

**PHONE**  
425-747-4937

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**WEBSITE**  
www.youtheastideservices.org

### LOCATIONS

YES serves the Bellevue, Kirkland, Redmond and Sammamish communities, and provides on-site services to 50+ elementary, middle and high schools, and teen/community centers in the Bellevue and Lake Washington School Districts.

**YES Bellevue** (main office)  
999 164th Ave NE  
Bellevue, WA 98008

**YES Kirkland**  
11829 97th Ave NE  
Kirkland, WA 98034

**YES Redmond**  
15600 Redmond Way, #102  
Redmond, WA 98052



999 164th Ave NE  
Bellevue, WA 98008

### MISSION

**Youth Eastside Services (YES)** is a lifeline for kids and families coping with challenges such as emotional distress, substance abuse and violence. Through intervention, outreach and prevention, YES builds confidence and personal responsibility, strengthens family relationships, and advocates for a safer community that cares for its youth.

### SPONSOR A YES FAMILY

## These Families are in Need of Your Help

Many YES families still haven't fully recovered from the worst of the pandemic. Nationally, more than one-third of parents report problems paying for housing, utility, food, or medical costs.

These YES families need your help:

- » One parent had to transition jobs due to COVID, while financially supporting a child applying to colleges. She needs help to supplement the money she set aside for college application fees.
- » A grandma with four grandkids in her custody is now raising them as a single parent, after her husband was moved to a long-term care facility due to a chronic disease. She needs groceries to keep the family fed and healthy.
- » A family who lost their source of income due to recent domestic violence, family separation, and job loss needs basic items for their new home.



**Help a family who lost their income due to a domestic violence situation.**

» A family that is being supported by a single caregiver, who has not been able to work since February of 2020 due to COVID layoffs, needs help with school supplies.

You can directly help these families by becoming a gift card sponsor and providing them with basic needs.

As a gift card sponsor, you commit to donating gift cards in \$25 or \$50 increments to

local stores, which will help families during this particularly challenging time.

### HELP A FAMILY, GIVE A GIFT CARD

I want to become a gift card sponsor and help youth and families afford basic needs.

**GIVE TODAY!**

[youtheastideservices.org/giftcards](https://www.youtheastideservices.org/giftcards)

Or contact Becca Holbrook at [beccah@youtheastideservices.org](mailto:beccah@youtheastideservices.org)

## YES CEO David W. Downing Responds to *How Are Kids Doing?*

### How are kids doing?

In my 30-plus years of working in the child and youth mental health and substance use disorder treatment sector, or behavioral health field as it is now called, I've been asked this question often. However, NEVER have I been asked this question with the frequency and intensity of concern that I have since the beginning of the pandemic. These past two years have led us as a society to become more divided and isolated and this has significantly impacted our youth.

The sheer increase in the number of children and youth seeking behavioral health treatment at Youth Eastside Services (YES) for anxiety and depression is a real concern. What is particularly worrisome is that the symptoms they exhibit are more acute than before the pandemic, and require intensive services for a more lengthy duration. This leads to a higher financial cost for providers like us, and for the families needing our help.

### A national emergency declaration

This child and youth mental health crisis was confirmed in October 2021 with an official joint declaration of national emergency in children's mental health by the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry (AACAP), and the Children's Hospital Association (CHA) who stated:



***As health professionals dedicated to the care of children and adolescents, we have witnessed soaring rates of mental health challenges among children, adolescents, and their families over the course of the COVID-19 pandemic, exacerbating the situation that existed prior to the pandemic. Children and families across our country have experienced enormous adversity and disruption.***

- AAP, AACAP, CHA Declaration of a National Emergency in Child and Adolescent Mental Health.

Specifically in Washington, the October 2020 Department of Health report on the "Impact of COVID-19 on Behavioral Health" showed that youth ages 11-17 were more likely than any other age group to score for moderate to severe symptoms of anxiety and depression.

### A reduction in Medicaid funding

Given this escalating crisis, a logical assumption might be that funding would increase to support the needs of our young people. Unfortunately, that would be wrong. Specifically, the reimbursement methods used in our King County region, have actually reduced Medicaid payments to local nonprofit organizations serving the mental health and substance use disorder treatment needs of children and youth, as relayed to me by peer CEOs and

Directors, by approximately 20-36% in the past 12 months. Sadly, there seems little movement to correct this.

Am I worried? Yes, absolutely. Do I feel hopeless? No, never. In the face of adversity, I feel and see resilience in our young people, their families and those of us taking action. However, while we are scrappy, we are not miracle workers. Only with the right funding and resources will we be able to meet the demands of this crisis.

### What you can do to help?

First, it is imperative that as a community we are educated and informed about the crisis around youth mental health. Second, take time to learn the skills needed and gather the courage to ask young people how they are doing. Not only as parents and family members, but also as teachers, coaches, and neighbors. Third, please continue your generous financial support to help cover the shortfall of Medicaid reimbursements. Fourth, advocate for increased funding for child and youth behavioral health at all levels of government (federal, state, county and city).

### You are the inspiration we need

If there is one gift I take from the difficult experience of the pandemic, it is the increased awareness of child and youth behavioral health by YOU, our community, and your desire to be part of the solution to this crisis. It is genuinely inspiring and heartening to have you all stand firm and take action together to fight for systemic change and to adequately fund and strengthen the great work of YES. Together we can literally save the lives of young people, and help them build lives worth living.

### WHAT WE DO

Youth Eastside Services (YES) is the leading youth-serving behavioral health agency in East King County for children and youth from birth to age 22, and their families. We provide evidence-based mental health counseling, substance use and co-occurring disorders counseling and treatment, early childhood behavioral health services, psychiatric services, and education and prevention programs. No matter what your financial situation is, you can receive help at YES. We accept most insurance plans, Medicaid, and offer a sliding fee scale.

“Too often, our children remain adrift in a sea of unaddressed trauma, issues and complexities. YES provides our vulnerable tweens and teens with a real lifeline to emotional health. Our enduring support of YES over the decades reflects our heartfelt commitment to its rescue mission of healing.”

- Todd and Mimi Menenberg, Champion for Youth Giving Circle Members

## SUBSTANCE USE SERVICES

# Uncovering the Person Beneath the Addiction

In her 30 years of studying substance use and helping teens recover, YES Director of School-Based Services, Kristie Neklason's favorite moment has always been meeting the individual underneath the addiction.

"When you lose yourself in drugs, you lose your individuality," she says. "You lose your ability to make a unique contribution to the world."

### Providing research proven therapy

Thanks to the generosity of a community with a passion for helping youth recover, YES is able to support clients in rediscovering their true selves through a treatment program called the Seven Challenges Group. Part of YES' Road to Recovery program, the Seven Challenges Group uses evidence-based therapy designed to offer youth a safe space to talk about drug use and the challenges that lie beneath.

The program includes reading, journaling, group sessions, and one-to-one counseling to help teens become accountable for using substances, including investigating why they use, the impact on their quality of life, and discovering their motives for changing use and behavior. Research shows that the approach is working.

### Providing a spectrum of recovery

Fortunately, YES has programs all along the substance-use spectrum, from experimentation to dependence, including one-day alcohol and drug awareness classes and sober recreation activities. That range of support is what contributes to YES' nearly 83% success rate in treating clients. And those successes

are clearly reflected by clients who are making healthier choices.

**"The feedback I receive the most about the program is how grateful the participants are in having a safe, nonjudgmental space to talk about their drug use, their struggles and their hopes and dreams. Most often it isn't about drugs, but rather what they want to accomplish in our community,"** said Kristie Neklason, Director of School-Based Services.



## CLIENT STORY

### A Day in the Life of a Seven Challenges Group Member

*The following is an account from one young client about what it is like to attend the weekly Seven Challenges Recovery Group:*

From my own personal battles to the tension and hostile environment that is my home life, my anxiety can feel unmanageable. My days consist of using the skills I've learned over the past few years in therapy to just get through the day. Sometimes when I wake up, getting out of bed feels harder than it's ever been before. Using substances would typically be my next step.

Once I show up to group I feel like I can speak my mind without feeling judged. I've really learned to trust the therapists and other group members as I feel like they give helpful insight and can really relate to what you're feeling in that moment.

While journaling in group I reflect on things like what we like about drugs and also what the risks of using substances are.

I really like the way the journals did this since they did it in a way where I didn't feel bad for my actions but I learned a lot of things I would have done differently and was able to identify many, "even better if's".

In discussion, we talk a lot about how boredom and impulsivity lead to a lot of

reckless and risky decisions that move focus away from our goals. What I find most helpful is, the therapist's approach of focusing on what the client wants for their life and their journey. At the end of the day, it's my choice and I control my own life, it's not about what anyone else wants. It makes me feel empowered to take control of my future.

Something that I take away from the group is that you really are not alone in this. There are so many others who are in this with you.

**When I told my friend, "I can't do this," they said, "I know you feel like YOU can't do this, but I hope you know that WE can do this."**

Not only was that the best advice and reassurance I've ever gotten, that's also how this group makes me feel.

When I leave the group I feel tired but usually at least a little better than before. There are tons of friendly faces there that never fail to make group fun. I keep coming back to the group because I feel like I need accountability and the space to think about my use and where I want to go from here.

**Recovery stories like these are made possible through the generosity of many YES donors. Supporters provide over 5,000 children, youth, and families with a chance of recovery every year. Thank you for continuing to support evidence-based therapies and providing young people with hope for a better tomorrow.**

## MAKING AN IMPACT

# Helping this Holiday Season

### Donate to YES' End-of-Year Campaign

Send your critical year-end gift by midnight, December 31st to provide children and youth a chance to recover, heal and thrive. Visit [youtheastsideways.org/donate](http://youtheastsideways.org/donate) to make your gift today.

### Donating stock, a tax-smart way to give

By giving shares of stock owned for at least one year, you can receive the same deduction as you would for a cash donation, and also avoid potential capital gains tax. To make a transfer of stocks, bonds or mutual funds, contact your broker.

### Honor someone with a gift in their name

Making a donation in someone's name is a special way to recognize someone important and help a young person who's struggling. A special tribute card, drawn by a YES client, will be sent in recognition of your generous gift to the recipient of your donation. Visit [youtheastsideways.org/donate](http://youtheastsideways.org/donate)

### Gather a community of support

Invite your friends, family and coworkers to join you in support of children, youth and families by hosting a fundraiser. Workplace event, holiday party, birthday celebration, the ideas are endless!



If you'd like to learn how you can take action and gather a community in support of youth mental health call Angela Chapman at 425-586-2326.

### Purchase gifts using Amazon Smile

Amazon will donate 0.5% of the price of all your Amazon purchases. Simply shop on Amazon using the link [smile.amazon.com](http://smile.amazon.com) and chose Youth Eastside Services.

### Sponsor a family by donating gift cards

YES' year-long gift card drive helps YES families experiencing challenging times purchase basic needs. We currently have families who need your help! Email Becca Holbrook at [BeccaH@youtheastsideways.org](mailto:BeccaH@youtheastsideways.org) to sign up.



**SAVE THE DATE**

**Invest in Youth**  
BREAKFAST  
May 19, 2022 | 7:30-8:45 AM  
MEYDENBAUR CENTER, BELLEVUE, WA

**JOIN US IN-PERSON!**

## DONOR SPOTLIGHT

# Drawn to YES by a Mission that Supports Families of All Backgrounds

Alpa Parikh was introduced to YES by a friend and YES Board member. She was immediately drawn to the mission of YES - "YES is a lifeline for kids and families coping with challenges such as emotional distress, substance abuse and violence. Through intervention, outreach and prevention, YES builds confidence and personal responsibility, strengthens family relationships, and advocates for a safer community that cares for its youth".

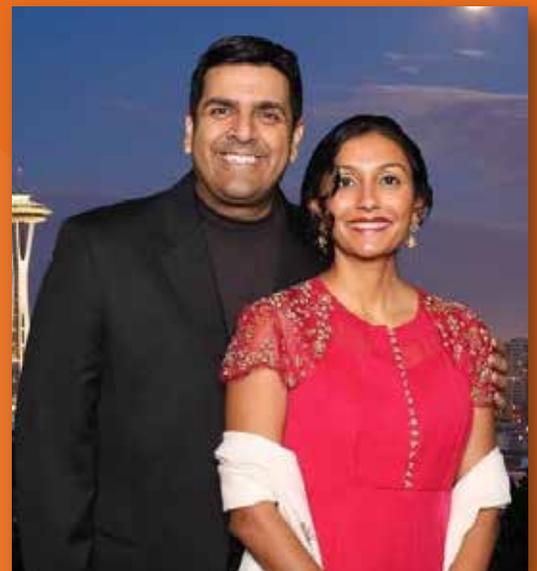
As someone who has lived in India, Kenya, England and now the USA, YES stood out to Alpa for being a source of support for children and families of all backgrounds, regardless of race and ability to pay for services.

**"YES creates a safe and inclusive environment and helps empower youth to overcome adversity."**

Alpa was also impressed with the care and expertise demonstrated by the counselors and therapists at YES. "As a parent, it is comforting to know that YES is an invaluable resource and partner to the local community and schools."

When Alpa was asked to join the Board of Trustees for YES in 2019, it was an easy decision. Alpa has supported YES as a Board member and a Champions for Youth Giving Circle Member ever since, and has introduced several friends and family members to the amazing work that YES does to support mental health and substance use issues in our community.

Alpa lives in Kirkland with her husband Kush, and their two daughters. They firmly believe that by providing opportunities and empowering our youth, we create future leaders.



**As parents Alpa Parikh and her husband Kush value YES as an invaluable resource and partner in the community.**