



DEPARTMENT OF  
**BEHAVIORAL  
WELLNESS**  
A SYSTEM OF CARE AND RECOVERY

**COUNTY EXECUTIVE OFFICE**  
105 E. Anapamu St., Fourth Floor, Santa Barbara CA 93101  
(805) 568-3400

**PRESS RELEASE**  
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**NEWS MEDIA CONTACT:**

Suzanne Grimesey, MFT, (805) 886-5403, [suzkirk@sbcbswell.org](mailto:suzkirk@sbcbswell.org)

**COUNTY OF SANTA BARBARA SEEKS COMMUNITY INPUT ON MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT SERVICES NEEDS TO ADDRESS IMPACTS OF COVID-19 PANDEMIC**

**(SANTA BARBARA, Calif.)** – Globally and nationally, the COVID-19 pandemic has negatively affected many people’s mental health and created new challenges for people already suffering from mental illness and substance use disorders. In order to ascertain and respond to needs locally, the County of Santa Barbara, in partnership with community mental health and wellness partners and stakeholders, is seeking input to help determine mental health and substance use disorder services to meet the needs of our community.

The whole community is invited to respond to a short 10- to 15-minute survey during September. Data gathered through the survey will be used to identify and tailor services to meet the needs of community members. The survey is available electronically in [English](#) and [Spanish](#), and on the County’s website at [recovery.sbc.org/covidrecovery/](https://recovery.sbc.org/covidrecovery/). The survey will also be conducted in the field by service providers for populations less likely to have access to an electronic survey.

In June, the County Board of Supervisors authorized the use of federal ARPA funding (American Rescue Plan Act) to expedite an assessment of mental health needs resulting from COVID 19, and to develop a plan to initiate identified priority services in conjunction with partners to promote recovery and resiliency in individuals and our overall community.

“Isolation, quarantine, remote learning, business impacts and physical distancing has impacted everyone; some more than others,” said Suzanne Grimesey, MFT, PIO/Chief Quality Care and Strategy Officer for the County of Santa Barbara Department of Behavioral Wellness. “It is critical that necessary supports to address the unique impacts of COVID-19 are in place in a timely manner to help our community through recovery. We could not be more appreciative of the County Board of Supervisors for recognizing a need to address whole-community mental health and supporting this collaborative effort.”

The process is being led by the County [Department of Behavioral Wellness](#) and the [Community Wellness Team](#), along with a broad stakeholder group that provided input on the assessment processes including key populations and targeted outreach strategies. The survey was developed with assistance from mental health experts from UCSB to assure efficacy. The survey includes questions from the 2019 Cottage Health Population Health Survey, and from previous children’s mental health surveys.

**-MORE-**

**COUNTY SURVEY ON MENTAL HEALTH IMPACTS OF THE PANDEMIC  
ADD 1-1-1**

Data from this survey will be reviewed and compared against previous surveys. A separate survey designed to assess the impact of the pandemic on children ages 0-5 is under development, and will be sent out at a later date. Collaborative community partners include those listed below in alphabetical order.

For more information about the process and recovery plan, the public may contact Suzanne Grimmesey at [suzkirk@sbcbswell.org](mailto:suzkirk@sbcbswell.org).

**Community Wellness Team Members:**

American Red Cross  
County of Santa Barbara Department of Behavioral Wellness  
County of Santa Barbara Sheriff's Department Behavioral Sciences Unit  
Cottage Health  
Hospice of Santa Barbara  
Institute for Collective Trauma and Growth  
Jewish Foundation of Santa Barbara  
Mental Wellness Center  
Santa Barbara County Psychological Association  
Santa Barbara Foundation  
Santa Barbara Response Network  
Santa Barbara Unified School District

**Countywide Mental Health and Alcohol and Drug Advocates and Providers**

Bowers Foundation	Health Linkages/Santa Barbara County
CALM	Promotores Network
Casa De La Raza	Lompoc Valley Community Healthcare
Casa Pacifica	Organization - Healthy Lompoc Coalition
CenCal Health	Planned Parenthood California Central Coast
Community Health Centers of the Central Coast	Romo and Associates
Council on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse (CADA)	Santa Barbara Cottage Hospital
County of Santa Barbara Department of Social Services	Santa Barbara County Education Office
Dignity Health CA Central Coast	Santa Barbara Neighborhood Clinics
Family Service Agency	Santa Barbara Unified School District
	Transitions Mental Health Association
	UC, Santa Barbara