitigation, treatment, or prevention of disease (such as smoking cessation) are not subject to enforcement under this law.

There are three ways for retailers to apply for a permit, which must be

renewed annually:

1. Visit www.tobaccopermits.com and fill out the online application.
2. Submit a written request to the Idaho Tobacco Project to receive an application packet: Department of Health and Welfare, P.O. Box 83720, 3rd Floor, Boise, ID 83720-0036.
3. Call 877-641-4468 and request a tobacco permit.

Retailers such as vape shops who do not sell tobacco products (cigarettes, cigars, chewing tobacco, etc.) should choose "other" as their vendor type when applying for their permit.

Please visit the [Idaho Tobacco Project webpage](#) or call 877-641-4468 with questions.

Implementing statewide community resource database

By Nicole Coleman

Program Specialist

In late May 2020, The Division of Behavioral Health entered into a consulting contract with a subject matter expert on the implementation of a Statewide Community Resource Database. The consultants, Julota, have begun their work with and have been holding meetings with respective division staff to understand the current status of Idaho's behavioral health resources.

The consultants will hold virtual focus group meetings this month

and in August with regional staff and community stakeholders. The professional consulting contract will conclude at the end of September 2020 with a final report showcasing how Idaho could implement a successful Statewide Community Resource Database.

Agency guidance documents now online

By Christopher Good

Business Analyst

Senator Patrick Moynihan once said, "Secrecy is for losers" in reference to the operations of a people's government. In a government of, by and for the people, the people must have access to the information traded by those operating on their behalf.

This is why Governor Brad Little issued his Executive Order 2020-02, Transparency in Agency Guidance Documents, which requires state agencies to make available online all documents that:

- Are in writing
- Aid or advise staff on interpretation of legislation or rules
- Are widely applicable, i.e. not regarding a specific case or situation, but something staff relies upon in general to understand what

the law or rule says.

- Affect the rights or interests of a person who is outside of the Idaho Department of Health and Welfare

Thanks to the cooperation of division staff in each region and the division's Central Office staff, this material is now available, in time for the July 1 deadline described in the Executive Order. The documents are now online and accessible to the public [here](#).

While a maintenance plan is being developed for ongoing transparency, please keep in mind that when new policies or guidelines are established, they must be made available at this site. Please review what's posted now, and if you are aware of other material that fits the criteria listed above, please contact Chris Good at Christopher.Good@dhw.idaho.gov with that information.

Behavioral Health Board Contacts

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4th Annual Northwest Conference canceled

Due to the current COVID-19 pandemic, State Hospital North will be canceling the Northwest Conference on Complicated and Severe Psychiatric Presentations that was previously scheduled for Sept. 10 and 11, 2020. The conference may be rescheduled for August or September 2021.