

RISE Newsletter

Resilience, Integration, Support, Empowerment (RISE)

RISE is a comprehensive school-based intervention model that integrates behavioral health care coordination with academic support, family engagement, and community-based collaboration.

The program is designed to ensure our services are embedded within and strengthen existing school structures. Our RISE Coordinators work in collaboration with the school's social workers, counselors, and other support staff to better connect with youth.

By placing trained coordinators directly in schools, RISE helps students manage stress, build resilience, and strengthen their sense of belonging.



The program offers individual support, group circles, and family engagement, bridging culture, language, and systems to ensure every student has the tools to thrive emotionally, socially, and academically.

Our vision is to help normalize mental health discussions and equip youth with tools to navigate their overall wellness. We create safe, supportive spaces for students to express their emotions and concerns. Group and peer support conversations often serve as a precursor to identifying the need for more substantial mental health services, in partnership with school-based health centers.

What is Communities of Rooted Brilliance (CRB)?

We began in 2009, then known as the Coalition for Refugees from Burma. Our work at that time centered around helping refugees from Burma survive the trauma of resettlement from a jungle war zone or detention camp to an extremely dissimilar urban culture.

Over time, we found that our work was deeply needed within many newcomer communities, so our mission adapted, and we changed our name to Communities of Rooted Brilliance to better reflect our partnerships!

We embrace traditional customs and values and provide newcomers with community-inspired educational opportunities that create pathways for self-determination as they weave into the fabric of their newfound home.

We partner with our community by continually seeking out their knowledge and wisdom on the services we offer, and we know that leadership already exists within each community—partnering with these leaders to serve their communities in culturally responsive ways.

[Become a Partner](#)

Reflection of Last Year 25-26



[Franklin High School API Block Party]

Behavioral Health Coordinator at Franklin High School, Michael Wong, shared, “As we reflect on this academic year and build towards the next, Franklin High School is hoping to partner with even more organizations that are able to provide students with school-based services. This year bloomed with opportunities and new connections, but there is always room for more support.

We are looking for more ways to talk about mental health, especially for young men. We want to create a space where students can be more open to receiving mental health supports, and have exercise,

clubs, and extracurriculars serve a larger role in reducing mental health barriers."

Behavioral Health Coordinator at Rainier Beach High School, Pray Shiferaw, shared, "In late January, I was invited to participate in an interview with Besa Gordon and DEEL highlighting the work that BHCs do. Naturally, I accepted the invitation and participated in the interview. The interview provided an opportunity to highlight the importance of accessible, school-based support and the positive impact it can have on students' academic, social, and emotional well-being. I wanted the greater Seattle community to hear about the work my colleagues and I are doing in schools to help address the growing mental health crisis among youth. It was an honor to meet with Besa Gordon, discuss my role, and share with the community the investment we are making in our young people today. It was also rewarding to help raise awareness of the collaborative work being done by educators, healthcare providers, and community partners to ensure students have the resources they need to thrive."

Tools to Talk about Mental Health Created Last Year

Mindfulness Journal



[Mindfulness Journal from West Seattle High School's Care Team]

With the help of West Seattle High School's Care Team, Medina Abdi, Behavioral Health Coordinator, created a Mindfulness Journal for May's Mental Health Awareness Month. The journal contains question prompts, a coping skills tracker, and emotion reflections. Considering students will not be able to check in with their counselors or support staff over the summer and may not have others they feel comfortable checking in with, this journal allows them the opportunity to begin checking in with themselves for emotional growth and self-regulation. The journals were distributed around the school so students can take them as they please, as well as share them with other schools.

Self-Care Bingo



[Self-Care Bingo created by Behavioral Health Coordinator Pray Shiferaw]

In May, Pray Shiferaw, Behavioral Health Coordinator at Rainer Beach High School, tabled and offered a self-care bingo card to students who were interested. Although only a small number of students participated, there was one student who was able to get a bingo! They reported that even though these were things they already did, thinking about these practices as self-care made it feel more intentional.

Want to Partner or Collaborate?
Find your Behavioral Health Coordinator

Highline School District

Shahba Shahrukhi – Pacific Middle School & Mt. Rainier High School

Seattle Public Schools

Michael Wong – Franklin High School
Medina Abdi – Chief Sealth Middle School
Pray Shiferaw – Rainier Beach High School
Emily Moore –West Seattle High School
Tina Vasylenko – Madison Middle School
Ayni Ugas – Aki Kurose Middle School
Soghra Sadat – Mercer Middle School
Anahi Barragan – Denny Middle School

Donate to CRB



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