



Today's Date: February 24, 2025

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Release Date: IMMEDIATE

## **Horizon Behavioral Health's TREE Grant Expands Access to Youth Mental Health and Substance Use Treatment in Central Virginia**

**Amherst, VA** – Horizon Behavioral Health's TREE (Enhancement and Expansion of Treatment and Recovery Services for Adolescents, Transitional Aged Youth, and their Families) Grant is making significant strides in providing comprehensive, evidence-based support for adolescents and young adults struggling with substance use and co-occurring mental health challenges. Now entering its second year, the program continues to expand its outreach and enhance its services.

The TREE program, funded by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), implements the Adolescent Community Reinforcement Approach (A-CRA) to equip youth ages 12–25 with the skills and support they need for long-term recovery. The initiative also includes tobacco cessation education, case management, and collaboration with local schools, court systems, and community organizations to ensure wraparound care.

### **Key Achievements:**

- **52 youth have received services** through the TREE grant, with an increasing referral rate across Lynchburg, Amherst, Appomattox, Bedford, and Campbell counties.
- **93.2% of clients completed their three-month follow-ups**—well above the national discretionary grant average of 61.0%.
- **85.2% of clients completed their six-month follow-ups**, surpassing the national benchmark of 45.3%.
- All program staff have been trained in A-CRA, with several pursuing advanced certification to enhance service delivery.
- Community engagement efforts have strengthened partnerships with local schools, juvenile justice programs, and behavioral health organizations.

“The TREE program is proving its effectiveness not only in treatment engagement but also in sustained client support,” said Amy Phillips, Project Director for the TREE Grant. “Our high follow-up rates demonstrate the impact of our structured engagement strategies and the dedication of our staff.”

“Supporting students extends beyond the classroom, and our partnership with Horizon Behavioral Health underscores our commitment to student well-being,” added Marie Petrone, Director of Student/Family Wellness & Attendance, Foster Care & Homeless



Liaison for Amherst County Public Schools. “By prioritizing intervention over punishment, we have expanded access to critical services, reduced repeat offenses, and helped more students stay engaged in their education. This collaboration is making a real difference—ensuring that a mistake, such as bringing a THC vape to school, doesn’t derail a student’s future. Instead, they are given the opportunity to learn, grow, and stay on the path to success.”

As the TREE grant moves into its second year, Horizon Behavioral Health remains committed to expanding intake rates, enhancing outreach, and ensuring that all youth receive trauma-informed, family-driven care.

For more information on Horizon’s services or to make a referral, please visit [Horizon Behavioral Health’s website](http://www.horizonbh.org).

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***Horizon Behavioral Health** has been the primary public behavioral healthcare provider in the Central Virginia region for more than 55 years. Horizon provides services to adults and children, addressing challenges with mental health, substance use and intellectual disabilities. Horizon is accredited by CARF International. This represents the highest level of accreditation that can be given to a behavioral health organization.*