

Pillar of Hope Fund

for counseling services at Catholic Schools

catholiccf.org/pillar-of-hope



Purpose

The Pillar of Hope Fund supports counseling and intervention services for low-income students attending Catholic schools in Santa Clara County. The goal is that once children have access to Catholic education, these services can help them thrive and provide a foundation for success in high school and beyond. Catholic schools provide strong, God-centered support for students struggling with a number of issues, and, with this fund's support, schools can compliment that with consistent counseling services.

The Need



In 2021, a coalition of experts in pediatric health including the American Academy of Pediatrics declared a national emergency in child and adolescent mental health. Rates of childhood mental health concerns and suicide rose steadily between 2010 and 2020 and by 2018 suicide was the second leading cause of death for youth ages 10-24.¹

This situation has been exacerbated since 2020. **"We are caring for young people with soaring rates of depression, anxiety, trauma, loneliness, and suicidality that will have lasting impacts on them, their families, and their communities,"** said the statement from the American Academy of Pediatrics.

“ Through individual counseling sessions, students have been able to develop better coping strategies, improve communication skills, and increase self-awareness. The support and guidance provided by [our counselor] has a positive impact on the student's overall well-being.

– Nicole Sabbatini, Acting Principal, St. Justin School



The Fund's Impact

During the 2022-2023 school year, CASSY provided highly qualified postgraduate therapists to the campuses of 6 Diocesan elementary schools 1-3 days a week. Parents and staff alike are relieved to have resources available on campus so they don't have to go to a second location.



1416

individual student therapy sessions



1004

parent engagement consultations



823

staff consultations

Counselors present to classes on topics like

inclusion

empathy

processing trauma

stress management

How the Fund Works

This fund will grant the greater of 15% of the fund balance or \$200,000 annually. The specific schools may change year over year, but the fund will always support the same purpose.

The Pillar of Hope Fund partners with CASSY – Counseling & Support Services for Youth – a nonprofit agency that partners with schools to provide professional mental health services to students in their academic setting. Grants from this fund are used to pay for CASSY counselors in local schools and other services/resources as needed.

CASSY

Counseling &
Support Services
for Youth

In return for the grant, the recipients are required to report on various metrics including number of students served, number and topics of presentations, percent of students making progress on treatment goals, and more.

Students Need Your Support

The youth mental health crisis is far from resolved. The Pillar of Hope Fund has made great first steps toward providing students and families with the resources they need, **but there is more work to be done.**



“They were there for me when I needed someone to talk to and they were so helpful. I felt safe.”

- Student

In addition to ensuring that counseling services can continue at the current schools, additional funding will help expand into other necessary areas.

- The schools currently partnering with CASSY have counselors for 1-3 days a week which is often insufficient to meet the needs of students.
- There are schools on the waitlist to get a counselor from CASSY. We would like every school to have access to qualified counselors for their students.
- Parents are craving opportunities to learn about the challenges their children face and would benefit from more educational opportunities.
- There are further opportunities to train teachers and school staff on student mental health. The California Department of Education recommends Youth Mental Health First Aid training for suicide prevention.

Make a positive impact on students' mental health today!

Often, the students in greatest need have the most limited access to resources. Your support of the Pillar of Hope Fund will help provide vital services to Catholic schools which serve lower-income communities.

Make donations online at
catholiccf.org/pillar-of-hope

Make checks payable to The Catholic Community Foundation and write “Pillar of Hope” in the memo. Mail checks to:
777 N. First St., Suite 490, San Jose, CA 95112

Join us in offering students **HOPE** for the future by giving them the support they need today.