

“We’re more than a mental health clinic. Making sure a family has enough food to get through the weekend is part of well-being. That’s why I’m a case manager at WestCoast. We don’t just treat depression, or anxiety. We address the daily challenges our kids are facing in very tangible ways.”

- Beth Harvey, WestCoast Children’s Clinic Case Manager

Laila, a 5th grader, started seeing a therapist at WestCoast after being hospitalized for a suicide attempt. Her anxiety and depression were intolerable. So were her living circumstances. Laila’s father was increasingly abusive to her mom, but her mom couldn’t afford to move out.

At WestCoast Children’s Clinic more and more kids and families are struggling to make ends meet. And kids are paying the price. Why?

The families we see at WestCoast are living at the intersection of two record moments in California:

As the pandemic subsided, so did the policies that cut the child poverty rate in half. The result: The poverty rate more than doubled in one year — the greatest in state history.

At the same time, mental health distress among children and adolescents soared.

Hospitals are seeing an average of 30 kids every day for mental health emergencies, up from one per day prior to the pandemic.

The circumstances and reasons for the rise in mental health acuity are varied. For kids at WestCoast, poverty, racism, discrimination, intergenerational trauma, and community violence are part of the picture.

Having adequate resources is a large part of well-being.

That’s why we created the WestCoast Children’s Fund.

In addition to providing Laila’s weekly therapy, WestCoast helped her mother with funds for a rental deposit so she and Laila could move to a safe place.

With your support, we can bridge gaps in our clients’ safety net, providing access to resources that make an immediate and profound impact. And a little bit goes a long way.

Laila was able to stay in the same school with her friends.

With our Children’s Fund, we get kids what they need:

Carmen’s family now has enough money for her bus fare and three meals a day.

Kassie can pay for child care so her 10-year-old isn’t home alone while she works the occasional evening shift.

Gabriel could still get glasses after his mom lost her insurance.

Jade has gender affirming clothing to wear to graduation.

We also help kids access activities that would otherwise be out of reach:

Anthony’s uncle got him into karate classes.

Destiny takes West African drumming lessons.

Jordan can pay for her flag football team uniform.

Poverty is not a given. It’s a social policy decision.

So is lack of access to timely mental health care.

While we advocate for equitable policy choices, we help kids cope with adversity, connect families to community resources, and prevent homelessness.

It’s simple. We want the same things for kids at WestCoast that we want for all our kids:

Enough to eat, a safe place to sleep.

Medical and dental care.

A sense of well-being.

Opportunities to play and grow.

To imagine a future for themselves.

Help us bridge the gaps.



WESTCOAST CHILDREN'S CLINIC

A photograph of two young girls in front of a brick wall. The girl on the left has dark, curly hair and is smiling broadly, showing her teeth. She is wearing a grey jacket over a light purple shirt. The girl on the right is wearing a purple beanie and a yellow jacket, laughing with her mouth wide open. Her hands are resting on the shoulders of the girl on the left.

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