

Project Healthy Minds



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Our Mission Statement

To improve the mental health of queer and trans youth in the Antelope Valley and San Fernando Valley by providing weekly mental health support groups lead by a team of qualified queer therapists.

As a team we value:

- Mutual Respect
- Anti-Criminalization of our community
- Accountability
- Leaving room for learning opportunities
- Critical Love (compassion, support, challenging)
- Intersectionality

Our User Group

- Serving Queer and Trans individuals struggling with Mental health
- Ages 18-24
- In the San Fernando Valley and Antelope Valley

Issues Queer and Trans Youth face:

- Higher rates of bullying
- Higher rates of attempted suicide
- Lack of access to inclusive and adequate counseling
- Substance abuse
- Ongoing mental illness
- Familial issues due to lack of acceptance

Proven benefits of support groups:

- Reduces isolation & loneliness and improves communication skills
- Increased healthy behaviors & improved illness adaptation
- Enhanced psychological wellbeing & reduces perceived stigma
- Greater self-acceptance & reductions in substance use
- Enhanced sense of control & reduced risk behaviors
- Enhanced coping skills & improved self-confidence

Our Strategy

- As a team we hope to achieve a safe space for queer youth between the ages of 18-24 in the Antelope Valley and San Fernando Valley to be able to come and access support in the form of group therapy run by queer therapists for queer youth.
- We are excited about this because as queer youth we don't have access to safe queer spaces that are run by queer adults that are professionally trained in mental health. Often as queer youth we join support groups that are either run by queer people without mental health training or therapy groups run by people who don't understand the queer experience.

This is our plan:

- Our plan is a weekly in-person and online hybrid program servicing queer youth by creating a space for cognitive behavioral therapy and social educational activities such as queer sex ed and monthly queer focused events.
- Organizations we would like to partner with:
 - [The Outreach Center](#) located in Lancaster
 - [The Penny Lane Center](#) located in Lancaster & Palmdale
 - [Camp Brave Trails](#) new mental health program currently online
 - [NAMI](#) located all over Los Angeles County
 - [National Queer & Trans Therapists of Color Network](#) located all over Los Angeles county
 - [Dignity San Fernando Valley](#)

Impact on User Group

With this group we will be combating issues of isolation and lack of community that many queer people face along with other mental illnesses that queer people are more susceptible to.

Queer Mental Health Statistics

- 48% of LGBTQ youths reported engaging in self-harm in the past 12 months, including over 60% of transgender and nonbinary youths.
- 68% of LGBTQ youths reported symptoms of generalized anxiety disorder in the past two weeks, including more than 3 in 4 transgender and nonbinary youths.
- 1 in 3 LGBTQ youths reported that they had been physically threatened or harmed in their lifetime because of their LGBTQ identity.

Effectiveness of support groups

- 85% felt an improved sense of personal value.
- 77% experienced an improved sense of belonging and connection with the community.
- 81% reported an improved network of friends and personal supports.

As incentives we would offer:

- Free food and drinks
- Free safe sex resources
- Free pride supplies (flags, bracelets, stickers, etc)

Our Prototype

As a group we presume:

- There will be available queer therapists in the area.
- Our user group will be available and interested in the support group.
- It will be affordable and sustainable.
- Word of mouth and social media outreach will get enough attendees.
- The group will be a safe space for all queer identities.

As a prototype we would organize a casual community event where prospective therapists and group members can come together and meet each other in a safe casual environment to feel out their interest in the group.

- We will meet at a local park or recreational center and come together to play games and eat food.
- We will conduct a Q&A for our prospective therapists and group members so they can learn more about the program and each other.

Our Budget

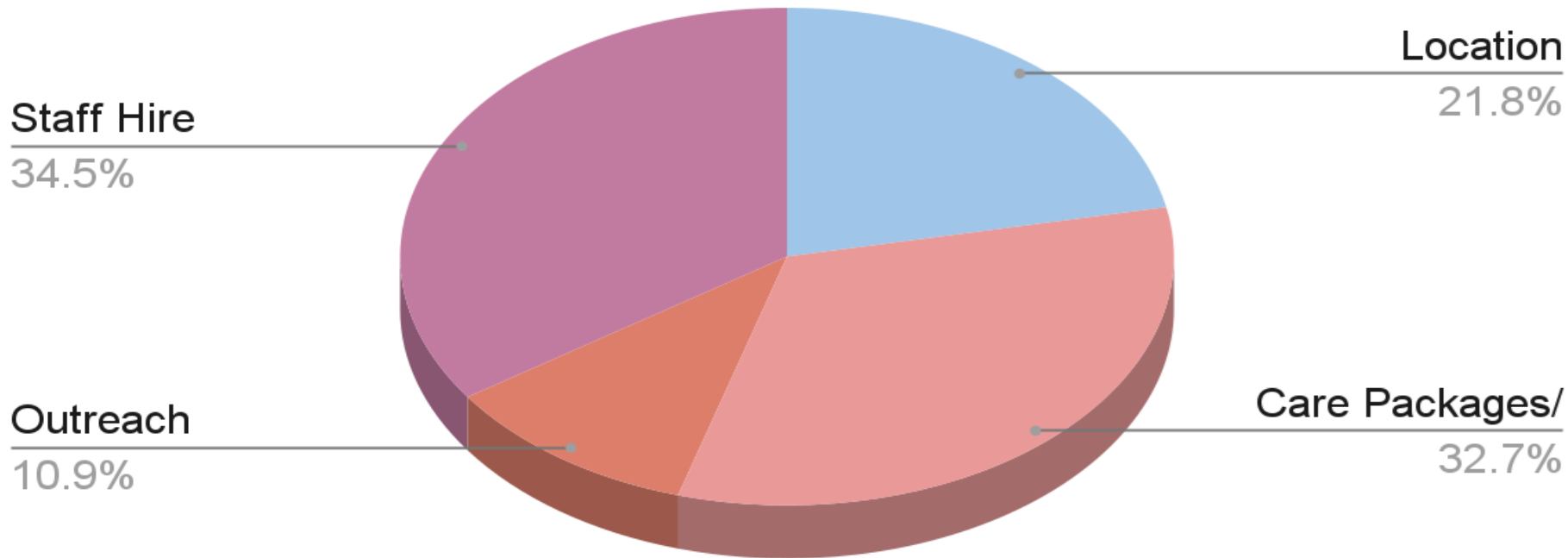
“If we were granted \$50,000 for 1 year, we would...”

- Funds towards:
 - **Hiring Staff:** - Queer Therapists, that will facilitate the support groups. - Program coordinator, to support therapist in crafting the rubric and budget
 - **Location:** Funds for physical location
 - **Outreach :** Media Funding
 - **Care packages :** Pride supplies, safe sex resources, and Meal stipends for youth
 - **Miscellaneous:** Puzzles, paint, and games for youth

Sustaining our strategy beyond 1 year

- **Grants:** Trans Lifeline, LA LGBT Center, Liberty Hill
- **Donations:** Organizing Community events such as Open Mics and Marathon fundraisers.

Budget:



Team Influential



Curly, Juan, Cassandra, Kian