



# County of Santa Cruz



Salud Mental y  
Tratamiento del Uso  
de Sustancias

## HEALTH SERVICES AGENCY

Behavioral Health Division

Administration

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## Press Release

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For Immediate Release

Date: September 17, 2025

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### **RIBBON CUTTING CEREMONY TO WELCOME THE HOPE FORWARD-ESPERANZA ADELANTE YOUTH CRISIS CENTER TO SANTA CRUZ COUNTY**

Santa Cruz County Behavioral Health Division invites the community to a ribbon cutting ceremony for the new youth crisis center, *Hope Forward-Esperanza Adelante*.

**WHAT:** Ribbon Cutting for the Hope Forward-Esperanza Adelante Youth Crisis Center

**WHEN:** Wednesday, September 17, 2025 at 10:00 a.m.

**WHERE:** 5300 Soquel Ave. Santa Cruz, CA 95062

#### **The Hope Forward-Esperanza Adelante youth crisis center is set to open in winter 2025.**

It features two programs designed to meet different levels of need: a Crisis Stabilization Unit (CSU) and a Crisis Residential Program (CRP). The Crisis Stabilization Unit is an 8-chair unit that provides assessment and short-term stabilization, with an average stay of less than 24 hours. The Crisis Residential Program is a 16-bed program that offers therapeutic support, care coordination, and recovery-focused treatment for youth and their families. A typical stay ranges from two to ten days. These programs provide short-term, intensive support for children and youth experiencing acute mental health crises in a safe, supportive environment.

Funding for this \$26.1 million, state-of-the-art youth crisis center came from state grants and County sources. Due to community importance, the project was expedited and completed in just three years – from property acquisition to construction – through staff commitment and strong leadership from the Board of Supervisors.

Santa Cruz County Behavioral Health has partnered with [Aspiranet](#), a California-based 501(c)(3) nonprofit, to operate the youth crisis center. The [Santa Cruz County Mobile Crisis Response Team](#) will also support the center by providing referrals and transporting youth.

“Santa Cruz County’s youth deserve timely, compassionate mental health care when they need it most,” said Dr. Marni Sandoval, Director of Santa Cruz County Behavioral Health. “*Hope Forward–Esperanza Adelante* represents a major step forward in ensuring that young people and their families can access support without unnecessary delays or barriers.”

“Hope Forward–Esperanza Adelante gives youth in Santa Cruz County the chance to heal close to home and their support network”, said Connie Moreno–Peraza, Director of Health Services Agency. “The center will also ease the strain on emergency service systems.”

The Ribbon Cutting Ceremony will include welcoming remarks from:

- Vernon Brown, Aspiranet CEO
- Nicole Coburn, Assistant County Executive Officer
- Manu Koenig, First District Supervisor
- Connie Moreno–Peraza, Health Services Agency Director
- Gail Pellerin, Assemblymember for District 28
- Dr. Marni Sandoval, Behavioral Health Director

Following the ribbon cutting ceremony, attendees may participate in a tour of the youth crisis center.

**For more information about the Santa Cruz County Hope Forward–Esperanza Adelante youth crisis center, including updates on the official opening in winter 2025, please visit [santacruzhealth.org/YouthCrisis](https://santacruzhealth.org/YouthCrisis)**

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