



San Mateo Help@Hand

MHSA INN Final Report



RDA
CONSULTING



SAN MATEO COUNTY HEALTH
**BEHAVIORAL HEALTH
& RECOVERY SERVICES**

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This report was developed by Resource Development Associates under contract with San Mateo County Department of Behavioral Health and Recovery Services.

Resource Development Associates, 2022



SAN MATEO COUNTY HEALTH
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Introduction

Help@Hand is a statewide Mental Health Services Act (MHSA) Innovation (INN) project that aims to bring technology-based solutions to county and city behavioral health systems. The project is administered by the California Mental Health Services Authority (CalMHSA) and funded and directed by local jurisdictions. San Mateo County Behavioral Health and Recovery Services (BHRS) identified the need for technology-based behavioral health supports as part of the fiscal year (FY) 2017-20 MHSA Three-Year Plan. In April and May of 2018, San Mateo conducted a Community Program Planning (CPP) process aimed to (1) inform community members about the proposed MHSA INN plan and (2) seek input and feedback from stakeholders to incorporate into the final plan. Stakeholders received background information about MHSA INN to ensure their ability to meaningfully participate.

Project Goals

In San Mateo County, this INN project provided an opportunity for BHRS and its collaborative county partners to leverage technology, specifically behavioral health applications (apps), to reach and engage two priority populations, (1) transition age youth (TAY) and (2) older adults. Through the Help@Hand INN project, BHRS aims to:

Provide access and linkages to behavioral health services



Provide social connectivity through the use of virtual avatars and/or



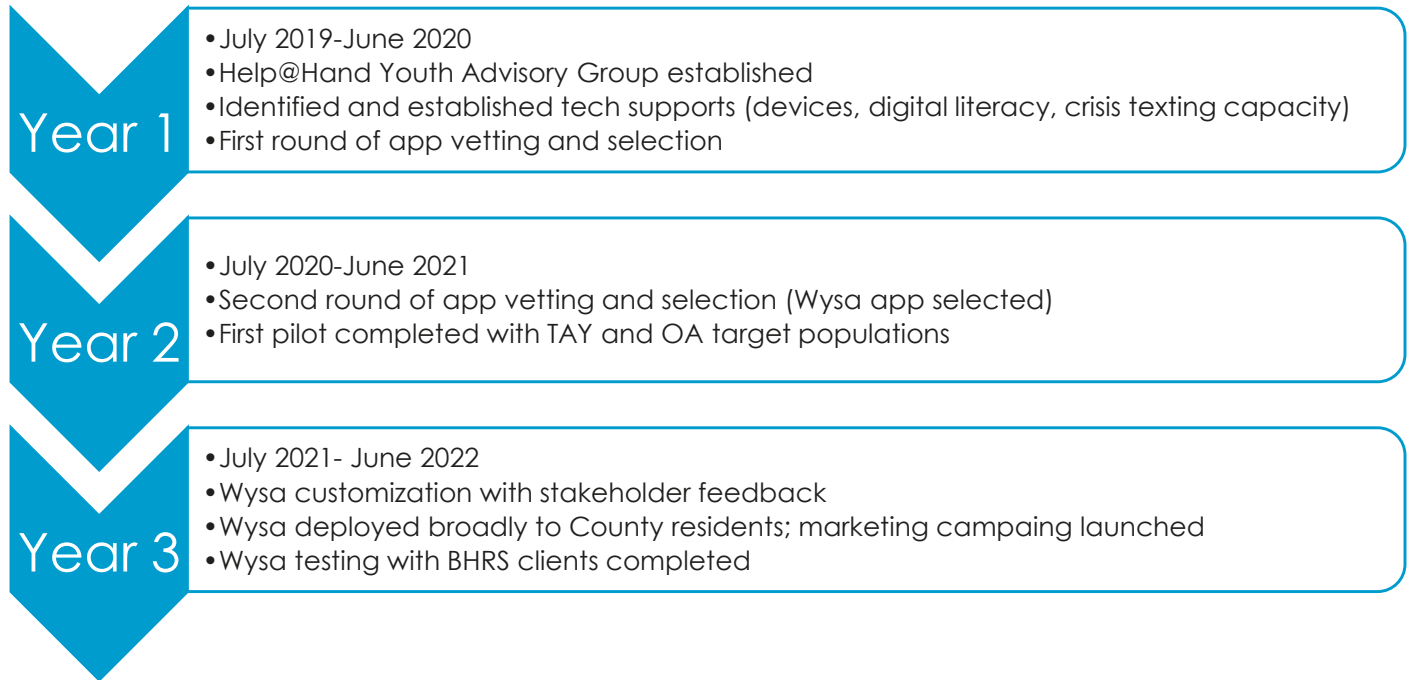
Support self-directed mental wellness and recovery goals



This project also serves to reduce the stigma associated with mental health treatment by using virtual engagement strategies and to provide alternative methods for engaging in behavioral health recovery and wellness activities.

Project Implementation

Figure 1. Summary Timeline of Tech-Based Solutions



The San Mateo Help@Hand project development was guided by a local Help@Hand Advisory Committee, which was established during the planning phase of the project and prior to the launch. The Help@Hand Advisory Committee was comprised of peers, family members of clients, and individuals from the older adult and TAY communities, BHRS staff, stakeholders from County departments (e.g., Information Technology, Aging and Adult Services), peer-based agencies California Clubhouse and Heart and Soul, and community-based agencies Peninsula Family Service and Youth Leadership Institute. Implementation highlights are summarized in the timeline above by year and further details are included as follows:

Year 1

The first part of year 1 included identifying needs to support the use of technology solutions in a behavioral health setting. The needs identified by the Help@Hand Advisory Committee resulted in establishing the following targeted supports:

- 1) Digital Mental Health Literacy (DMHL) train-the-trainer for Help@Hand peer staff that covered topics related to security and privacy measures and managing digital identity;
- 2) Get App-y Workshops for older adults to receive supports with basic 101 technology education and DMHL topics;
- 3) A Youth Advisory Group to guide priorities for Transition Age Youth; and

- 4) Expansion of the local crisis hotline to include text-based and social media supports in preparation for the app release.

While efforts to identify needs and establish supports began in year 1, this has been an ongoing and iterative process throughout the entire three-year timeline. The following additional tech supports were established in subsequent phases of the project to address emerging needs:

- 5) Technology device distribution, including data plans, for behavioral health clients and Help@Hand participants that do not have the resources to purchase technology;
- 6) Technology 101 trainings for BHRS peer staff that would be distributing devices; and
- 7) Tech Cafés or workshops for clients and the community at large to receive basic technology supports, DMHL education and advanced Zoom topics.

In the second half of year 1, Help@Hand stakeholders and contractors reviewed available technologies—which were approved through a Request for Statement of Qualifications (RFSQ) process led by CalMHSA—and participated in various app vetting, testing, and selection activities to identify the app they would like to pilot with the target populations. Through this first round, BHRS selected Happify as an app to move forward with older adult community piloting and Remente for TAY. At the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Happify vendor terminated their participation in Help@Hand and TAY stakeholders recognized that the needs of the TAY population had changed. Both groups returned to the app vetting, selection and exploration process in the beginning of Year 2.

Year 2

In Year 2, as an immediate response to the COVID-19 pandemic, San Mateo County began two key activities:

- 1) **Device Distribution:** Lack of access to devices most prominently affects low-income, rural, disabled, people of color, and our older adult community, leading to a digital inequity. BHRS provided technology supports (devices and data plans), for one year, for clients and family members of clients that would benefit from telehealth and/or other behavioral health services but do not have the resources to purchase the technology needed. BHRS leveraged CARES Act funding to distribute 290 tablets with a one-year data plan to 15 BHRS contracted community agencies. MHSA funding was also leveraged to award 13 CBO's funding to procure devices, data plans, and accessories (hotspots, headphones, screen protectors, styluses, etc.) that support clients' use of the technology for behavioral health supports. MHSA funding was also allocated to purchase up to 790 devices for BHRS clients, including 30 tablets for residential Board and Cares and regional clinics. Staff, agencies, clients, community and faith leaders provided feedback that in addition to the lack of access to technology, many residents lacked the knowledge to use technology. This knowledge gap contributed to the digital divide. In response to this feedback, BHRS launched additional digital literacy supports including Technology 101 trainings, Tech Cafés and workshops for clients and the community. Training topics included:
 - How to set-up a Gmail account
 - Email maintenance
 - Professional emailing
 - Tips on how to scan a QR Reader
 - How to Download an Application (App)
 - Tips on using your phone camera
 - Online safety & privacy
 - Tips on Privacy Settings (mobile phone & social media)
 - Telehealth and telehealth etiquette
 - Zoom teleconferencing basics

- 2) Headspace Launch – the wellness app Headspace was made available to residents across the county including a Spanish version for Spanish-speaking populations. 3,245 San Mateo County residents downloaded and used Headspace. San Mateo County participated in a University of California, Irvine (UCI)-led evaluation of Headspace. Surveys were emailed to San Mateo County's Headspace users between July and October 2021. Over 300 (n=352) users responded to the baseline survey and 121 completed the follow-up survey. Key findings include:
- Mental Health - 78% of respondents experienced mental health challenges. Current users scored higher on distress than abandoners.
 - Reasons for Not Using Headspace - Common reasons for abandoning Headspace were that people were using other strategies to support their mental health (32%) and/or they just wanted to try Headspace (31%).
 - Headspace Experience - Users had a positive experience with Headspace: 92% of Current users would recommend Headspace and 90% of Current users found Headspace easy to use. Among abandoners, 72% would recommend Headspace and 75% found it easy to use.
 - Mental Health Resources - Almost half of respondents had made use of resources other than Headspace, such as online tools and professional mental health resources, to support their mental health.

BHRS leveraged the launch of Headspace to conduct a second round of vetting and testing activities, although stakeholders ultimately selected Wysa as an app to move forward with for both older adults and TAY community piloting. A key factor in this decision was Wysa app developers' willingness to customize and refine the app to fit the needs and priorities of the local population. Additionally, both target populations viewed Wysa as more culturally relevant compared to the other apps explored. In the second half of Year 2, San Mateo County designed and implemented a pilot to define and measure success with the selected Wysa app and inform app customizations and a broad deployment plan. After a successful app pilot, the product and pilot outcomes were presented to Help@Hand Leadership and Wysa was included in the Help@Hand technology portfolio, thereby allowing other jurisdictions to more easily integrate the apps into their behavioral health systems.

Furthermore, BHRS began working with the app developers to customize what the Help@Hand Advisory Committee recommended as mandatory customizations in order to ensure success of the app. The mandatory recommendations included the following:

- Create instructions/tutorials for accessing and using the app.
- Include a disclaimer about the chatbot and the app's intended purpose, "the app is a light touch resource for wellness concerns, not a replacement for therapy."
- Update the notifications and reminders to be more motivating and engaging for TAY users.
- Include an in-app directory/search function that allows users to quickly navigate to what they need within the app.
- Remove all mentions of the ask-a-therapist feature; this was a high risk assessment issue.
- Create more topics specific to the needs of TAY and Older Adults.
- Update the SOS button name to reflect the page content and/or add local resources. .

See attached Spotlight on San Mateo County's Wysa Pilot.

Year 3

In Year 3, the County launched the customized app to the two identified target populations (older adults and TAY). BHRS contracted with Uptown Solutions to develop a marketing campaign and advertised the availability of Wysa to residents through a landing page, hosted by CalMHSA, a partner toolkit distributed to over 2,000 BHRS agency partners and stakeholders, which included flyers and social media posts to share, digital ads, organic social media posts, transit ads on 30 buses throughout the

county, mailing of 10,000 postcards to targeted residents, and print/media ads with the Daily Journal. See attached San Mateo County Marketing Campaign Report.



RDA conducted a brief survey of early users (who downloaded the app through August 2022 and after the first two months after the marketing campaign roll out.) to further assess the impact of the app and inform the Innovation Learning Goals.

Simultaneously, BHRS, stakeholders and contractors reviewed the results of the pilot stage and decided to further test the app with behavioral health clients to determine if the app could support clients in between therapy appointments with their wellness and recovery goals and if the app could be integrated into their system of care.

The table below provides a comprehensive timeline of activities and major events that occurred over the three-year project timeline.

Table 1. San Mateo Help@Hand Timeline of Activities

Dates	Activities
Year 1	Identifying needs and establish targeted supports
July 2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Peninsula Family Services (PFS)¹ and Youth Leadership Institute (YLI)² fully onboarded and begin developing focus groups with target populations to identify needs and peer-led outreach strategies; o Contracted StarVista to develop texting and social media supports for youth in crisis to expand resources for wellness app users o CalMHSA facilitated focus groups in San Mateo to develop digital health literacy curriculum
August 2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Get App-y Workshops launch to support older adults in basic technology 101 and the development of the H@H Youth Advisory Group.
Sept. – Oct. 2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Identified need to research additional tech solutions

¹ YLI is the contracted organization to conduct peer-led outreach to the TAY population for the Help@Hand project.

² PFS is the contracted organization to conduct peer-led outreach to the older adult population for the Help@Hand project.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o CalMHSA facilitated a second RFSQ process to broaden the pool of possible tech solutions; this resulted in 93 solutions to choose from
Nov. 2019 – Jan. 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Completed first round of App demos, vetting and selection process included local focus groups with TAY and OA
Jan. 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o App exploration training to identify customization needs and inform app deployment needs. We selected Happify for older adults and Remente for TAY for the pilot phase
Feb. – April 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o COVID-19 led to Happify vendor backing out of the project and TAY stakeholders recognized that the needs of the population had changed. Both groups returned to the app vetting, selection and exploration process
May 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Device procurement and deployment pilot begins with peer-led agencies California Clubhouse and Heart & Soul
Year 2	App demonstrations vetting and selection
July – Oct. 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Second round of App demos, vetting and selection process included local focus groups with TAY and older adults; Wysa app selected, began pilot proposal development
Sept. 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Purchased 10,000 Headspace app licenses and distributed them rapidly to support SMC community mental health wellness during COVID-19
Oct. 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Contracted with Painted Brain to provide tech 101 trainings for peer staff that would be distributing devices and Tech Cafés for clients and the community at large
Nov. – Dec. 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Launched distribution of 250 tablets to network of providers, 50 tablets to Board and Cares and clinic sites, funding for 700+ devices for BHRS clients plus device accessories needed for engagement (headphones, covers, styluses, hotspots, etc.)
April – June 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Launched Pilot with TAY and older adults to further test the selected app Wysa
May 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Began exploration of needs for integration into BHRS system of care o Decided to wait until after the local customizations are completed and broad deployment of the app begins.
Year 3	App pilot implementation, and analysis
June 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Added advanced Zoom topics to Painted Brain's contract. Held first training to address equitable practices while facilitating Zoom meetings
July-Aug 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Headspace Survey and results from UCI o Pilot with TAY and older adults continued
Oct-Dec 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Purchased licenses for Wysa and completed marketing contracts
Jan-Feb 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Wysa app customizations completed with input from Advisory Committee
March-April 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o App launched, supported by peer-led outreach from community partners (YLI and PFS) o Launched further app testing with Adult BHRS clients
May-June 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Completed sustainability planning o Developed and launched communications plan for app deployment

Evaluation Overview

The County contracted Resource Development Associates (RDA) to evaluate this project over a three-year period (from 2019-2022.) The following locally defined Learning Goals evolved over the course of the project and were established by the Help@Hand Advisory Committee:

Learning Goal 1

Can a mental health app connect transition age youth and older adults to mental health services and other supports if needed?

Learning Goal 2

Can an app promote mental health wellness and reduce feelings of isolation?

Learning Goal 3

Can an app promote wellness and recovery for individuals living with mental health challenges?

RDA has assessed the goals defined above to help San Mateo County BHRS understand the implementation of the apps and the outcomes of their utilization in the local context. The University of California Irvine (UCI) is also conducting a statewide evaluation of the County Behavioral Health Technology Collaborative to explore app usage trends, linkages to care, and recovery outcomes across all jurisdictions participating in the Help@Hand project.

As the project progressed, the Learning Goals were adapted to reflect emerging community needs, implementation learnings and evaluation goals.

Evaluation Timeline and Adaptations

The evaluation evolved as the Help@Hand Advisory Committee, BHRS and RDA identified lessons learned and carried those lessons forward by adapting the Learning Goals. This iterative process has allowed the evaluation to follow the evolution of the project.

Initially, the Learning Goals were stated as follows:

1. Does the availability and implementation of technology-based mental health apps connect transition age youth in crisis and older adults experiencing isolation to in-person services?
2. Does engaging with the apps promote access to mental health services and supports?
3. Does engaging with the apps promote wellness and recovery?

The first Learning Goal was originally intended to assess whether the availability and implementation of technology-based mental health apps connect **TAY in crisis** and **older adults experiencing isolation** to **in-person** services. Early stakeholder input prioritized TAY in crisis and isolated older adults. Early stakeholder input prioritized the importance of in-person support and raised concerns about the idea of a technology-based solution replacing in-person connections.

Early conversations with our local youth crisis response center staff and stakeholders led to an agreement that youth in crisis are best served by live, trained peers with clinical supervision (rather than through a digital tool such as the app, which uses AI). Additionally, the available technologies, which

were approved through a Request for Statement of Qualifications (RFSQ) process led by CalMHSA, were not equipped to address youth in crisis. This led to the first change in our Learning Goals to focus on supporting the mental wellness of TAY in general and alternatively investing in the expansion of the local crisis hotline resources to include text-based and social media supports in preparation for the app release. The selected app would be customized to include local crisis resources and a means to connect users that may need additional supports to live crisis center resources via voice call, chat and/or text.

Furthermore, given the restriction on in-person activities after the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, in-person services were not a feasible resource. Therefore, the first Learning Goal was modified accordingly to assess whether a mental health app can connect both older adults and TAY in general (vs. those in crisis in particular) to mental health and other supports (not just in-person) if needed.

During the pandemic, a greater concern arose regarding feelings of isolation among both the older adult and TAY populations. Therefore, the second Learning Goal was modified to assess whether an app can promote mental health wellness and reduce feelings of isolation

The third Learning Goal further specified that this was for individuals living with mental health challenges. Early in the implementation of Help@Hand, staff and stakeholders determined that it would be much more feasible to work through the app vetting, selection, piloting, and customization processes working with older adults and TAY in the community (vs. in clinical care with BHRS clients). After Wysa was selected as the app to support wellness, reduce isolation, and promote connections to supports, BHRS testing with clients focused on determining whether this app in particular met the project's goals for individuals living with mental health challenges and specifically whether it promotes their wellness and recovery.

The final Learning Goals were adapted as follows:

1. Can a mental health app connect transition age youth and older adults to mental health services and other supports if needed?
2. Can an app promote mental health wellness and reduce feelings of isolation?
3. Can an app promote wellness and recovery for individuals living with mental health challenges?

Data collection for this evaluation report focused on the implementation of the following activities undertaken by BHRS and local stakeholders throughout the three year evaluation period: (a) activities related to app vetting, testing, and selection, (b) a two-month pilot process with older adults and TAY (c) app exploration groups to identify customization needs, (d) further testing with behavioral health consumers and (e) broad deployment of the app to the target communities including data collected and findings from this deployment to County residents.

Evaluation Methods

Data Collection

RDA used both quantitative and qualitative evaluation methods to assess the influence of the Wysa app on pilot participants' well-being, feelings of isolation, mental health stigma, and potential connections to further mental health supports if needed. Qualitative app exploration was also conducted in early pilot phases to identify considerations for app customizations, further testing with San Mateo County behavioral health consumers, and broad deployment to the target populations.

Additionally, qualitative and quantitative data were collected from the perspectives of different stakeholders involved in implementation and decision-making processes, including the Help@Hand

Advisory Committee and peer partner agencies. RDA collected data through interviews, surveys, and four focus groups with the following stakeholders:

Table 2. Data Collection Activities and Participants

Method	Stakeholders
Interviews	Doris Estremera, MHSa Manager ³
	Rubi Salazar, Peer Program Coordinator, Youth Leadership Institute (YLI)
	Ahleli Cuenca, Bay Area Director of Programs, YLI
	Susan Houston, Vice President of Older Adult Services, Peninsula Family Service (PFS)
	Patricia Duarte, Peer Support Specialist, PFS
	Cristian Huevo, Peer Support Worker, PFS
Process Focus Group For Year 2 Reporting	Help@Hand Advisory Committee
App Vetting and Selection Focus Groups	TAY app testers (5)
	Older adult app testers (7)
Pilot Participant Focus Groups	TAY app pilot participants (16)
	Older adult pilot participants (37)
Pilot 1 Participant Survey	TAY app pilot participants
	Older adult pilot participants
App Exploration Groups	TAY participants (8)
	Older Adult participants (12)
Testing Participant Survey	BHRS Adult Clients
Testing Participant Focus Groups	BHRS Adult Clients
App Deployment Survey	San Mateo General Population (app users)

Interviews with Help@Hand staff and contractors explored key activities, lessons learned about the app pilot process and stakeholder engagement, participation in the statewide collaborative, and the potential impacts of behavioral health technology on the TAY and older adult populations. The focus group with the Help@Hand Advisory Committee offered an opportunity to discuss the role of the committee, successes and areas for improvement in the Help@Hand project activities, experiences working with different stakeholders, and changes in expectations of how technology can help meet the behavioral health and wellness needs of TAY and older adults in the county. RDA also attended monthly Help@Hand Advisory Committee meetings and documented the project's progress throughout the evaluation period.

RDA's role adapted as the needs of the project changed over time. When BHRS recognized the county would need to undergo an in-depth app pilot process, RDA worked with YLI and PFS to design and implement four focus groups with pilot participants. RDA, with the support of PFS, conducted one focus group with older adults, and YLI conducted a series of focus groups with TAY. Pilot participant focus groups were used to collect feedback on usage experiences with the Wysa app and the perceptions of each app's ability to meet the local Help@Hand Learning Goals and needs of the TAY and older adult populations. RDA also conducted two exploration groups, one with TAY and one with older adults to further explore specific app features of interest and inform the customization and app deployment phases of the Help@Hand project.

³ As the MHSa Manager and the Help@Hand project manager, Doris Estremera oversees all project activities.

San Mateo County defines participants of the Help@Hand project as pilot users of the Wysa app—individuals who participated in the pilot stage by downloading and using the Wysa app. Accordingly, demographic data were collected in the form of surveys that were completed by both TAY and older adult participants prior to downloading and using the selected apps for a total of two weeks.

Individuals who participated in the pilot stage also completed surveys about their experiences with the app; they were assessed both before and after the pilot period to determine whether engaging with the app was related to any increase in particular favorable outcomes, and/or whether unfavorable outcomes or risk factors decreased after engaging with the app. In the Final phase of the project, County residents who downloaded the app were also invited to complete a brief feedback survey. Participants were contacted by email and invited to complete the survey; 30 participants responded.

Data Analysis

To analyze the qualitative data, RDA transcribed interview and focus group participants' responses to capture their sentiments and perceptions. RDA then thematically assessed responses from all participants and identified recurring themes and key findings.

To analyze the quantitative data, RDA tabulated frequencies and percentages of app testers' demographic information (i.e., age group, assigned sex at birth, gender identity, race/ethnicity, sexual orientation, employment status, etc.) as well as app testers' responses to survey questions developed to elicit feedback about the overall usefulness of the app's functionality, feelings of isolation and connectedness, and perceptions about mental health.

Evaluation Limitations

Qualitative data collection and analysis was limited in scope by low numbers of participants available and willing to participate in focus group and interview activities. A larger study could have resulted in more nuanced findings. The evaluation was also impacted by changes in mental health needs and service availability related to the COVID-19 pandemic. The need to shift focus and adapt Learning Goals resulted in less ability to track attitudes and beliefs consistently across time.

Evaluation Findings

Wysa Pilot & General Population User Learnings

Aside from informing app customizations and the Wysa deployment plan, another objective of the Wysa pilots (with TAY, Older Adults, and BHRS clients) was to contribute to learnings related to the local Learning Goals.

The following sections provide an overview of how the pilot process and the general population survey contributed to each of San Mateo County BHRS Help@Hand Learning Goals.

For each data collection phase, demographic data can be found in Appendix A.

Learning Goal 1: Can an app connect transition age youth and older adults to mental health services and other supports if needed?

Data from the TAY and Older Adult pilots suggest that there is some potential for the Wysa app to help users feel more comfortable seeking mental health services and supports.

- **In the TAY pilot, 47% (n=15) agreed that they are more likely to reach out for help with their mental health and wellness after using Wysa. In the Older Adult pilot, 31% agreed (n=32).**

Survey results suggest that using the app did not significantly reduce measures of help-seeking stigma, but there were slight differences that represent potential for some individuals to reach out for support who may not have otherwise. Results for TAY in particular show some reduction in stigma.

- In the TAY pilot group, **67% agreed (n=15) in the post survey that they “know when to ask for help” compared to 44% (n=16) in the pre survey.**
- In the Older Adult pilot, this figure stayed relatively consistent: **89% (n=37) agreed in the pre survey that they “know when to ask for help”, and 85% (n=34) agreed in the post survey.**
- In the TAY pilot, **60% agreed (n=15) that their “self-confidence would NOT be threatened if [they] sought professional help” compared to 56% in pre survey.**
- In the Older Adult pilot, **76% agreed (n=33) in the post survey that “[their] self-confidence would NOT be threatened if [they] sought professional help” compared to 83% in the pre survey.**

While using Wysa may encourage individuals to seek out additional resources and support, integration of these supports with the app and the ability to track whether users follow through with seeking support is limited. That is, while the app could feasibly help to reduce stigma and promote help-seeking, it does not always connect users directly with services. One feature that the app does have to connect users to services is the “SOS” feature, which users can use to reach out and seek out additional resources if needed. Selecting the “SOS” button brings users to crisis supports such as the Crisis Hotline and Text line.

- **In the TAY pilot, 33% (n=15) found the SOS feature of the Wysa app to be useful (28% moderately useful and 7% extremely useful). In the Older Adult pilot, 9% found the SOS feature useful (6% moderately useful and 3% very useful).**

In the pilot stage, almost two-thirds of the TAY and older adult participants did not use the SOS feature over concerns that this feature would contact emergency services immediately. As a recommendation to address this finding, BHRS worked with the Wysa app developers to include a local resource page accessible within the app to facilitate connections to mental health supports for those who may need it. The page includes a collection of local mental health resources for participants to review, should they be interested in exploring services beyond the app itself. The app developers also created an “Extra Resources” button alongside the “SOS” feature and created pathways for the chatbot to recommend the resource page to users.

Some pilot users did express that they would have liked to be connected to a person for more traditional counseling.

- One TAY user shared that it *“Would have been nice to have an option to talk to a human as opposed to just the bot”*

In the final survey with general population app users, **36% of respondents agreed with the statement, “Because I used Wysa, I am more likely to reach out for help with my mental wellness.”** This is slightly lower than the percentage of pilot users who agreed with the same statement, but the general population survey respondents also reported substantially lower interaction with the app. Even with the lower exposure to all of Wysa’s features, this represents a meaningful improvement in likelihood to seek support. The final survey also provides insight for the need for future BHRS services in terms of reducing stigma around mental wellness. For these survey respondents, 57% agreed with the statement, “I feel comfortable discussing topics related to mental health and mental illness,” and 52% agreed with the statement, “I feel comfortable seeking mental health services (such as counseling/therapy)”. While the survey returned a small number of responses and does not necessarily represent county residents, this data suggests that there is further room for efforts to reduce mental health stigma in the community.

Summary

Given the results from the survey that was completed by the pilot participants, there is some evidence to suggest that TAY users would be more willing to seek help for their mental health and wellness because of using the Wysa app, and that seeking help would not negatively impact their confidence and self-esteem. Among Older Adults, there is evidence that this population feels comfortable seeking support and understands when they need to reach out for help. Given that using the app itself did not seem to decrease their feelings of being left out after its use, it is important that the app offer connection to other avenues of support.

Learning Goal 2: Can the Wysa app promote mental wellness and reduce feelings of isolation?

Wellbeing

Based on findings gathered from focus groups and survey responses from two pilot groups and one test group (TAY, Older Adults, and BHRS Clients), results suggest that apps such as Wysa promote mental wellness for participants. In particular, participants from each of these groups reported the following common benefits of using Wysa:

- Enhanced self-care strategies
- Improved coping with feelings like anxiety, anger, sadness, and stress
- Better, more restful sleep

As one TAY pilot participant reported, *"I suffer from loneliness, and it was comforting that I could check in with the app anytime"*. An Older Adult BHRS client likewise commented, *"I've been going through a health crisis, depression, inconveniences – it's helpful to have this tool. It helps with self-reflection, gives you an opportunity to pause and think through things"*.

According to survey results, users in each of these groups experienced improvements in subjective well-being indicators after using Wysa for two months.

Figure 2-4 below depict pilot users survey responses to how they felt the app impacted their well-being, as represented by increased feelings of satisfaction, hope, and balance, and reduced feelings of nervousness, depression, and stress.

Figure 2. Survey Responses from TAY Respondents about Well-being (n = 16)

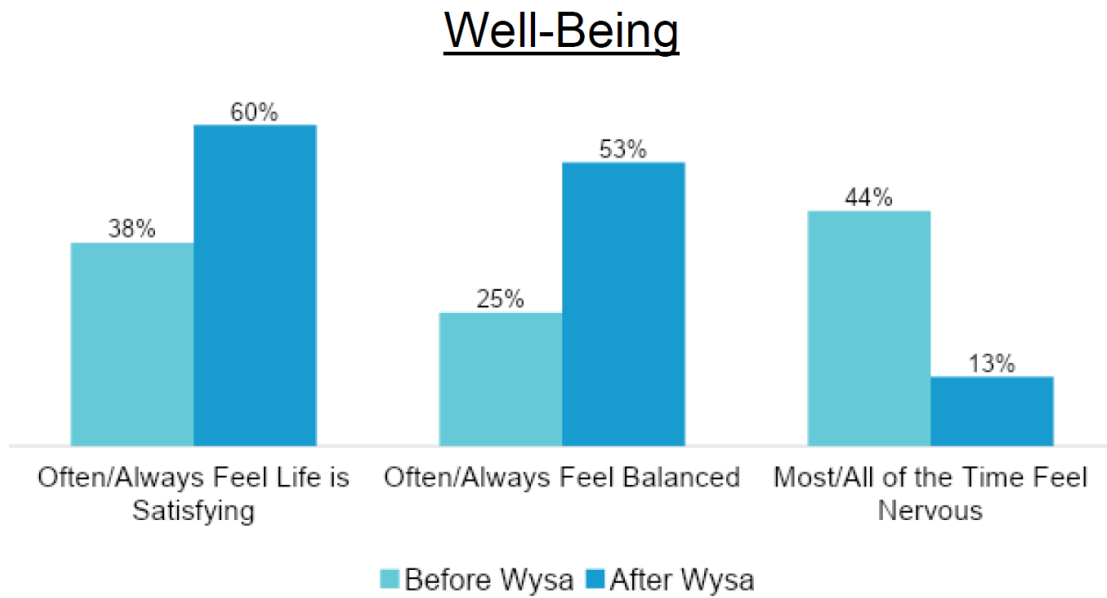


Figure 3. Survey Responses from Older Adult Respondents about Well-being (n = 37)

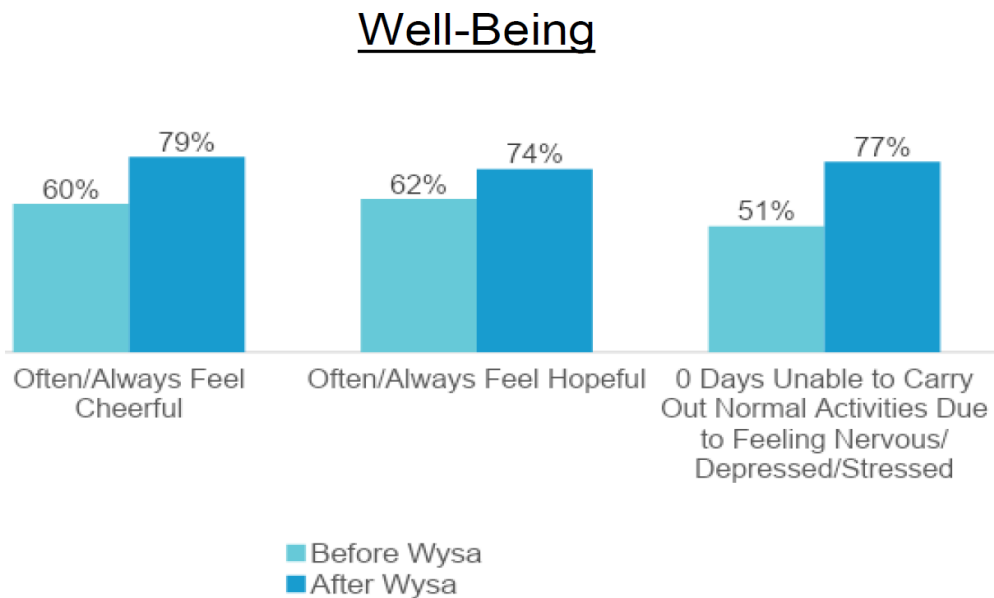
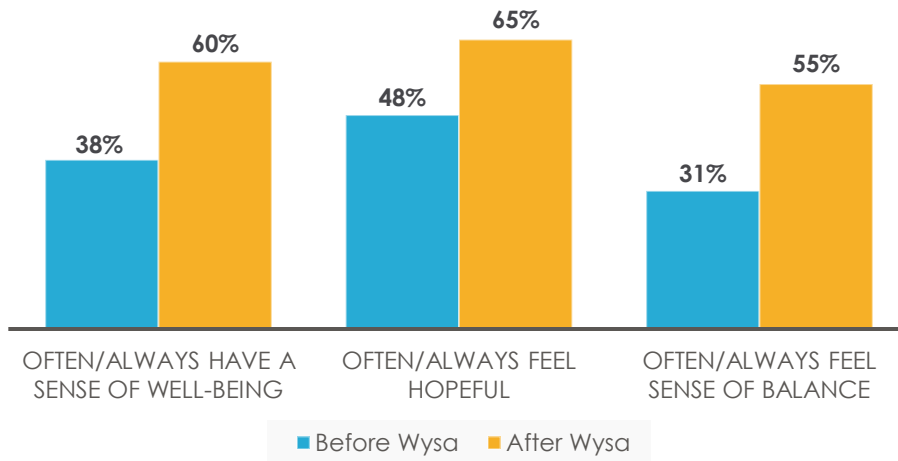


Figure 4. Survey Responses from BHRS client Respondents about Well-being (n = 20)

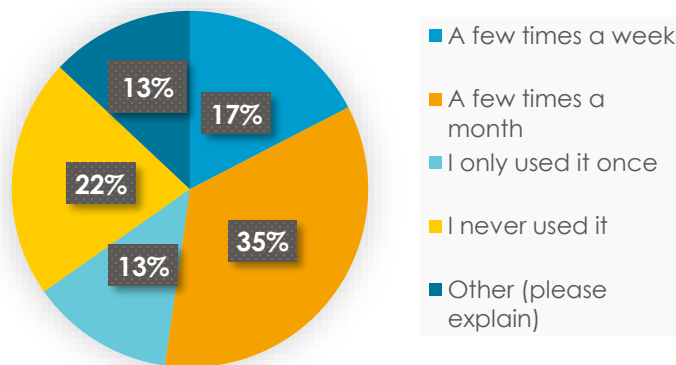
Well-being



Notably, in the final survey of general users following the launch of Wysa to all County residents, results do not suggest the same level of potential for improving mental wellness as was seen in the pilot and test populations. Of those who completed a survey after downloading the app in this phase (21 users), **36% agreed with the statement, “Wysa improves my mental wellness,” and 41% agreed with the statement, “Using Wysa makes me feel like I have more support when I am feeling down, stressed, or anxious.”** It is important to note that this group overall had significantly less experience with the Wysa app than did the users in the pilot and test groups. As shown in Figure 6, 35% of the general population users who completed the survey either only used the app once or never used it at all. It is possible that these users did not experience as much benefit from the app simply because they did not actually make use of it, or made very little use of it, before reporting their feedback.

Figure 6. Survey Responses from General (SM County) Population (n=22)

Frequency of Wysa Use



Connectedness

Findings from the focus group and survey data demonstrate mixed impacts of using an app like Wysa on feelings of isolation and social connectedness. For the first TAY pilot, one of the first positive outcomes that staff noticed after the testing and piloting process was that the level of social connectedness

increased after TAY participants' use of the app. Other benefits reported by the older adult program staff included Wysa's chatbot feature, which provides suggestions to the user and prompts them to carry out a specific activity (e.g., positive affirmations, carrying out a physical activity) in response to a specific issue that the participant reports that they are currently experiencing within the app. Program staff also noted that youth reported that the Wysa app allowed youth a safe space to express any current issues or challenges that they were facing that day. Further, based on TAY participant feedback, program staff also noted that the Wysa app's chatbot features proved to be a valuable asset that TAY participants found helpful, especially after the onset of the pandemic.

Figure 6. Survey Responses from TAY Respondents about Connectedness (n = 16)

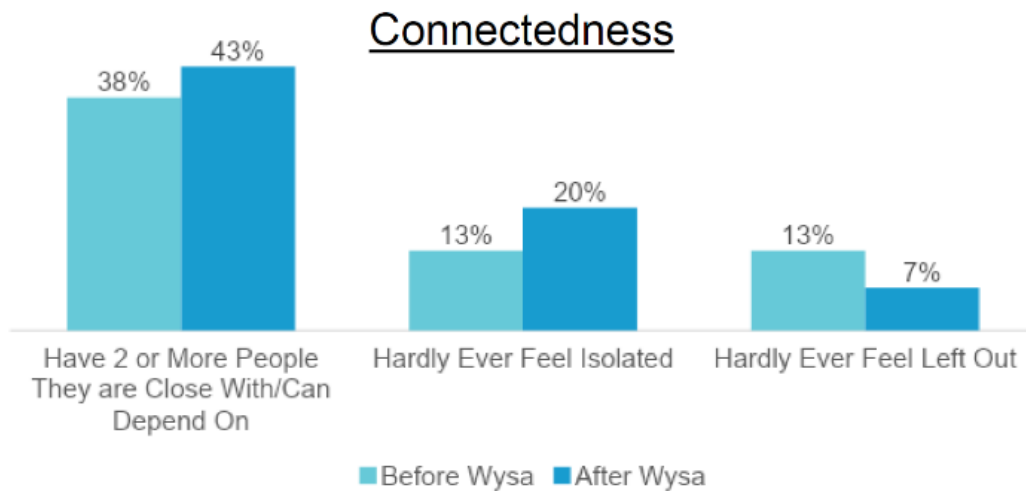
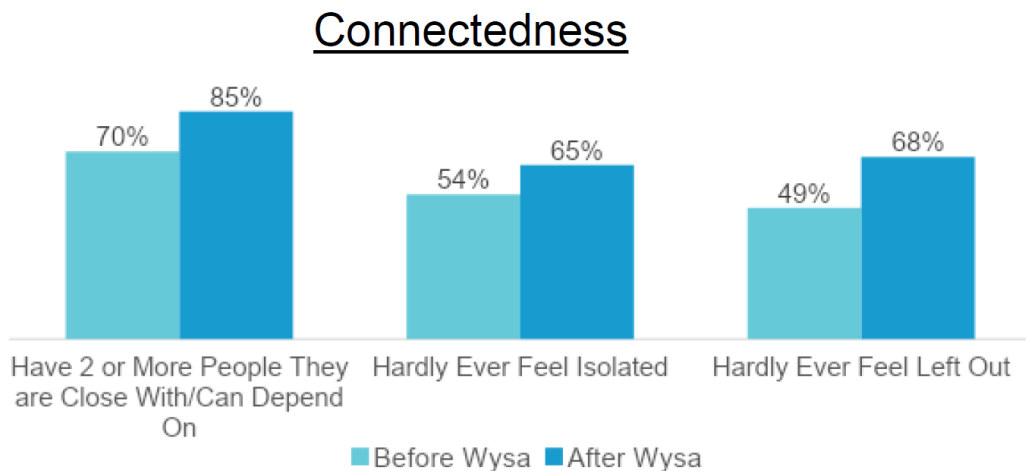


Figure 7. Survey Responses from Older Adult Respondents about Connectedness (n = 37)



For both TAY and older adults, after using the app, a greater number reported they have two or more people they are close with and can depend on, hardly ever feel isolated, and hardly ever feel left out.

While these results are promising, other survey question responses suggest that pilot users did not experience fewer feelings of isolation following use of the app but rather feel more connected to

support when they needed it. In surveys of early pilot users, **most (80% of TAY, 71% of Older Adults) did not agree with the statement “Using Wysa makes me feel connected to other people”**. In the follow up pilot with BHRS clients, **most participants (79%) did agree with the statement, “Using Wysa makes me feel connected to supports,”**. **Most users in all three groups (93% of TAY, 56% of Older Adults, and 79% of BHRS clients) agreed that “Using Wysa makes me feel like I have more support when I am feeling down, stressed, or anxious”**.

The Wysa app's secure and private chat functionality were noted to enhance greater participation among TAY who may not otherwise engage in an in-person setting due to factors such as social anxiety or fear of being judged by peers. In Wysa, users can chat with an AI robot (i.e., chatbot), which then responds and recommends several self-care practices, such as mindfulness or physical movement activities or other resources in response to the user's issues or challenges mentioned in the chat. These chat functionalities were noted to reduce feelings of isolation and enhance social connection. Program staff also noted that the TAY testing participants seemed to value having access to chat-like features when using apps such as Wysa. **In fact, 80% of TAY and 53% of older adult users found the chatbot to be extremely or moderately useful.** Older adult users generally found the chatbot feature to be useful and enjoyed having a place to talk and share their feelings at any time of the day. They appreciated that the chatbot summarized what they said and referenced previous discussions. At the same time, some users noted that the chatbot's responses felt generic, unhelpful, and redundant, particularly when they used more complex language. Some also found it challenging to type everything they were feeling.

Similarly to the findings on mental wellbeing, the findings on isolation and connectedness are more limited in the general population. Among the group of users who responded to the survey, **41% either somewhat or strongly agreed with the statement, “Using Wysa makes me feel like I have more support when I am feeling down, stressed, or anxious.”** This is substantially lower than the percentage of pilot and test users who agreed with the same statement. However, those groups reported more usage of the app and also received additional outreach and support for using the app that the general population did not receive.

Summary

Given the above findings from both surveys and focus groups, it seems that Wysa is generally beneficial in terms of both wellbeing and isolation, but that it does not eliminate the need for other behavioral health services and supports. In terms of wellbeing, the app promotes positive self-care and coping strategies. In terms of isolation, the app offers an outlet for folks to feel supported in times of need. However, using Wysa does not appear to eliminate distressing feelings and does not help people to feel more connected to others more broadly speaking. It is therefore important to consider Wysa as a supplementary resource that might be integrated with other supports to meet varying mental health needs for County residents. Additionally, given the differences in response between the pilot and testing groups and the general population, it seems likely that Wysa is significantly more effective as a tool for improving mental wellness and reducing feelings of isolation when it is provided along with other supports and resources.

Learning Goal 3: Can an app promote wellness and recovery for individuals living with mental health challenges?

Testing with existing BHRS clients demonstrated the ways that use of the Wysa app can integrate with and enhance other types of mental wellness support and resources to be a valuable tool in recovery for individuals with mental health challenges.

In surveys with BHRS test users, **79% agreed that using Wysa makes them feel like they have more support when they are feeling down, stressed or anxious. 75% agreed that using Wysa makes them feel connected to supports.**

For many of the test users, Wysa was a valuable supplementary resource, which they could turn to in addition to therapy or other resources they are already connected to. Using the app bolstered clients' self-care and coping strategies, eased loneliness, and allowed clients to feel even more connected and supported than with therapy alone.

- One Older Adult user shared that *"the app reinforces what I'm doing in therapy and expands it... The app will direct you to therapy or counseling and if you don't respond, the app will check in on you."*
- One TAY test user shared: *"I suffer from loneliness, and it was comforting that I could check in with the app anytime"*

Test users especially appreciated that the app is available 24/7, unlike traditional therapy or groups which tend to meet once or twice a week. Additionally, some users found it refreshing to use the app's tools and chat with the bot as a way to process thoughts and feelings without needing to share with another person. Some tools in the app were perceived as being more concrete than counseling, allowing users to work through issues in tangible ways and see their progress.

BHRS clients testing the Wysa app reported that the tools helped them manage feelings of anxiety, anger, stress, and loneliness, and helped them sleep better.

- One Older Adult client shared: *"I've been going through a health crisis, depression, inconveniences – it's helpful to have this tool. It helps with self-reflection, gives you an opportunity to pause and think through things"*
- A TAY client shared: *"[The app] helps me calm down. I used the talking feature and the self-care feature. Help with my anger and get a better night's rest."*

Summary

Results from surveys, interviews, and focus groups with BHRS clients who tested using the Wysa app show that the tools can support recovery when used as a supplement to traditional services. It will be critical to consider how clinicians can integrate the Wysa app into their practice with BHRS clients, allowing clients to benefit from a variety of tools and supports. The app offers some unique components that are not available with one-on-one or small group counseling (such as 24/7 access and integrated tracking tools) that may bolster these efforts and improve recovery for some clients.

Additional Findings

App accessibility and usability

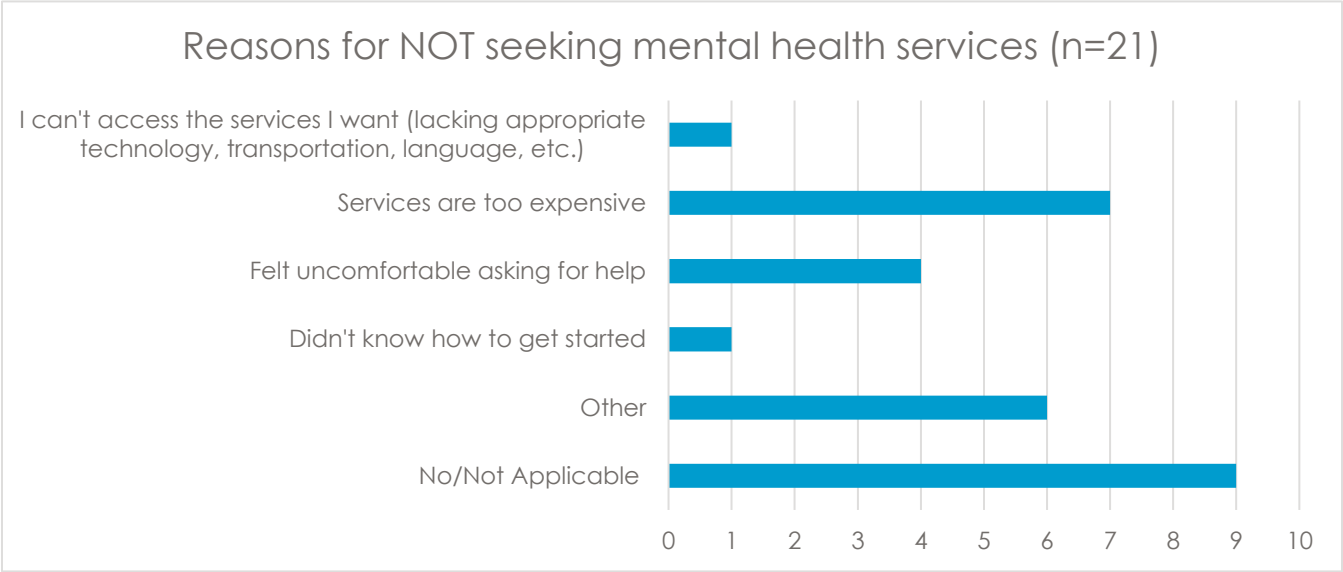
Based on survey responses and feedback from both pilot testing and the app launch, the Wysa app appears to be easy and intuitive to use and navigate. All of the TAY and 88% of older adults in pilot testing agreed that the app's language was easy to understand. Further, 93% of TAY and 88% of older adults in pilot testing agreed that the app was easy to use, while 76% of general population users agreed. Lastly, 87% of TAY and 69% of older adult pilot users reported that they would recommend using the app to others, and 62% of general population app users agreed. The availability of the apps content in various languages continues to be a concern among stakeholders. Stakeholders noted that BHRS did not identify a minimum viable product language requirement,⁴ and that they are concerned

⁴ A minimum viable product is the most basic version of a product that will still satisfy users. In this case, the minimum viable language requirements are the languages that the apps must offer to meet the fundamental linguistic needs of the target populations.

about moving forward with an app that has limited, or no, features for monolingual Spanish or Chinese speakers given the strong presence of these communities in San Mateo County. BHRS had initially hoped to include monolingual Spanish and Chinese speakers as target populations; however, they realized early in the Help@Hand project that they did not have the capacity to have priority populations in addition to older adults and TAY. However, reaching these two subgroups of the older adult and TAY populations continues to be an expressed interest of a number of stakeholders involved in San Mateo County's Help@Hand project. To address concerns, the Wysa app developers are currently working on a Spanish version of the app for future testing and piloting.

Accessibility of mental health services

In the final project stage, users who downloaded Wysa were asked in a survey, "In the past 2 months, have you chosen not to seek professional mental health services for any of the following reasons? Please select all that apply." Users reported that they have *not* sought services due to such factors as expense, discomfort, and lack of knowledge or access. While Wysa may encourage users to seek out mental health services, it will be critical to ensure that these barriers are considered.



Conclusion

The key evaluation findings outlined in this report can provide guidance for future directions and decisions regarding the sustainability of the Wysa app as a tool to support mental wellness and connect individuals to mental health resources in a non-stigmatizing and relevant manner, especially as we launched into a digital world post COVID-19.

It will be important to continue to consider ways to connect users with in-person services and resources from the app and to ensure that the app's tools are accessible to those with varying needs. Specifically for TAY, it will be important to identify ongoing best practices to support their mental health and wellness and mitigate barriers and/or stigmas. For Older Adults, more research is needed to focus on the various stigmas experienced within this population and possible reasons as to why older age-range adults, those between the ages 75 to 90, might be reluctant to seek mental health and wellness resources, and whether using an app is even an appropriate tool culturally appropriate way to engage the older age-range adults in wellness and possible connections to additional mental health supports if needed.

This report also serves as an opportunity to highlight unanticipated successes as San Mateo County responded to client and community technology-related needs that evolved during the course of this

Innovation project and were exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic. The local Learning Goals of this project centered around identifying an app or technology-based solution for supporting the mental health needs of consumers. While San Mateo County did identify and implement a wellness app to support these goals, the county ended up addressing so much more in the realm of digital supports including:

- Digital Mental Health Literacy (DMHL) training for peer staff
- Get App-y Workshops for older adults to receive supports with basic 101 technology education
- Expansion of the local youth crisis hotline to include text-based and social media supports
- 700+ Device and data plans distribution to clients to support engagement in services
- Tech Cafés or workshops for clients and the community at large to receive basic technology supports and 101 technology education

The Help@Hand Advisory Committee was engaged in a conversation around sustainability of the above mentioned Help@Hand activities and the Wysa app deployment. Stakeholders were asked: 1) What activities are a priority to sustain? And 2) Are there any changes we would like to see to any of these activities? Text-based/social media crisis supports for youth, device/data plan distribution, Get App-y Workshops, and Wysa deployment were prioritized in that order.

Prior the end of the Innovation pilot period, San Mateo County was able to secure ongoing MHSA funding for the text-based/social media crisis supports for youth and device/data plan distributions to clients.

The Get App-y Workshops and Wysa deployment activities were funded for one-year with one-time MHSA funding to allow for continued evaluation of the need and impact. The Wysa deployment activities includes contracts with 1) Painted Brain, a peer-run, peer-led agency that will support behavioral health clients with digital and technology needs related to their devices and the Wysa app; 2) Peninsula Family Service (PFS) and Youth Leadership Institute (YLI) to continue outreach activities to promote the Wysa app among vulnerable older adults and TAY that may need more supports; and 3) marketing activities, focused on social media ads only, to promote Wysa amongst the general San Mateo County population of older adults and TAY.

To-date, PFS staff have found it challenging to promote the use of an app with vulnerable older adult populations. The older age-range adults are much more interested in the Get App-y Workshops than the app. Older adults find it difficult to download and use the app without staff support and those that do use, don't engage with it ongoing. Pending the success of Wysa uptake broadly across the general San Mateo County population, amongst BHRS clients, and PFS and YLI outreach activities, decisions will be made for the continuation of Wysa app deployment past June 2023.

Appendix A: Demographic data

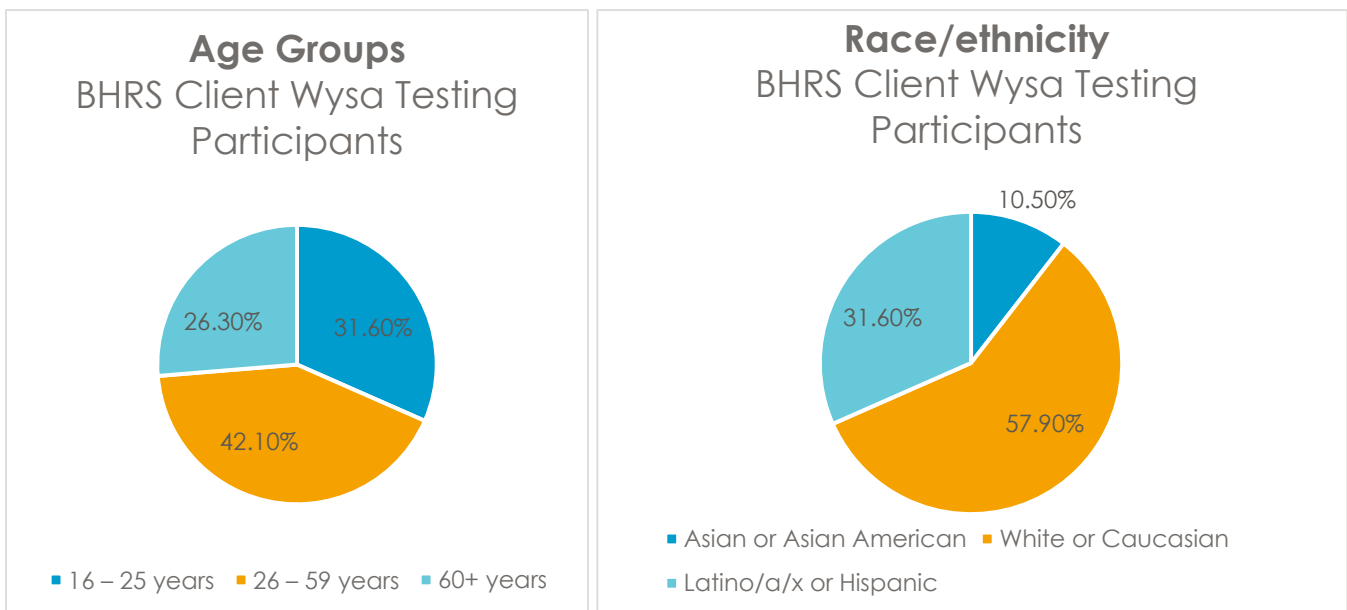
Pilot Focus Group, Interviews, and Survey respondents

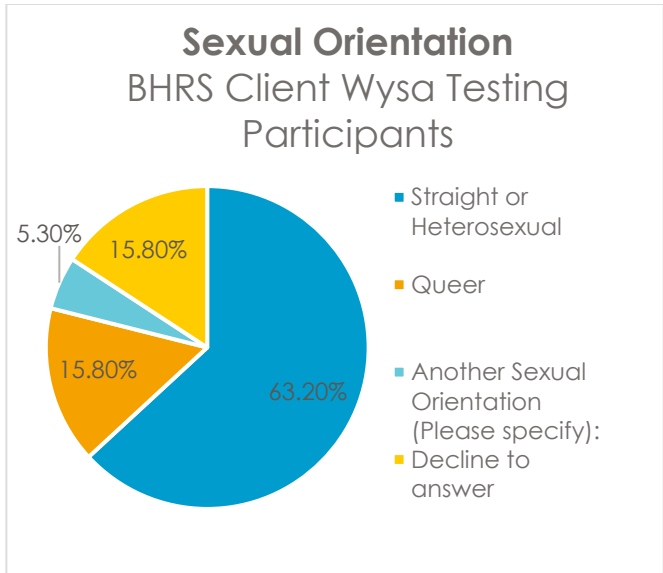
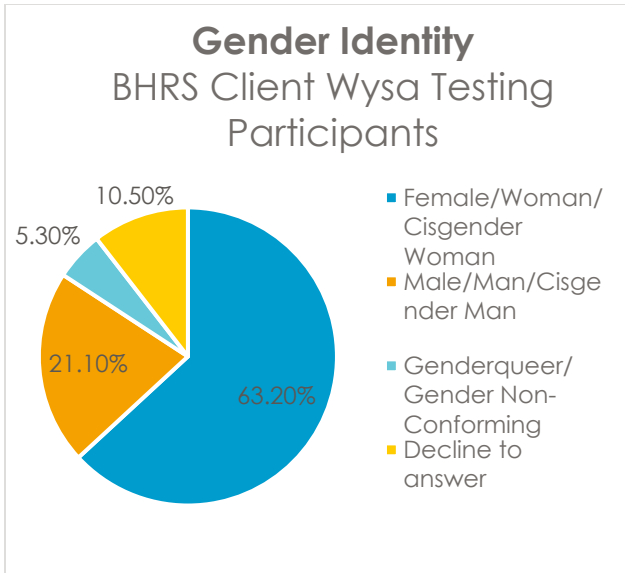
The demographic characteristics of pilot participants by target population are presented in the table below:

Older Adult and TAY Wya Pilot Participant Demographics	
Older Adults	TAY
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Average 69 years old (range: 55 to 89 years) • 78% were female • Majority identified as White/Caucasian (83%) • 87% identified as straight/heterosexual • Most held a bachelor's or graduate degree (38%) • 52% reported no mental health challenges • 51% retired • 28% made under \$30k per year 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Average 17 years old (range: 14 to 24 years) • 75% were female • Majority identified as Asian (50%), followed by Hispanic/Latino (38%) • 67% identified as straight/heterosexual • 81% were high school students • 43% reported no mental health challenges • 50% were students • Came from various households with a wide range of annual household incomes

BHRS Client Focus Group, Interview, and Survey respondents

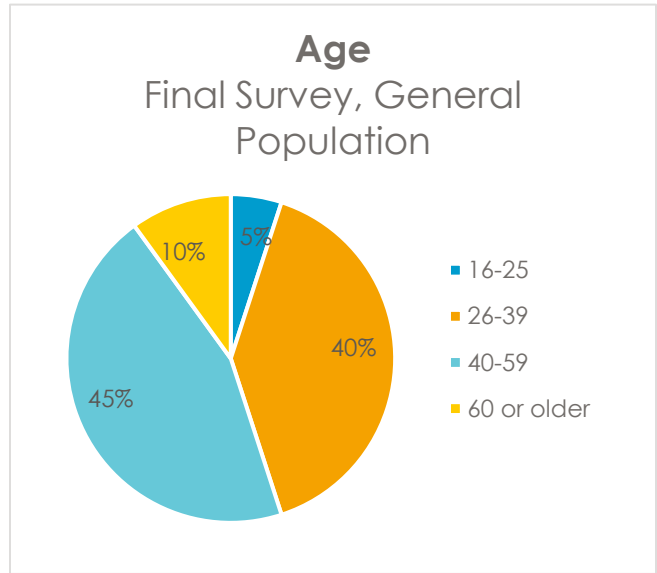
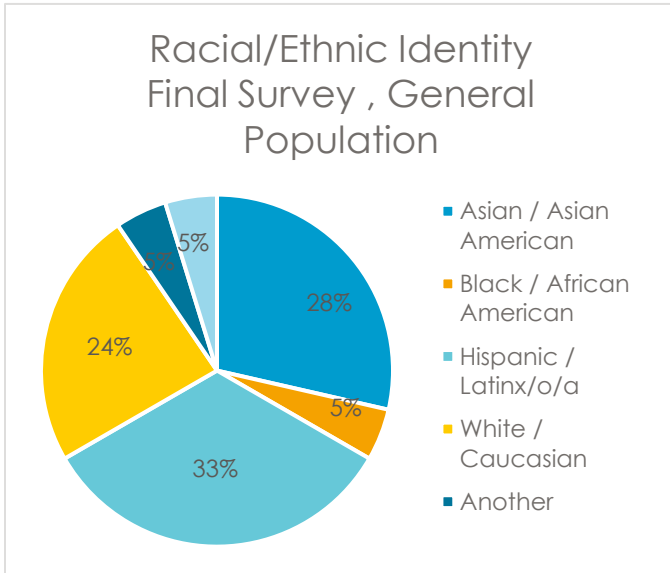
The demographic characteristics of participants in BHRS client app testing (n=19) are presented in the charts below:



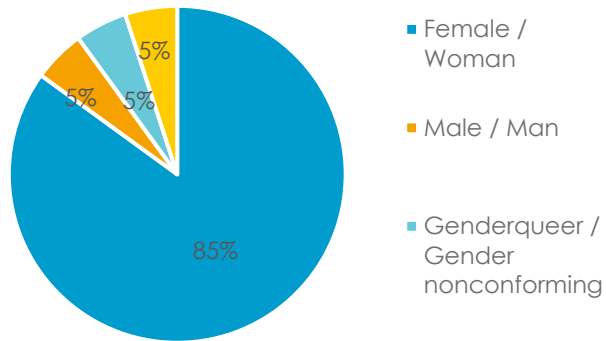


General Population Wysa user Survey respondents

The demographic characteristics of respondents to a follow up survey among general population county residents (n=21) are presented in the charts below:

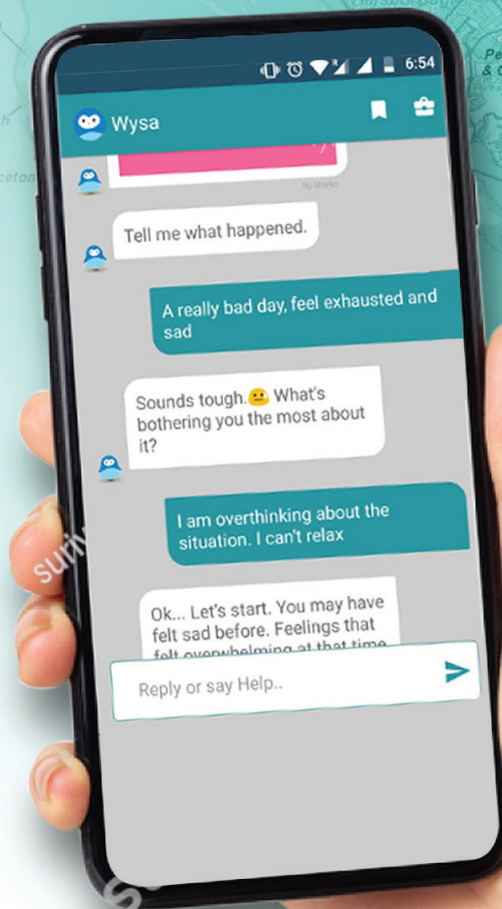


Gender Identity Final Survey, General Population



SPOTLIGHT

San Mateo County's Wysa Pilot



San Mateo County Behavioral Health and Recovery Services and its contracted partners, Peninsula Family Services and Youth Leadership Institute, piloted the Wysa app with 37 older adults¹ and 16 transition age youth (TAY)² between April and July 2021. Pilot participants completed pre and demographic surveys, engaged with the app for two months, and then completed post surveys, focus groups, and app exploration sessions.

Data were collected and analyzed by Resource Development Associates (RDA) Consulting. This spotlight highlights excerpts from the pilot reports and presentations developed by RDA Consulting. The full pilot reports can be found in Appendix C.

¹ 37 older adults completed the pre and demographic surveys, 34 completed the post survey, 30 participated in the focus groups, and 12 participated in the app exploration.

² 16 TAY completed the pre and demographic surveys, 15 completed the post survey, 13 participated in the focus group, and 8 participated in the app exploration.

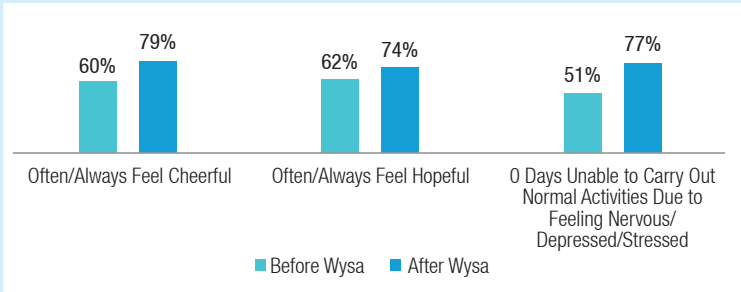
PILOT LEARNING OBJECTIVE #1: Can an app promote mental health wellness and reduce feelings of isolation?

MENTAL HEALTH AND WELL-BEING



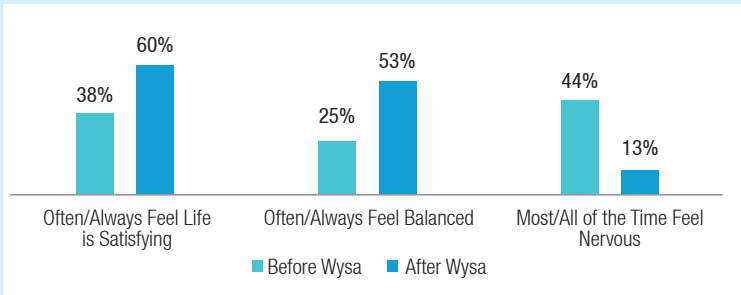
Older Adults

The proportion of favorable responses among almost all (18 out of 21) metrics related to mental health and well-being increased or stayed the same after using Wysa. This suggests that **using Wysa may have helped improve pilot users' mental health and wellbeing**. The largest increases were as follows:



TAY

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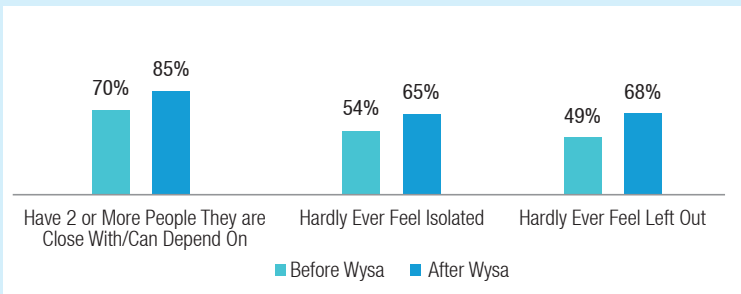


PERSONAL CONNECTIONS



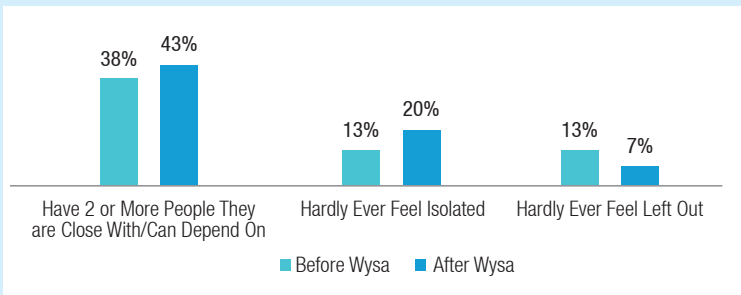
Older Adults

The proportion of favorable responses among all 4 metrics related to personal connections/isolation increased after using Wysa. This suggests that **using Wysa may have helped improve pilot users' feelings of isolation and connectedness**. The largest increases were as follows:



TAY

The proportion of favorable responses among almost all 4 metrics related to personal connections both increased and decreased after using Wysa. This suggests that **using Wysa may have had different impacts on users' feelings of connectedness**. Key findings were as follows:



PILOT LEARNING OBJECTIVE #2: Can an app connect transition age youth and older adults to mental health services and other supports if needed?



SOS Button

The SOS Button allows users to develop a safety plan and directs users in crisis to international crisis helplines.

% of users who...	Older Adults	TAY
did not use the SOS button	69%	60%
found it very, extremely, or moderately useful	9%	34%
found it slightly or not at all useful	22%	7%

Most older adult and TAY users were “afraid” or “scared” to use this feature as they thought emergency services would be contacted.

A few older adult users did not notice the feature at all.

EXPERIENCES WITH WYSA: STRENGTHS AND CHALLENGES

Older adults and TAY identified a number of strengths and challenges. The percentages represent the respondents who agreed or mostly agreed with each statement.

STRENGTHS

	Older Adults	TAY
Usage & Accessibility		
The language is easy to understand	88%	100%
Wysa is easy to use	78%	93%
Wysa is visually appealing	75%	87%
Would recommend Wysa to others	69%	87%
Support for Mental Health & Wellness Needs		
Wysa improved my mental health and wellness	56%	67%
Wysa makes me feel like I have support when feeling down, stressed, or anxious	56%	93%
I find Wysa useful in my daily life	53%	60%
Culture		
Wysa values and respects cultural differences*	31%	60%

CHALLENGES

	Older Adults	TAY
Support for Mental Health & Wellness Needs		
Because I used Wysa I am more likely to reach out for help with my mental health and wellness	31%	47%
Wysa makes me feel connected to other people	29%	20%
Wysa has helped me detect symptoms related to my mental health and wellness	22%	47%
Culture		
Wysa values and respects cultural differences*	31%	60%
Wysa demonstrates knowledge about my culture	13%	33%

*Older adults found this to be a challenge, while TAY found it to be a strength.

OVERARCHING USER RECOMMENDATIONS³

The following recommendations were shared by users in the post survey, focus groups, and app explorations.



Technical Support

- Create instructions, tutorials, and/or workshops focused on downloading and using the Wysa app.



Accessibility

- Enable Wysa to function offline to provide access to users with limited internet connection.
- Optimize Wysa for all devices and offer tutorials on how to configure app settings on different devices.
- Ensure the language, locations of the buttons, and content are optimized for users with cognitive or physical impairments.



User Engagement and Notifications

- Make the notifications and reminders more engaging for TAY users.
- Explore gamification strategies to incentivize users to engage with the app more frequently.
- Remind users of the ability to customize notifications.



Disclaimers and Notifications

- Add a disclaimer about the app's intended purpose, including that the app is a light touch resource for mild mental health and wellness concerns and is not a replacement for therapy.
- Offer users more control over app notifications, including frequency and how they are received (e.g., phone, email).



Content

- Include an in-app directory/search function.
- Ensure Wysa is inclusive of and responsive to individuals of different cultures and communities (e.g., LGBTQ+, different races/ethnicities) by reviewing and revising the content throughout the app as needed.
- Remove mentions of any other features that require a fee.
- Offer additional in-app customizations (e.g., colors, backgrounds/wallpaper, layout).

³ User recommendations were condensed for the purpose of this spotlight. Complete lists for older adults and TAY are available in the pilot reports developed by RDA.

Campaign Report

2022 Wellness For All Campaign

San Mateo County Behavioral Health and Recovery Services (BHRS)



Campaign Goals + Objectives

Uptown Studios partnered with San Mateo County Behavioral Health and Recovery Services (BHRS) to manage its 2022 Wellness For All campaign. There were two target audiences for the campaign: Older adults aged 55+ and younger adults aged 14-29.

The campaign's goals were to obtain 7,000 downloads and sign-ups of the Wysa app by the end of 2022 while working to reduce the stigma of mental health support, normalize asking for help, and drive awareness of the services and resources available to older adults aged 55 and over.

Table 1 below provides the terms and definitions related to digital measurements and what is defined as a "good" outcome. These terms are referenced throughout this document. Table 2 below outlines all of the campaign strategies and each outcome.

Table 1

Measurement & Definition	Defined as "good"
Engagements - The number of likes, comments and shares.	1% - 5% of your followers
Impressions -The number of times your content is displayed, no matter if it was clicked or not.	The higher the better. There is no "ideal" reach-to-impression ratio, but anything less than 0.2 is not ideal.
Reach - The total number of people who see your content.	Instagram average: 13.51% of followers Facebook average: 8.6% of followers
Post Clicks - The number of times someone clicked on the ad.	2% of impressions
CTR (Click-through Rate) - the percentage of people visiting a web page who clicked on the link of an ad.	2% is considered good
Total Net Audience Growth - The number of audience members you acquired during the reporting period.	Instagram - 1.5% per week is good Facebook - 0.64% per week is good

Table 2

Strategy	Outcome
<p>Digital Ads - Generate three social media and Google ads per audience to increase the number of app downloads from June 29, 2022, to September 22, 2022.</p>	<p>There were a total of six ad campaigns that ran on Facebook and Instagram from June 29, 2022, to September 22, 2022. Three of the ad campaigns targeted older adults, and three targeted younger adults. During that time, there were 20,079 ad clicks resulting in an average click-through rate of 0.51%. The top ad included candid imagery of a young adult on their phone. That ad received a total of 485 clicks.</p> <p>One Google Ads campaign targeting older adults ran from June 29, 2022, to September 22, 2022. This campaign received 1,771 clicks and had 42,163 impressions.</p>
<p>Organic Social Media - Create an organic social media plan for 2022 to increase awareness of the Wysa app and services offered by San Mateo County BHRS.</p>	<p>Uptown Studios created organic social media content to share on San Mateo County Health and its partner’s social media pages. Organic social media content was only shared on San Mateo County Health’s social media pages from June 28, 2022, to August 17, 2022. During that time, there were 15,628 engagements, 1,676,146 impressions, and 7,115 post clicks.</p>
<p>Billboards and Transit Shelter Ads - Utilize billboards and transit shelter ads to promote the app to potential users.</p>	<p>Uptown Studios created a single ad to display on 30 buses throughout San Mateo County. The ads were displayed on the outside of buses beginning August 22, 2022, and will stay through December 31, 2022. The ads are on 15 buses on the North garage route and 15 on the South garage route in San Mateo County.</p>

<p>Partner Toolkit - Create a digital partner toolkit to provide partners with the necessary tools to encourage community engagement.</p>	<p>Uptown Studios created a digital partner toolkit that included social media, flyers, eblast content, and texting information. San Mateo County BHRS distributed these toolkits to their partners, such as YLI and Peninsula Family Services.</p>
<p>Postcards - Use direct mail to send out two postcards with QR codes to allow users to download the app and sign-up easily.</p>	<p>Uptown Studios developed two postcards, one for each target audience. Uptown Studios mailed 10,000 postcards on July 22, 2022.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mailed one postcard to 2,949 Young Adults aged 18 to 24 living in San Mateo County. • Mailed one postcard to 7,051 Older Adults aged 55+ living in San Mateo County.
<p>Monthly Eblasts - Send out monthly eblasts, including information about the app's services and instructions on downloading the app with the specialized codes from June 29, 2022, through September 22, 2022.</p>	<p>Monthly eblasts did not get prioritized in the budget; therefore, Uptown Studios did not create and send out monthly eblasts. However, the digital partner toolkits included eblast content, and partner organizations were encouraged to send an eblast to their contacts.</p>
<p>Flyers - Create flyers to be distributed by partners to local health care centers, older adult communities, and libraries with information on how to download and sign-up for the Wysa app.</p>	<p>Uptown Studios created two flyers, one for each target audience, and included them in the digital partner toolkits.</p>
<p>News Outlets - Contact local news outlets to promote information about the Wysa app and San Mateo County services and resources for older adults aged 55+.</p>	<p>Uptown Studios created and managed the implementation of a print ad for the Daily Journal. This ad targeted older adults aged 55 +. The ad ran weekly for five weeks, from July 25, 2022, to August 22, 2022. Because of the print ad space purchased, the Daily</p>

	<p>Journal gave San Mateo County BHRS a free digital ad space on its website during the same period.</p>
<p>Landing Page - Develop a landing page with information about Wysa, mental wellness, and the county's available resources.</p>	<p>Uptown Studios created content for the campaign landing page while CalMHSA managed the development portion. The landing page went live on March 7, 2022. There have been 868 page views with a bounce rate of 85.48%.</p>



Digital Ads + Organic Social Media





Uptown Studios executed a combination of organic social media and paid digital ads to reach the target audiences. Uptown Studios incorporated positive and supportive messaging to reduce the stigma of mental wellness support. The graphics used had a diverse range of younger and older adults.

Uptown Studios created and scheduled posts across Facebook and Instagram from June 28, 2022, through August 17, 2022. Due to other health-related concerns within San Mateo County, the focus on the county's social media pages shifted, and Uptown Studios could not continue posting to the county's social media pages after August 17. Because the county's social media channels were not used for the entire campaign duration, Uptown Studios believes this affected the overall reach of the campaign messaging and is likely one of the factors that led to lower utilization of Wysa.

Paid social media ads ran on Facebook and Instagram from June 29, 2022, to September 22, 2022. There were 20,079 ad clicks across all paid social ads, resulting in an average click-through rate of 0.51%. The top ad, which received 485 clicks, included candid imagery of a younger adult on their phone.

Top Organic Social Media Posts


Post Content	Impressions	Reach	Engagements	Engagement Rate (per Impression)
<p>San Mateo County Health Wed 7/20/2022 11:05 am PDT</p> <p>Find some peace and calm with FREE subscriptions to Wysa, available to everyone living, working, or attending...</p> 	1,067	1,005	11	1%
<p>San Mateo County Health Wed 7/6/2022 1:37 pm PDT</p> <p>Open to trying something new? Work on self care, with Wysa, a wellness app for your phone or tablet, now available FRE...</p> 	1,207	1,121	11	0.9%

 <p>San Mateo County Health Wed 6/29/2022 2:00 pm PDT</p> <p>Mental wellness is important! That's why San Mateo County is offering FREE subscriptions to Wysa, a wellness app....</p>  <table border="1"> <tr><td>Impressions</td><td>1,596</td></tr> <tr><td>Reach</td><td>1,495</td></tr> <tr><td>Engagements <i>i</i></td><td>29</td></tr> <tr><td>Engagement Rate (per Impression)</td><td>1.8%</td></tr> </table>	Impressions	1,596	Reach	1,495	Engagements <i>i</i>	29	Engagement Rate (per Impression)	1.8%	 <p>San Mateo County Health Tue 6/28/2022 1:11 pm PDT</p> <p>These are trying times! We can all use some help finding a bit of chill. Those living, working, or going to school in Sa...</p>  <table border="1"> <tr><td>Impressions</td><td>1,313</td></tr> <tr><td>Reach</td><td>1,223</td></tr> <tr><td>Engagements <i>i</i></td><td>7</td></tr> <tr><td>Engagement Rate (per Impression)</td><td>0.5%</td></tr> </table>	Impressions	1,313	Reach	1,223	Engagements <i>i</i>	7	Engagement Rate (per Impression)	0.5%
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Organic Social Media Results

Measurement	Result
Engagements	15,628
Impressions	1,676,146
Post Clicks	7,115
Total Net Audience Growth	117

Top Performing Ad

<p>Ad Image</p>	
<p>Headline</p>	<p>Reset. Rebuild. Relax. For Free</p>
<p>Description</p>	<p>Take a moment for yourself. Visit our website to access a FREE subscription to the mental wellness app, Wysa.</p>
<p>People Reached</p>	<p>219,658</p>
<p>Impressions</p>	<p>628,564</p>
<p>Clicks</p>	<p>485</p>
<p>CTR</p>	<p>0.08%</p>

Paid Social Media Advertising Results





Measurement	Result
Reach	390,095
Impressions	3,931,261
Clicks	20,079
CTR	0.51%

Google Advertising Results

Measurement	Result
Impressions	42,163
Clicks	1,771
CTR	4.20%

Postcards

The Uptown Studios Team developed two postcards and mailed them to 10,000 San Mateo County residents. Each postcard was designed for a specific target audience: older adults and younger adults. By mailing postcards, San Mateo County BHRIS could reach its target audiences directly in their homes. The postcards provided information about Wysa and led people to the campaign landing page to download the app and find other resources San Mateo County provides.

Target Audience	Graphics
<p>Younger Adults - Mailed 2,949 of 10,000 postcards to Young Adults aged 18 to 24 living in San Mateo County</p>	 <p>The graphic shows a young woman with dark, curly hair holding a smartphone in front of her face. The phone screen displays the Wysa app logo. Below the image is a decorative wave graphic in shades of green, yellow, and orange.</p> <p>PRIORITIZE YOUR MENTAL WELLNESS</p> <p>It's okay to need a little help sometimes. Your mental health is just as important as your physical health. San Mateo County Behavioral Health and Recovery Services has partnered with Help@Hand to offer a free subscription to the Wysa app to those living, working, or going to school in San Mateo County to get you the help you are looking for.</p> <p>It's Okay To Not Be Okay. To download the app, use this QR code, or visit this link: HelpAtHandCA.org/San-Mateo</p>   

Older Adults -

Mailed 7,051 Of 10,000 postcards to Older Adults aged 55+ living in San Mateo County



WE'RE HERE TO HELP

It's okay to need a little help sometimes. San Mateo County Behavioral Health and Recovery Services has partnered with Help@Hand to offer a free subscription to the Wysa app to those living, working, or going to school in San Mateo County to get you the help you are looking for.

It's Okay To Not Be Okay.

To download the app, use this QR code, or visit this link:
HelpAtHandCA.org/San-Mateo



Bus Ads

Uptown Studios created a single ad to display on 30 buses throughout San Mateo County. The ads were displayed on the outside of buses beginning August 22, 2022, and will stay through December 31, 2022. The ads are on 15 buses on the North garage route and 15 on the South garage route in San Mateo County. The bus ads will receive 7,800,000 impressions. This number estimates the number of people who will see this ad based on traffic in the area during the buses' run. Uptown Studios could not obtain transit shelter ads or billboards because of the high cost and lack of availability in San Mateo County.

Images of Bus Ad



Partner Toolkit

The Uptown Studios team developed a digital partner toolkit for San Mateo County BHRS to share with existing partners and local organizations in San Mateo County. The toolkit included a description of the Wellness For All campaign, two flyers, social media content, eblast content, and texting outreach content. San Mateo County BHRS sent these toolkits to YLI, Peninsula Family Services, and over 2,000 members on their subscriber list.






Link To The toolkit

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1BC8scJRLfdJqDrUIV5sfV3qYQMs385nt/view?usp=sharing>

Print Ad

Uptown Studios created and managed the implementation of a print ad for the Daily Journal. A print ad was chosen to target older adults aged 55+ because it is a media outlet that this age group commonly uses to receive news and other information. The ad ran weekly for five weeks, from July 25, 2022, to August 22, 2022. Because of the print ad space purchased, the Daily Journal gave San Mateo County BHRs a free digital ad space on its website during the same period.

Images of Print + Digital Ads

Print Ad	Digital Ad
 <p>IT'S OKAY TO NOT BE OKAY</p> <p>The hectic times we're living in have taken a toll on us all. We want you to know, it's okay to not be okay. San Mateo County has resources available to help!</p> <p>Get Free Access To The Wysa Wellness App And Other Resources Available In The County</p> <p>To download the app, use this QR code, or visit this link: HelpAtHandCA.org/San-Mateo</p>   	 <p>Stay connected to the person that matters most, YOU.</p> <p>Note: This ad was clickable and drove people to the campaign landing page.</p>

Landing Page

Uptown Studios created content for the campaign landing page while CalMHSA managed the development portion. The landing page went live on March 7, 2022. The landing page included information on downloading and signing up for the Wysa app, a video about Wysa, and a list of resources available to older adults in San Mateo County. There was also a survey that users were required to complete to get their access code and free access to the app for the first three months of the campaign.

For September, the landing page had 868 page views, and users spent an average of 2:42 minutes on the page. The landing page had a bounce rate of 85.48%, meaning that 85.48% of visitors left the page after clicking on the link. The highest pageviews were from September 12, 2022, to September 15, 2022.

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diverse youth and adults on mobile devices

Wysa is a wellness app that can help you get your wellness back on track. San Mateo County is offering free subscriptions to Wysa, available 24x7, anytime, anywhere. Wysa is anonymous and guides you through mindfulness and over 150+ self-care tools.

Ready to try Wysa for free?

Use the access code provided below to get full free access to the Wysa app. Just click on your age group link to be directed to download the app. *If you already have the Wysa app on your device, type: #referralcode in the Wysa chat.*

Campaign Summary

To achieve the campaign goal of obtaining 7,000 Wysa app downloads by the end of the year, Uptown Studios implemented several strategies. Organic social media and digital ads were two strategies implemented to reach both target audiences. These strategies encouraged San Mateo County residents to download Wysa, provided resources available to older adults, and destigmatized talking about mental health.

To drive awareness of the campaign and encourage Wysa app downloads, Uptown Studios used bus ads, print ads, and postcards. Bus ads are displayed on 30 buses throughout San Mateo County until December 31, 2022. A print ad ran in the Daily Journal weekly for five weeks, from July 25, 2022, to August 22, 2022. Postcards were sent to 10,000 San Mateo County residents in June 2022. Both the bus and print ads targeted older adults in San Mateo County, while the postcards targeted older and younger adults.

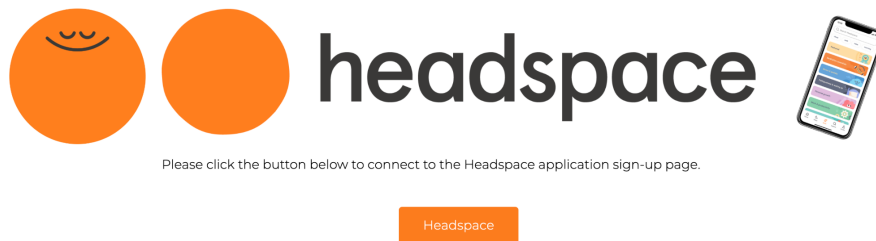
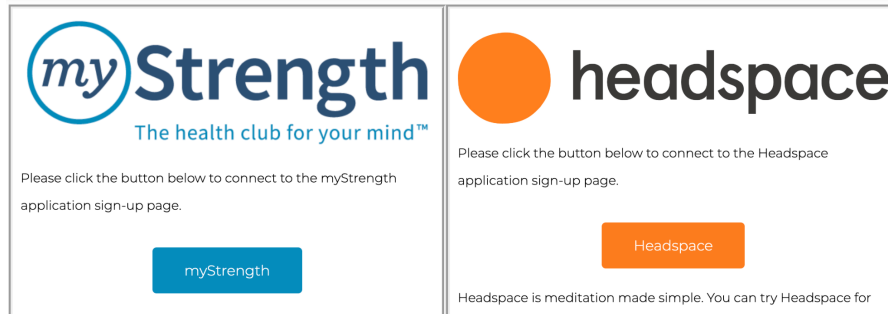
A Digital Partner Toolkit was sent out to over 2,000 partner organizations in San Mateo County. The toolkit included flyers, eblast content, organic social media content, and texting information. The toolkit's purpose was to have partners talk to their communities about the campaign, show their community members how to download Wysa, and share other resources available to older adults through San Mateo County.

All materials created for the campaign drove to a landing page for which Uptown Studios provided copy and graphics. It included information about Wysa and resources available through the county. People who downloaded the Wysa app had to go through the landing page to receive an access code.

There were 285 Wysa app downloads by September 2022. The number of Wysa app downloads, thus far, is less than anticipated. Uptown Studios provides recommendations in the section below to improve the number of downloads by December 2022.

Recommendations

- Simplify the landing page
 - Turn all links on the landing page into a button, so the links are more eye-catching
 - Examples:



Local resources for Claremont, LaVerne and Pomona

COVID-19 Resources

Tri-City Wellness Center

Wellness Apps

- Promote Wysa app using messaging that highlights app features and use other well known sources that have written articles or made posts about Wysa to share on social media
 - "Having a hard time falling asleep at night? Wysa offers sleep stories to help you fall asleep and stay asleep! Get FREE access to the app through San Mateo County. Visit our website to get your free access now!
 - Example of articles to share:
<https://www.businesswire.com/news/home/20220718005028/en/Wysa-Secure-s-20m-to-Address-Global-Mental-Health-Demand-With-AI-Digital-Therapeutics>

- Have someone well-known from the county talk about why they love the app
 - Have a sports player, team mascot, mayor, etc take a video talking about WYSA and how the county is offering free access and post that to social media or the landing page.
- Resume organic social media postings. Halting posts half way through the campaign caused a setback on reach.
 - The algorithm (on all social media platforms) appreciates more frequent posting - around three to four times per week.
 - Consider creating new social media accounts under "Wellness For All" rather than using the county's social media accounts. This allows you to target the specific audience for this campaign by tailoring the posts and messaging for them
 - Uptown has created Berkeley Wellness For All and Tri-City Wellness For All social media accounts for similar campaigns
 - Continue encouraging partners to share and repost BHRS social media posts to increase reach and engagement