

# Ensure Healthy Development for Youth

*A Grand Challenge for Social Work*



The Grand Challenge to **Ensure Healthy Development for Youth** responds to the observation that behavioral health problems in childhood and adolescence often have lifelong repercussions on physical, emotional, and financial well-being. Led by the [Coalition for the Promotion of Behavioral Health](#) (CPBH), this interdisciplinary group includes more than 150 researchers, educators, and practitioners.

Since 2015, the group has advanced Seven Action Steps articulated in [Unleashing the Power of Prevention](#), a report published by the National Academy of Medicine. It has published, presented, and advocated both within the field of social work, where it has developed new educational resources, and outside, working with local, state, and federal policymakers.

## THE PATH TO PROGRESS

*The Steering Committee of the Coalition for the Promotion of Behavioral Health completed a strategic planning process to help guide the coalition in reaching its goals.*



## Network Leadership

### NETWORK CO-LEADS

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### STEERING COMMITTEE

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**Valerie Shapiro, PhD**  
University of California, Berkeley

## LOOKING BACK

The CPBH has concentrated its efforts in three main areas:

- **Increasing** community and state infrastructure for delivering preventive interventions for behavioral health problems in children and youth
- **Scaling-up** tested and effective family-focused interventions in pediatric and health care settings
- **Preparing** the social work workforce to deliver tested and effective preventive interventions for behavioral problems in children and youth

Over the past five years, the coalition has made considerable progress in each of these areas by:

- **Convening** statewide meetings of practitioners, policymakers, and researchers, as well as providing expert testimony to state legislators
- **Participating** in [The Collaborative on Healthy Parenting in Primary Care](#), an initiative of the Forum on Promoting Children's Cognitive, Affective, and Behavioral Health at the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine
- **Contributing** to prevention programs in Colorado (Communities That Care) and Utah (Life Skills Utah)
- **Coordinating** with accreditation bodies, standardizing learning objectives, identifying existing programs in allied disciplines, and creating a repository of relevant course syllabi, among other actions

## LOOKING AHEAD

Members of the Grand Challenge to **Ensure Healthy Development for Youth** look forward to engaging more people and organizations in this work and to continuing the important work underway, particularly:

- **Increasing** the interdisciplinary reach of its work
- **Advancing** the 7 Action Steps of [Unleashing the Power of Prevention](#) in additional states, communities, and educational settings
- **Finding** resources to more effectively support the infrastructure of the CPBH and **Ensure Healthy Development for Youth** networks
- **Disseminating** the training modules more widely, including via a January 2021 webinar
- **Prioritizing** reduction of racial and socioeconomic disparities in behavioral health problems

- **Contributing** to a [special issue](#) of the *Journal of the Society for Social Work and Research* describing progress relative to the goals and seven action steps of this Grand Challenge

In the past year alone, members of the CPBH have:

- **Helped** develop the [Colorado Statewide Strategic Plan for Primary Prevention](#)
- **Promoted** the infrastructure necessary to increase the use of tested and effective preventive interventions in Colorado, Utah, Massachusetts, and Delaware
- **Authored and disseminated** four [prevention training modules](#) for social work students
- **Delivered** ~25 keynotes and other conference [presentations](#)
- **Published** ~20 empirical and opinion [articles](#) promoting prevention
- **Commented** in the media on COVID-19 related [childhood hunger](#), calling for a national task force and plan to address this urgent issue
- **Briefed** federal legislators on "[The Decarceration of Transition Age Youth with Intellectual/Developmental Disabilities and Mental Disorders](#)," as well as "[The Impact of Weapons and Violence on Schools and Surrounding Communities](#)"
- **Developed** a robust [Strategic Plan](#) for implementing the activities of the Grand Challenge



- 🏠 [coalitionforbehavioralhealth.org](http://coalitionforbehavioralhealth.org)
- 🏠 [grandchallengesforsocialwork.org](http://grandchallengesforsocialwork.org)
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## Join Us

The Coalition for the Promotion of Behavioral Health — interdisciplinary at its core — will accomplish this work through the efforts of many. **If your organization is engaged in prevention science around youth behavioral health, please join us!**

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