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California Awards \$8 Million to 12 Community-Based and Tribal Organizations for Youth Substance Use Prevention

Funds Support Youth Leadership and Family Engagement Partnerships Across the State

Sacramento, Calif. – Elevate Youth California, a project of The Center at Sierra Health Foundation under contract with the California Department of Health Care Services (DHCS), today announced grants totaling \$8.148 million awarded to 12 community-based and Tribal organizations throughout California for innovative youth-led social justice, peer support and mentoring activities.

Funded by revenue generated by Proposition 64, which legalized adult non-medical use of cannabis in California, the *Elevate Youth California: Youth Substance Use Disorder: Innovation Track* will prioritize programs in low-income communities of color, and Tribal and 2S/LGBTQ+ communities.

Partner organizations will work with youth ages 12 to 26 years in urban and rural areas of the state. Projects will focus on youth activism and family engagement, as well as changing social and community norms around substance use and preventing harms and risks associated with substance use. A full list of organizations that received awards is posted on the [Elevate Youth California website](#).

“This funding opportunity was inspired by the innovative spirit of California’s young leaders and community and Tribal organizations addressing inequities impacting youth in low-income communities and communities of color,” said Chet P. Hewitt, president and CEO of Sierra Health Foundation and The Center. “Our new partners will pioneer projects rooted in cultural understanding of the trauma caused by the War on Drugs and centered on healing and youth leadership.”

Multi-year grants of up to \$750,000 per project will support activities that build youth leadership and activism, provide culturally relevant services and promote policy, systems and environmental change. Funding will support efforts through November 2024.

“It is inspiring to see the continued commitment and innovative ideas of Elevate Youth California’s community partners. Preventing a substance use disorder in a young person will forever change the course of their life,” said Marlies Perez, chief of DHCS’ Community Services Division. “As the COVID-19 pandemic continues, and our young people re-engage in school and community, the third cohort of nonprofit community and Tribal partners have found innovative ways to meet the multiple complex needs of our young people.”

The [first Standard Track cohort of 26 community-based organizations](#) was awarded \$21.5 million in March 2020, when the program launched. In November 2020, \$29.7 million was granted to the [second cohort of 32 community-based organizations](#) to support racially and culturally responsive, trauma-informed, population-based and place-based approaches, particularly for California’s demographic communities disproportionately impacted by the War on Drugs. In August 2021, The Center awarded a new [cohort of 18 community-based organizations to build their capacity](#) and, in November 2021, a [third round of Standard Track grants was awarded to 61 organizations](#), totaling \$52.776 million. With this current round of funding, The Center has awarded a total of \$118.1 million to support the prevention of youth substance use.

Funding for the program comes through the DHCS Proposition 64 California Cannabis Tax Fund, Allocation 3, Youth Education Prevention Early Intervention and Treatment Account.

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About The Center at Sierra Health Foundation: *The Center works to promote health and racial equity in communities throughout California with local, state and national partners. Learn more at www.shfcenter.org.*

About Department of Health Care Services (DHCS): *DHCS provides nearly 14 million Californians – more than one-third of the state’s population – with access to affordable, integrated, high-quality health care, including medical, dental, mental health, substance use treatment services, and long-term care. DHCS’ vision is to preserve and improve the overall health and well-being of all Californians. Learn more at www.dhcs.ca.gov.*

About Proposition 64: *Proposition 64 funding prioritizes youth education, prevention, and early intervention, connecting youth and their families to programs that include wraparound care in communities disproportionately harmed by past and current drug policies and criminalized for substance use.*