

PROPOSITION 64 ADVISORY GROUP

Date: November 13, 2025

Time: 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Members Present

- » Denise Galvez
- » Jessica Guerra
- » Stephanie List
- » Lishaun Francis
- » Jim Keddy
- » Stephanie Chen
- » Vince Leus
- » Martin D. Martinez II
- » Pete Nielsen
- » Gabe Teran

Opening Remarks and Introductions

Denise Galvez, Prevention and Youth Branch Chief, Department of Health Care Services (DHCS)

Denise Galvez welcomed attendees and provided an overview of the meeting agenda. Virtual attendees introduced themselves.

Galvez welcomed the new Proposition 64 Advisory Group (Prop 64 AG) members and encouraged them to complete the survey to improve future meetings. Galvez shared that the Elevate Youth California (EYC) Round 7 Request for Application (RFA) received over 600 applications. Results are expected to be announced in mid-December.

Galvez informed interested parties about the Behavioral Health Services Act County Policy Manual and invited [public comments](#) on performance measures tied to reducing homelessness, institutionalization, and justice involvement.

2025 Youth Education Prevention, Early Intervention and Treatment Account (YEPEITA) Legislative Report

Denise Galvez

Galvez provided a historical overview of Proposition 64 (Prop 64), noting that while fund allocations initially rose, they have steadily declined in recent years. Per Revenue and Taxation Code Section 34019(f)(1), DHCS is required to submit an annual legislative spending report on YEPEITA funds and to convene the Prop 64 AG.

The [2025 YEPEITA Legislative Report](#) analyzes allocations, expenditures, and program outcomes for fiscal years (FYs) 2020-21 through 2023-24. It summarizes the current fiscal status of YEPEITA fund recipients and the programmatic status of YEPEITA-funded programs implemented through DHCS, the California Department of Social Services, the California Department of Public Health, and the California Natural Resources Agency.

Galvez described EYC as a DHCS statewide substance use disorder (SUD) prevention program investing in youth leadership and civic engagement for youth of color and 2SLGBTQIA+¹, focusing on youth ages 12 to 26 living in communities disproportionately impacted by the war on drugs. DHCS has awarded at least one cohort annually, consistently executed contracts, maintained a strong payment record, and is formally evaluating the program through an external partner. The next Prop 64 AG meeting will solicit feedback to inform the upcoming EYC RFA. Galvez presented a map showing EYC's geographic reach, emphasizing that reaching youth of color remains a top priority.

Jim Keddy emphasized that EYC is one of the few state programs that intentionally invests in youth in rural counties and tribal communities, not just urban areas.

Keddy summarized recent legislative developments affecting cannabis taxation and market dynamics in California. Keddy discussed cannabis use trends, noting increased consumption during the pandemic and instability in the cannabis business landscape due to market churn. He referenced the Cannabis Control Department's report, which shows rising product purchases and diversification (e.g., beverages, gummies, candies).

Galvez mentions that Kratom is a frequent topic of discussion at monthly Statewide Prevention Coordinator meetings. Stephanie Chen adds that 7-OH, a more potent derivative, is banned in some states and is partially banned in Los Angeles County. Gabe

¹ Two-spirited, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, queer/questioning, intersex, asexual (or ally).

Teran comments that Ventura County unincorporated and the City of Oxnard are currently actively working on high-potency Kratom regulations.

California Department of Social Services Update

Nadirah Jones, Bureau Chief, Child Care Policy and Development Branch, California Department of Social Services (CDSS)

Nadirah Jones stated the mission of CDSS's Child Care & Development Division (CCDD), which is to "build, strengthen, and maintain an equitable, comprehensive, quality, and affordable child care and development system for the children and families in our state." CCDD aims to integrate childcare with other programs that serve the needs of the whole child and family, address social determinants of health and Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs), and provide essential support to the childcare workforce to ensure equitable access.

Jones discussed how the Early Childhood Development Act of 2020 introduced significant changes to create a coordinated early learning and care system aimed at supporting children and families through economic assistance and other resources. It incorporated existing programs from CDSS that serve the state's most vulnerable families and children. The newly combined programs are now part of CCDD.

Jones provided an overview of the three childcare programs funded by YEPEITA. The [California Alternative Payment Program](#) (CAPP) is a voucher-based program that offers parents a choice of providers who accept vouchers. The [General Child Care and Development Program](#) (CCTR) is a general childcare and development program. The [Emergency Childcare Bridge Program](#) (Bridge Program) is an emergency childcare option for foster care families. These programs aim to intervene in early childhood to increase retention in education programs and prevent substance use.

Jones provided an overview of CDSS's YEPEITA fund allocations for each of the three childcare programs for FYs 2024-25 and 2025-26. Approximately \$28.6 million remaining from the FY 2024-25 CCTR RFA was awarded through the Contractor Interest in Expansion Funds (CIEF) for a total of 1,100 additional slots.

Jones presented a graph of the current enrollment numbers for FY 2024-25 across the three programs. CAPP manages the largest funds, whereas the Bridge Program operates with the smallest, focusing specifically on transitional services.

Jones listed the public engagement opportunities: 1) the main way information is provided is via [Child Care Bulletins](#) (alerts are available when new ones are posted); 2) community meetings; and 3) the CDSS's [Stakeholder Resources](#) webpage.

Keddy asked about CAPP's funding sources. Jones explained that CAPP is primarily funded by the federal Child Care and Development Fund, as well as state General Funds and YEPEITA.

California Natural Resources Agency Update

Ka-Ryn Escovedo, Program Manager, Youth Community Access (YCA) Grant Program, California Natural Resources Agency (CNRA)

Rebecca Griffin, YCA Grant Program Lead, CNRA

Nicole Chastain, YCA Grant Program Co-lead, CNRA

Ka-Ryn Escovedo opened by noting CNRA's expertise in natural resource projects and their commitment to aligning YEPEITA's goals with CNRA's mission of expanding access to natural and cultural resources.

Rebecca Griffin provided an overview of the YCA Grant Program, a competitive grant initiative designed to enhance youth access to natural and cultural resources. Eligible applicants are local, state, and federal agencies; non-profits; and federally recognized tribes. Projects must serve youth (defined as individuals from birth to age 26); increase youth access to natural or cultural resources; and enhance youth health, safety, and well-being.

Nicole Chastain defined underserved and low-income communities, both of which programs are required to serve. Chastain notes that the YCA Grant Program prioritizes communities that have been disproportionately impacted by past state and federal drug policies, as well as other underserved communities. The YCA Grant Program gives funding preference to projects that incorporate one or more of the following elements: youth involvement in project planning, youth participation in outreach and awareness activities, and initiatives that empower youth to make healthy choices.

Griffin and Chastain showcased six projects by grantees, including Conservation Corps of Long Beach, Pointe Blue Conservation Science, Outdoor Outreach, Boys and Girls Club of Fresno County, Wishtoyo Foundation, and The Urban Association of Forestry and Fire Professionals, Inc.

In FY 2024-25, Griffin reported that through the YCA Grant Program, clean vehicles were acquired, youth were provided with paid employment and internship opportunities, access to cultural and natural resources was facilitated, and workshops were conducted. Additionally, youth camps and field trips were organized.

Griffin also reported that interest surged for Round 3 of funding, with 450 proposals and 108 awards totaling \$32.8 million. Round 4 solicitation is expected in Summer 2026.

Grantees faced significant barriers, including rising transportation and vehicle costs, staffing shortages and turnover, delays due to underbudgeting, and shortages of clean vehicle inventory in California. To address these issues, CNRA increased the maximum award size to \$500,000, allowed advance payments to ease financial strain, granted flexibility to purchase gas-powered vans if clean vehicles are unavailable, simplified payment forms and instructional videos, and revised program guidelines and competitive process for Round 4.

Escovedo presented a tentative timeline for Round 4. Escovedo explained that CNRA is seeking the best way to operate the YCA Grant Program, which includes revising the program guidelines. Program guidelines are anticipated to be released for public comment by Spring 2026.

Jessica Guerra expressed appreciation for CNRA's youth and environmental efforts. Galvez highlighted CNRA's commitment to environmental stewardship, and Keddy emphasized the importance of youth engagement.

California Department of Public Health Update

Beth Olagues, Branch Manager, Substance and Addiction Prevention Branch (SAPB), California Department of Public Health (CDPH)

Jessica Hwang, Public Awareness Section Manager, CDPH

Gretchen Franklin, Substance Prevention Section Manager, CDPH

Angela Kranz, Surveillance and Analytics Unit Supervisor, CDPH

Beth Olagues provided an overview of the Youth Cannabis Prevention Initiative, which focuses on media campaigns; health education; policy, systems, and environmental approaches; community-driven interventions; and evaluation.

Jessica Hwang shared progress on the Youth Cannabis Education and Prevention Media Campaign, including the \$20 million contract executed on July 21, 2025, with Rescue Agency to carry out the Bridge Campaign focusing on youth ages 13-17 via social media and gaming platforms. Parents and guardians will also be reached via Facebook and Instagram in English and Spanish, directing them to the Let's Talk Cannabis website. SAPB's strategy remains focused on delivering evidence-based, empathetic, and inclusive messaging about the mental and physical health impacts of cannabis to reduce health inequities across California.

Alongside the Bridge Campaign, development of the next Youth Cannabis Education and Prevention Media Campaign is underway, with an expected launch in early 2027. This campaign will expand outreach to young adults (18-20).

Gretchen Franklin highlighted CDPH's partnership with Friday Night Live (FNL), which promotes youth leadership and prevention education. FNL hosted the Annual Youth Summit in 2024 and 2025, shared a cannabis prevention toolkit at the July 2025 Leadership Conference, and added cannabis content to its 16-week mentoring curriculum. In October 2025, FNL launched mini-grants for up to 20 chapters to lead youth-driven cannabis prevention campaigns.

CDPH partners with the University of California, San Diego (UCSD) from July 2024 through June 2027 to support youth cannabis education and cessation through two programs: [Youth Vaping Alternative Program Education](#) (YVAPE), a free alternative-to-suspension program for middle and high school students caught vaping or using cannabis on campus, and [Kick It California](#) (KIC), which offers personalized cannabis cessation support for young adults ages 18-29 and referred students. KIC provides one-on-one coaching, text support, and self-help resources using evidence-based methods, while YVAPE combines educational videos and phone counseling to help students reflect on their behavior and make healthier choices.

CDPH partnered with the California Youth Advocacy Network (CYAN) under a contract from December 2024 through September 2027 to advance youth cannabis education and policy change. CYAN develops educational materials and trainings for youth, young adults, and adult allies, and conducts key informant interviews, policy reviews, and focus groups to better understand youth cannabis use and perceptions. Using data from state surveys, CYAN creates consumer-tested, multilingual resources and engages youth through social media and advocacy training. The organization also provides technical assistance to local health jurisdictions and school partners to promote the YVAPE program and support policy updates related to school discipline and cannabis access.

CDPH partnered with five Local Health Jurisdictions (LHJ) (Butte County, Long Beach, Humboldt County, Santa Clara County, and Shasta County) to implement youth cannabis education, prevention, and policy change strategies through \$200,000, four-year grants.

Angela Kranz discussed various youth and young adult data collection and surveillance systems designed to monitor cannabis use, perceptions of risk, attitudes, behaviors, and associated consequences. Data is disseminated in reports, presentations, briefs, fact sheets, and interactive dashboards.

Kranz explained that the Interagency Agreement with the University of California, Irvine (effective through December 31, 2026) includes two white papers aimed at a public health audience. The first addresses cannabis use with other substances and alcohol,

and youth risk and protective factors. The second may focus on high-potency THC, though the topic could shift based on evolving priorities. Scientific advisory consultation is also funded under the agreement. Separately, SAPB is working with UCSD on a feasibility report for a statewide youth substance use survey, which will continue through September 2027. This includes interviews and follow-up surveys with 30 school administrators to assess barriers and survey burden, and testing scalable recruitment and administration strategies.

Keddy asked if CDPH is involved in cannabis use research funded by the Department of Cannabis Control (DCC). Olagues confirmed that CDPH helped review DCC grant applications since the scope is broad and involves environmental impact.

Teran stated that as the demand for downstream programming decreases, upstream prevention should be either maintained or enhanced to prevent a future increase in downstream needs.

Chen asked if any surveillance data relates to hemp-derived THC products such as delta-8 THC, and Kranz said that the data doesn't detail the type of product.

Galvez mentioned how FNL Mentoring completed the first cohort of the California Service to Science Academy (CSSA) and presented favorable outcomes. It will be added to the Substance Use Prevention Evidence-based Resource (SUPER), which was developed by DHCS in partnership with the University of California, Los Angeles, to scale up innovative programs in California and measure effectiveness across a continuum of evidence. Teran mentioned involvement with FNL Mentoring.

Elevate Youth California Cohort Update

Matt Cervantes, Director of Health Programs, The Center at Sierra Health Foundation (The Center)

Shyra Murrey, Program Officer, The Center

Shyra Murrey announced that approximately \$46.98 million will be awarded to partners in EYC Round 7 Standard Track, focusing on youth-led policy, systems, and environmental change work. The EYC Round 7 RFA was released on August 18, 2025, and the application period closed on September 26, 2025. A record number of applications were received, with 643 applicable submissions reviewed by DHCS staff and external reviewers. Recommendations will be announced in mid-December and will be shared on the EYC website and via email to all applicants. The award period will run from January 2026 to December 2028.

Education Northwest and Social Policy Research Associates are completing the external evaluation report and executive summary for Round 3 and anticipate finalizing the

public-facing documents by February 2026. For Round 4, the consultant team aims to collect data by the end of 2025. Similar to Round 3, data collection involves gathering data directly from youth participants through surveys and photovoice focus groups, as well as data from funded partner staff collected through focus groups and reviews of their cumulative reports.

Murrey provided an update on the EYC training and technical assistance (TTA) available to funded partners. In addition to ongoing one-on-one coaching and networking sessions, a wide range of training sessions were offered throughout 2025 by multiple partners. CADCA led sessions on advocacy vs. lobbying, social media prevention messaging, cultural humility, youth leadership, youth engagement, and environmental strategies. Leverage Point Development provided workshops on organizational goal setting and strategic planning. The Mirror Group hosted youth-led data collection and advocacy trainings, while Public Health Institute offered webinars on local cannabis policy and youth health impacts. The Youth Leadership Institute facilitated virtual learning communities and webinars on youth meeting facilitation, harm reduction, and team building. Spitfire delivered storytelling and media engagement training, and CARS focused on cross-sector prevention partnerships and youth-led collective impact. Public Works Alliance hosted webinars on nonprofit revenue streams and led a six-month fund development and sustainability cohort for six funded partners.

Murrey stated that the upcoming milestones include announcing the Round 7 awardees, executing awardee subcontracts, and closing out Round 4 contracts.

Martin D. Martinez II inquired about unfinished Round 4 projects and the reallocation of funding. Galvez clarified that unused funds are rolled into future rounds or redistributed.

Vince Leus emphasized the importance of youth involvement in evaluation and collaborative deliverables.

Public Comment

All participants

No public comments were made.

Closing and Next Steps

Denise Galvez

Galvez reminded Prop 64 AG members that a brief survey will be distributed to gather input on improving future meeting structure. Galvez thanked all attendees for their participation and concluded the meeting.