



CASSY

# IMPACT REPORT

YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH & COVID-19

July 2021



## FROM THE DIRECTORS

At long last, we are about to say **“We did it”!** When we left our school campuses in March 2020, we could not have imagined that we would be unable to return until a year later. In the intervening months, we have seen heroic efforts from our therapists, teachers and school staff to provide the best possible support for our students in a remote learning environment.

CASSY is focused on creating a stronger community through the trials we’ve surpassed together. During remote learning, CASSY’s highest priority was to provide support and engage with our students through our telehealth program. As students returned to campus, CASSY once again adapted our practice to provide a hybrid model of telehealth and in-person services that enabled us to meet students at their comfort level. We are committed to doing whatever it takes to provide the necessary support students need during the school year.

Throughout the pandemic, CASSY listened to the needs of our community, and we heard loud and clear that parents and caregivers needed critical support and resources. We focused our presentations on parenting during a pandemic, and are proud to have done so in both English and Spanish. We also created community presentations that expanded our support beyond our CASSY districts to reach students and families around the world. This is an area of growth for CASSY, and we’re excited to provide our community with additional presentations during the upcoming school year.

Our commitment to the children and their families we serve remains steadfast. CASSY will always be here to support and stand by our community, and we’re looking forward to a post-pandemic year as we continue our work building a strong community strengthening youth mental health.

Thank you for standing with us.

**Marico Sayoc**  
Executive Director

**Ana Homayoun**  
Board Chair

# OUR DREAM

We **envision** a world where all students receive the continuity of support they need, from the first day of kindergarten until they graduate from high school, to be successful in school and life.

Our **mission** is to de-stigmatize mental health services and make supporting students' social and emotional well-being the norm in our local schools.



## Our Commitment to **MAKING A DIFFERENCE**

- We hire, train and mentor professional therapists who love working with youth.
- We partner with schools that value mental health in the educational process.
- We tailor our programs to meet the unique needs of the population we serve.
- We make ourselves available to all students, regardless of their ability to pay.

# COVID-19 IMPACT

## on Youth Mental Health

- As early as May 2020, nearly 3 in 10 parents (29%) reported that their child was "experiencing harm" to their emotional or mental health because of social distancing and school closures. (Gallup Poll)
- More than 25% of high school students reported worsening emotional and cognitive health, and over 20% of parents with children ages 5-12 reported similar worsening conditions for their children. (KFF)
- More than 1 in 4 young people reported an increase in losing sleep because of worry, feeling unhappy or depressed, feeling constantly under strain, or experiencing a loss of confidence in themselves. (America's Promise Alliance)
- Mental health-related visits to the emergency department increased 24% for children aged 5-11 and 31% for youth aged 12-17 years. (CDC)
- Around half of parents (46%) say they have noticed a new or worsening mental health condition for their teen since the start of the pandemic. (Mott Children's Hospital Nat'l Poll on Children's Health – Univ. of Michigan)
- 56% of students report that their stress about school has increased. (Challenge Success – Stanford Graduate School of Education)
- 64% of high school respondents reported their mental health has worsened since the beginning of the pandemic. (Active Minds)
- 76% of high school students report having experienced loneliness or isolation, and 80% report stress or anxiety as a result of COVID-19. (Active Minds)

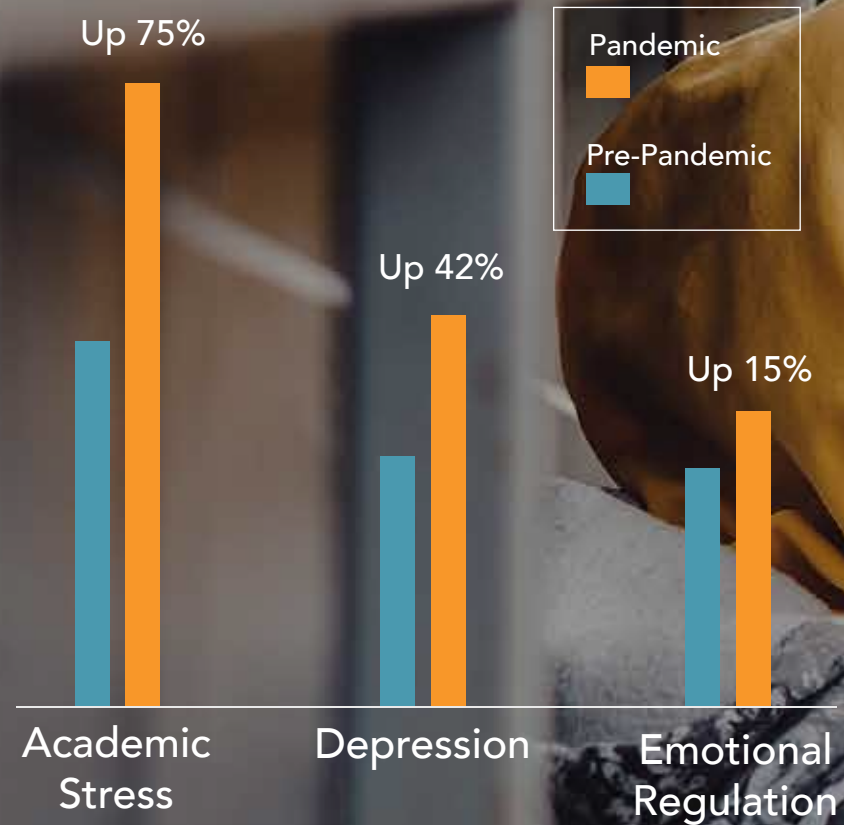
- Children are also experiencing consequences of the economic fallout of the pandemic, with at least 20 million children living in a household in which someone has lost a job. (Kaiser Family Foundation)
- Latino and Black households with children are experiencing multiple COVID-related hardships (contracting COVID, loss of jobs or income, housing insecurity, food insufficiency) at twice the rate of Asian-American and White child households. (Child Trends)



# COVID-19 IMPACT

## Statistics

During the pandemic, the following areas of treatment showed the most dramatic increase:



## FOCUS OF TREATMENT

While Some Areas Increased ↑ Others Decreased ↓

TREATMENT AREA	% SEEKING HELP	CHANGE
ACADEMIC STRESS	35.2%	75% ↑
DEPRESSION	22.2%	43% ↑
EMOTIONAL REGULATION	16.4%	15% ↑
ANXIETY	32.0%	7% ↓
SELF ESTEEM	11.3%	18% ↓
COMM WITH PARENTS	10.6%	16% ↓
PEER RELATIONSHIPS	6.6%	56% ↓
ANGER	6.5%	29% ↓
SOCIAL SKILLS	5.1%	49% ↓

STRESS  
DEPRESSION  
ANXIETY  
ISOLATION  
FEAR  
GRIEF  
Loss of Activities  
Loneliness  
Social Distance  
Job Loss  
Financial Stress  
Housing Instability  
Food Insecurity  
Disconnection  
Uncertainty  
Loss of Sleep  
Illness

# STUDENTS

## THE PANDEMIC EFFECT

In addition to the perennial struggles of adolescence, during the pandemic students experienced new sources of anxiety, depression, loss, and stress.

**9918**  
students  
helped by  
CASSY  
in 20/21

- Social distancing
- No meaningful activities & teams
- Isolation/loneliness
- Anxiety with online school
- Family stress
- Anxiety with illness & grief

# STUDENTS

## CASSY'S RESPONSE

CASSY offered comprehensive mental health services to existing students, expanded outreach to new students, and created innovative new programs.

- Seamlessly offered online telehealth service
- Presented mental health education webinars
- Provided virtual stress reduction workshops
- When campuses re-opened, offered Walk & Talk sessions with students

**99%**  
of students  
said CASSY met  
their needs

# FAMILIES

## THE PANDEMIC EFFECT

Families experienced new sources of stress due to COVID-19—job & income loss, financial instability, housing instability, food insecurity, and illness/death.

**50%**  
of parents  
struggled  
with mental  
health

Half of adults with children under 18 reported negative impacts to their mental health due to stress from the pandemic. Finding mental health support for your child in an uncertain year felt overwhelming for many.

# FAMILIES

## CASSY'S RESPONSE

CASSY ensured services remained accessible and free of charge to students and their caregivers. Cost should never be a barrier to receiving mental health care.

- Provided free parent consultations
- Created family CASSY Care Kits
- Expanded online family resources through the CASSY website

**100%**  
of parents would  
recommend  
CASSY

# SCHOOLS

## THE PANDEMIC EFFECT

Schools had to grapple with new ways of delivering instruction, while responding to ever-changing public health conditions and guidance.

• Student support systems had to be re-envisioned.

• The workload of administrators and teachers increased dramatically.

• Students' educational and mental health needs rose rapidly at a time when teachers and administrators were stretched very thin.

**100%** of students who were treated by a CASSY therapist in 2020/2021 made progress on their treatment goals.

# SCHOOLS

## CASSY'S RESPONSE

CASSY continued to reach students right where they are – whether at school or at home. We pivoted to support schools during online schooling.

• Trained staff on mental health issues

• Increased flexibility of therapy options for schools' shifting needs

• Partnered with schools to develop an online referral process for new students

• Consulted with school staff on disconcerting issues they encountered in their classrooms



# COMMUNITY

## THE PANDEMIC EFFECT

2020 was a uniquely challenging year. The COVID-19 pandemic was a once-in-a-lifetime event, affecting public health, society, and the economy.

Not only did the coronavirus upend our lives, work, and school communities, but critical issues around justice, race, equity, and inclusion burst to the forefront of the news. The collective toll on mental health was immense.

# COMMUNITY

## CASSY'S RESPONSE

CASSY provided parent education & community outreach opportunities through webinars – offered live & made available for replay after the event.

- Gave presentations on emotional health in a difficult year
- Topics included staying organized & motivated in online school, applying to college amidst the pandemic, ways to parent and support youth in a stressful year
- Offered seminars in Spanish – our proven Latino outreach program addresses the specific cultural needs of the Latino community

RESPECT  
&  
UNITY



# SPOTLIGHT

## Student Voices

When Sarah went to high school, making friends was a struggle.

**She had only one friend.** Her name was Alice.

Knowing Alice was waiting for her at school was the reason Sarah made it out of bed each morning. Feeling misunderstood both at home and at school was a heavy burden to carry. But Alice never judged, never criticized. Sarah always felt safe and supported.



Alice was the CASSY therapist at Sarah's high school.

"I wouldn't have made it through high school if it wasn't for Alice. She was my adult friend who would always be there when I wasn't feeling well. There were weeks when I would go to her office every single day on my lunch break. Alice would always welcome me into her office, offer me a glass of water, and we would talk for some time. **Knowing she was always there for me changed my life and helped me through some challenging high school years.** "

Today, Sarah speaks with a stronger voice. "I want to tell all students who go through a difficult time in high school to please remember this: High school is just right now. It is not forever. I felt like there was no life after high school. But I just graduated from college, and my life is so different now. I know I would not be who I am today without Alice."

*"I wouldn't have made it through high school if it wasn't for my high school CASSY counselor."*

# SPOTLIGHT

## District Partners

Linda Lyon is the Executive Director of Palo Alto Partners in Education (PiE). Her organization expands the services Palo Alto Unified offers through community donations.



A major priority for Linda's organization is funding student mental health services. PiE provides the funding for many of CASSY's counselors, enabling a vital service to students in PAUSD schools. The opportunity for healing and wellness for these students would not otherwise be possible in a school setting.

In a recent interview with CASSY, Linda pointed to the need for mental health services in PAUSD schools being more pronounced than ever, from K-12.

"There is a lot of hidden need. People often don't want others to know they are struggling whether it's for physical, financial or psychological reasons. **By providing services that are available to all at the school site, those who need it are more willing to seek care.**"

Easily accessible, on-campus services are key. Lyon explains, "Teachers have a relationship with the clinician on site and can quickly make referrals. In many cases, time is of the essence and by having established relationships and lines of communication, help can be given as fast as possible."

Due to the funding structure of California schools, there are not enough resources to give the best mental health care to all students.

*"Services like CASSY's are essential to the public school model."*

# SERVING THE BAY AREA SINCE 2009

Belle Haven School  
Ravenswood MS  
Costano Elementary  
Los Robles Elementary

- PALO ALTO UNIFIED**
- Addison Elementary
  - Barron Park Elementary
  - Juana Briones Elementary
  - Duveneck Elementary
  - El Carmelo Elementary
  - Escondido Elementary
  - Fairmeadow Elementary
  - Ellen Fletcher MS
  - Grendell Preschool
  - Green MS
  - Henry M Gunn HS
  - Hays Elementary
  - Herbert Hoover Elementary
  - JLS MS
  - Nixon Elementary
  - Ohlone Elementary
  - Palo Alto HS
  - Palo Verde Elementary

Aerial map of the San Francisco Bay Area with numerous orange location pins. Lines connect some pins to labels for specific schools. The labels include: Anderson Elementary, Boynton HS, Milpitas HS, Calaveras Hills HS, Lynhaven Elementary, Rosemary Elementary, Monroe MS, Country Lane Elementary, Prospect HS, Del Mar HS, Argonaut Elementary, Baker Elementary, Payne Elementary, Castlemont Elementary, Blackford Elementary, Saratoga HS, Foothill Elementary, Westmont HS, CSI Elementary, Redwood MS, Latimer School, Rolling Hills MS, Capri Elementary, Village Elementary, Saratoga Elementary, and Branham HS. Other pins are present but not labeled.

- ## OUR SCHOOL DISTRICT PARTNERS
- |                                      |                                   |
|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Campbell Union School District       | Moreland School District          |
| Campbell Union HS District           | Palo Alto Unified School District |
| Los Gatos-Saratoga Union HS District | Ravenswood City School District   |
| Los Gatos Union School District      | Redwood City School District      |
| Milpitas Unified School District     | Saratoga Union School District    |

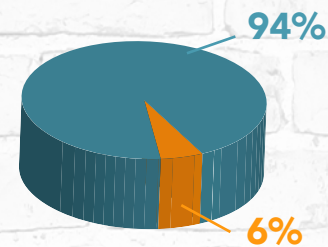
**NOW REACHING  
50,000+ STUDENTS  
IN THE BAY AREA**

# FINANCIALS

2020-2021 School Year

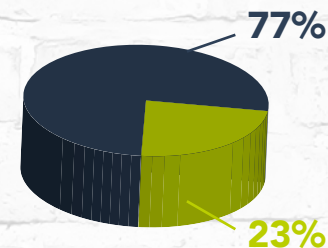
## OPERATIONAL EXPENSES

School Therapist Salaries	\$4,395,575	■
Operational Overhead	\$ 275,059	■
<b>Total Operating Expenses</b>	<b>\$4,670,634</b>	



## FUNDING SOURCES

School Contracts	\$3,603,341	■
Fundraising	\$1,067,293	■

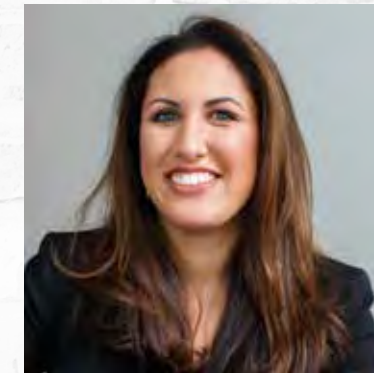


- CASSY operates with very little overhead. **94% of all school and donation funding goes directly to support school therapists on each campus.**
- CASSY relies on the **generous support of community donors and sponsors** for a significant percentage of its operating budget.

A heartfelt **thank you**  
to all our supporters!

[cassybayarea.org/give](https://cassybayarea.org/give)

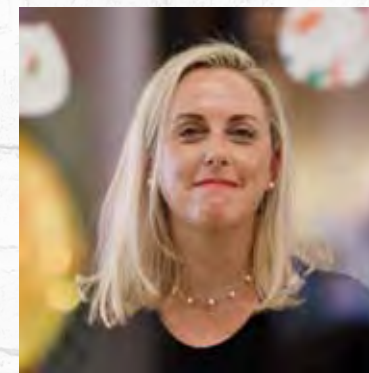
# BOARD OF DIRECTORS



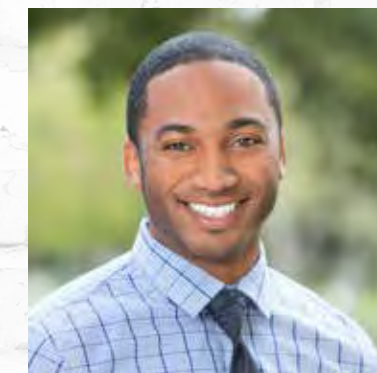
**ANA HOMAYOUN**  
Board Chair



**DWIGHT KODA**  
Treasurer



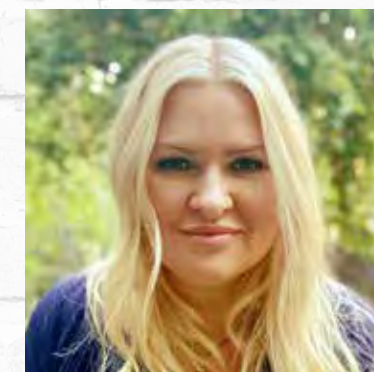
**SARAH CHAFFIN**  
Director



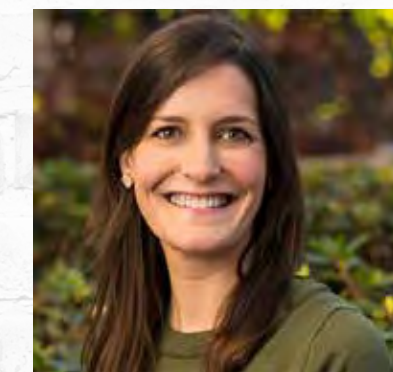
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**KIMBERLY PARK**  
Director



**LISA POTT**  
Director



**ELIZABETH REICHERT**  
Director



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