



Region 8 Behavioral Health Plan

PRESENTATION BY TAOS
COUNTY TO:

LEGISLATIVE HEALTH
AND HUMAN
SERVICES COMMITTEE

7-21-26

Region 8 Overview

- Region includes Taos, Colfax, and Union Counties
- Tribal partners: Taos Pueblo and Picuris Pueblo
- Taos County serves as Accountable Entity
- Goal: Build a coordinated behavioral health continuum across the region

Regional Behavioral Health Planning

Under BHRIA, each region was authorized to develop a **four-year Behavioral Health Regional Plan** that includes:

- Up to five regional behavioral health priorities
- Community-informed strategies and initiatives
- Funding requests tied to measurable outcomes
- A framework for evaluation, accountability, and continuous improvement





Region 8 Behavioral Health Plan

The Regional plan was developed to guide future investments and ensure funding is aligned with the priorities identified by communities, providers, Tribal partners, local governments, and people with lived experience.

Region 8's Plan represents the collective vision of Taos County, Colfax County, Union County, Taos Pueblo, Picuris Pueblo, providers, community organizations, and residents working together to strengthen behavioral health services across the region.

A planning committee comprised of representation from all of the above entities, and facilitated by Via Positiva, Behavioral Health Consulting, worked from October 2025 –June 2026 to develop Region 8's behavioral health plan

Region 8 Planning Process

The Region 8 Behavioral Health Plan was developed through a collaborative, community-driven process that included:

- **Monthly Regional Planning Committee meetings** involving counties, Tribal partners, providers, schools, healthcare systems, courts, community organizations, and individuals with lived experience.
- **Community Listening Sessions** conducted in Union County, Colfax County, and through a regional virtual forum to identify behavioral health strengths, gaps, and priorities.
- A **three-day Enhanced Sequential Intercept Mapping (ESIM) Workshop** involving approximately 75 stakeholders representing behavioral health, healthcare, education, law enforcement, courts, Tribal communities, local governments, and community partners.
- Review of community input, regional data, and system mapping findings to identify and prioritize behavioral health needs.
- **Outcome** - This process resulted in the identification of five regional priorities that form the foundation of the Region 8 Behavioral Health Plan and guide future behavioral health investments across Taos County, Colfax County, Union County, Taos Pueblo, and Picuris Pueblo.

Key Challenges Identified

- Workforce shortages and provider sustainability
- Transportation and housing barriers
- Fragmented systems and limited care coordination
- Youth behavioral health and prevention gaps
- Limited detoxification, crisis, and recovery services
- Needs exceed available BHRIA funding

A close-up photograph of a green, spiny cactus against a reddish-brown wall. The cactus has several flat, oval-shaped pads with numerous small, sharp spines. The wall is a textured, terracotta-colored surface.

Five Regional Priorities

1. Care Navigation & Coordination
2. Housing, Transportation & Community Infrastructure
3. Youth Programs, Prevention & School-Based Supports
4. Workforce & Provider Supports
5. SUD, Co-Occurring & Clinical Services

Priority 1 – Care Navigation & Coordination



Goal: Create a coordinated regional behavioral health system that helps individuals access services, navigate complex systems, and remain connected to care.

Key Strategies

- Develop a regional hub-and-spoke navigation model
- Expand behavioral health navigation and case management
- Integrate peer support services
- Improve referral coordination across healthcare, behavioral health, justice, education, housing, and Tribal systems
- Address transportation barriers and continuity of care

Expected Impact

- Improved access to services
- Reduced system fragmentation
- Increased treatment engagement
- Stronger regional coordination and long-term sustainability

Priority 2 – Housing, Transportation & Community Infrastructure

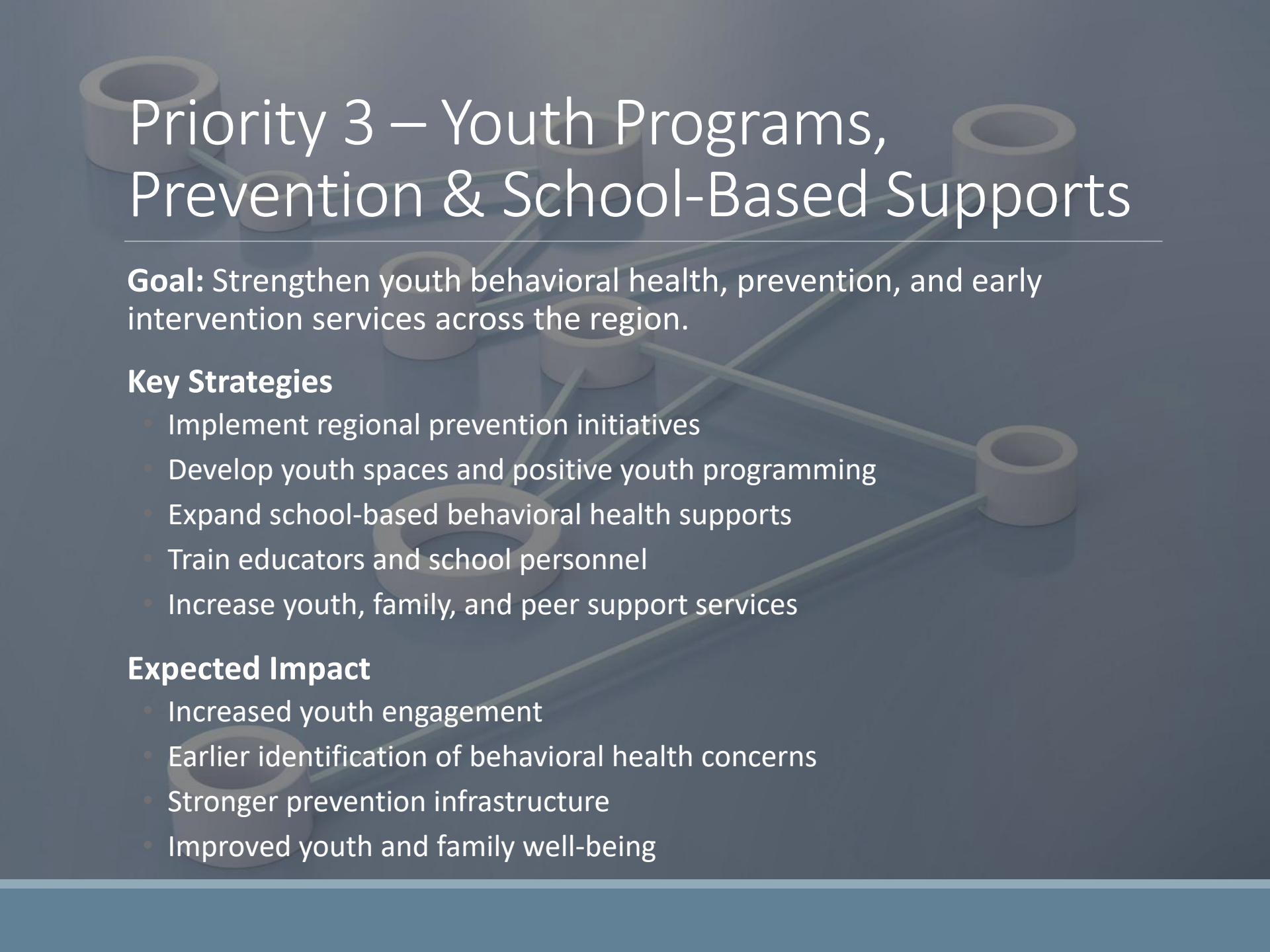
Goal: Reduce practical barriers that prevent individuals and families from accessing behavioral health services.

Key Strategies

- Expand transportation assistance and mobility supports
- Strengthen housing navigation and stabilization services
- Improve coordination with housing and transportation partners
- Explore Medicaid opportunities for counties and detention centers
- Integrate social supports through care coordination

Expected Impact

- Increased access to care
- Reduced transportation barriers
- Improved housing stability
- Better engagement in treatment and recovery

An abstract background graphic featuring a network of interconnected nodes and lines. The nodes are represented by 3D cylindrical shapes of varying sizes, some of which are highlighted with a lighter blue color. The lines are thin and grey, connecting the nodes in a complex, web-like pattern. The overall aesthetic is modern and technical, suggesting a network or system.

Priority 3 – Youth Programs, Prevention & School-Based Supports

Goal: Strengthen youth behavioral health, prevention, and early intervention services across the region.

Key Strategies

- Implement regional prevention initiatives
- Develop youth spaces and positive youth programming
- Expand school-based behavioral health supports
- Train educators and school personnel
- Increase youth, family, and peer support services

Expected Impact

- Increased youth engagement
- Earlier identification of behavioral health concerns
- Stronger prevention infrastructure
- Improved youth and family well-being

Priority 4 – Priority 4 – Workforce & Provider Supports

Goal: Strengthen the behavioral health workforce and improve provider sustainability throughout Region 8.

Key Strategies

- Expand workforce recruitment and retention efforts
Support paid internships and workforce pipelines
- Increase bilingual and culturally responsive workforce capacity
- Expand peer support workforce development
- Provide training, technical assistance, and sustainability support

Expected Impact

- Increased provider capacity
- Improved workforce retention
- Expanded access to culturally responsive services
- Greater long-term sustainability of the provider network



Priority 5 – SUD, Co-Occurring & Clinical Services

Goal: Expand access to substance use disorder treatment, recovery services, crisis response, and clinical care.

Key Strategies

- Support expansion of detoxification and recovery services
- Increase outpatient behavioral health treatment capacity
- Expand psychiatric and co-occurring treatment services
- Support mobile crisis development
- Build the foundation for a Regional CCBHC model

Expected Impact

- Increased treatment access
- Reduced wait times
- Expanded recovery supports
- Improved crisis response and continuity of care



Strategic Investments

- Regional hub-and-spoke navigation model
- Peer, youth peer, and family peer supports
- Transportation coordination and housing stabilization
- Workforce pipeline, internships, and bilingual workforce development
- Detox, recovery, mobile crisis, and CCBHC development
- Trauma-informed and culturally responsive services



Region 8 Early Access Award

In late 2025, **Taos County**, serving as the Region 8 Accountable Entity, successfully applied for Early Access funding through the Behavioral Health Reform and Investment Act (BHRIA).

- **Award Amount:** \$2,000,000
- **Funding Approved:** 2026
- **Grant and Services Agreement (GSA) Executed:** May 2026

The Early Access award provides Region 8 with the opportunity to begin implementation activities before Regional Plan funding becomes available. Funds will be used to:

- Lay the foundation for **Priority 1: Care Navigation & Coordination**
- Lay the foundation for **Priority 5: SUD, Co-Occurring & Clinical Services**
- Develop regional care coordination infrastructure and partnerships
- Advance planning and implementation activities for a Regional CCBHC model
- Complete the **Region 8 Detoxification Center Capital Project**, creating critical treatment and recovery infrastructure for the region

Funding Strategy (\$6.29M)

Based on Region 8's Plan -

Funding will be distributed annually
for three years from 2026-2029

- Care Navigation & Coordination: \$2.0M
- SUD, Co-Occurring & Clinical Services: \$2.0M
- Youth Prevention & School-Based Supports: \$775K
- Housing/Transportation: \$750K
- Workforce Supports: \$389K
- Administration/Evaluation/Data Infrastructure: \$377K



Tribal Set-Aside Funding

The Behavioral Health Reform and Investment Act (BHRIA) includes a separate Tribal funding set-aside that allows Tribes and Pueblos to identify their own priorities and funding requests.

Taos Pueblo and Picuris Pueblo are currently developing their Tribal priorities and funding proposals.

The Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) and Health Care Authority (HCA) have provided additional flexibility regarding Tribal planning timelines and are not requiring Tribal submissions on the same schedule as regional plans.

Tribal priorities will be submitted after June 30, 2026.

Regional Commitment

While the Tribal set-aside process moves forward independently, Taos County remains committed to ensuring that Taos Pueblo and Picuris Pueblo are fully included in regional planning, coordination, and implementation efforts.

Expected Outcomes of the Plan

- Increased access to behavioral health services

- Improved care coordination and continuity of care

- Expanded youth prevention programming

- Increased transportation and housing supports

- Stronger workforce and provider capacity

- Progress toward a Regional CCBHC model

Plan Submission and Next Steps

Region 8 Submitted its Behavioral Health Plan on June 30th, 2026

The Plan will be reviewed by the BHRIA Executive Committee in August or September.

Once approved, Region 8's Planning Committee comprised of representation across all three counties and two Pueblos will continue meeting monthly as implementation begins.

As Region 8 awaits plan review and approval, Early Access implementation is beginning.



Key Message for Legislators

The plan establishes foundational infrastructure for a regional behavioral health continuum. While the investment is significant, stakeholders agreed that available funding is insufficient to fully meet regional needs. Additional long-term state, federal, Medicaid, Tribal, and local investments will be required to achieve the region's vision.