

NCEF Mental Health Initiative

Since 2012, NCEF has invested \$34,970,496 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 healthcare 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** in grades 9th-12th attempt suicide.
- For children 18 and younger, there has been a **231% increase in hospitalizations** due to mood and depressive disorders between 2017 and 2022.
- 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.

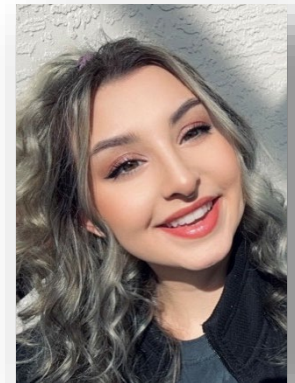
**Data from Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, David Lawrence Centers, National Alliance on Mental Illness.*

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, **nearly 85,000 youth** have benefitted from this effective and coordinated approach.
- **Over 7,000 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 partnered in 2014 to develop a workable, **sustainable system of care and treatment** for the low-income and uninsured children with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) in Collier County.

Meet Chloe, Age 22

The world changed for Chloe at 13 years old. Facing depression, anger and other struggles, she turned to the only relief she could find—self harm through cutting. This approach to attaining reprieve caused concern for her parents that led to her stay at David Lawrence Centers' Crisis Unit. She experienced several involuntary stays in different crisis units followed by her admission into DLC's Community Action Team (CAT) wrap-around program. Two years after she walked through the doors of the Children's Crisis Unit, she completed the program. Armed with healthy coping mechanisms for dealing with childhood trauma, Chloe went on to graduate high school and earned her nursing degree.



How your dollars make a difference:

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

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

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

\$5,000 equips 300 at-risk teens with mental health educational programming

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

\$1,000 ensures 20 children receive behavioral screenings



Strategic Initiative Partners

