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SANTA CRUZ COUNTY RECEIVES FUDING FOR THRIVING YOUTH & COMMUNITY PROGRAM

SANTA CRUZ COUNTY, CA— The County of Santa Cruz is pleased to announce that the Behavioral Health Division’s, Substance Use Disorder Services (SUDS) Prevention Unit has received a million dollars, over three years, from a Prop 64 Board of State and Community Corrections Grant to decrease cannabis use among youth.

SUDS Prevention has begun utilizing this funding to partner with Pajaro Valley Prevention and Student Assistance Inc. (PVPSA), Santa Cruz City Schools, California Institute for Invincible Youth (IY), and Friday Night Live (FNL) to launch the Thriving Youth & Community (TYC) program. TYC provides Santa Cruz City Schools with an avenue to support youth’s academic, social, and emotional wellbeing, connect to school and community, and to reduce disciplinary incidents through a trauma-informed culturally and developmentally responsive model.

Cannabis promotion, availability, and access has a local impact on youth. Access has increased with ease of access being a key factor to youth substance use. In 2019, 65% of Santa Cruz City School 9th graders reported “fairly easy” to “very easy” access to Cannabis (Santa Cruz County CHKS Data, 2019). This has resulted in a decrease in perception of harm and increase use of Cannabis vaping and vaping related disciplinary incidents in school and referrals to juvenile probation.

The TYC program provides youth with services needed at all three levels of care including prevention, intervention, and cessation. All pathway levels integrate positive youth development programming with IY with additional skill building and youth leadership opportunities with FNL.

“By participating in TYC, youth will have increased knowledge of the harmful impacts of recreational Cannabis use and well as increased refusal skills and decreased vaping use. Youth will also experience an increase in peer, adult, school, and community connectedness,” said Erik Riera, Behavioral Health Director.

As front-line school staff, peers, and parents engaging with youth daily, you can support students to reach their full potential. **Click here to make a referral:** <https://www.pvpsa.org/tyc-referral> or contact PVPSA at 831-728-6445 or email adriana.mata@pvpsa.org. **Student Self-referrals Encouraged!**

For more information about the TYC Program visit our website at:

[http://www.santacruzhealth.org/HSAHome/HSADivisions/BehavioralHealth/SubstanceUseDisordersServices/ThrivingYouthCommunitiesProgram\(TYC\).aspx](http://www.santacruzhealth.org/HSAHome/HSADivisions/BehavioralHealth/SubstanceUseDisordersServices/ThrivingYouthCommunitiesProgram(TYC).aspx)

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