

San Francisco Mental Health Board-94110



- What is the Mental Health Board /history.
- Project Details and Obligations.
- Best Practices.
- Needs Assessment.
- Quotes.
- Reflection and Involvement.

What is the MHB-History

- History: The State of California passed the short-Doyle Act, 1957, which gave counties the responsibility for providing treatment and care to the mentally ill through a community-based and operated system.
- The legislator at the same time mandated the establishment of a Mental Health Board in each county.
- To assure citizen involvement and therefore accountability for the mental health systems in the communities in which they serve.
- San Francisco had its own MHB a year earlier and when ordinance came along, they incorporated that language into its own ordinance.

Why is it important?

- Mental Health Services are now operating under managed care, and guidance from consumers and citizens is needed.
- 1 in 4 families has a member who needs mental health care.
- Misinformation about mental illness and substance abuse is all too common.
- Mental Health and substance abuse problems affect our physical health as well.
- Culturally appropriate personnel and policies that reflect our community's need.

Project Details and Responsibilities

- Conduct a needs assessment of programs in the Mission District, to assess what is currently working for women and girls and what is needed.
- Meet with as many agencies as possible.
- Create a Spreadsheet with relevant information.
- Questions to ask: Who does your program serve? How are you funded? What are your best practices in working with women, girls? How do you address safety issues? If you had a microphone to the MHB, what would you say to them?
- I interviewed 21 agencies, saw in person 19 and participated giving workshops in one.
- The Mission District is Complex and is not all 94110 zip code.

Best Practices

- Many Cultural, Linguistic, Multi ethnic programs have been tailored to the specific needs of the community.
- The Latino group is so diverse that Native Americans has become a new term for our community (Rather than Indigenous Minorities). And according to this need agencies incorporate native beliefs and wisdom to treat mental illnesses.
- Vibrant new programs have been developed to suit the evolving needs of teens, children and families in a culturally appropriate way: Shamanic encounters, The DJ Project, Young Women Arise, Females Against Violence, Supportive Families for Queer children, and much more.

Best Practices

- To Claim our roots and culture to empower our youth for the future, proud of our heritage.
- To built self esteem and give a voice to young girls starting in the home, schools, churches, and community.
- To help immigrant families adjust(not acculturate), learn new ways of living and incorporate them to our lives.
- To empower all members of our society with dignity and integrity regardless of immigrant, sex, gender, mental challenges, ethnicity, and social status.
- Peer mentorship, and bring professionals from our Latino Heritage to work in our schools, hospitals, and in every aspect of our society so our children and youth mirror themselves and find a role model to follow.

NEEDS

- Many agencies do not see the need for gender specific delivery of programs.
- Safety is only addressed on terms of agency(most cases), not on accessibility, immigrant friendly, and neighborhood safety.
- Culturally/Linguistically/Gender Appropriate methods are far behind our current time.
- “Necessity is the mother of invention” is an old adage that the Mission District reinvents each day, as budget cuts inflict our neighborhood programs, current/up to date materials are needed.
- Most programs work to save money (ER, long term facilities turning into out patient services and transitional homes, and not to heal our ill.

NEEDS

- Low Self Esteem (youth, children and parents).
- High stigma of mental health programs.
- Depression, anxiety, and hopelessness.
- To develop Programs that do not train youth for a minimal paying job, but strive for higher education .
- More after school programs.
- Division of parents and reunification of families.
- Absent parents.
- Youth in Foster Care and on their own.
- Art and spiritual practices are needed as part of healing modalities.

NEEDS

- Sexual exploitation (local and imported).
- Abusive relationships/ Domestic and Date violence.
- Substance abuse
- Access to affordable/free mental health programs.
- Access to free or affordable child care programs.
- Education and evaluation of mental health of parent and children on reunification of children to immigrant parents either with a new partner/ a new life in a new country.

Latina Needs

- Sexual exploitation/ girls and women from Latin American Countries.
- Anxiety due to immigrant status/ adults live in fear of job loss, being homeless, and deportation/ children live in fear ,day by day, of losing their parents or get themselves arrested and deported.
- Accurate information on immigrant laws as they are updated.
- Access to mental health/ legal residents do not seek mental help in fear of not qualifying for citizenship or getting green card forfeited. Only children born in the U.S. could have access to mental health since the application process asks to list all public services used in order to qualify for citizenship.
- Peer mentoring, and educated Latina women to mentor/role model for young impressionable girls.

Quotes

- “When I see a client I see a person that needs to reclaim its voice”(Brian/Progress Foundation).
- “Peer educators are an important force in our program”(Celina/Horizons-Prevention Program).
- “Our young members of society need a place were to go to, a place where they feel safe, that they belong and contribute to”(Celina/Horizons- Environmental Prevention Program).
- “The DJ Program gives youth the opportunity to be creative and put their energy and talent into a program that allows them to be themselves”(Korina/Horizons).
- “Youth are less likely to engage in harmful behavior when they are given opportunities to connect with non judgemental, inspiring, and caring adult staff” (Korina/Horizons Inhalant Prevention Program).

Quotes

- **“Is important to remember we are part of a sisterhood, where our young members look up to the elders for help and guidance” (Korina/Horizons-Young Women Arise).**
- **“In this era of cost effectiveness we need to set programs that move them from services to achieve active health” (Kathy/Emergency Dpt Case M.P).**
- **“The laws do not serve a community that has evolved the time when the laws were made” (Lynn/UCSF-SFGH).**
- **“We tell parents and caregivers to be honest about their feelings because children know how their parent really feel.. And be sure to tell your child that you love them” (Lynn/Supportive Families).**

Reflection and involvement

- Personal experience / reflections.
- Involvement.
- Questions and Answers

Vibrant programs and faces

