

## CYBHI Equity Working Group

June 2022

**Background:** The Children and Youth Behavioral Health Initiative aims to reimagine the ecosystem that supports behavioral health and social and emotional wellbeing of ALL children and youth ages 0-25. The reimagined ecosystem will focus on promoting wellbeing and preventing behavioral health challenges, and on routinely screening, supporting, and serving ALL children and youth for emerging and existing behavioral health (mental health and substance use) needs. It is a five-year, whole child, equity-centered, catalytic systems change initiative bringing together partners from across systems and sectors including health, education, and beyond—with children, youth, and families engaged and centered in the effort and reimagined ecosystem.

**Purpose:** The purpose of the CYBHI Equity Working Group is to advise CalHHS and its Departments on an equity framework for the initiative and make recommendations for applying the framework to embed equity into the processes, design, planning and implementation of the overall approach to the Initiative and activities, services, programs, and policies of the individual workstreams in order to build a behavioral health system for children and youth that addresses current inequities.

The CYBHI Equity Working Group will advise, guide, develop practical applications and recommendations, and help hold accountable and build capacity of the CYBHI in its effort to center and advance equity in the development and implementation of a reimagined behavioral health ecosystem for children and youth ages 0-25, particularly children, youth and families that face the greatest systemic barriers to wellness and are disproportionately impacted by behavioral health issues, including children and youth of color, LGBTQ+ youth, low-income families, and children and youth from underserved communities.

**Charter:** To provide advice, guidance, tools and recommendations on embedding and advancing equity in the work of the CYBHI.

1. **Develop and help apply a recommended equity framework for the CYBHI**, including:
  - Develop a Recommended Equity Framework
    - Definition of equity
    - Key dimensions of equity that should be included in the planning and development of the overall initiative and individual workstreams
    - Specific populations of focus
    - Review of data to drive recommendations on the above
    - Core elements for advancing equity to utilize across the work of the CYBHI

- Advise the CYBHI on applying the framework and embedding equity approaches and the centering of equity into the initiative overall and at the workstream level.
  - Develop an Equity Tool that CalHHS and its Departments can use with a recommended set of process level approaches for the Initiative and workstreams to incorporate and center the advancement of equity.
    - Example Tools: Master Plan on Aging Equity Tool and [Racial Equity Tools | Home](#); Background on Racial Equity Tools: [GARE-Resource\\_Guide.pdf \(racialequityalliance.org\)](#)
    - Identify existing toolkits and resources that CYBHI can utilize to support its equity work
    - Incorporate strategies in the toolkit that reflect the potential need for different strategies for different populations in order to address behavioral health inequities for children and youth
    - Include in the toolkit a set of recommendations on best practices for centering equity in ongoing stakeholder engagement processes in alignment with the equity framework adopted.
    - Include in the toolkit a set of recommendations for how to embed a focus on equity through a continuous learning and improvement approach.
  - Identify key capabilities the state needs, and ways in which to build those capabilities, for CYBHI to most effectively utilize the CYBHI Equity Tool developed by the Equity Working Group.

**2. Support the use of data to advance equity.**

- Advise and provide recommendations on data issues and considerations for advancing equity including use of data to identify, understand, track and set priorities for addressing inequities in children and youth behavioral health systems and outcomes.
- Provide feedback and recommendations on the development of 5-year CYBHI outcomes goals and metrics on how they can best advance equity, as well as workstream level equity goals and metrics as applicable.
- Inform the centering of equity in initiative-level evaluation planning.

**3. Serve as thought partner and go-to resource on advancing equity through the work of the CYBHI.**

- Provide expertise, advice and guidance on key issues, plans, strategies and recommendations at the initiative and workstream level, based on specific needs of the initiative and workstreams, to support their efforts in advancing equity in supports and services, access and outcomes. Help identify whether the

services/deliverables being developed by each workstream are accessible and inclusive for all intended users and participants.

- Provide thought partnership, expertise, advice, and guidance on systems level changes needed to disrupt current systems that result in and hold in place inequities and the development of specific strategies, including culturally grounded and relevant practices, at the workstream level for healing and for addressing the systemic barriers that disproportionately affect the behavioral health of some groups, including BIPOC children and youth, LGBTQ+ youth, and children, youth, and families from low-income and underserved communities.
- Looking at the efforts to advance equity across the overall initiative and specific workstream levels, identify gaps, opportunities, and systemic needs in the CYBHI equity approach and provide recommended approaches to strengthen the CYBHI approach to equity.

The Working Group acts as a thought partner and advisor to CalHHS and its Departments and does not have direct decision-making authority.

**Membership:**

- Members of the CYBHI Equity Working Group are appointed by CalHHS.
- Members are selected to serve a one-year term for the inaugural period of the Working Group. Future terms may be two-years.
- The Working Group will be comprised of no more than 25 members. Membership will reflect a broad array of Californians with interest and expertise in advancing equity in the systems and sectors addressing children and youth behavioral health.
- Membership may include representatives from state government, local government, people with lived experience, behavioral health providers, health plans, education (early education, K-12, and higher education), community-based organizations, people with expertise in developing and implementing systems and policy changes to advance equity, academic researchers, and organized labor.
- Membership will reflect the diversity of California’s children, youth and families across multiple dimensions.
- The Working Group is facilitated by CalHHS and led by its members. The Working Group will have co-chairs and establish working committees to accomplish the charter. Members of the Working Group will be expected to participate on at least one committee.
- Some Working Group members may be tasked with presenting certain topics as subject matter experts.

## **Operations:**

- The Equity Working Group will form as a time-limited, one-year advisory committee to advance the early work of the CYBHI. There will be a reflection and evaluation process after one year to determine if the Working Group should continue in the original form or evolve based on the evolving work needs of CYBHI.
- The Working Group plans to convene three times between July-December 2022 and at least two times January-June 2023. Meetings are anticipated to be virtual in 2022.
- All meetings of the Working Group shall be open to the public.
- Meeting agendas will be prepared and posted online in advance of a meeting. Working Group members are encouraged to suggest agenda items.
- Meeting recordings, presentations, and other materials will be posted within 3 business days following the meeting.
- Meetings will be accessible for virtual and/or in person participation (when meetings have an in-person component).
- Meetings will aim to adhere to principles of inclusion, collaboration, and effectiveness, including:
  - Meetings seek to provide a collegial environment to allow for the expression of diverse and innovative points-of-view from all members.
  - Meetings aim to support open communication and active collaboration between Equity Working Group members and CalHHS.
  - Members' consistent attendance at the meetings and active participation before, during, and after meetings is encouraged.
  - A person-centered, data-driven, and equity-lens approach is encouraged as reflected in CalHHS's Guiding Principles.
  - People participating on the Equity Working Group based on their lived experience and not in a professional capacity will be compensated \$100/meeting.

## **Application and Selection Process**

State Participation: State leaders and staff will be appointed to the Equity Working Group based on expertise and CYBHI needs.

Stakeholder Participation: Stakeholders and the public may apply to serve on the CYBHI Equity Working Group during an open application period.

## **Selection Criteria**

- Demonstrates knowledge and experience of working with groups that face disproportionate and systemic barriers to behavioral health and wellness, including

BIPOC children and youth, LGBTQ+ youth, and children, youth, and families from low-income and underserved communities, as well as understanding and experience of children and youth social and emotional wellbeing and behavioral health.

- Has expertise and experience in advancing health equity through systems level approaches.
- Has connections to underserved communities and advocacy networks (formal or informal) that inform their perspective and can expand and deepen the diversity of experiences and engagement included in the work of the CYBHI.
- Has experience representing or working with children, youth, parents and/or families as a consumer, caregiver, provider, education professional, or advocate