Supporting youth and their families through our Youth Services programs (pg. 3)

Partnering to end addiction amongst youth at local schools (pg. 5)
Ways To Give

Center for Human Services (CHS) is a nonprofit agency serving youth and families since 1970. Our mission is to change lives and build futures through programs that strengthen and support youth and families. We provide proven prevention, education, treatment, counseling and shelter services in Stanislaus County.

**Get in touch:**
2000 W. Briggsmore Ave., Suite I
Modesto, CA 95350
(209) 526-1476
centerforhumanservices.org

**Ways To Give**

CHS is a tax-exempt 501(c)(3) organization. We are thankful for the many ways our community supports our work. Here are some different ways you can support us:

**TIME** Become a volunteer

**TALENT** Share one of your talents

**TREASURE** Provide monetary support

**DONATE ONLINE**
Make a secure donation online with a one-time, monthly or annual campaign gift:

centerforhumanservices.org/donate

**MAKE A GIFT BY MAIL**
Checks, payable to Center for Human Services, can be mailed to:

Center for Human Services
2000 W. Briggsmore Ave., Ste. I
Modesto, CA 95350
“Oh, to have a peaceful mind!”

What can be more important?
When I am at peace, my mind, body, and soul (the seat of my emotions) are in alignment with each other. This peace represents a balanced life. If my mind is in distress, it affects me physically and emotionally.

The World Health Organization (WHO) states “health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity”. WHO defines mental health as a state of well-being where the individual is aware of his or her abilities, can cope with normal stressors, can work productively and is able to make a contribution to his or her community.

CHS has been blessed as an agency to provide mental health services in Stanislaus County for over 25 years. In many of our communities, there has been a stigma associated with mental illness; consequently, therapy services are a major obstacle to getting professional help. By partnering with BHRS and the schools in our county, we have broken through some of the barriers that exist in getting the help one needs.

In my 22 years of working at CHS, I have had the honor and privilege to provide direct service and administrative support. It didn’t matter if we were a small agency or the size we are now; our clients, and our community are at the heart of what we do. Hence, Center for Human (Humanity) Services.

I am so grateful I have had the opportunity to serve in my position as Behavioral Health Director. I have worked many places, but none can compare to the dedicated, committed, and innovative staff we have here at CHS.

Thank you for allowing me to serve in this capacity. Remember, if there’s breath, there’s hope. Hold onto it and do not let go. Hope can take you far.

CHS, I see you in the future and you look better!

With Gratefulness,
Rosemary McFadden, LMFT
YOUTH SERVICES

Student Assistance Program (SAP) provides short-term education, prevention, and intervention services for students in K-12 education. Some of the challenges addressed include family conflicts, anger management, relationship issues, academic issues, and anxiety. The program can accommodate students for up to eight weeks, and Student Assistance Specialists can refer students to off-site, long-term care when needed.

Family Support Program (FSP) works with families at schools or at their homes to help build parenting skills and link them to community resources including food, housing, and counseling. Family Support Specialists are based at select school sites in Modesto City Schools and Empire Union School District.

“We’re here to walk with them through life’s ups and downs,” said Family Support Specialist (FSS), Karina Bedoy. Specialists, like Karina, are the heart and soul of the Family Support Program. Each team member, located at a school in Modesto City Schools and Empire Union School District, is dedicated to engaging families and providing them with food, housing, and counseling resources.

No matter the challenge, the Family Support Program seeks to empower and ease the burden for families seeking assistance. The program focuses on meeting physical necessities, as well as mental and emotional wellness.

“I see my job as connecting people to resources for any obstacles or problems they might be facing in life,” said a fellow FSS Danya Dominguez. “It’s the type of support that’s not available in a lot of places.” FSS’ provide services directly and refer clients to outside resources when needed. Either way, they work to raise awareness of the local resources available to families.

Family Support Specialists have witnessed the impact of the program in fulfilling client needs, and fostering a positive relationship between parents and schools.

Because staff works with schools to provide resources, FSS Maria Nevarez says, “Parents that had a confrontational relationship with the school begin to see us as advocates.”

Each member of this team has experienced the joy of seeing a client receive the support they needed. For Maria, a memorable experience was when she walked alongside a single mother and her child with autism as they sought schooling resources while transitioning from living in a hotel to renting their own apartment. For FSS Veronica Nino, it was the tears in a client’s eyes as they received a stack of Christmas presents. In another instance, a client told Veronica, “Thank you for remembering that we exist.” This touched Veronica, and serves as a reminder of the impact our acts of service can have on a person.

Family Support Specialists are both grateful and excited about their role in changing lives. Summing up her experience, Karina said, “I have to pinch myself to remember that I’m going to work to help people. It feels really good to help someone who may not have had someone be there for them.”
It Takes A Village

As a single mother of two children with special needs, I never imagined how difficult it would be to get mental health services in Stanislaus County.

Unfortunately, the challenges are similar statewide. My daughter is 14 and has a diagnosis of Bipolar I, which manifests as chronic depression and severe mood swings. I also have a son with high-functioning autism. My daughter has been enrolled in special education programs since the 1st grade. Since then, we’ve done exhaustive assessments and tried many medications. We’ve worked within the school system and with mental health service providers.

The mood stabilizing medication she takes now makes a huge difference and requires a monthly refill from a psychiatrist. Getting access to a psychiatrist for medication management has been one of the most challenging things I’ve ever tried to do. There is a severe shortage of psychiatrists in general, particularly those who treat children and accept our health insurance.

Last year, my daughter was hospitalized five times for severe depression and self harm. The isolation of COVID was detrimental to her mental health and mine, to be honest. Psychiatric hospitalization is pretty terrifying, and even though it does help stabilize my daughter, I don’t think it’s an experience we’ll ever get used to.

My daughter’s mental health requires constant monitoring and tending to. Advocating for her needs is exhausting and often defeating. Fortunately, I have learned how to be a fierce advocate for my daughter. The one thing I tell other parents in my situation is that they will need to be prepared to fight. It will be exhausting and continuous. It will require stamina. It will take a village, whether that’s already available or needs to be built. They will need community support which may not come from family.

As a parent, it’s easy to feel lost between clinicians, medical doctors, psychiatrists, ER staff, case managers, teachers, school administrators, community advocates, post-hospitalization service providers, etc. It’s a lot.

Everyone trying to help holds a very small piece of the entire picture.

It’s up to the parent or caregiver to make sense of it all and that is incredibly hard to do on your own. Working at CHS has given me an understanding of the types of support available for families in Stanislaus County.

There is no easy fix and mental health is something that needs regular tending to. Being able to talk with a clinician or social worker who knows what you are going through and how all the pieces fit together can make all the difference. Parents need support as much as the children they are seeking services for. Even though my daughter is the one who stays in the hospital (usually about one week at a time), it’s something that affects my entire family. We all go through it with her.

Sometimes the most helpful thing is just knowing what to expect next and having someone explain the process to you, even if the process feels fragmented and broken.
Partnering to End Addiction

As one of the most challenged areas of California when it comes to opioid use, Modesto was in need of an all-encompassing program that would support youth facing addiction as well as their families.

Center for Human Services’ Youth Opioid Response (YOR) program was created last year to provide the guidance and counseling needed to address this pressing issue.

Substance Use Disorder Counselor, Hanat Balimuttajjo, described the program’s mission to “educate, prevent, and reduce substance use as well as any associated problems experienced.” Emphasizing the need for this program in Stanislaus County, she talked about the increase of drug related deaths in the past year.

Additionally, the program is addressing other challenges youth may be facing including alcohol and cannabis use. YOR Counselors aim to raise awareness of all addictive substances and guide youth through recovery. Through a person-centered approach and cognitive behavioral therapy, counselors work to address the needs of the students and the people closest to them.

Hanat describes, “With the matrix model, we allow individuals to process and grow, but also bring families into the recovery process.” Parents are invited to take part in the program by attending parent education events, offered monthly.

Hanat expressed excitement about the future of the program. The increase in referrals from school staff, parents, and youth themselves attests that the program is both helpful and wanted. The scope of services also continues to grow as the YOR program collaborates with other local entities.

“We are building partnerships outside of this program,” said Hanat. “All counselors are working with other service providers in our community.”

They have also begun to offer roaming services to reach students at remote schools so that no student is left behind. As a whole, youth are expressing interest in the program and sharing that it’s a safe space for them to come and address life and social issues they are having.

With YOR’s services at their fingertips, students have a program to turn to, people to confide in, and a path to recovery.

In partnership with

This service is supported by a federal grant under the State Opioid Response program, with funding provided by the California Department of Health Care Services.
Youth Opioid Response (YOR) Program, established in 2021, provides counseling to youth experiencing opioid, stimulant, or other substance use. The YOR team offers prevention and intervention counseling groups, individual counseling, treatment planning, and family engagement. Services are offered at each of the Modesto City Schools high school campuses, and extra support for families of students is offered through monthly parent education events.

1 in 7 high school students reported misusing prescription opioids in their lifetime and 1 in 14 high school students reported current prescription opioid misuse. (Source: Center for Disease Control Youth Risk Behavior Survey)

Visit centerforhumanservices.org to learn more about Substance Use Treatment for youth and adults.

Our impact for the 2021-2022 school year (to date):

- 9 Substance Use Disorder (SUD) Counselors
- 1 Parent Navigator
- 8 High Schools in Modesto with on-site SUD Counselors
- 75 Youth receiving individual counseling services
- 559 Youth engaged in small groups
- 59 Youth screened for opioid use
- 39 Youth referred to recovery support
- 2,841 People served, including youth and family members or caregivers, through outreach efforts
- 17 Families received navigation services
Center for Human Services acknowledges the support of our funding partners who underwrite, in part, the quality services provided to children and families. Partners include but are not limited to: Stanislaus County Board of Supervisors, Behavioral Health & Recovery Services, First 5 Stanislaus, Community Services Agency, Probation, various school districts, foundations, Federal and State agencies. We are grateful to all of our funders for fostering the health and well-being of our communities through their support of Center for Human Services’ shelter, prevention, intervention, treatment & counseling services.

Work with us!

Every day our employees work to make a difference in the lives of youth and families in our community. We care for our employees and their families by offering:

- Health insurance coverage
- 401(k) savings plan
- Paid time off
- Employee assistance program and more

To see current job openings and to apply scan the code or visit centerforhumanservices.org

Change lives, build futures and help families