



SAFE PASSAGES *bringing pathways to community success for our kids*

1017 Clay Street, Oakland, CA 94607

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**Safe Passages Awarded \$8.9 million from Governor’s Statewide
Master Plan for Kids’ Mental Health**

*Funds will support Safe Passages Community Wellness and Prevention Center in downtown
Oakland*

Oakland, CA – [Safe Passages](#) announced today that it has received \$8.9 million to establish a Community Wellness and Prevention Center in Downtown Oakland. The award furthers the organization’s ability to advance racial equity, provide a safe space for youth and young people to survive and thrive, and address gaps in the continuum of care for mental and behavioral health. This opportunity will enhance Safe Passages’ status as an anchor institution for the community by providing innovative prevention and early intervention services to youth and their families.

The awards are delivered through the Department of Health Care Services’ (DHCS) Behavioral Health Continuum Infrastructure Program (BHCIP) Round 4: Children and Youth grants. Governor Gavin Newsom [announced](#) \$480.5 million in awards for 54 projects to improve California’s behavioral health infrastructure for children and youth. Safe Passages’ is one of only 4 Bay Area projects receiving funds and the only one in Alameda County.

As part of Governor Newsom’s Master Plan for Kids’ Mental Health, this historic investment provides grant funding to construct new facilities and expand existing facilities that help children, youth, transition-age youth, and perinatal individuals with a mental health and/or substance use disorder.

"Safe Passages has a long and distinguished record of working with underserved communities in Alameda County and beyond," said Senator Nancy Skinner, D-Berkeley, chair of the Senate Budget Committee. "This funding award is not only well-deserved, it’s a testament to Safe Passages’ proactive approach to creating more equitable conditions for families, children and youth in the Bay Area. The Community Wellness and Prevention Center will play a critical role in improving the life chances of Oakland families, and I applaud Governor Newsom’s administration for selecting Safe Passages for this crucial grant award."

"Funding for our facility is in line with our vision for improving the life chances of all families in Alameda County, especially those families of color and LGBTQ families that are frequently



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Safe Passages' new building at 1017 Clay St. will provide a continuum of services for Oakland and other East Bay Families

unserved by systems of care,” said Safe Passages CEO Josefina Alvarado Mena. “We believe in the power of community members to address the challenges they face. By establishing a Community Wellness and Youth Prevention Center in the heart of Oakland, we are locating our work within the communities we are committed to serving. The new Safe Passages Center will be a symbol of hope and possibility for all families and youth in Oakland and all of Alameda County.”

“Successful treatments for children and youth experiencing mental health and substance use disorders are evident in outpatient settings that integrate family support,” said DHCS Director Michelle Baass. “With significant and innovative state and federal investments in homelessness, health care delivery reform, and the social safety net, California is addressing historic gaps to meet the growing demand of services and supports for children and youth across the state,” added Dr. Mark Ghaly, Secretary of the California Health & Human Services Agency,

This is the fourth of six rounds of the \$2.2 billion BHCIP funding provided by the Legislature and the Governor, which was authorized in the fiscal year 2021-22 budget to construct, acquire, and expand behavioral health facilities and community-based care options as well as invest in mobile crisis infrastructure. Funds can only be used for facility capacity expansion. BHCIP is part of a broader commitment by the California Health & Human Services Agency (CalHHS) to improve the state’s behavioral health and long-term care continuum infrastructure.

These investments will ensure care can be provided in the least restrictive settings by creating a wide range of options, including outpatient alternatives, urgent care, peer respite, wellness centers, and social rehabilitation models. They will allow alternatives to incarceration, hospitalization, homelessness, and institutionalization by better meeting the needs of vulnerable populations who face the greatest barriers to access. A variety of care placement options can provide a vital off-ramp from intensive behavioral health service settings, helping transition individuals, including the most vulnerable, to community living.

Additional information on this round of awardees is available on the BHCIP Data [Dashboard](#).

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About Safe Passages

Over the past 24 years, Safe Passages has developed initiatives for vulnerable children that span the age continuum from birth to adulthood including Early Childhood, School-Linked Services, Juvenile Justice and College to Career programs and services, Community-Based Workforce Services, including operating AmeriCorps programming for 10 years. Through these initiatives, thousands of vulnerable youth receive direct services every year. Community engagement is at the core of our work and is aligned with our mission to disrupt the cycle of poverty by engaging youth and families to build and drive a continuum of services that supports student success and community development.

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