



COMMUNITY SERVICES, HOUSING, AND COMMUNITY  
DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT  
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**SCRBH (ASO) Proposed Youth Pilot Project with  
Designated Marijuana Account (DMA) Funding**

**Goal:** Provide substance use engagement and peer support services for middle and high school age youth in a culturally responsive and youth driven approach to the six (6) county Spokane Regional Service Area (RSA) through a behavioral health teen call/text engagement service no later than the Summer of 2021. Through the project, the SCRBH (ASO) seeks to develop a pragmatic intervention, engagement, and referral model to address the needs of Spokane Regional Service Area (RSA) youth interested in behavioral health treatment. As there continues to be a dynamic shift in the culture and circumstances facing youth today, the engagement methodologies to reach them must also evolve to more accurately reflect the needs of youth and provide a clear linkage to existing behavioral health treatment services. This is even more apparent when looking at the unique challenges faced in the frontier rural counties (Adams, Ferry, Lincoln, Pend Oreille, and Stevens counties), where youth face significant challenges due to limited resource availability and barriers in access due to geographical and transportation limitations. Through this project, the SCRBH (ASO) seeks to provide another avenue to address the challenges in youth service access while working to enhance existing youth engagement and referral services.

**Background:** Substance use among teens is on the rise along with increasing emergency room visits. The heightened need for SUD outreach and engagement services for youth living at or below the two hundred twenty percent (220%) of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL) without Medicaid insurance coverage and youth who are seeking services independent of their parent/guardian was identified in 2020, in part due to impact of the Covid-19 pandemic. With an increase in need for behavioral health services due to the unique combination of complex factors stemming from the global pandemic, including loss of established coping mechanisms, lack of physical access to engagement/peer services, and change in youth engagement practices based on increasing dependence on technology for engagement and social interaction. The SCRBH (ASO) has identified the need for a new co-occurring engagement method to engage and interact with youth to meet them where they are at and in the forms of communication they utilize. This new engagement proposal would utilize a behavioral health call/text center services that are staffed full-time with a SUD intervention specialist and certified youth peers. They will provide engagement, outreach and brief intervention services, along with referrals to Spokane RSA SUD counseling providers following the Screening, Brief Intervention, and Referral to Treatment (SBIRT) model.

**Funding:** Currently, the SCRBH (ASO) receives Designated Marijuana Account (DMA) funds for Substance Abuse prevention and treatment services. In collaboration with the Health Care Authority of Washington, the SCRBH (ASO) intends to leverage the available DMA for the development, implementation, maintenance, and evaluation of programs that support intervention and treatment/recovery support services for middle-school and high-school aged students. In addition, the SCRBH (ASO) is evaluating any additional available funding to support this project, and potential broaden the scope to address suicide prevention and mental health support.

**Scope of Services:**

Scope of services would include SUD Teen Call/Text services provided by full-time SUD Intervention Specialists and Certified Youth Peers. These services would include outreach and engagement, counseling referrals to Spokane RSA SUD providers and brief SUD intervention and treatment. SAMSHA Tip 51 protocols would be followed and results would be objectively measured. The text-line number would be actively promoted on social media, websites and through local schools.

[www.spokanecounty.org/CSHCD](http://www.spokanecounty.org/CSHCD)

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