



RALLY (Rapid Action Learning Leaders for Youth) Palm Beach County-wide Youth Mental Health Response

At a Glance
August 2023

RALLY By the Numbers



and their families
in Palm Beach County



Youth, parents, grassroots leaders,
community members, behavioral health
providers, system leads, elected officials,
and funders participated.



with an additional 25 people participating
pre-RALLY in initial meetings and feedback
workspace (Jamboard).



2 funders –
Children's Services Council
and
Palm Health Foundation –
announced support for
organizations/communities to
activate RALLY solutions.



*Determined at the RALLY

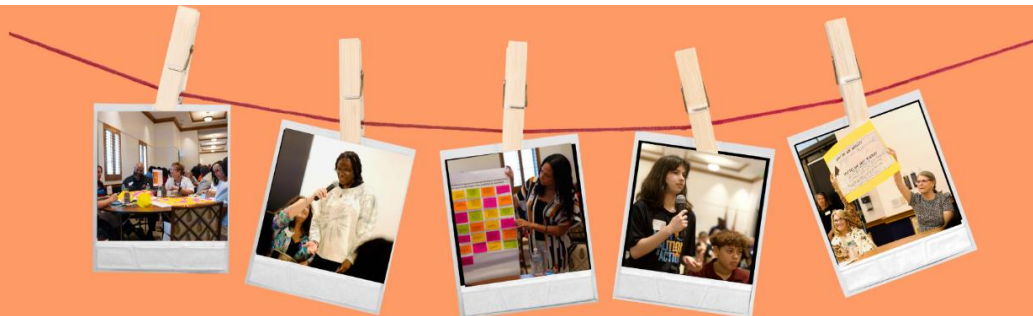


RALLY (Rapid Action Learning Leaders for Youth)

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At a Glance

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THE COMMUNITY RALLIES FOR

... INVITING PROFESSIONALS AND YOUTH REFLECTIVE OF THE COMMUNITY TO SPREAD MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS

... OFFERING YOUTH ACTIVITIES THAT TEACH CRITICAL SKILLS/LIFE SKILLS

... DEVELOPING NON-TRADITIONAL THERAPEUTIC SUPPORTS

... RESOURCING CONGREGATIONS, COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS, GRASSROOTS INITIATIVES TO HOST MENTAL HEALTH PROGRAMS/SERVICES/SUPPORTS IN THEIR EXISTING SPACES WHERE YOUTH ALREADY ARE

... BUILDING COMMUNITY/SAFE SPACES FOR YOUTH TO COME AND TALK, HANG OUT, AND BE TOGETHER WITH TRUSTED ADULTS

... PROVIDING COMPREHENSIVE, LARGE-SCALE, YOUTH-LED, ADULT-GUIDED ACTIVITIES THAT ARE FREE TO PARTICIPATE, ACCESSIBLE TO JOIN, OPEN TO ALL AND INCLUSIVE

... RETHINKING HOW PROVIDERS CAN BE AVAILABLE TO DELIVER SERVICES THAT MEET COMMUNITY WHERE THEY ARE AND EVALUATING PRACTICES WITH A TRAUMA-AWARE LENS

RALLY participants
are
self-organizing
to discuss
collaborations

HOW WILL
WE RALLY?
from here...

Funders
are
meeting again in
September to
discuss their
plans and paths
for investing in
solutions

Florida Atlantic
University
is
partnering to
evaluate progress
and youth impact



BeWellPBC
is
working with
stakeholders to
develop regular
communications/
feedback loop

The School District
of PBC
is
examining ways to
incorporate more
youth voice with
school based mental
health work

Business owners
are
developing youth
programming
(within their
expertise) to offer
in their
neighborhoods

Behavioral health
providers
are
taking RALLY
feedback and
looking at internal
practices
to implement
youth ideas

RALLY
organizers
are
connecting
potential partners
based on
completed
commitment forms

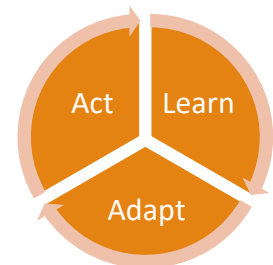


RALLY (Rapid Action Learning Leaders for Youth) Palm Beach County-wide Youth Mental Health Response

Event Summary August 2023

The Purpose

RALLY—Rapid Action Learning Leaders for Youth—as the name implies, has brought together youth, grassroots initiatives, community leaders, behavioral health providers, funders, and system leads to quickly mobilize solutions for youth mental health through a collective and continuous effort to act, test, learn, and adapt.

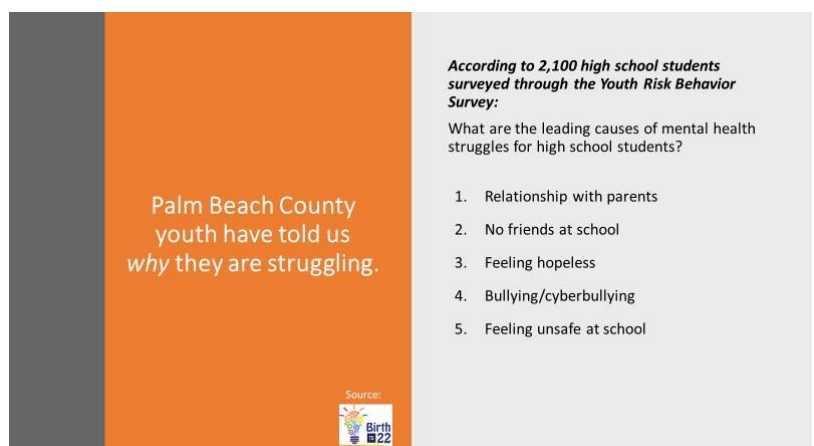


The Need: Youth Are Looking to Us to Act

Youth mental health is in crisis. Even before COVID-19, the [American Psychological Association](#) stated that in the 10 years leading up to the pandemic, feelings of persistent sadness and hopelessness—as well as suicidal thoughts and behaviors—increased by about 40% among young people [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s (CDC) Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System]. The CDC also found that girls, LGBTQ+ youth, and BIPOC youth who have experienced racism were more likely to have poor mental health during the pandemic. [A recent government survey](#) shows the pandemic took a harsh toll on U.S. teen girls’ mental health, with almost 60% reporting feelings of persistent sadness or hopelessness. In addition, [youth dying by suicide](#) have been getting younger, especially Black youth. As [stated by Kathleen Ethier, director of CDC’s adolescent and school health division](#), in 30 years of collecting similar data, “we’ve never seen this kind of devastating, consistent findings,” she said. “There’s no question young people are telling us they are in crisis. The data really call on us to act.”

Most compelling is local data gathered through the [Youth Risk Behavior Survey 2021](#) identifying high school youth 5 main mental health concerns and the follow-up conversations hosted throughout Palm Beach County by Birth to 22: United for Brighter Futures in spring 2023 with an additional 402 youth and parents to learn more about these five struggles ([Pre-Rally Data Deck](#)).

With this data in tow, BeWellPBC along with key partners were ready to address how to answer the needs of youth across the county.



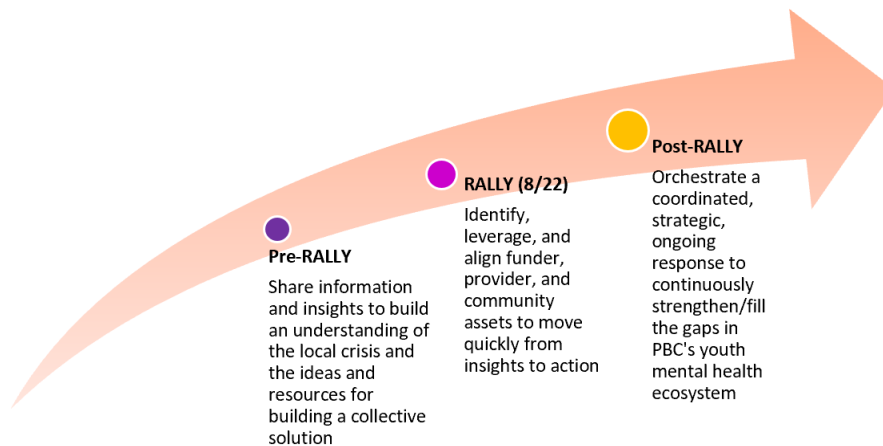
The Process

BeWellPBC supported by Children’s Services Council and Palm Health Foundation developed the RALLY - a multi-channel approach to build and leverage capacity among a wide range of supports—youth peers, parents, schools, faith communities, neighborhood initiatives, behavioral health agencies, etc.— in order to fill the gaps left wide open by a behavioral health profession shortage and disparities in access to care, and move beyond status quo methods and treatments to a vital conditions/equity approach for the complex challenges facing youth today.

With focus on youth ages 12-19 and their families, the RALLY became a data-driven, decision-making process to get people beyond talking about needs to taking action to solve problems.

The RALLY was divided into 3 parts:

- The **Pre-RALLY** process engaged funders to think through their commitment to resources for youth mental health, invited youth and community leaders closest to youth to guide the work, and provided a virtual workspace ([RALLY for Youth Mental Health](#)) to gain insights from the larger public ahead of the August 22nd event.
- The **RALLY** on August 22nd from 5-8pm was an in-person gathering that hosted 96 Palm Beach County residents and professionals (see Appendix A for list of participating groups and organizations) to set priorities, identify existing supports and new concepts to tackle youth mental health, and move ideas to action with new relationships forming and capital dedicated to the cause.
- Now **Post-RALLY**, community and systems are activating plans to deploy short-term and long-term solutions to do the most good. Florida Atlantic University is partnering to determine evaluation methods for capturing impact and a regular communication process for partner check-ins is emerging.



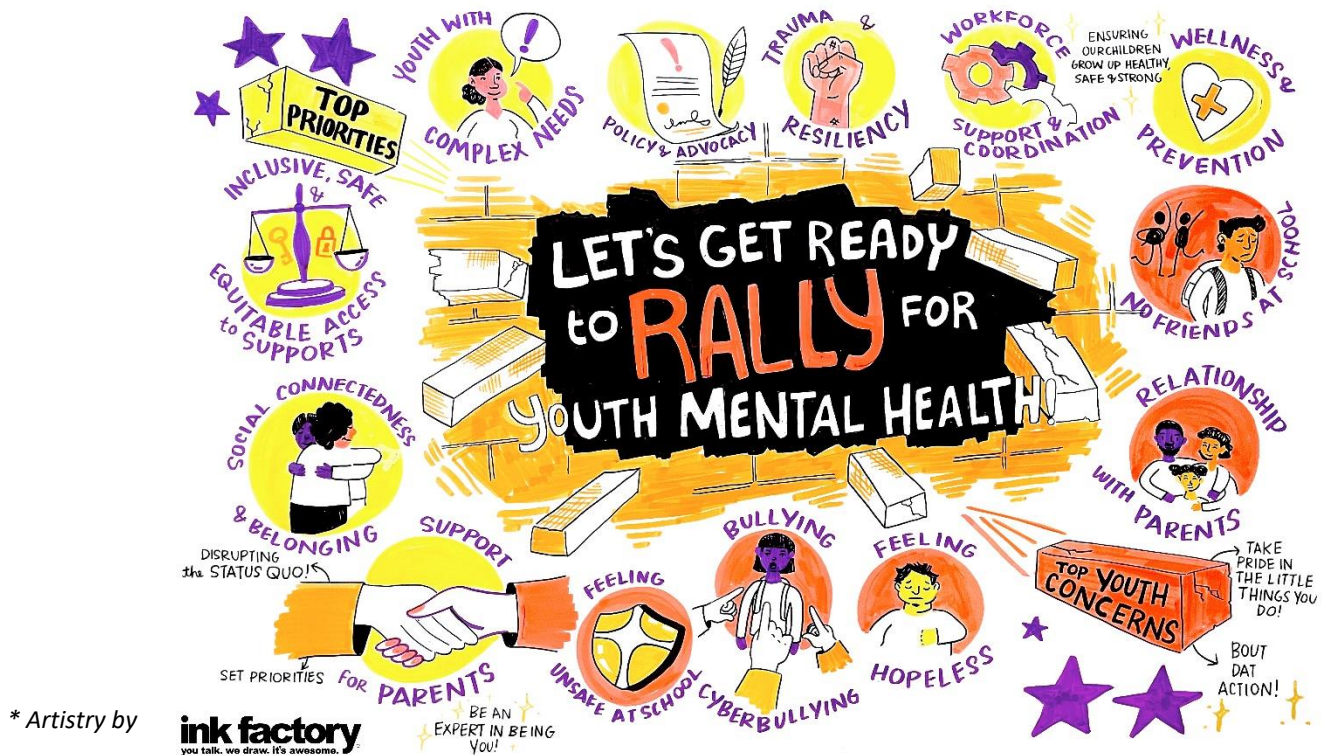
Important Considerations for the Process

Within the RALLY approach, certain factors were key to its success:

- **Build on what exists.** Every community in PBC has assets and trusted people and places to reach youth. In addition, PBC is rich in initiatives focused on behavioral health and existing pathways for individuals to participate and exercise leadership in this space. The RALLY could identify, map, and seek to connect these assets and build capacity for supporting youth mental health.
- **Design programs and creative solutions to increase access to mental health care and address inequity.** By mapping youth touchpoints, BeWellPBC and partners could uncover ways to increase access either in person or through technology.
- **Engage beneficiaries in designing and advocating for programs.** The RALLY had to include a vast universe of lived experience experts, including youth, siblings, parents, and loved ones to cultivate learning and trust.
- **Be vigilant with implementation.** While the RALLY intention was to encourage acting swiftly, PBC should do so with integrity, compassion, and a focus on equity that is considered in all aspects of implementation.

The Process Leads to Results

The RALLY garnered shared vision regarding priority areas, top ideas, and next steps for Palm Beach County's collective youth mental health response.



Priority Areas

Powered by input from the virtual [RALLY for Youth Mental Health](#) (Jamboard Page 1/Appendix B), priorities were clustered and recognized under the following categories:

- ❖ Youth with complex needs
- ❖ Inclusive, safe, and equitable access to supports
- ❖ Workforce support (for youth services) and coordination
- ❖ Support for parents
- ❖ Trauma and resiliency
- ❖ Social connectedness and belonging
- ❖ Policy and advocacy
- ❖ Wellness and prevention

Top Ideas

Based on the priority areas, RALLY participants focused on services and supports already available in county as well as new program designs that hold promise (Jamboard Page 2 and 3/Appendix C and D) to choose and frame out solutions that they considered to be best ways to move forward NOW.

Utilizing a logic model framework, participants were asked:

- 1) What is the top idea?
- 2) What priority(ies) does it impact?
- 3) Which youth concern does it address?
- 4) How do we make it work?
- 5) Where/how do we start?

Ideas progressed to efforts (and themes for solutions became obvious) as participants across the event communicated their rally cries for “What do we want?” and “How do we get there?”

A few rally cries sounded very similar ...

The community wants mental health awareness.

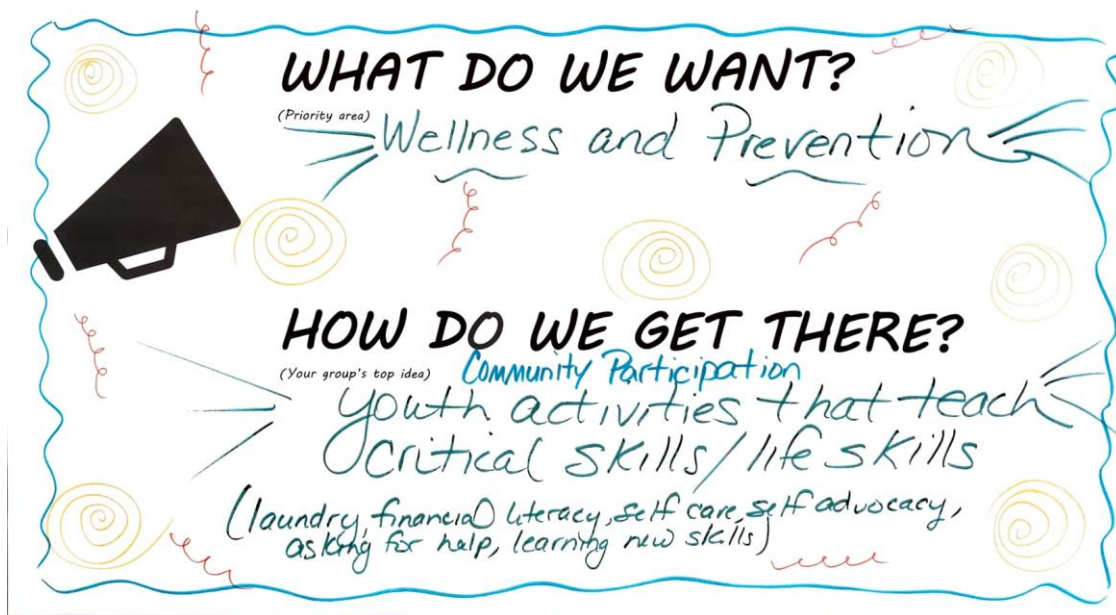
What is the idea? What is the best opportunity to create impact/fill gaps? Invite professionals to youth that are reflective of community to increase MH awareness, advocate of the LGBTQ+ community	Which priority(ies) does it impact? Well-being, Support (if needed), Mental health, Community, Wellness, Resilience, Social connections, Trauma & Resilience, etc.	Which youth concern(s) does it address? (circle any/all that apply) • Relationship with parents • No friends at school • Feeling hopeless • Bullying/cyberbullying • Feeling unsafe at school
How do we make it work? Safe spaces Openness Trust Build relationships Businesses - local stores, community center, arts & cultural center, barber shops, basketball court Trinity Counseling Center Love, Hope, & Healing Compass Faith-based organizations	What/who do we need? What can we leverage? (Resources? Partners?) How will we know if it's successful? Open mic night, Poetry slams, Pottery, School District - Dine United, Youth groups & inclusive youth groups (out of school time also), Surf, hikes/raunch, BEACH Success: Attendance, Survey by youth - pre/post, Testimonials	
Where/how do we start? Advertise, central location - community center/park TikTok, Insta Within a year	What is the first thing you would do to start/expand this program? When could it launch? (Less than/more than a year from now)	

"Invite professionals and youth reflective of the community to increase mental health awareness."

- Utilize Tik Tok and Instagram (social media) to advertise mental health facts and tips that speak to the larger community.
- Work with local businesses (bookstores, community centers, barber shops, etc.) to offer mental health information on site.
- Host events (poetry slams, pottery classes, open mic nights, dance competitions, etc.) where mental health information can be shared or partner with community events already scheduled.
- Support inclusive youth groups on and off school campus where relationships and trust can build and prevention and wellness can be encouraged.

*Logic Model for Solutions

The community wants support for youth wellness and prevention.



*RALLY poster

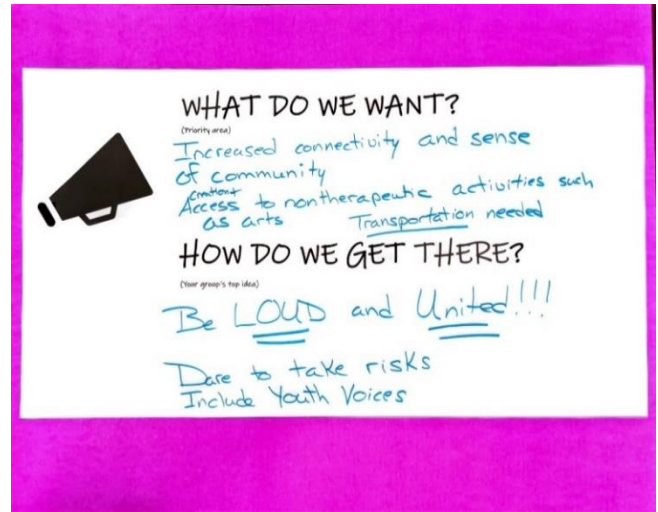
"Offer youth activities that teach critical skills/life skills (laundry, financial literacy, self-care, self-advocacy, asking for help, learning new skills)."

- Create life skills wellness markets – free events for teen and parent friendly activities to include physical exercise (yoga, dance), mindfulness practices, writing workshops (resume-building, creative writing), budgeting classes, etc.
- Highlight local places that foster teen self-expression/self-care through a wide range of expressive arts activities.
- Develop a gaming app that teaches skills and is marketed throughout the county/made accessible for all youth to utilize.
- Get local businesses involved to offer skill-building (ie. banks teaching financial literacy, chefs/restaurants teaching basic cooking skills, Home Depot teaching home maintenance skills).

The community wants advocacy.

“Fill the gap of not enough providers to meet current waitlists, develop non-traditional therapeutic supports, increase connectivity to community, and support growth of workforce.”

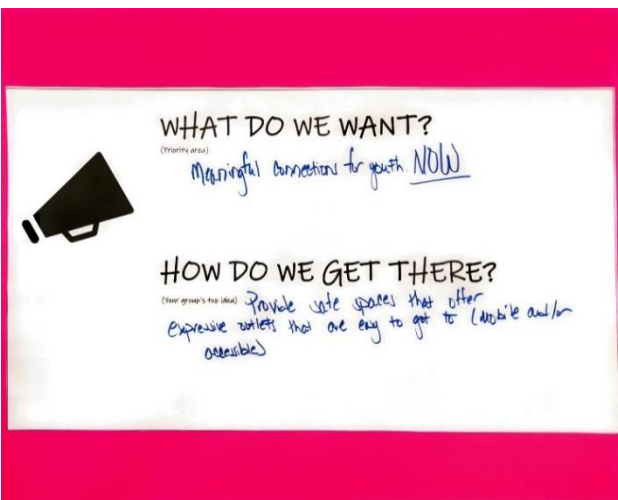
- Ensure youth voice is heard/involve youth in every youth conversation.
- Be loud and united when talking to elected officials.
- Lobby for higher salaries and other incentives for the workforce.
- Organize and engage with providers of unconventional programming (ie. peers, expressive arts). Find what support they need (ie. staffing and other resources).
- Create a countywide directory of non-therapeutic supports and advertise to professionals and residents – and pay an entity to maintain the directory.
- Advocate for transportation services.



The community wants meaningful connections for youth.

*RALLY poster

“Building community/safe spaces for youth to come and talk, hang out, and be together with safe adults.”



- Ask youth what spaces work for them.
- Take inventory of existing safe spaces and expand programming and opportunities there.
- Involve local businesses to offer space/support efforts.
- Train staff/volunteers on site to identify mental health needs.
- Research new programming that is successful in similar communities across the state/country and invest.
- Advertise safe spaces in a welcoming way for all to feel comfortable to attend.
- Open additional locations to be accessible to youth with transportation barriers/open in neighborhoods where youth live and equipped with adults trained to support youth.
- Include space for parents to meet other parents and learn about local resources.
- Focus on youth resilience in programming.

The community wants behavioral health support provided in existing community spaces.

“Funding/resources for congregations and community organizations to host mental health programs/services/supports in their existing spaces where youth already are.”

- Identify and work with community and faith-based organizations serving youth to bring in speakers, take field trips, provide support through engaging activities like the arts, offer curriculum related to behavioral health at their sites.
- Offer training for youth peer-to-peer support.
- Connect school staff and clinicians with community organizations and congregations for warm handoffs and to fill gaps in support for youth and their families (make the community organizations part of the treatment teams).
- Engage private practitioners to provide focused support to organizations (ie. replicating what EJS Project and Achievement Centers for Children and Families are already offering).

The community wants family support through policy change.

“Rethink how providers can be available to deliver services to meet community needs.”

- Host information sessions/training for providers to ensure inclusive services for youth and their families.
- Educate all systems serving youth to utilize behavioral health services most appropriately and most efficiently.
- Increase co-location of behavioral health providers to serve families with care coordination and evidenced-based practices.
- Prioritize the 70 schools without co-located agencies to link to providers.
- Expand High Fidelity Wraparound for care coordination.
- Meet families where they are/make it a priority to support families to be able to be involved in their youth's services. Providers and systems need to adjust their practices and policies to make participation most accessible for parents/guardians/other family members.

The community wants trauma-informed, healing centered pathways to support youth and families.

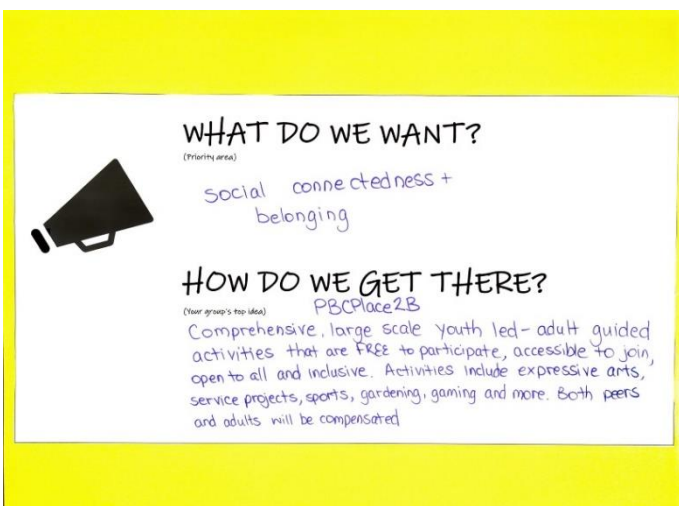
“Evaluate current practices through a trauma-aware lens to decrease barriers to services.”

- Survey community and service providers to determine need for trauma and resiliency coaching, certification, etc.
- Resource experts – lived and learned – to train on best practices in trauma-informed care and healing centered community work.
- Determine peer review process of providers and community initiatives for strength-based suggestions and service support.
- Incentivize providers to participate and hold one another accountable in supportive ways.

The community wants youth leadership and support.

“Comprehensive, large-scale, youth-led, adult-guided activities that are free to participate, accessible to join, open to all and inclusive.”

- Honor life experience when hiring and creating programming.
- Offer activities to include expressive arts, service projects, sports, gardening, and gaming.
- Both adults and youth leading the programming will be compensated.
- Training for adults/residents/stay-at-home parents to mentor, mediate, and support youth to lead activities.
- Canvas the community for talented youth and employ them to lead programming.
- Funding for transportation or support for local entities (churches, initiatives) with transportation to utilize their services to get youth to programming.
- Explore promising practices as models for implementation (Icelandic Prevention Model).



WHAT DO WE WANT?
(Priority area)

social connectedness + belonging

HOW DO WE GET THERE?
(Your group's top idea)

PBCPlace2B
Comprehensive, large scale youth led-adult guided activities that are FREE to participate, accessible to join, open to all and inclusive. Activities include expressive arts, service projects, sports, gardening, gaming and more. Both peers and adults will be compensated



WHAT DO WE WANT?
(Priority area)

Lend a hand to an outstretched hand.

HOW DO WE GET THERE?
(Your group's top idea)

Community Collaboration

Next Steps

Rally cries led to commitments from individuals and organizations, and participants shared what they will do next (on commitment forms) because of the RALLY. Here are a few ...

- “Help my friends connect with one another and start a positive word initiative.” – Youth
- “Review our internal processes and keep in touch with our peers in the field to improve collaboration.” – Provider
- “Increase community outreach to educate and support youth and families.” – Grassroots Initiative
- “Disrupt the way it has always been done and be open to providing help in new ways.” – Local Business
- “Communicate better across the county about what we can offer.” – Systems Leader
- “Meet with youth consistently and ask what they want.” – Recreation Center
- “Include youth in developing new programming and support them to lead.” – Countywide Initiative
- “Advance this conversation to resourcing actions.” – Funder
- “Provide time, energy, and experience in driving (RALLY) ideas forward.” – This was stated multiple times by various people.

RALLY For Youth Mental Health
Strengthening Palm Beach County's Youth Mental Health
Taken All at Once
AUGUST 22, 2023
5PM - 8PM

I COMMIT TO PALM BEACH COUNTY'S YOUTH!

Priority area(s) I am most passionate about:

- ☐ Youth with complex needs
- ☒ Inclusive, safe, and equitable access to support
- ☒ Support for parents
- ☒ Social connectedness and belonging
- ☐ Policy and advocacy
- ☐ Wellness and prevention
- ☐ Trauma and resiliency
- ☐ Workforce support (for youth services) and coordination

I am most interested in the following ideas from tonight:

collaborating vendor market
community popups for our
free educational programming

What can you offer post RALLY to bring ideas to reality?

- ☒ Resources
- ☒ Connections
- ☒ Action
- ☒ Advocacy

What will you do next as a result of your participation tonight?

connect w/ 2 orgs to create
events led by youth

Name: Pranoo Kuman Signature: [Signature]

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- ☒ Trauma and resiliency
- ☐ Workforce support (for youth services) and coordination

I am most interested in the following ideas from tonight:

community spaces for youth to participate
in programs to increase connectedness & resiliency

What can you offer post RALLY to bring ideas to reality?

- ☐ Resources
- ☒ Connections
- ☒ Action
- ☒ Advocacy

What will you do next as a result of your participation tonight?

stay connected to the work keep everyone out
for potential grant opportunities

Name: Tracy Clara Truitt Signature: [Signature]

* Commitment Forms

These collective commitments inspired action:

- ✓ **Two funders – Children’s Services Council and Palm Health Foundation – announced at the RALLY that they will each dedicate \$200,000 to drive forward youth mental health solutions.**
- ✓ Additional funders scheduled to meet in September to develop plans for investing in RALLY ideas.
- ✓ A “table team” (group of participants brainstorming together at the RALLY) organized themselves to get together post-event, build these new relationships, and discuss collaborations.
- ✓ A behavioral health provider returned to the office and began a deep dive into practices from policy to marketing to hiring, looking for opportunity to decrease barriers to services.
- ✓ Florida Atlantic University School of Social Work met with BeWellPBC to discuss tracking and monitoring system.
- ✓ Neighborhood business owners are creating/expanding youth programming (based on their expertise) to offer at their commercial space.
- ✓ The School District is examining ways to incorporate more youth voice with school based mental health work.
- ✓ Palm Beach County Behavioral Health Coalition is aligning 2 upcoming youth summits (host to 100s of local youth) with themes from the RALLY and engaging youth in action to move ideas forward.
- ✓ BeWellPBC as RALLY organizers are connecting potential partners based on commitment forms.

As the event came to a close, everyone was encouraged to continue building on RALLY momentum by:

- ❖ Connecting with new people from the event and looking for opportunities to work together.
- ❖ Leveraging available resources to make them available to move on ideas from the RALLY.
- ❖ Taking ideas from the RALLY and building them out with partners from community to systems – making sure to include youth.

The Action

In the weeks and months to come, shared priorities and rally cries can answer the call of Palm Beach County youth who are looking to the community in their time of need.

Success of this youth mental health response will hinge on:

People and Partnerships

- Community stewards, systems leaders, and beneficiaries acting together.
- Funders willing to take risks on investing in new solutions/community-led solutions.
- Youth engaged and provided support to be “at the table” and leading solutions and learning.
- New collaborators/non-traditional participants from the community connected and committed to the work.

Process

- Regular communications out to the community at large including updates from participants about commitments realized.
- Mechanisms for community to continue to offer ideas with the opportunity to participate in development and implementation.
- Successful solutions scaled across the county to benefit more Palm Beach County neighborhoods.
- Evaluation methods shared across partners (community and systems) to track progress and impact on youth.

Performance

- Number of youth reached, especially in vulnerable communities/where there is not equitable access.
- Ideas brought to fruition, deployed, and providing youth mental health support on time and on budget.
- Analysis and sensemaking that are based in continuous learning/sharing outcomes.

In the end, the excitement is palpable as this movement builds to respond to the youth mental health crisis **now**. All of us. Together. United for our youth.



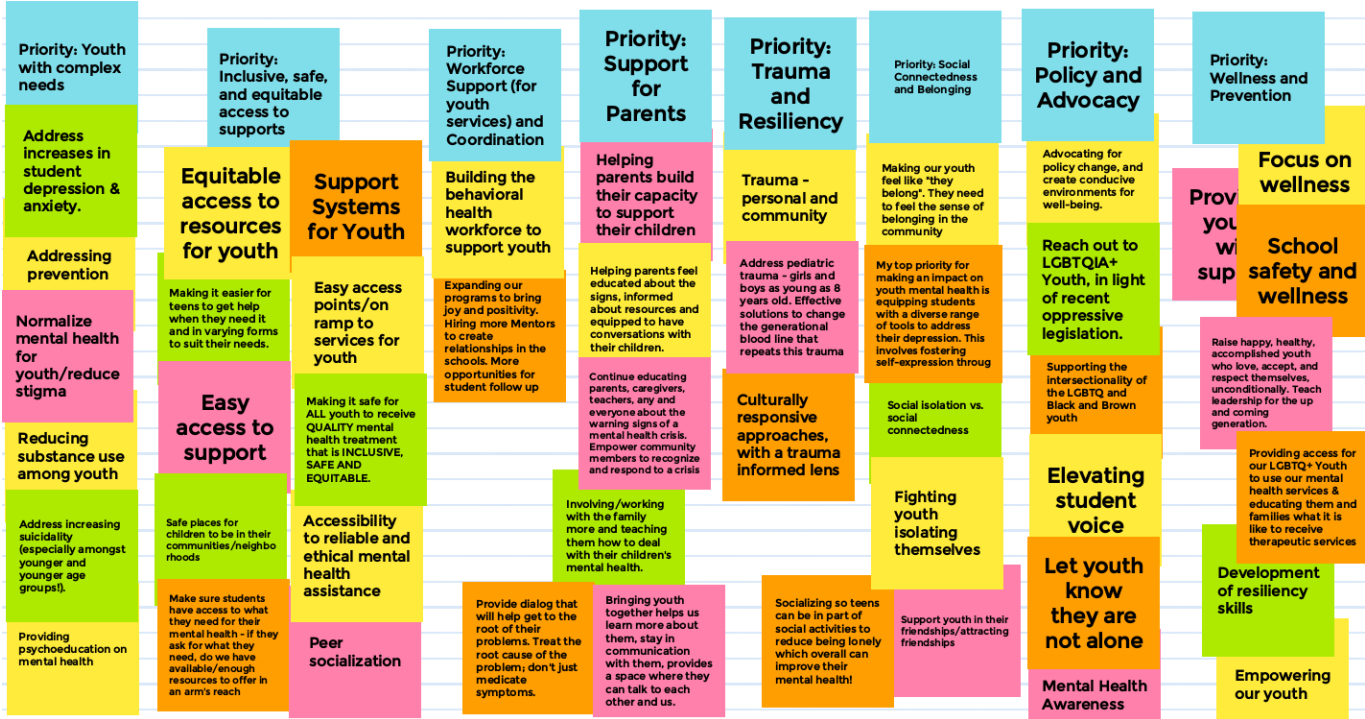
Appendix A: Who Participated

- **Community Leads**
 - Youth and Adult Residents
 - Bi-Wi “Because I’m Worth It!” International
 - Digital Vibez
 - EJS Project
 - Federation of Families of Florida
 - Flawless Foundation
 - Golden Parents Inc.
 - Healthier Delray Beach
 - Love, Hope & Healing Inc.
 - National Alliance on Mental Illness
 - Youth Empowered to Prosper
 - Young Men of Distinction
 - Faith in Florida
- **Businesses**
 - Khanna Connections
 - Rohi’s Readery
 - Tranquility Drive
 - Unity3 Palm Beach
 - Uppercutz Barbershop & Salon
- **Local Initiatives**
 - BeWellPBC
 - Birth to 22: United for Brighter Futures
 - Palm Beach County Behavioral Health Coalition
 - PBC NeuroArts Collaborative
- **Funders and Systems**
 - Childnet
 - Children’s Services Council
 - Community Foundation of Palm Beach and Martin Counties
 - Florida Atlantic University
 - HCA Florida JFK North Hospital
 - Juvenile Justice Board
 - Palm Beach County Criminal Justice Commission
 - Palm Beach County Community Services
 - Palm Beach County Youth Services
 - Palm Health Foundation
 - The School District of Palm Beach County/School Board
 - Southeast Florida Behavioral Health Network
 - United Way of Palm Beach County
- **Providers**
 - 211 Palm Beach and Treasure Coast
 - Alpert Jewish Family Service
 - Boys Town South Florida
 - Center for Child Counseling
 - Center for Family Services of Palm Beach County
 - Compass Community Center
 - Families First of Palm Beach County
 - National Alliance on Mental Illness
 - Pace Center for Girls



Appendix B: Top Priorities for Youth Mental Health

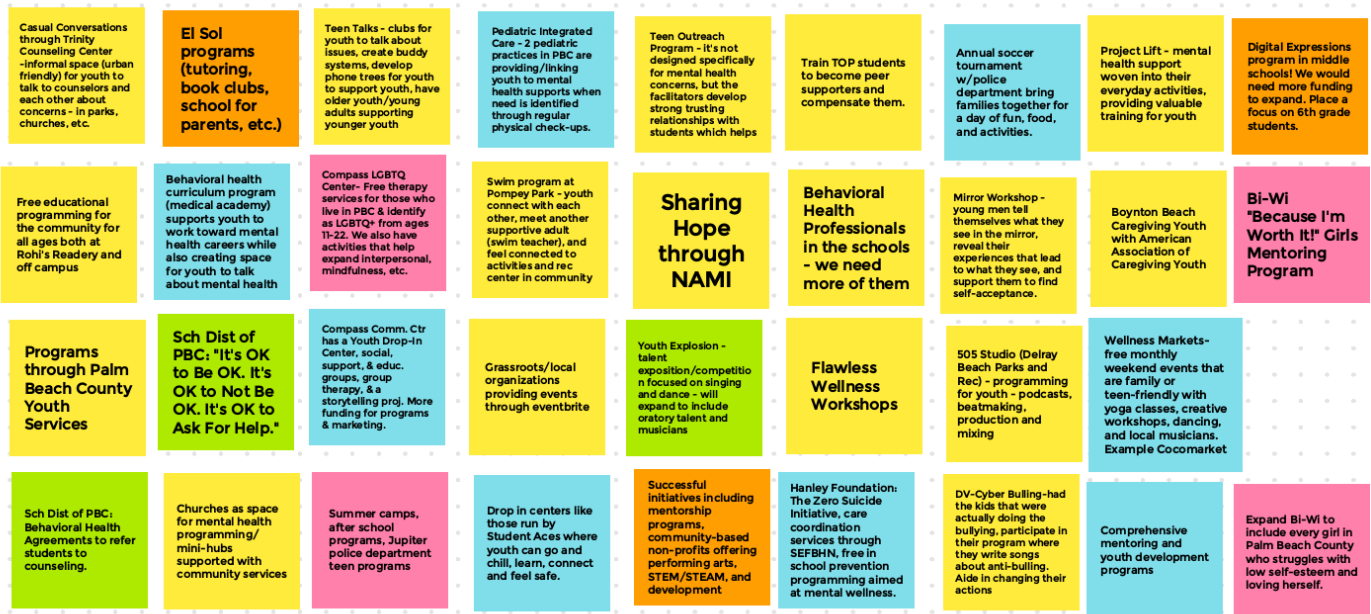
What is your top priority for making an impact on youth mental health in Palm Beach County?



Appendix C: Existing Services and Supports in Palm Beach County That Are Positively Impacting Youth Mental Health

RALLY for Youth Mental Health

What existing initiatives/programs/services/supports are working in our community that support youth mental health? How could they be expanded?



RALLY for Youth Mental Health

What new ideas hold promise?



* Photography by Naji Designs



