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**The Ballmer Institute  
for Children's Behavioral Health**

**Senate Briefing  
November 20, 2024**

# The Ballmer Institute for Children's Behavioral Health

- Launched March 2022 through a transformational lead gift from Connie and Steve Ballmer
- Aims to expand the workforce of professionals capable of providing behavioral health support to youth and families
- Establishes a new undergraduate major and profession in child behavioral health
- Integrates training elements typically available only in graduate degree programs into an undergraduate program
- Equips the existing youth-serving workforce with skills to support child behavioral health
- Prioritizes the needs of historically under-served youth and families



# Faculty Update

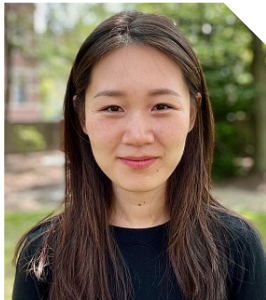
- **Three new faculty began this year – increasing our senior level faculty lines**
  - Professor Sarah Kate Bearman, Director of Clinical Training
  - Assistant Professor Evelyn Cho
  - Clinical Professor Elizabeth Lefler
- **Two additional faculty have been hired and will begin in fall 2025**
  - Assistant Professor Alexis Mercurief
  - Assistant Clinical Professor Patrick Bell
- **Overall Faculty hiring progress**
  - 5 of our 10 tenure-related faculty lines filled
  - 6 of our 15 clinical faculty lines filled



# Ballmer Institute Faculty



Sunny  
Bai



Evelyn  
Cho



Atika  
Khurana



Ariel  
Williamson



Katie  
McLaughlin



Sarah Kate  
Bearman



Perna  
Martin



Maureen  
Zalewski



Katia  
Duncan



Cody  
Gion



Kalani  
Makanui



Miriam  
White-Pedeaux



Alexis  
Mercurief



Elizabeth  
Lefler



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# Academic Program Update

- **Graduate Program**
  - Graduate Microcredential (Virtual)
- **Undergraduate Program**
  - Child Behavioral Health Majors (Portland)
  - Pre-Child Behavioral Health Majors (Eugene)



# Graduate Microcredential



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# Child Behavioral Health Graduate Microcredential

We are currently delivering this program to our third cohort of graduate microcredential students

## Program Highlights

- Offered at no direct cost to Oregon educators and youth-serving professionals
- Over 200 educators and youth-serving professionals have participated
- Exploring early education-focused program given high level of expressed need for such training in the state
- Considering offering to educators beyond Oregon

## Student Feedback

89%

Rated the quality of the program as “good” or “excellent”

93%

Reported developing new skills through the program

90%

Reported integrating content into daily work with youth



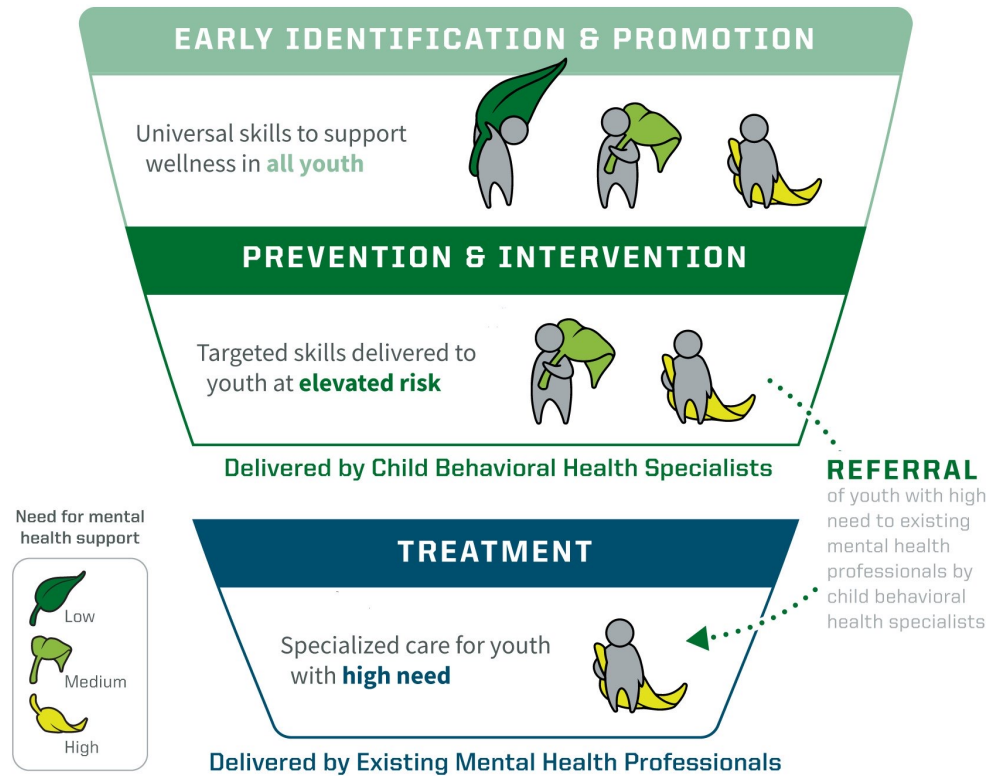
# Child Behavioral Health Undergraduate Program



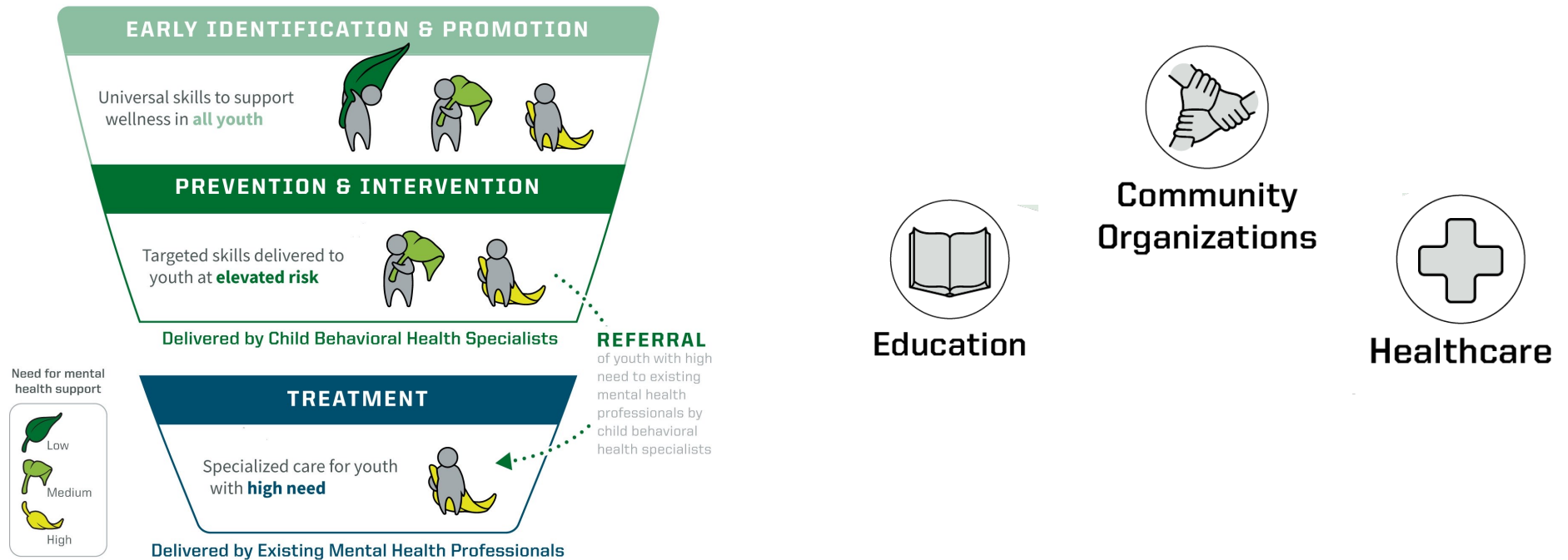
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# Child Behavioral Health Specialist



# Child Behavioral Health Specialist



# Child Behavioral Health Curriculum

<b>Foundational Skills and Professional Practice</b>	Foundational helping skills; risk and resilience; screening and risk assessment; professional ethics; and clinical-decision making
<b>Behavioral Health Promotion</b>	Skills to promote wellness in all youth regardless of risk level, such as emotion regulation, interpersonal skills, and stress management
<b>Prevention and Intervention</b>	Evidence-based skills to support behavioral health for youth that have elevated risk, including problem-solving, relaxation, behavioral activation, flexible thinking, and parenting supports.
<b>Inclusive Practice</b>	Foundational knowledge to work with youth from a variety of different backgrounds, skills, and abilities.



# Supervised Field Experiences



- Gain over 700 hours of experience in youth serving settings, beginning with K12 students
- Receive direct supervision from licensed clinical faculty from a diverse range of behavioral health backgrounds
- Demonstrate proficiency through competency-based assessments



# Child Behavioral Health Majors

**This fall, we welcomed our first child behavioral health undergraduate cohort to UO Portland (19 students).**

**Students currently enrolled in four classes:**

- Foundations in Child Behavioral Health Skills
- Foundations in Culturally Responsive Practice
- Ethics and Professional Practice
- Child Behavioral Health Promotion I

**Applied practice begins next term!**



# Pre-Child Behavioral Health Majors

**52 students are enrolled in the first two years of the program.**

## **Students in Eugene can:**

- Live in our Residential Community
- Enroll in our FIG: Mental Health and Social Media
- Engage with advising and use our community space in New Residence Hall

**Application to the major is now open and we expect a similar-sized cohort (20-25 students).**



# Creating a National Model



# Partnership: Co-Creating a National Training Model



## School and Community Partnerships

- Applied practical training for students
- Embedded Clinical Faculty
- Graduate Microcredential in Child Behavioral Health

## Advisory Boards

- Community Advisory Board
- Youth Advisory Board
- National Behavioral Health Advisory Board





# National Behavioral Health Advisory Board



Margarita Alegría, Ph.D.  
Harvard



Rinad Beidas, Ph.D.  
Northwestern



Catherine Bradshaw, Ph.D.  
University of Virginia



Sharon Hoover, Ph.D.  
University of Maryland



Janine Jones, Ph.D.  
University of Washington



Margaret Kuklinski, Ph.D.  
University of Washington



Anna Lau, Ph.D.  
UCLA



Elizabeth McCauley, Ph.D.  
University of Washington



Vikram Patel, Ph.D.  
Harvard



Wendy Reinke, Ph.D.  
University of Missouri



Bryan Weiner, Ph.D.  
University of Washington



John Weisz, Ph.D.  
Harvard



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# Credentialing and Billing

- **HB4151 passed in Oregon to establish a Task Force to identify strategies to expand, sustain and diversify the youth behavioral health workforce**
  - Credentialing for Child Behavioral Health Specialists and other emerging behavioral health professionals
  - Funding to sustain expanded workforce to respond to growing needs
- **National Advisory Board advising on program standards and scope of practice to inform credentialing pathway**
- **Exploring a state plan amendment to allow CBH Specialists to bill Medicaid for services**



# Program Evaluation

**Mission:** To monitor and evaluate the impact of the Ballmer Institute's Child Behavioral Health Training Program on the youth and communities that we serve



**Guiding principles:** Community-centered approach to represent diverse perspectives on program impact; co-designed with community partners; mixed methods

**Multilevel stakeholder engagement** to elicit input from school & district leadership, school staff, community partner organizations, students, families, Ballmer Institute staff and students on priority research questions and outcomes



# Program Evaluation

## Two-year mixed method formative evaluation study (2024-2026):

- Purpose: Examine the acceptability, feasibility, and appropriateness/fit of the Ballmer Institute's child behavioral health training program in schools and obtain preliminary information on program reach and effectiveness.
- School partners: 7 schools representing 3 public school districts: Portland Public Schools, Parkrose, David Douglas School Districts



### Participants



30 CBH students



100 school staff



300 elementary & middle school youth



90 caregivers

### Data collection



Surveys & interviews on determinants and implementation outcomes; youth behavioral health measures, academic functioning; progress monitoring on skills acquisition

### Data driven decision making



Use evaluation data to refine the undergraduate CBH training program and adapt youth behavioral health services in schools



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