

# Start Your Path: Behavioral Health Careers



Washington State  
Health Care Authority

# Start Your Path Campaign

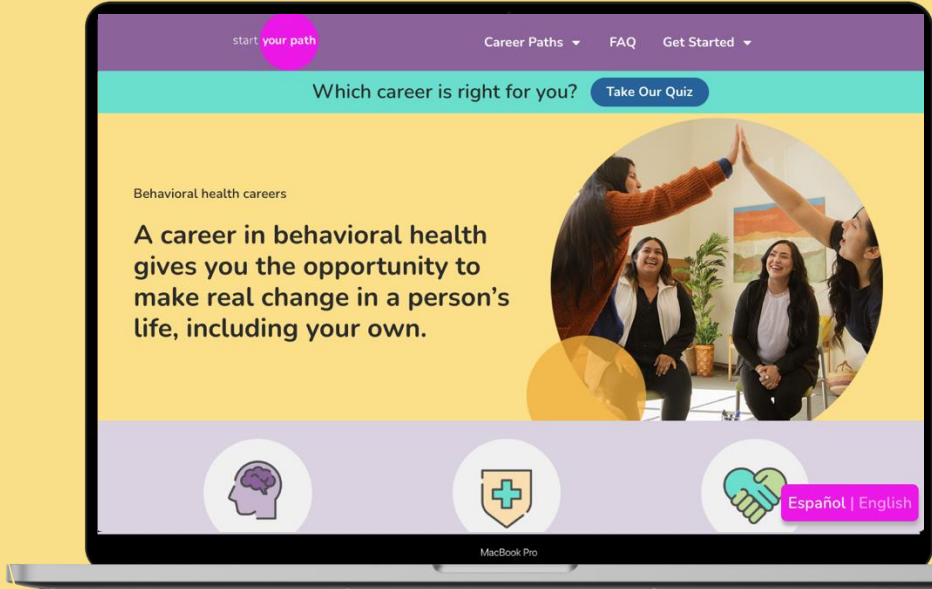
SPONSORED BY WASHINGTON STATE HEALTH CARE AUTHORITY

**Goal:** Increase awareness of and interest in behavioral health careers to address the growing need for diverse behavioral health professionals in Washington state

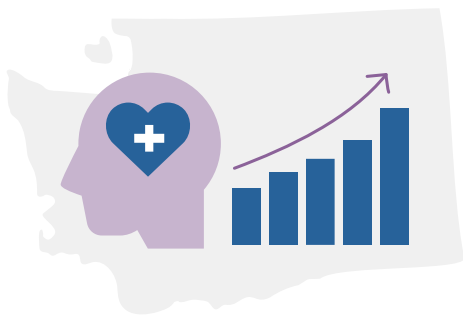
Join us at

[StartYourPath.org](https://StartYourPath.org)

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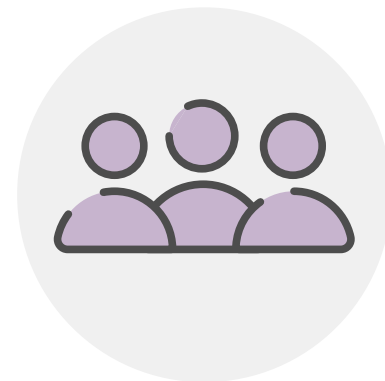
# Behavioral Health Provider Needs in WA



Nearly 1 in 3 adults has had either a substance use disorder or any mental illness in the past year.



**1.4M Washingtonians** experiencing mental illness + **500K Washingtonians** with a substance use disorder



People of color represent less than 20% of the behavioral health workforce.

# Campaign Phases

## **Phase I** *Sept. 2021 – Dec. 2021*

- Initial awareness phase

## **Phase II** *Oct. 2022 – Dec. 2022*

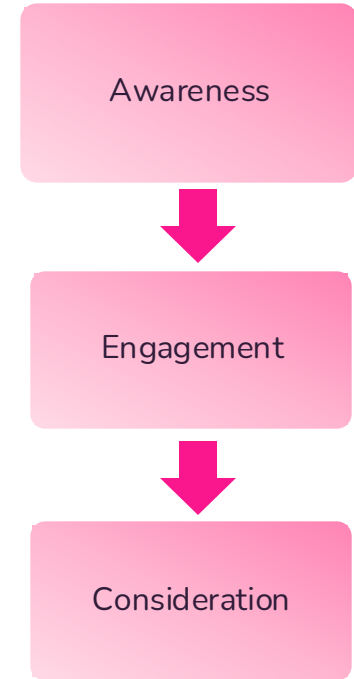
- Continue awareness, encourage exploration of careers and resources

## **Phase III** *Jun. 2023 – Jul. 2024*

- Continue awareness, continue encouraging engagement to gain audience insights, behaviors and preference

## **Phase IV** *Sept. 2024 – Feb. 2025*

- Expand awareness, while continuing to drive engagement in specific career paths



# Key Components of the Campaign

## Research-Informed Audiences

- Individuals entering the workforce WA (18 - 24 year olds)
- Individuals who are unemployed, underemployed and career-changers (25 – 44 year olds)
- Lived experience

## Creative + Messaging

(Tailored to reflect diversity of WA and to reflect the values that resonate with our audiences)

- **Real BH professionals:** English and Spanish speaking, BIPOC,
- **Geographic diversity:** urban, rural, suburban, tribal
- **We want our audiences to feel:**
  - Inspired and empowered to be a part of solving a changing facing our society

## Landing Page/Website

(Serves as a central location for simple, streamlined information on BH careers)

- Highlights in-demand careers:
  - SUD professional
  - SUD Prevention
  - Peer Counselor
  - Licensed Mental Health Counselor
- Career Quiz

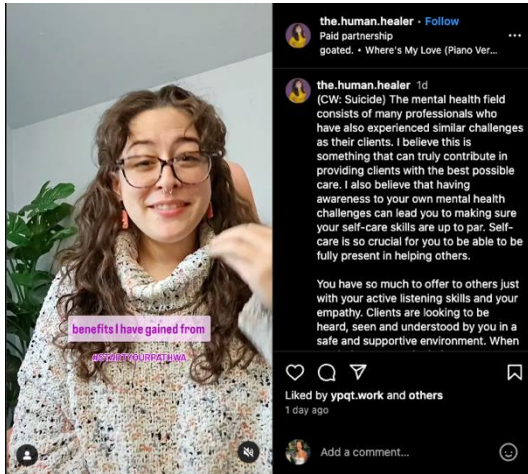
## Integrated Marketing Approach

(Highly targeted and customized to reach our key audiences)

- We optimize our approach each year, but a few activations:
  - Social media (ex: Instagram, LinkedIn, Reddit, TikTok, etc.)
  - Video, including online video and connected TV (ex: YouTube, Amazon, etc.)
  - In-person events, particularly w/ students

# Highlights from the Latest Phase

## Partnering w/ Online Influencers



## Online + Out-of-Home Ads



## In-Person Events



# Sharing Stories of Real Behavioral Health Professionals

VIDEOS



# Campaign Ad Performance To Date

CAMPAIGN-TO-DATE METRICS, 9.13.21 – 7.31.24

182,417,567  
IMPRESSIONS

- **Impressions:** The total number of times content was displayed
- **What it tells us:** The number of times our ad was potentially viewed by audiences, broadening awareness

30,382,464  
VIDEO COMPLETES

- **Video Completes:** The total of viewers who watched an entire video ad without skipping
- **What it tells us:** That a viewer was engaged and interested with the video

327,409  
WEB SESSIONS

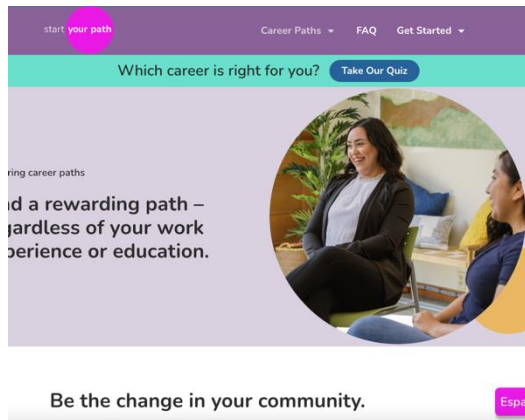
- **Website/Landing Page Sessions:** The number of times a user is directed to a campaign site and engaged
- **What it tells us:** A user saw an ad, was interested in the content and visited the website seeking information



# Key Takeaways for Other Workforce Efforts



Share real, authentic and diverse stories from current professionals



Centralize information, particularly on credentials, education + salary info



Get in front of your audiences as early as possible



# Washington Behavioral Health Research Insights

# Prospective BH Workforce Insights

QUALITATIVE + QUANTITATIVE RESEARCH

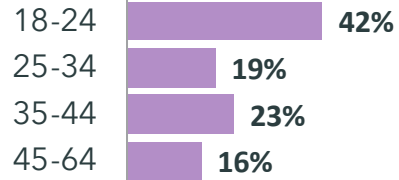
- Focus groups + in-depth interviews (IDIs)
  - 6 focus groups with research-informed audiences (English, Spanish and Bilingual)
  - 8 IDIs with professionals familiar with recruitment and hiring for BH careers
- Pre-campaign launch online survey, N=600 Washington State residents in the workforce (English + Spanish)
- Future research: post-campaign launch online survey, N=600 Washington State residents in the workforce (English + Spanish)



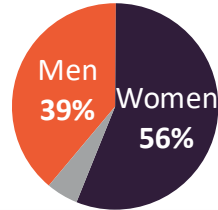
## Demographic breakdown of survey respondents

N=600 Washington State residents in the workforce

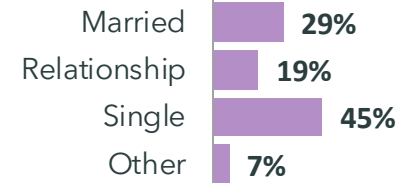
### AGE



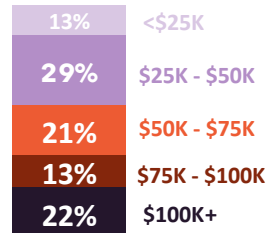
### GENDER



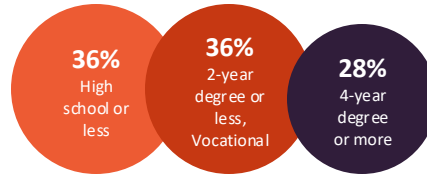
### RELATIONSHIP/MARITAL STATUS



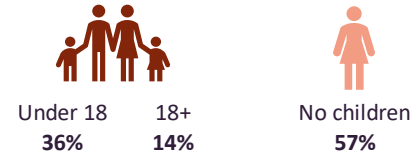
### INCOME



### EDUCATION



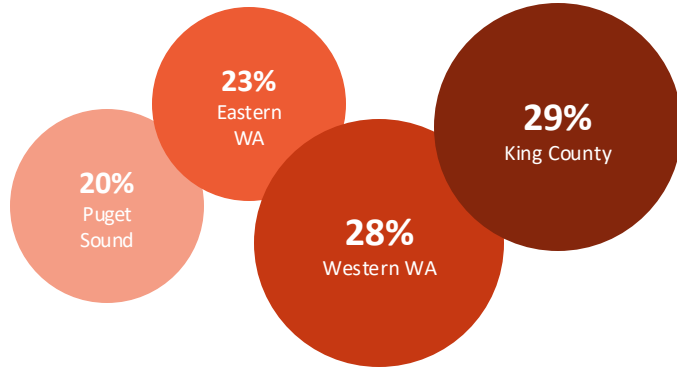
### CHILDREN IN HOUSEHOLD



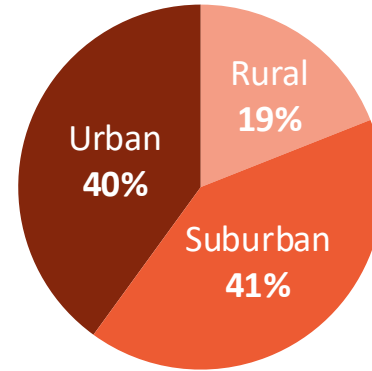
## Demographic breakdown of survey respondents

N=600 Washington State residents in the workforce

### AREA OF STATE



### COMMUNITY TYPE

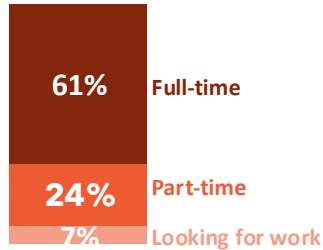


**Demographic breakdown of survey respondents**  
 N=600 Washington State residents in the workforce

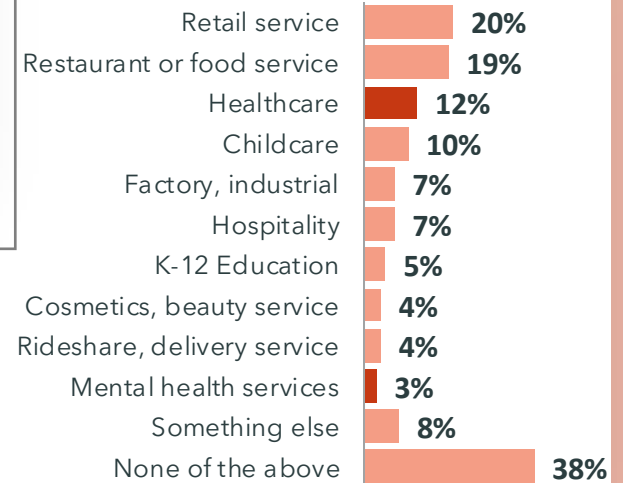
**BILINGUAL FLUENCY  
 COMFORT IN WORK SETTING**  
*(n=156 SPN media respondents)*

Yes	No
<b>70%</b>	<b>30%</b>

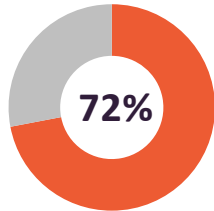
**EMPLOYMENT STATUS**



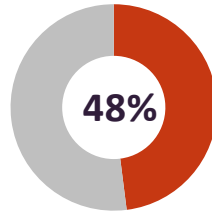
**CURRENT / PREVIOUS INDUSTRY  
 OF EMPLOYMENT**



**CAREER CHANGERS**



**UNDEREMPLOYED**



## Key Factors Underlying Consideration of BH Careers

Just over half of survey participants have considered a career in BH

Those who have considered a BH career mostly think returning to school would help them take the next step, with economic considerations secondary

8 in 10 in the WA workforce consider themselves a person with lived experience, and the same amount know someone struggling with MH or SUD

# Top Motivations, Barriers to Entry and Potential Improvements



## Top Motivations

**Desire to help people**

Interest in mental health  
or the brain

Feeling that one's  
personal experiences  
can help others

## Top Barriers to Entry

**Cost of education or  
credentials**

Perceived lack of work-life  
balance

Emotional stress of the  
job

## Potential Improvements

**Higher wages**

Better support systems to  
prevent burnout

Investment in treatment  
centers to create more  
employment opportunities



# Opportunities for Workforce Development Leaders

**Issue:** Fear of burnout and caregiver fatigue is a top potential barrier to considering a BH career.

**Opportunity:** Share resources that support mental health to prevent burnout. Highlight testimonials with real professionals about how they maintain mental health to prevent burnout.

**Issue:** The WA workforce thinks enrolling in education is the next step they'd need to take, but the cost of credentials or education is a primary concern.

**Opportunity:** Increase awareness of roles that don't require as much credentialing or education. Emphasize additional support available from employers or educational institutions where possible.

**Issue:** The WA workforce wants to see assurance of a good starting salary and higher wages for professionals.

**Opportunity:** Where increases are not feasible, lean into the benefits and resources that BH careers provide, especially those related to employee wellness, flexible work environments and benefits for parents or caregivers.

For more information or resources,  
contact us at:

[HCAHealthWorkforce@hca.wa.gov](mailto:HCAHealthWorkforce@hca.wa.gov)



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# Thank you!



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