

**Hawaii State Council on Developmental Disabilities  
Health Child and Youth Committee  
Mental Health Survey Findings 2025**

## **Summary**

The Hawaii State Council on Developmental Disabilities Health Child and Youth Committee created and collected survey data on individuals with developmental, intellectual, mental health or dual diagnosis about mental health services and needs. The survey was created to understand the unmet behavioral health needs and improve Hawaii's behavioral health care system to meet and respond to the mental health needs of those with developmental disabilities, dual diagnosis and their families, including those in urban and rural areas of the state.

The survey was created with input from individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities, mental health diagnosis, parents of individuals with a child with a developmental disability and input from Daniela Bond Smith, from the University of Hawai'i Economic Research Organization.

Parents of individuals with a developmental, intellectual or mental health diagnosis and adults with those diagnosis completed the survey. In total we had 129 responses from across the state of Hawaii. With most of the responses from Oahu and Kauai. The needs across the islands were similar and the findings are reported below.

### **Key Findings for Parent Reported Data**

- 45% of parents reported their child having mental health diagnosis and an additional 24% think their child needs a mental health diagnosis they do not currently have.
- 16% of parents think their child has an undiagnosed developmental disability.
- 8.3% of the parents stated that their child had been a sexually assaulted or abused and that they did not report it.
- 48% of parents stated that their child has been bullied at school.
- 24% of parents said they do not know how to get supports for their child's mental health
- 19% of parents said they do not know where to get supports for their child's developmental disability
- 25% of parents reported that they have chosen not to receive medical help or call emergency services because they are concerned about how first responders will interact with their child.

### **Key Findings for Self-Reported Data**

- 25% of the respondents disclosed they have an IDD diagnosis
- 4.6% of the respondents disclosed having a dual diagnosis
- 41% of the respondents reported currently receiving mental health services
- The most frequent support services used by the respondents was employment and in home support services.
- What they like about the current mental health services they receive is that it is in person, but then many also liked the flexibility of telehealth. However, the majority responded that they would prefer if mental health services were provided in person.

- 66% of respondents said they like or like a great deal the mental health services they currently receive.
- 30% of respondents said they look online for information about their mental health diagnosis and 11% said they use social media to find out information about their diagnosis.
- 62% of respondents rely on family to understand their mental health diagnosis.
- Employment supports was the most frequently selected that they would benefit from the most.
- 37% responded that they felt first responders should have information about them and their diagnosis before interacting with them, and that they would like to see social workers supporting first responders in the field.
- 7% of respondents reported having been physically, sexually abused or neglected at one point in their life, and more than 50% of them did not report it.
- 22% of mental health services being provided are off island and or out of state.
- Not knowing or understanding the services that their insurance covers.

### **Recommendations**

- That informational sheets are created by the Health Child and Youth Committee on the difference between intellectual, developmental, learning disabilities and mental health. Examples to include Autism, and ADHD.
- That SMART 911 should be looked at as an option across the state as 37% of respondents said they would like first responders to have information about them ahead of time.
- That additional training and education be provided to individuals with I/DD on abuse, neglect and reporting it.
- That the Health Child and Youth Committee create a resource guide on where to find mental health services and services for I/DD.
- Possible further investigation on where family members of individuals with a mental health, or I/DD diagnosis get their information from.
- Create a guide on where to get accurate information about I/DD and mental health diagnosis.
- That employment services and supports continues to be the first option for individuals with I/DD but also to those with mental health diagnosis.

### **Needs**

- There is a need for more mental health clinicians (psychologist, psychiatrists on neighbor islands) to provide in person services.
- Education on health plans and what they cover for mental health services.
- Community awareness around mental health issues. As 50% of respondents said they do not like to tell people due to stigmas around mental health.
- For mental health practitioners to have experience with providing services/supports to individuals with a developmental or intellectual disability.