



# Multi-Solvers to Improve Mental Well-Being in Blaine County

The term “multi-solver” refers to solutions that effectively address multiple challenges at once. The five multi-solvers presented here emerge from extensive community engagement over the past year.\* Among these solutions, a few are focused on prevention, while others aim to increase care capacity and skill development. Additionally, one of the multi-solvers is targeted at improving our crisis response, even as others work to reduce the demand for crisis response in the first place.

## Multi-Solvers Table of Contents

<b>Multi-Solver #1: Community Spaces &amp; Activities.....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Multi-Solver #2: Community Education &amp; Resilience.....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Multi-Solver #3: Care Access and Professional Capacity.....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Multi-Solver #4: Crisis Response.....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Multi-Solver #5: Collaboration Infrastructure.....</b>	<b>6</b>

*\*Ideas represented in this document were sourced from a series of activities over 12 months which includes interviews with 60+ stakeholders; public meetings attended by over 250 members of the community; scores of strategy conversations with community partners; and extensive visioning, asset mapping, and gap assessment. Multi-solvers were further refined during action-oriented dialogue with 40+ service and program providers in Blaine County in February 2024. Organizations represented include: St. Luke’s Wood River Foundation, St. Luke’s Community Board, St. Luke’s Center for Community Health, St. Luke’s Health System, St. Luke’s Wood River Medical, Blaine County School District, Sun Valley Community School, Sage School, The Space, Far & Wise, WRV Palliative & Hospice Care, The Crisis Hotline, 5B Suicide Prevention Alliance, Blaine County Emergency Response Medical Personnel, Wood River Fire & Rescue, KH Counseling, Wood River Interfaith Council, WRV Early Childhood Learning Collaborative, Sun Valley Ski Education Foundation, Flourish Foundation, The Hunger Coalition, NAMI-WRV, The Senior Connection, YMCA, The Advocates, Spur Foundation, Blaine County Sheriff’s Department, City of Hailey Police, Men’s Second Chance Living, The Alliance of Idaho, and BCFIRST.*

*\*\*Steering Committee members include Daniel Abrahamson (Roots Community Health Center), Amanda Deaver (Upstream Strategic Communications), Megan Edwards (St. Luke’s Wood River Foundation), Sally Gillespie (Spur Foundation), Jeanne Liston (St. Luke’s Wood River Community Board), Tyler Norris (CEO Alliance for Mental Health), Erin Pfaeffle (St. Luke’s Health System), Deb Robertson (St. Luke’s Wood River), Sarah Seppa (St. Luke’s Center for Community Health), Megan Tanous (St. Luke’s Wood River Foundation), and Jenna Vagias (Project Coordinator).*

## Multi-Solver #1: Community Spaces & Activities

*Create a collaborative effort that supports and incentivizes local businesses and organizations to offer a multitude of welcoming community-connecting environments and activities throughout the county, with a particular focus on teens.*

**Assets:** Many, many organizations are offering (or could offer) multi-generational and teen activities throughout the valley. When viewed collectively and communicated collaboratively, the reach and impact will be amplified for the benefit of the community.

### **Short Term Action Examples:**

- Schedule/Marketing/Communicate multigenerational and teen-specific events collaboratively for greater reach and impact.
- Organize and coordinate meaningful, purpose-driven volunteer or paid opportunities to support belonging, purpose, and connection among teens and young professionals.

### **Mid-Term Action Examples:**

- Develop an approach that incentivizes and trains local businesses and organizations to offer teen-centered activities in their spaces.
- Work with businesses and organizations to make their settings more “teen-welcoming” while understanding developmentally-appropriate teen behavior.

### **Long Term Action Example:**

- Consider repurposing the Movie Theater in Hailey as a multi-generational space with a teen-focus that has ever changing programming options and support from many organizations. A Community Center could offer self-directed activities such as pool tables, ping-pong, an arcade, affordable bowling, movies, trampoline, mini-golf, rock climbing, video games, or a youth coffeehouse as well as offering rotating enrichment programs led by partner organizations like tuning your skis, woodworking, painting skateboards, cooking, other arts, music, etc.
- Support the Advocates’ Thrive Center which will offer a large community meeting space, teen-specific space designed by teens, and a childcare center.
- Support the Blaine County Recreation District’s long-term plans to build a multi-purpose recreational facility in south Hailey/north Bellevue.

## Multi-Solver #2: Community Education & Resilience

***Build a robust, comprehensive community training and education program focused on building a common language and understanding of resiliency, self-regulation, healthy communication, and crisis de-escalation.***

**Assets:** Many organizations in our community are offering mental health related education and continuing education opportunities and are poised to lead various action items within this multi-solver.

### **Short Term Actions Examples:**

- Offer widespread mindfulness, self-regulation and resilience training to the community.
- Community groups continue to offer mental health related events such as speakers, movies, and conversations that are free to the community and help destigmatize the conversation around mental health, addiction and getting support.
- Create a coordinating lead to organize and communicate marketing of mental health related events and identify specific topic gaps to bring forward in the community.
- Create a targeted mental health training program for coaches working with youth that could potentially be shared with other youth-centric professionals.
- Expand existing English as a Second Language classes and Life Skills classes to the general community.

### **Mid-Term Action Examples:**

- Expand mindfulness education to first responders as part of their standard training, parents, coaches, and Spanish-speakers.
- Prioritize training community members to build resiliency and neighborhood support for everyone in our community. This could include mentorship and peer-to-peer support programs, community resiliency model training for a large portion of our community, and resource awareness training for frontline staff.
- Prioritize resiliency, self-regulation and de-escalation “train the trainer” opportunities for professionals who work directly with the public such as first responders, teachers, nonprofit employees, hospital employees, frontline staff, etc.

### **Long Term Action Examples:**

- Create the Center for Career Exploration trade school opportunity with Far & Wise to provide meaningful education for those seeking a career in the trades and/or service industry.
- Build a mental health education program for a variety of adults (with special attention on parents) with a primary design element focused on bringing the content/programs to adults “where they are at” rather than adding additional responsibilities.

## Multi-Solver #3: Care Access and Professional Capacity

*Increase behavioral health access and capacity for individuals and families by assessing the mental health continuum of care in Blaine County, addressing inadequacy within the system, and building out the behavioral health workforce of the future.*

**Assets:** We live in a generous community filled with residents and organizations that have shown through various philanthropic means that mental well-being is a priority for our community. Additionally, we have a small, but mighty team of mental health professionals and organizations dedicated to building care capacity in our community.

### **Short Term Action Examples:**

- Inventory the mental well-being care continuum across the region - to better understand capacities/gaps, systems challenges, reimbursement and other matters.
- Inventory group support offerings, fund qualified professionals to lead groups in identified areas of need, and develop a clear and concise communication plan to make the community aware of group support options.
- Make counseling affordable and accessible which could include ideas such as increasing scholarships to receive counseling, offering free to low-cost access to telehealth services, and providing mindfulness app subscriptions.

### **Mid-Term Actions Examples:**

- Building professional pathways in behavior health by providing a progression of positions and supporting professional development through internships, student scholarships, and loan forgiveness programs to train, recruit, and/or retain clinicians to live and work in our valley.
- Bolster the bilingual community support system that includes liaisons, connectors, caseworkers, and social workers positions at various organizations and agencies throughout Blaine County to provide immediate crisis support and help individuals find appropriate longer-term care based on their needs. Consider increasing telehealth options for immediate bilingual access to therapy.

### **Long Term Action Examples:**

- Support mental health counselors' ability to live and work in the valley by funding ideas such as long-term subsidies for the insurance/Medicare gap, office space at reduced rates, affordable housing, and stipends for bilingual therapists.
- Endow education for new mental health providers committed to our community by offering scholarships to those seeking higher education in mental health in exchange for a commitment to the community post degree.

## Multi-Solver #4: Crisis Response

*Create a 24-hour mobile crisis response system and crisis stabilization setting(s) or system.*

**Assets:** The first responder community, law enforcement agencies, and the county judicial system are interested and invested in action ideas that will provide support for the increase in mental health related crises and calls the County has experienced in recent years. Furthermore, we live in a generous community filled with residents and organizations that have shown through various philanthropic means that mental well-being is a priority for our community.

### **Short Term Action Examples:**

- Assess the Crisis Hotline offerings and address identified gaps in the statewide 988 system and links to local resources.
- Provide mental health training for the first responder community to include mindfulness education, Community Resiliency Model training, and/or Crisis Intervention Training.

### **Mid-Term Action Examples:**

- Create a preventative “paramedicine” program to provide wellness check home visits to those with a history of mental illness or at high risk of crisis.
- Explore crisis care solutions that could be implemented while the community works toward a longer term action of a crisis care center. Ideas could include a dedicated section or “bed(s)” in the hospital for mental health crises staffed for short-term intensive care or a transportation system for mental health crises' that require longer term inpatient services in Twin Falls.

### **Long-Term Action Examples:**

- Create a mental health “on-call” mobile team to accompany (or go in lieu of) law enforcement to mental health situations. This team could include trained mental health professionals and advocates that could ride along or be called into a mental health response.
- Create crisis care/stabilization capacity (whether embedded or stand-alone) that would provide 23 hour crisis care available on a walk-in basis, or as referral from family/friends, EMS, law enforcement.
- Create a “survivor support” on-call trained staff to respond to death scenes and attend to the mental health needs of the survivors while first responders take care of the victims/patients.

## Multi-Solver #5: Collaboration Infrastructure

***Build the infrastructure required to support ongoing collaboration across organizations, entities, and businesses to prioritize our community's mental health as foundational to our overall health.***

### **Short Term Action Examples:**

- Provide leadership and coordinate efforts between resource providers and action teams generated to support the various streams of work identified by the community as priorities based on this Initiative.
- Coordinate regular meetings between the resource providers including specific sub-groups like bilingual community support positions, teen activity positions, community caseworker positions, and crisis response positions.
- Collaborate with community partners to collectively market all mental health related events, programs, discussions, etc., being offered to the community by various partners. Identify specific mental health topic gaps that may exist and work to bring events to the community to support these areas.

### **Mid-Term Action Examples:**

- Collate and communicate all mental health resources that exist in the community with a comprehensive, ecosystem-approach strategic communication plan. This could include creating and maintaining a well being website, distributing the Mental Health Resource Guide and adding a "Short Guide Card" for first responders, and/or providing training for frontline workers to outline resources available.

### **Long Term Action Examples:**

- Build the long-term infrastructure to maintain the work of the Mental Well Being Initiative by creating a Community Well Being Collaborative (via a nonprofit, a county division or as a subset of an existing organization) to encourage collaboration between service providers, agencies, and organizations to address mental well being as an ecosystem. The Collaborative could be the one point of contact for the public to identify what help is available and could provide a "warm hand-off" connection to resources.
- Work with LatinX/Hispanic leaders and community to build a Spanish-specific communication strategy specifically created to effectively communicate with the Spanish-speaking population.