PROJECT SAFETY NET

STRATEGIC PLAN 2023–2025

THE PROJECT SAFETY NET STRATEGIC PLAN IS GROUNDED IN COLLECTIVE IMPACT AND IDEAL PRINCIPLES AND HAS BEEN CREATED BY ENGAGING THE COMMUNITY IN ITS FORMULATION.
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A Message From The Board Chair

On behalf of the Project Safety Net Board of Directors, I am pleased to present to you our Strategic Plan for 2023-2025.

Project Safety Net has become an important convenor and connector for youth, service providers, and community members focused on youth mental health and suicide prevention since we came together as a scrappy group of committed volunteers in 2009 in response to a suicide cluster in Palo Alto. Over time, we became a program funded by the City of Palo Alto with part-time and then full-time staff support. In 2020, we became an independent 501(c)3 non-profit, with a vision of expanding our role of convenor and collaborator to support youth well-being throughout northern Santa Clara and southern San Mateo counties. This new organizational structure gives us the opportunity to collaborate with new voices and partners in more diverse communities and advocate more fiercely for policies which will support improved mental health services for our youth, reduce the stigma of mental health struggles, and amplify the voices of youth advocates. We were deeply honored to be named a 2022 California Nonprofit of the Year by Senator Josh Becker.

We welcome your support for our work. Your time, your talents, and your financial contributions all help us to continue and grow in our ability to support a robust collaborative voice for youth mental health.

Peace be with you,

The Rev. Dr. Eileen Altman, Board Chair
Associate Pastor, First Congregational Church of Palo Alto, UCC
MISSION

Project Safety Net mobilizes community support and resources for youth suicide prevention and mental wellness. We are a coalition working on community education, outreach, and training; access to quality youth mental health services; and policy advocacy.

VISION

Young people are empowered, in partnership with the whole community, to advocate for themselves and their peers. Youth suicide is ended. Stigma is non-existent, and high-quality mental health services are culturally relevant, accessible, and well-utilized. We envision a community where youth and young adults feel safe, supported, and accepted.

VALUES

Collaboration: We effect change through the connections, creativity and contributions from our entire community working together.

Hope: We are committed to preventing the most preventable form of death, suicide.

Courage: We face the challenge of mental health and suicide-related stigma with strength and perseverance.

Accountability: We act with integrity, honesty and sincerity.

Belonging: Anti-racism, inclusion, diversity, equity, access, and liberation guide our efforts.

Learning: Best practice and ongoing reflection advance our work.

Youth Voice: We invite, listen to, and amplify the voices of youth and young adults.
FRAMEWORKS

During the strategic planning process, CEN centered IDEAL and used the Collective Impact principles of practice.

IDEAL

**Inclusion:** Inclusion is a universal human right. It moves beyond diversity and toward creating an equitable environment, where the richness of ideas, backgrounds, and perspectives are harnessed. Inclusion is the act of creating space where each person is authentically valued, respected, and supported.

*Inclusion is Belonging, Agency, and Ownership.*

**Diversity:** Our different identities such as age, race, ethnicity, gender, nationality, socio-economic status, physical/mental ability, sexual orientation, immigration status, spiritual practice/beliefs, employment status, geographic location, or other characteristics.

*Diversity encompasses ALL the ways we identify.*

**Equity:** When a person or group receives the unique opportunities needed to reduce or eliminate barriers, equity is demonstrated. It is a process that begins by acknowledging an unequal starting place and works to correct and address imbalance. Equity ensure that people have the opportunity to grow, contribute, and develop, regardless of their identity.

*Equity is not equality; it is about people getting what they need.*

**Access:** Also referred to as accessibility, this refers to the equitable right, engagement, or entry for everyone, regardless of human ability and experience. For organizations, it refers to how they encompass and celebrate characteristics and talents that each individual brings. It is about representation for all.

*Access refers to engagement, information and decision-making.*

**Liberation:** The gaining of equal rights or full social or economic opportunities for a particular group, including the protection from abuse or exploitation. It is ultimately freedom from oppression, allowing one to be their whole self.

*Liberation is showing up as your whole self.*

**Collective Principles Impact**

1. Design and implement the initiative with a priority placed on equity
2. Include community members in the collaborative
3. Use data to continuously learn, adapt, and improve
4. Build a culture that fosters relationships, trust, and respect across participants
5. Customize engagement for local context
PROCESS OVERVIEW

Objectives

- Prioritize equity and elevate diverse community voices
- Define a blueprint that advances youth mental health, suicide prevention, and resiliency
- Serve Northern Santa Clara and Southern San Mateo counties

Three Phases

Organize: Prepare and listen
Imagine: Envision and describe
Launch: Execute and evaluate

Processes

Strategic plan committee, document review, IDEAL survey, listening sessions, SWOT analysis, board retreat, community conversations

Ensure Inclusion

- Community participants include self-identified LGBTQIA+ youth and allies
- At least 50% of community participants contributing to community assessment will racially self-identify as non-White
- At least 2/3 of key informant interviews will be with partners that serve communities beyond Palo Alto

During the process we were unable to meet the above objectives and have listed strategies to employ moving forward

A Few Key Findings

- PSN has a positive and long-standing reputation for those who know about the organization.
- The mission of the organization is clear, the “how” is not.
- Youth shared the desire to have more opportunities to enter spaces that normalize talking about youth mental health.
STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

Based on the information compiled, CEN has determined the following as Strategic Priorities for the PSN Strategic Plan 2023–2025

1. Define and establish the scope of Project Safety Net’s programs and services
2. Define and launch a public policy and advocacy program
3. Fortify Project Safety Net’s financial strength
4. Expand PSN programs and services into Southern San Mateo and Northern Santa Clara Counties
5. Strengthen community impact

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Redesign psnyouth.org
2. Assess and build a framework for the PSN network via IDEAL subcommittee
3. Include PSN staff in discussions and processes of the PSN board
4. Outreach to middle schools
5. Coordinate a regional effort to elevate youth mental health
6. Create spaces for youth to talk about mental health with parents and adults
7. Create education for parents about youth mental health and suicide prevention
8. Determine additional opportunities for collaboration with other entities and fill gaps in collective impact
9. Implement continuing education requirements as part of PSN board service
10. Build staff and board advocacy toolkits, resources, and skillsets
11. Define a board Give and Get policy
12. Strategize an all-encompassing fundraising plan
13. Provide opportunities for community members to actively contribute to PSN’s mission
14. Build strategic relationships with key people in the community at the ground level
15. Strategize a youth volunteer program which emphasizes leadership training, capacity building, and youth mental health advocacy
16. Re-imagine the way that you mobilize organizations to reach better outcomes
THANK YOU

Project Safety Net (PSN) thanks its coalition partners for their unwavering commitment to ensure communities are stronger so youth can thrive and live a life of mental wellbeing. PSN’s work is possible through the diversity and acceptance within our coalition that fosters collaboration, big ideas, fresh perspectives, and inclusive leadership. We are especially grateful to the young people for using their voices and passion for action to promote wellness, resilience, and transformative change.

Thank you to Center for Excellence in Nonprofits (CEN) for their assistance with PSN’s strategic plan development. During this process, CEN centered IDEAL and Collective Impact principles; therefore, centering the communities served. By centering the PSN community, CEN developed an understanding of the organization, the explicit needs, a map of resources, and a solidified direction for addressing the work.

Through the leadership of PSN’s inaugural Board of Directors and guidance of the Strategic Planning Steering Committee, this strategic planning process was made possible through funding from community donors, the City of Palo Alto, El Camino Healthcare District and Sand Hill Foundation.

LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The collective efforts of Project Safety Net occurs upon the aboriginal homeland of the Tamien Nation, Ramaytush, and Ohlone since time immemorial and recognizes the continued persistence and resilience of culture and community despite the adverse impacts of settler colonialism. The three nations continue to have a relationship with the land; one of deep respect, agreement and reciprocity collaborating to help maintain balance. Project Safety Net acknowledges and supports the Tamien Nation, Ramaytush, and Ohlone in solidarity and commitment to partnership advocating for a more equitable and inclusive future.

*To learn about the land you live on, go to https://native-land.ca/*
PSN thanks the following representatives for your guidance and participation during the 6-month planning process:

- 49ers Academy
- County of Santa Clara Behavioral Health – School Based Service, Mental Health Services Act
- County of San Mateo Behavioral Health – Suicide Prevention & Equity
- East Palo Alto & Palo Alto Family YMCA
- El Camino Health Care District – ASPIRE (After-School Program Interventions and Resiliency Education)
- Mountain View Los Altos High Union High School District
- Mountain View Youth – AAPI SV: Stop Asian Hate Student Group
- National Alliance on Mental Illness - Santa Clara County
- One EPA
- Palo Alto Unified School District
- Project Cornerstone
- South San Mateo County Behavioral Health
- Youth Advisory Group Youth Leaders
- Stanford Center for Youth Mental Health & Wellbeing
- University of Oregon
- Young People representing Mountain View, Palo Alto, and San Mateo County

Strategic Planning Co-Chairs:
- Pattie DeMellopine, PSN Board Director & Mary Gloner, PSN CEO

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- CITY OF MOUNTAIN VIEW YOUTH ADVISORY COMMITTEE
- CITY OF PALO ALTO TEEN LIBRARY
- EAST PALO ALTO YMCA
- YOUTH COMMUNITY SERVICE
- YOUTH UNITED FOR COMMUNITY ACTION

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“Our generation is more comfortable speaking openly about mental health.”
- Youth Listening Session Participant
YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH RESOURCES

SUPPORT FOR INDIVIDUALS WHO ARE SUICIDAL OR IN CRISIS AND THOSE AROUND THEM:

- National Crisis and Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 988
- California Youth Crisis Line: 1-800-843-5200
- Trevor Project Lifeline specializing in crisis help for LGBTQ Youth: 1-866-488-7386
- Uplift Family Services: 877-41-CRISIS (877-412-7474)
- Pacific Clinics Helpline: 877-722-2737
- Text "BAY" or "RENEW" to Crisis Text Line at 741741
- Emergencies: Call or Text 911 and ask for Crisis Intervention Trained (CIT) officer

- San Mateo County
  - 24/7 Crisis Line (run by StarVista): 650-579-0350
  - Youth Stabilization, Opportunity, and Support (S.O.S.) team: 650-579-0350
  - Teen Crisis Services: 650-747-6463

- Santa Clara County
  - Mental Health & Substance Use Services: 1-800-704-0900
  - 24/7 Crisis Line & Trusted Urgent Response Team (TRUST): 1-800-704-0900, Press 1

LOCAL GRIEF SUPPORT, COUNSELING, AND RESOURCES:

Kara: 650-321-5272
Lucile Packard Children’s Hospital Family Guidance & Bereavement Program: 650-497-8175; bereavement@stanfordchildrens.org

LOCAL CLINICS THAT WILL TRIAGE AND/OR SEE INDIVIDUALS AFFECTED BY A LOSS DUE TO SUICIDE:

- Sutter Health/Palo Alto Medical Foundation: 650-321-4121
- Lucile Packard Children’s Hospital & Clinics: 650-723-5111 (children/teens); 650-498-9111 (adults)
- El Camino Hospital ASPIRE Intensive Outpatient Programs: 650-940-7000 (Mountain View); 408-866-4021 (Los Gatos)
- Mills Peninsula Intensive Outpatient Programs: 650-696-4666

YOUTH WELLBEING AND MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES:

- Youth-led support groups, with faculty guidance, and on-site mental health services offered by local schools.
- allcove: Palo Alto - 650-798-6330; San Mateo - allcovesanmateo@peninsulacounties.org
- Children’s Health Council (CHC), 650-688-3625, www.chconline.org
- The Gronkowski Center, 650-961-9300, www.gronowskicenter.org
- HEARD Alliance, www.heardalliance.org

More resources available at PSN's website: www.psnyouth.org/resources/
Appendix A: Strength Weaknesses Opportunities and Threat (SWOT) Analysis

This analysis incorporates information received via the community engagement survey, listening sessions, and board retreat facilitation between July and November 2022. This SWOT analysis is a strategic planning tool that will help form the core of Project Safety Net’s (PSN’s) final strategic plan. Throughout this analysis, “stakeholders” are referred to as interested, invested, and impacted parties. Interested parties are those individuals or organizations with an interest in the work of PSN, this includes community members, former board members, and anyone who has indicated an interest in the work of PSN. Invested parties are those with some type of investment in the organization through volunteerism, donations, or collaboration. Impacted parties are those who are impacted by the mission of PSN and will typically include individuals who are beneficiaries of PSN’s services.