

CONEXIONES

healing • compassion • transformation

Local Evaluation Plan

WestEd – December 2019

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Suggested citation: Cerna, R., Wendt, S., & Jones, M. (2019). *Conexiones local evaluation plan*. San Francisco, CA: WestEd.

WestEd is a nonpartisan, nonprofit research, development, and service agency that works with education and other communities throughout the United States and abroad to promote excellence, achieve equity, and improve learning for children, youth, and adults. WestEd has more than a dozen offices nationwide, from Massachusetts, Vermont, Georgia, and Washington, DC, to Arizona and California, with headquarters in San Francisco.

Project Background

Santa Ana Unified School District (SAUSD) is California's 7th largest school district in the state and the largest district in Orange County. It is located within a high-need, complex urban setting that presents barriers to success both within and outside the classroom. SAUSD students have often experienced the devastating impacts of trauma through family disruption, domestic violence, abuse, high crime neighborhoods, homelessness, and extreme poverty. Such challenges tend to lead to additional barriers to educational success, such as mental health issues, substance abuse, gang involvement, incarceration, and high recidivism rates. Each of these factors are strong contributors to increased absenteeism, truancy, disciplinary reports, suspensions, expulsions, dropouts, and involvement in the juvenile justice system.

Addressing the impacts and barriers associated with trauma, the proposed program will build on the district's definition of school climate. This will be achieved by expanding its current collaborative approach, which includes mental health and diversion services, to address the current gaps in substance use, housing support, and job development; these are all aligned with Proposition 47 goals. Through the proposed program, students will be connected to the resources they need; staff will be connected to the professional supports they need; and parents will be connected to the overall process that will contribute to their child's success. For this reason, the proposed program will be referred to **Conexiones**, which means "connections" in Spanish.

Conexiones means "connections" in Spanish and is indicative of the collaborative approach the program will take to connect students to resources they need.

The three primary goals for **Conexiones** are to: (1) decrease student recidivism for substance use-related offenses; (2) decrease student disciplinary referrals and suspensions; increase student social and emotional health; and (3) create a streamlined, common referral process and data tracking system for students at-risk for arrest. These goals will be accomplished through the following objectives by the end of the grant: (1) students will have the supports necessary to avoid or decrease substance use and will recognize the long-term impact of substance use; (2) students will have increased engagement in restorative practices and will have increased access to mental health, substance use treatment, and supportive services; and (3) school Coordination of Services Teams (COST) will utilize a universal referral form to report student needs and request support.

To ensure a comprehensive evaluation of the impacts of **Conexiones** and its alignment with Prop 47 Guidelines, SAUSD has subcontracted with WestEd as the independent evaluator. The overarching purpose of the evaluation is to increase understanding of what works and to identify effective practices to reduce recidivism for substance use-related crimes among SAUSD students. A logic model outlining the relationship between inputs, activities, outputs, and outcomes is included in Appendix A.

Project Activities

Through **Conexiones**, SAUSD and its partners will establish a comprehensive wraparound program that includes services related to substance use, mental health, diversion and support services for eligible students at eight target school sites. Target schools were selected due to the high rates of substance use-related disciplinary reports. Services will be provided to students who meet one of three eligibility requirements: substance use-related offense (i.e., substance use-related suspension or expulsion), self-reported substance use, or Santa Ana School Police (SASPD) Referral for a substance use-related offense.

Conexiones Schools

Century High School
Chavez Academy
Griset Academy
Lathrop Intermediate School
McFadden Intermediate School
REACH Academy
Sierra Intermediate School
Valley High School

Conexiones will provide the following services at the target sites:

- **Substance Use Counseling:** Project Kinship, a key SAUSD community partner organization, will provide group and individual counseling for substance use.
- **Mental Health Services:** SAUSD staff will provide individual mental health counseling.
- **Support Services:** Students in need of support services, such as assistance with food, case management, housing, transportation, will be referred to Project Kinship.
- **Diversion Services:** Three options are offered:
 1. Students can be referred to restorative practices interventions offered by SAUSD, Project Kinship, or Neutral Ground, another key SAUSD community partner organization; these will be one-time sessions.
 2. Students can be referred to Youth Diversion, a program offered by SASPD for students who have a previous substance use-related offense.
 3. Students can be referred to the Toward No Drug Abuse Saturday program, 6-hour, one-time session.

A universal common referral form will be utilized to refer students to Conexiones services. A draft of the **Conexiones** Referral is included in Appendix B. The **Conexiones** Referral form will be completed by the school site Coordination of Services Teams (COST). The COST is a group of individuals at each school site who work together to address student needs. The majority of the **Conexiones** referrals will originate from the COST team and will include referrals for students who are eligible for services because they 1) have a substance use-related offense (i.e., suspension or expulsion) or 2) self-report substance use. The COST will complete a **Conexiones** referral form and provide the form to the Project Kinship Program Manager and **Conexiones** Coordinator. The Project Kinship Program Manager and **Conexiones** Coordinators will each be assigned to four target schools and will be responsible for attending monthly COST meetings and maintaining ongoing communication with the school-site COST. The third way students can be referred for **Conexiones** services is via the SASPD if they attend a target site and have a substance use-related arrest; in these cases, the SASPD will provide the referral directly to the **Conexiones** Coordinator. An informational flyer will be provided to each COST that explains the program, eligibility criteria, participating schools, and referral process is included in Appendix C. The **Conexiones** intake form that will be completed for all students at intake is included in Appendix D.

Process Evaluation

Process and fidelity data will be collected throughout all years of the project. WestEd will utilize qualitative and quantitative analysis techniques to report findings and to ensure interventions are implemented as intended. WestEd will conduct surveys and focus groups with the services providers, COST members, and members from the **Conexiones** Local Advisory Committee to understand collaboration among the partners and usefulness of the common referral system. WestEd will identify any possible lapses in the referral process and discuss strategies for improving the referral process. WestEd will conduct these focus groups at least annually. WestEd will also conduct focus groups with subgroups of students to discuss knowledge of services, participation in services, and perceived usefulness of services.

For quantitative data, WestEd will track three variables: (1) staff qualification, (2) student referrals, and (3) student participation in services. WestEd will assess whether **Conexiones** staff have been appropriately trained in the service they are providing by soliciting confirmation of training from SAUSD and its partnering agencies. This will be a binary variable indicating whether staff are appropriately trained. A definition of appropriate training will be decided in collaboration with SAUSD **Conexiones** leadership. These checks will occur at the beginning of the project and anytime a new staff member is onboarded.

Project Kinship will document referrals to and participation in all **Conexiones** services and deliver student-level referral and participation data to WestEd on a monthly basis. Student referral forms will include a unique ID for each student, so that their referral to and participation in services can be tracked. Student participation will also be compared to referrals to create a variable measuring the rate at which students comply with referrals. For mental health and substance use referrals, attending a minimum of four sessions will be considered “engagement” in **Conexiones**, and attending a minimum of eight sessions will be considered “completion” of **Conexiones** services (though students may participate in more than eight sessions). For diversion services that are one-day sessions (e.g., Toward No Drug Abuse Saturday program), program attendance will be a single, binary variable.

Outcome Evaluation

Outcomes of **Conexiones** will be evaluated using a pretest–posttest design. Two types of outcomes will be examined: school-level and person-level. Because enrollment will be continuous (i.e., youth are not enrolled as part of a cohort), person-level outcome measurement will vary for each youth. However, in all cases, the baseline measurement will occur prior to participation in services; the outcome measurement will occur after programming has been received.

School-Level Outcomes

The treatment group will consist of all the **Conexiones** schools. The comparison group will be the SAUSD schools that do not receive **Conexiones** but have similar characteristics as the treatment schools. Characteristics include school size, grade levels served, and prevalence of substance-use related school offenses. The treatment schools were chosen due to their high-level of need, thus, comparison schools will inherently be different at pretest,

Local definition of revisidism:
A new substance use-related school offense.

introducing bias into the comparative analysis. Taking this bias into account, raw numbers will not be directly compared between groups, but rather, change scores will be calculated for outcomes of interest. Any positive change in the treatment schools that goes beyond changes in the comparison group will be considered evidence that the treatment, rather than external factors, contributed to positive change.

School-level outcomes will include rates of substance use-related disciplinary referrals, suspensions, and recidivism. Data on substance use-related disciplinary referrals and suspensions will be collected from SAUSD.

Student-Level Outcomes

A benefit of the school-level approach is that it allows for a comparison with non-treatment schools. However, a limitation is that it lacks the ability to disentangle the relative impacts of the various **Conexiones** services. Consequently, WestEd will also analyze student-level identifiable data. WestEd will first examine how many participants fall into each possible combination of services (e.g., referrals for mental health and substance use services versus referrals for mental health services only). Based on those combinations, dosage indicators will be created and used in outcome analyses as covariates to examine the relative impacts of the constellations of services received.

To assess student-level changes, WestEd will utilize an existing annual social and emotional health survey that asks questions regarding social and emotional competencies including self-management, growth mindset, and social awareness. This survey is administered annually to every student in the district and is tracked by student ID. WestEd will look specifically at survey data for students involved in **Conexiones**. **Conexiones** students will also participate in a substance use perceptions questionnaire developed by WestEd prior to and after receiving substance use-related services. Finally, to evaluate recidivism, SASPD will collect and share with WestEd data on substance use-related new arrests, probation violations, and probation discharges.

Exhibit A. Project goals, objectives, data sources, and analysis plan.

Goal	Objective	Data Sources	Analysis Plan
<p>Goal 1: To decrease student recidivism for substance use related offenses.</p>	<p>By the end of the program, students will have the supports necessary to avoid or decrease substance use and will recognize the long-term impact of substance use.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Santa Ana School Police (SASP) • Pre/post CORE survey • Perceptions of substance use survey • Referral logs • Monthly data sheets • SAUSD 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Descriptives • Regression
<p>Goal 2: To decrease student disciplinary referrals and suspensions and increase student social and emotional health.</p>	<p>By the end of the program, students will have increased engagement in Restorative Practices and will have increased access to mental health and substance use treatment supports.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SASP • Pre/post CORE survey • Perceptions of substance use survey • Referral logs • Monthly data sheets • Student focus groups • SAUSD 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Descriptives • Regression • Content Analysis
<p>Goal 3: To create a streamlined, common referral process and data tracking system for students at-risk for arrest.</p>	<p>By the end of the program, School Administrator, School Counselors, Nurse, Parent and Community Liaison, School Social Workers (SSW), Restorative Practice Interventionists (RPI), Certified Alcohol and Drug Counselors (CADC), Housing Case Manager, and Job Developers will have a common referral system to identify and track services provided to students.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Referral forms • Partner surveys • Local Advisory Committee Interviews • COST Members • Focus groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Descriptives • Regression • Content Analysis

Dissemination

WestEd will complete all evaluation reporting including quarterly progress reports, Two-Year Preliminary Evaluation Report, Final Local Evaluation Report, and ongoing dissemination activities. All reports will be submitted per the BSCC timeline. Quarterly Reports will focus on addressing the process-related outcomes, such as the number of students served by the program activities, services available and received, demographic characteristics of participants, and progress toward each of the three project goals. A Two-Year Preliminary Evaluation Report will address process and outcome components, such as whether **Conexiones** followed the proposed logic model activities, whether targets were met, whether activities were implemented as intended, etc. The report will outline findings related to the implementation, the impact, and suggestions for continued program improvement. The Final Evaluation Report will culminate findings regarding evaluation goals, methodology, progress toward project goals, process and outcome findings, barriers to success, and unintended outcomes. Dissemination of evaluation results will include presentations to the Local Advisory Committee, the Final Evaluation Report, and WestEd's dissemination platforms, which include wested.org, and a Justice and Prevention Research Center newsletter, which has a large readership.

Appendix A.

Conexiones Logic Model

Inputs	Activities	Outputs	Short-term Outcomes	Long-term Outcomes
<p>History of partnership between SAUSD and:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project Kinship • Neutral Ground • WestEd <p>Existing Coordination of Services Teams (COST)</p> <p>Conexiones Coordinator</p> <p>Project Kinship Coordinator</p> <p>SAUSD Mental Healthy Counselors</p>	<p>Develop a common referral form for Conexiones</p> <p>Identify students who have substance use-related offenses and may be in need of substance use, mental health, diversion, or support services</p> <p>Utilize Conexiones referral form to refer students in need of substance use, mental health, diversion, or support services</p> <p>Provide substance use, mental health, diversion, or support services</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of trained substance use counselors providing services • Number of trained mental health professional providing services • Number of diversion activities • Number of support services provided • Number of students referred • Number of referrals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of students engaged in Conexiones • Number of students completed Conexiones services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students report increases in social and emotional competencies • Students report increases in knowledge of substance use impacts • Reduction in number of substance use-related offenses • Reduction in number of substance use-related arrests

Appendix B.

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA:

- Substance use-related offense
- SASPD referral
- Self-reported substance use

CONEXIONES Referral Form



REFERRING PARTY CONTACT INFORMATION

Referring Person/Title:		Agency/Department:		Referral Date (Required):
School Site:	Phone:	Fax:	E-mail:	

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION

Name (Last Name, First Name, MI)		Aeries ID (Required)	Date of Birth:	Age:	
Mailing Address: <input type="checkbox"/> Participant lives here		Gender: <input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female <input type="checkbox"/> Non-Binary <input type="checkbox"/> Prefer to Self-Define <input type="checkbox"/> Prefer Not to State			
Street		Race/Ethnicity:		Preferred Language:	
City	State	Zip Code	Home Phone:		Alternate Phone:

PARTICIPANT EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION

Name:		Relationship:		Phone:
Address:		<input type="checkbox"/> Participant lives here		Language Spoken by Emergency Contact:

POTENTIAL NEEDS

- | | | | |
|---|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Assistance with Food | <input type="checkbox"/> Civil Legal Services | <input type="checkbox"/> Housing Services | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation Services |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Basic Necessities | <input type="checkbox"/> Education Services | <input type="checkbox"/> Mental Health Services | <input type="checkbox"/> Other Support Services |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Case Management | <input type="checkbox"/> Employment Services | <input type="checkbox"/> Social Services | <input type="checkbox"/> Additional Services (Diversion) |

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Unsure | Any concerns with securing right to work documents or enrolling in government benefits? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Unsure | Does Conexiones staff need to talk with referring person prior to intake? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Unsure | Has participant been notified that a Conexiones staff will contact him/her or their emergency contact? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Unsure | OK to leave messages? |

ADDITIONAL NOTES FROM REFERRING PARTY

Please give completed form to Conexiones or Project Kinship Coordinator

CONEXIONES USE ONLY

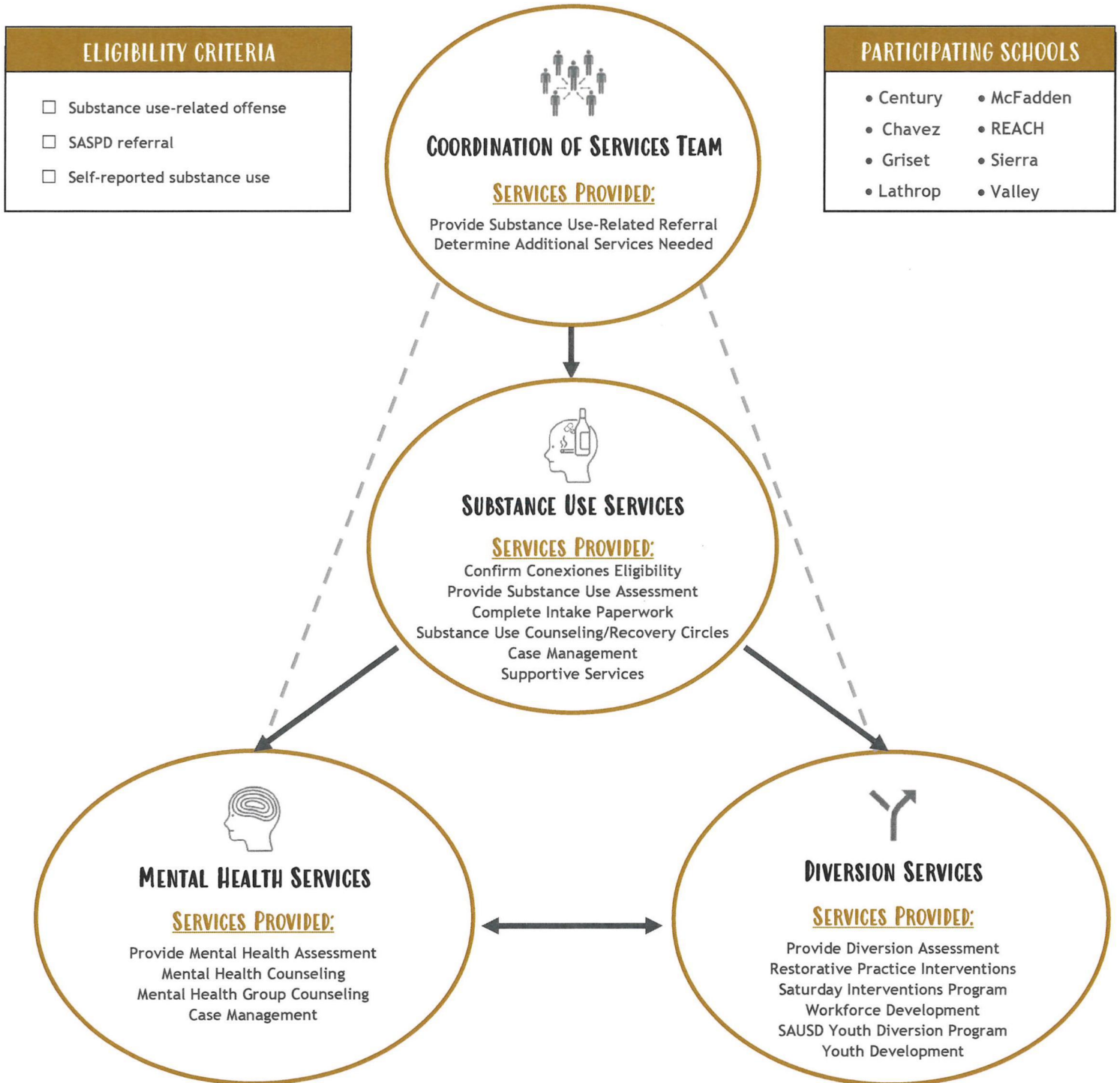
Date of COST Meeting:	Assigned Screening/Intake Team for Substance Use: <input type="checkbox"/> Project Kinship <input type="checkbox"/> SAUSD	Assigned Screening/Intake Staff:
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Appendix C.

CONEXIONES FLOW OF SERVICES

PROJECT SUMMARY:

Conexiones is a collaborative led by the Santa Ana Unified School District in an effort to provide mental health, substance use treatment, diversion, housing assistance, and job development at eight target school sites in the City of Santa Ana.



ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

- Substance use-related offense
- SASPD referral
- Self-reported substance use

PARTICIPATING SCHOOLS

- Century
- Chavez
- Griset
- Lathrop
- McFadden
- REACH
- Sierra
- Valley

COORDINATION OF SERVICES TEAM

SERVICES PROVIDED:
Provide Substance Use-Related Referral
Determine Additional Services Needed

SUBSTANCE USE SERVICES

SERVICES PROVIDED:
Confirm Conexiones Eligibility
Provide Substance Use Assessment
Complete Intake Paperwork
Substance Use Counseling/Recovery Circles
Case Management
Supportive Services

MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

SERVICES PROVIDED:
Provide Mental Health Assessment
Mental Health Counseling
Mental Health Group Counseling
Case Management

DIVERSION SERVICES

SERVICES PROVIDED:
Provide Diversion Assessment
Restorative Practice Interventions
Saturday Interventions Program
Workforce Development
SAUSD Youth Diversion Program
Youth Development



Appendix D.



CONEXIONES

Intake Form

School Site: _____

Date _____

Assigned Intake Team: _____

Date _____

CLIENT INFORMATION

Last Name	First Name	M.I.	DOB	Age	Unique ID
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NEEDS ASSESSMENT

Assistance with Food <input type="checkbox"/> Placeholder text <input type="checkbox"/> Placeholder text	Education Services <input type="checkbox"/> Placeholder text <input type="checkbox"/> Placeholder text	Social Services <input type="checkbox"/> Placeholder text <input type="checkbox"/> Placeholder text
Basic Necessities <input type="checkbox"/> Placeholder text <input type="checkbox"/> Placeholder text	Employment Services <input type="checkbox"/> Placeholder text <input type="checkbox"/> Placeholder text	Transportation Services <input type="checkbox"/> Placeholder text <input type="checkbox"/> Placeholder text
Case Management <input type="checkbox"/> Placeholder text <input type="checkbox"/> Placeholder text	Housing Services <input type="checkbox"/> Placeholder text <input type="checkbox"/> Placeholder text	Other Support Services <input type="checkbox"/> Placeholder text <input type="checkbox"/> Placeholder text
Civil Legal Services <input type="checkbox"/> Placeholder text <input type="checkbox"/> Placeholder text	Mental Health Services <input type="checkbox"/> Placeholder text <input type="checkbox"/> Placeholder text	Additional Services (Diversion) <input type="checkbox"/> Placeholder text <input type="checkbox"/> Placeholder text

STATUS AT INTAKE

Probation, Parole, PRCS	Probation, parole, or post release community supervision (PRCS) status at date of intake?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Level of Education <i>(Check Current Grade)</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> 6th <input type="checkbox"/> 7th <input type="checkbox"/> 8th <input type="checkbox"/> 9th <input type="checkbox"/> 10th <input type="checkbox"/> 11th <input type="checkbox"/> 12th <input type="checkbox"/> High School Graduation	<input type="checkbox"/> GED <input type="checkbox"/> Some College <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____
Employment Status	<input type="checkbox"/> Employed, Full Time <input type="checkbox"/> Employed, Part Time <input type="checkbox"/> Unemployed	<input type="checkbox"/> Not working due to age (under 15 years of age) or full-time student status <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____
Housing Status	<input type="checkbox"/> Independent Living/Housing <input type="checkbox"/> Living w/Immediate Family <input type="checkbox"/> Relative & Kinship Support <input type="checkbox"/> Foster Care	<input type="checkbox"/> Permanent Supportive Housing <input type="checkbox"/> Bridge Housing <input type="checkbox"/> Transitional Housing <input type="checkbox"/> Rapid Rehousing <input type="checkbox"/> Sober Living Home <input type="checkbox"/> Homeless <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____



Turn page over to complete →



CONEXIONES

Intake Form

ELIGIBILITY

Provisional Substance Use Diagnosis		<input type="checkbox"/> Not Screened <input type="checkbox"/> None Reported <input type="checkbox"/> Mild to Moderate <input type="checkbox"/> Chronic to Severe
Substance Use-Related Offense		<input type="checkbox"/> Not Screened <input type="checkbox"/> None Reported

ENROLLMENT STATUS

Conexiones eligible? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Unknown	Enrolled in services? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	If not enrolled, select reason: <input type="checkbox"/> Ineligible <input type="checkbox"/> Declined Services <input type="checkbox"/> Unable to Reach <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____
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PROVISIONAL GOALS

Service Plan #1		<input type="checkbox"/> N/A
Service Plan #2		<input type="checkbox"/> N/A

TREATMENT TEAM

SUBSTANCE USE	MENTAL HEALTH	DIVERSION
ORG: Project Kinship	ORG:	ORG:
STAFF:	STAFF:	STAFF:

ADDITIONAL NOTES



WE ENVISION A WORLD WHERE HOPE LIVES AND THE CYCLE OF DESPAIR ENDS..