CYBHI: FUNDING WHAT YOU ALREADY DO

A Message for School Counselors

Not New Work… New Funding for the Work You *Already* Do

Let's start by saying something you don't hear enough: **The work you do everyday matters.** Sitting with a student who's struggling before third period. Partnering with a worried caregiver. Helping a young person understand what is happening during a panic attack. This is the work you are already doing regularly and well. It doesn't need to be reinvented.

CYBHI isn't asking you to become someone different or add another counseling program. You already have the knowledge, skills, and relationships.

Instead, CYBHI gives districts and charter schools an opportunity to **receive reimbursement for many of the behavioral health services school counselors already provide.**

The Children and Youth Behavioral Health Initiative (CYBHI) Fee Schedule Program allows schools to get reimbursed for eligible services, including mental health services, counseling, screenings, psychoeducation, and care coordination you're providing right now. If a student is under 26 and has Medi-Cal, private insurance, or disability coverage, the support you provide can be reimbursed. Families pay nothing; no co-pay, no deductible, and there is no impact on their coverage.

We realize many of you have been through this before: a new program shows up and becomes another binder, another login, and another item on an already full caseload. **This is different.** CYBHI is designed to help sustain the services you're already providing, not replace them or change how you support students.

Your school district or charter school may need to update enrollment paperwork, collect insurance information, and consent forms to claim, and implement documentation processes so eligible services can be reimbursed.

Over time, reimbursement can help districts:

- Sustain existing counseling services
- Expand access to behavioral health supports
- Advocate for additional counseling positions
- Reduce pressure on general fund budgets

In other words, CYBHI helps transform essential school counseling services from a budget expense into a sustainable funding source.

THE BOTTOM LINE
CYBHI does not ask you to change how you counsel a student. It gives your district the opportunity to receive reimbursement for the counseling, screenings, psychoeducation, and care coordination you already provide at no cost to families, with no impact on their insurance.

Questions and Answers

Q: Will *this create more paperwork?*

A: Less than you'd think, and none of it touches how you work with a student. Documentation requirements vary by district and Electronic Health Record (EHR) system.

Q: *What if a student doesn't have Medi-Cal or insurance?*

A: You still serve them; nothing changes for that student. CYBHI doesn't restrict who you help; it just means meetings become reimbursable when a student has coverage.

Q: *Will this open us up to audits or scrutiny of my case notes?*

A: The documentation standard is the clinical notes that school counselors already keep. This isn't new compliance aimed at your practice; it's aimed at your district drawing down funding it's already entitled to.

Q: *Will I have to submit insurance claims like a private therapist?*

A: No. Most billing occurs through your district's established processes and Electronic Health Record (EHR) system. Your role and level of involvement will vary depending on your district's workflow and EHR vendor.

Q: *I've seen programs come and go. Why is this different?*

A: Unlike a time-limited grant, CYBHI Fee Schedule reimbursement is based on ongoing reimbursement for eligible services, like how healthcare providers are reimbursed. The goal is to create a more sustainable funding source for school-based behavioral health services.

Q: *Won't this make my relationship with students feel transactional?*

A: No. Students and families never receive a bill, co-pay, or invoice. From their perspective, nothing changes; they continue receiving support from a trusted school counselor.

Q: *What's in it for me, the school counselor?*

A: When districts can demonstrate both the impact and reimbursement value of counseling services, they have stronger evidence to:

- Sustain counseling positions
- Advocate for additional staff
- Expand behavioral health services
- Reduce reliance on limited general funds

Ultimately, CYBHI helps strengthen the long-term sustainability of school counseling services.

Q: *Do I need new training or certification?*

A: No new certification is required for your existing scope of practice; however, training on the Electronic Health Record (EHR) system and local documentation process will likely be required and vary in scope depending on your district's or charter school's vendor.

For more information on CYBHI please go to the following page:

Children and Youth Behavioral Health Initiative (CYBHI) - San Diego County Office of Education

SDCOE Student Wellness and School Culture Department