

NCEF Mental Health Initiative

Since 2012, NCEF has invested over \$16,840,059 into the community.

The Issue

One in six youth experience a mental health disorder each year. Early identification, expert diagnosis and effective individual treatment of childhood psychiatric and behavioral disorders are needed, along with taking away the stigma for children and their families, and empowering them with help, hope and answers.

Several NCEF-commissioned studies have documented the daunting challenges of mental health care in our community, including lack of access to treatment, insufficient numbers of qualified mental health providers, and inadequate to non-existent coordination among health-care providers. Recognizing that the pediatric primary care setting is the main gateway to access care for children and youth, the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry (AACAP) and the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) have highlighted the need to address the mental health needs of children and adolescents in primary care settings.

Based on their research and recommendations, NCEF has brought together key providers in the community to help shift the provision of mental health services in Collier County to an integrated primary care model. Since 2012, the initiative has been transforming and expanding mental and behavioral health care for at-risk children in Collier County.

Fast Facts*

- **Fifty percent** of all lifetime mental illness begins by age 14.
- Suicide is the second leading cause of death among high school-aged youths 14–18 years after unintentional injuries. Every day, **3,000 students** 9th-12th grades attempt suicide.
- For children 18 and younger, there has been an **87% increase in hospitalizations** due to Mood and Depressive Disorders between 2017 and 2021.
- The state ranks last among states in per-person spending for mental health services. Florida, which spends about **\$36 per person**, is ahead of only one U.S. jurisdiction, Puerto Rico, where the per capita spending is about \$20.
- An estimated **1 out of every 36 children** have Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) in Collier County.

*Data from Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, David Lawrence Centers, National Alliance on Mental Illness

Collaborative Successes

- NCEF conducted independent studies in 2005, 2010, 2017 and 2022 to determine key gaps in services for Mental Health, including identifying the need to shift the provision of mental health services to an integrated primary care model. Since inception, **over 75,000 youth** have benefitted from this effective and coordinated approach.
- **Nearly 6,000 children annually** receive mental health screenings during their pediatric well visits, and **nearly 2,000 preschoolers** receive screenings in their early learning environments.
- Golisano Children's Hospital and NCEF joined in a partnered in 2014 to develop a workable, **sustainable system of care and treatment** for the low income and uninsured children with Autism Spectrum Disorder in Collier County.

Meet Brianna, Age 22

Brianna is the youngest of five children. Her older siblings Josh and Lizzie were born with cerebral palsy and Autism Spectrum Disorder, which required constant care. When Brianna was ten, her older sister Lizzie passed away from pneumonia. Brianna began to feel detached, anxious, and began to self-harm. Brianna's mother took her for an emergency psych evaluation at David Lawrence Centers, and with the help of their mental health professionals Brianna began treatment. Today she is a thriving young adult with a passion for bringing mental health care to all children.



How your dollars make a difference:

\$1,000 provides social-emotional screenings for 20 children

\$2,500 provides 250 children with monthly behavioral health services

\$5,000 provides mental health educational programming for 300 at-risk teens

\$10,000 provides mental health assessments for 80 children in need

\$25,000 enables 1,190 pediatric patients to receive integrated intervention visits at the time of their primary care appointment

\$50,000 provides a school liaison to help children with mental health needs in a school setting



Strategic Initiative Partners

