



Meeting Notes
May 12, 2026
8:30 a.m. - 10:00 a.m.

Paso del Norte Health Foundation
221 N. Kansas, 19th Floor
El Paso, Texas 79901
Meeting Room C

Attendees:

Sharon Butterworth
Tanya Berry
David Cotchery
Sandra Day
Catherine Garcia
Roberto Garza
Cathy Gaytan
Cynthia Henry
Josue Lachica
Sedoo Ijir
Vanessa Leon
Violeta Lopez-Unzueta
Beatriz Marín – Olivarez
Laura Marquez
Ana Luisa Martinez
Enrique Mata
Natalie Mendez
Ben Miranda Jr.
Tom Moran
Amanda Munoz
Jermaine Neblett
Doris Ogribene
Dr. Carmen Olivas-Graham

Representing:

Paso del Norte Center at Meadows Institute
Texas Child Protective Services Region 10
Veterans Outreach/American GI Forum
Paso del Norte Health Foundation
El Paso County Juvenile Probation Department
The Warriors Journey
El Paso Child Guidance Center
Paso del Norte Center of Hope
Paso del Norte Center at Meadows Institute
TNOYS
Heart Gallery of El Paso
United Way of El Paso
El Paso Center for Children
Paso del Norte Children's Development Center
Proyecto M.A.M.A.
Paso del Norte Center at Meadows Institute
CASA of El Paso
Endeavors
Stephen A Cohen Clinic/Endeavors
El Paso Child Guidance Center
TNOYS
Emergence Health Network
Socorro Independent School District and EPCC

Manuel Ornelas	El Paso Center for Children
Rachel Quintanilla	Project Vida El Paso
Monica Reyes	Canutillo Independent School District
Alejandra Sanchez	Family Service of El Paso
Dr. Majd Sarah	YWCA El Paso Del Norte Region
Nicole Schiff	Paso del Norte Center of Hope
Beth Senger	El Paso Center for Children
Diana Serrano	El Paso Center for Children
Wes Temple	Region 19 Education Services Center
Isidro Torres	NAMI El Paso
Dana Williams	
Krista Wingate	Emergence Health Network
Sophia Wozniak	Emergence Health Network

Welcome and Introductions

Cathy Gaytan convened the meeting at 8:35 a.m. and called for introductions.

Introduction of Texas Network of Youth Services TNOYS Team

Ms. Gaytan introduced Sedoo Ijir and Jermaine Neblett from the TNOYS Team. She explained that a majority of the meeting will be used to gather vital information from the group that will be used to inform next steps in funding from the Department of Housing and Urban Development for Youth Systems Homelessness Improvement (YHSI). This TNOYS listening session is part of a series and includes a complement survey for youth-serving professionals across the state of Texas. Ms. Ijir and Mr. Neblett proceeded to gather thoughts and reflections on how area youth service providers engage youth in their services, and what providers, youth and young adults (YYA) need to do this effectively. They had particular focus on understanding how providers engage, serve, and partner with YYA who have experienced or are at risk of homelessness*.

**Those at risk of homelessness may include people with a variety of experiences such as juvenile justice, child welfare/foster care, mental health/behavioral health challenges, commercial sexual exploitation of youth (CSEY), etc. We want to hear from you as providers who work with young people in your specific community. Even if you don't serve young people with direct homelessness experience, it's likely that many of the youth that you see may be vulnerable to homelessness or other systems involvement if they have not already had those experiences.*

A majority of the organizations represented are providers serving youth and young adults (YYA) who are experiencing or at risk of homelessness, including those disconnected from school and work, or working within any of the following systems: Victim services, mental/behavioral health, K-12 education, juvenile justice, child welfare, higher education and workforce. The information gathering exercise took up most of the meeting. **Slides presented are included with these notes.**

May 14th Consortium General Meeting

Josue Lachica and Mr. Mata shared that the next Consortium General Meeting is scheduled for Thursday, May 14th and will be held at the Endeavors Health and Wellness Center, 12135 Pebble Hills Blvd, El Paso, TX 79936. **A save the date flyer is included with these notes.**

Adjourn – Cathy Gaytan Adjourned the meeting at 10:21 am





Join Our Youth-Serving Provider Listening and Learning Opportunities!

Through funding from the Department of Housing and Urban Development for Youth Systems Homelessness Improvement (YHSI), TNOYS is hosting a series of listening sessions and conducting a survey for youth-serving professionals across the state. We want to hear your thoughts and reflections on how youth service providers in Texas engage youth in their services, and what providers and youth and young adults (YYA) need to do this effectively. We are particularly interested in understanding how providers engage, serve, and partner with YYA who have experienced or are at risk of homelessness.

**Those at risk of homelessness may include people with a variety of experiences such as juvenile justice, child welfare/foster care, mental health/behavioral health challenges, commercial sexual exploitation of youth (CSEY), etc. We want to hear from you as providers who work with young people in your specific community. Even if you don't serve young people with direct homelessness experience, it's likely that many of the youth that you see may be vulnerable to homelessness or other systems involvement if they have not already had those experiences.*

We know that we cannot fully understand the needs, strengths, challenges, and opportunities associated with providing youth-informed services without hearing directly from those working directly in the field. Your insights will ultimately help inform guidance for other youth service providers on how to engage YYA effectively, and coordinate services across different systems.

Who Should Participate?

Providers serving youth and young adults (YYA) currently experiencing or at risk of homelessness, including those disconnected from school and work, or working within any of the following systems: Victim services, mental/behavioral health, K-12 education, juvenile justice, child welfare, higher education and workforce.

Your responses will help us explore:

- Resources, services and tools available to providers serving YYA experiencing or at risk of homelessness
- Challenges and opportunities in improving youth disconnection, homelessness response systems, and data sharing
- The needs of providers serving YYA experiencing or at risk of homelessness
- Opportunities to strengthen youth-adult partnership

Your perspectives will ultimately shape:

- A report of the findings
- A toolkit for youth serving providers on best practices for engaging youth experiencing or at risk of homelessness
- Recommendations and improvements to youth homelessness coordinated entry systems
- Training and technical assistance offerings
- TNOYS Policy agenda for Texas' 90th legislative session



TNOYS

TEXAS NETWORK OF
YOUTH SERVICES

THEIR FUTURE IS OUR BUSINESS.





**Sedoo Ijir, MPH
(She/Her)**

Director of Practice



**Jermaine Neblett
(He/Him/El)**

**Director of
Partnerships**



**Dana Williams
(She/Her)**

**Texas Emerging Leaders
Board Member**



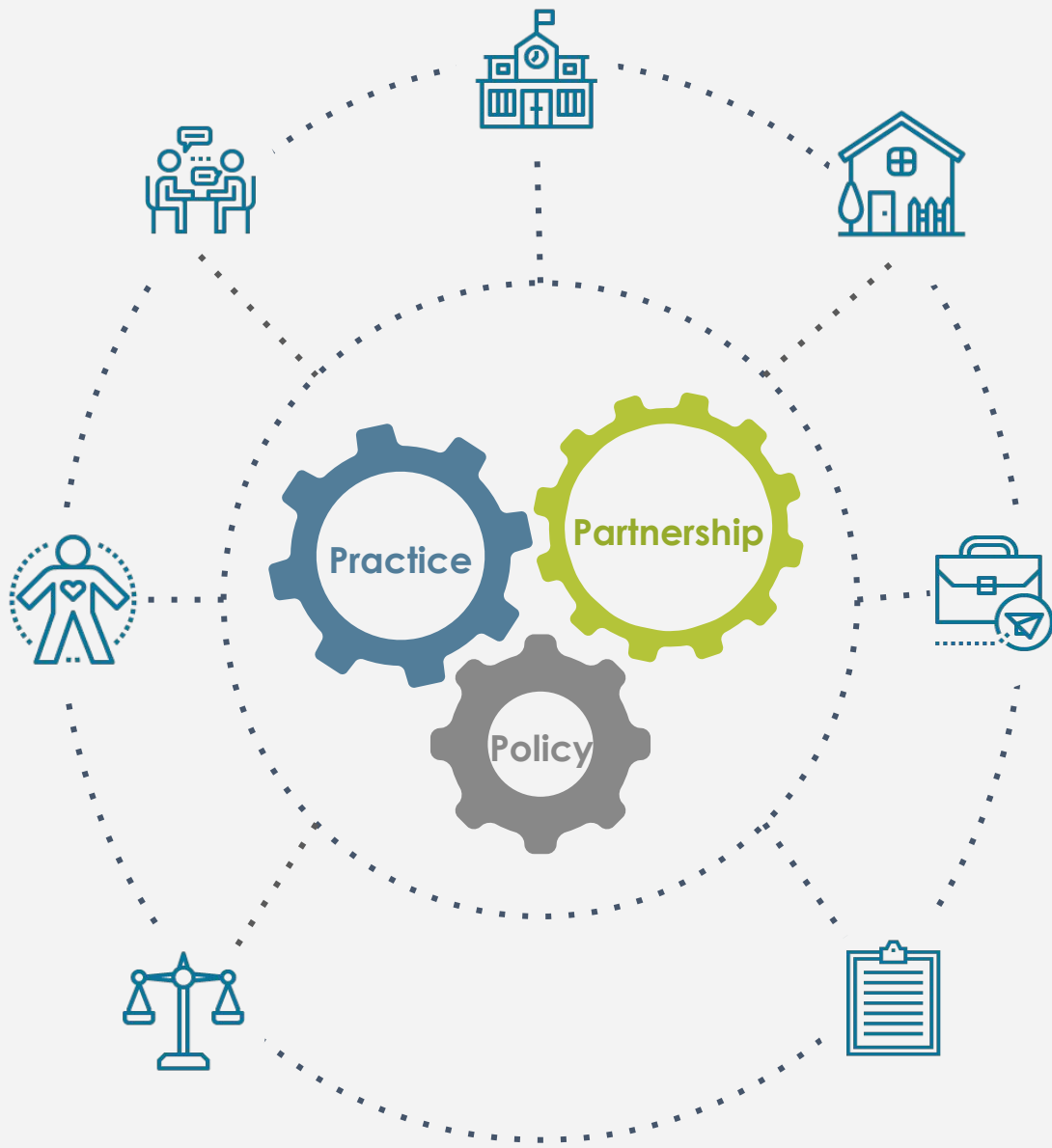
TNOYS' Mission

The mission of TNOYS is to strengthen services and support for Texas youth and families to help them overcome challenges and achieve healthy development.



Membership at a Glance

- Over **100 Organizational Members** serving youth, young adults, and families in **every Texas region.**
- A diverse range of individual members, including frontline staff.
- Representation across systems such as **education, child welfare, housing, and much more.**



By working **across systems**, we foster collaboration, build organizational capacity, and effect systems change.

TNOYS works across seven systems:

- Health
- Housing
- Child Welfare
- Victim Services
- Justice
- Workforce
- Education



Listening & Learning From Providers

Assessing Texas' Youth
Homelessness Response, and
Inclusion of Youth in Programs
and Services

TNOYS
TEXAS NETWORK OF
YOUTH SERVICES
THEIR FUTURE IS OUR BUSINESS.

Project Overview

Listening and Learning from You!

- *How are youth housing and homelessness services providers in Texas engaging youth and young adults to inform their services, if at all, and what do providers and YYA need to do this effectively?*
 - WHY: To understand needs, strengths, challenges, and opportunities for providers serving youth who are experiencing homelessness, which will inform development of guidance for services providers.
 - WHAT: A small group discussion with providers to learn about their experiences and opinions on how to improve coordinated entry and continuum of care for youth experiencing homelessness.



Definitions of Youth Homelessness

- Defining Homelessness:
 - **According to Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD):** people living in places not meant for human habitation, in shelters, or who are unstably housed and losing housing within 14 days.
 - **According to Texas Education Agency (TEA):** lacking a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence, including staying in shelters, motels, cars, or "doubled-up" housing due to economic hardship.

Icebreaker

Let's get to know each other!



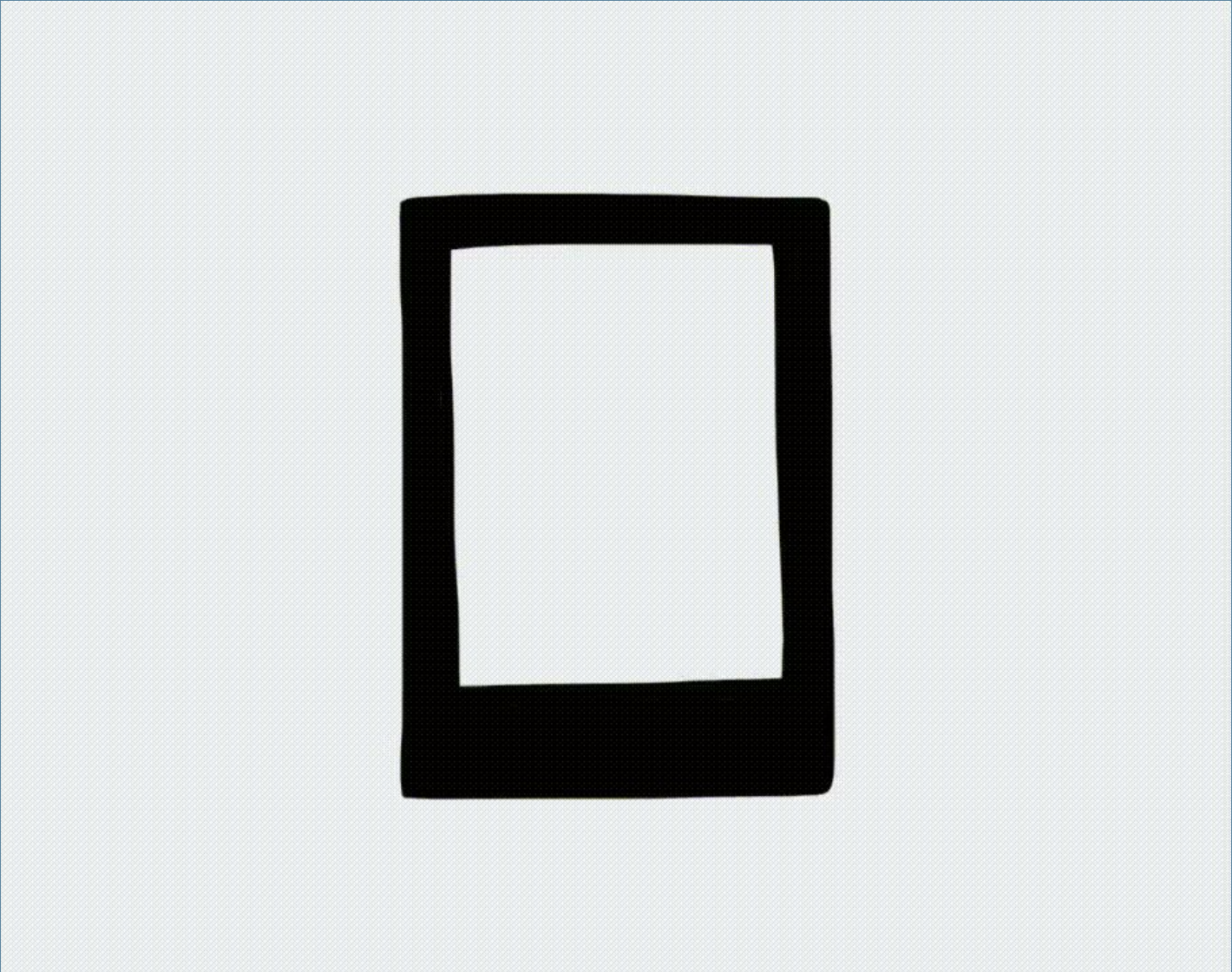
What is your favorite thing about El Paso?

Confidentiality and Respect

Please help maintain a safe space

- Avoid using specific names of individual staff or clients.
- You are not required to have experiences with homelessness to participate, nor are you required to disclose your experiences with us.
- You do not have to provide direct homelessness services to participate; supporting youth who have experienced, or are at risk of, homelessness is sufficient.
- There is no right or wrong answer.
- Respect the varying experiences of others in the room.
- One speaker at a time.
- Do not talk about responses from others outside of this session.
- Step up, step back.
- Try to stay on topic.





Consent and Permissions

Final reminders

- Your participation in this listening session is completely voluntary.
 - You may choose not to answer any question for any reason.
 - You may leave the listening session at any time and for any reason.
 - **Please say “yes” to verbally consent to proceed.**
- Today’s session will be recorded, with your permission.
 - The recording will be kept confidential, and no one outside of TNOYS will have access to this information.
 - The data collected today will be kept anonymous. We will seek your permission if we do want to use your name, and you have the right to permit or deny that use.
 - **Please say “yes” to verbally consent to us starting the recording.**



Listening Session:

Assessing Texas' Youth Homelessness
Response, and Inclusion of Youth in
Programs and Services

Understanding of Youth Homelessness

Understanding of Youth Homelessness

What does youth homelessness look like in your community or region?

Understanding of Youth Homelessness

What services, resources, or supports are typically available in your region (including your own)?

Understanding of Youth Homelessness

We know youth experiencing homelessness are more vulnerable to CSEY. How does your organization or organizations in your region reduce this risk?

Data Management, Information Sharing, and Coordination

Data Management, Information Sharing, and Coordination

How do you and your organization collaborate with other organizations in your area to meet the needs of youth experiencing homelessness or those impacted by or vulnerable to other systems?

Data Management, Information Sharing, and Coordination

Who here is aware of Homelessness Management Information Systems (HIMS)?

Data Management, Information Sharing, and Coordination

What are your needs as they relate to sharing client services information with other organizations you work with or want to work with?

Wants Needs, and Desired Services

Wants, Needs, and Desired Services

Can you tell us about tools, or trainings, that have been helpful for your work as a provider serving youth?

Wants, Needs, and Desired Services

How does your current funding support your services/practices?
Where are there funding gaps for services and resources to support youth experiencing homelessness?

Youth-Adult Partnership

Youth-Adult Partnership

What have been your experiences explaining housing resources and coordinated entry to youth and young adults?

Youth-Adult Partnership

When providing services, what opportunities does your organization have for youth and young adults to share feedback, suggestions, or directly drive decision making, program design, or organizational planning?

Youth-Adult Partnership

If you created a tool-kit specifically for youth and young adults accessing services in your region, what kind of information would you want to include?

QUESTIONS/COMMENTS?

Next Steps

Wrapping up today's listening session

- Please make sure you have completed and submitted the [Online Sign-In Survey!](#)
- Consent and Permission reminders:
 - The recording will be kept confidential.
 - Data will remain anonymous.
 - We will contact you if we want to use your name, and you have the right to accept or deny that request.
- Please return supplies to TNOYS.
- TNOYS will present our findings from all listening sessions (including this one) via a report that will be shared with all participants after concluding our tour.
- **We'll now transition to TNOYS' Statewide Survey.**

THANK YOU



Texas Statewide Provider Survey on Youth Homelessness

Continuing our Research

Engaging Texas' Youth Homelessness System & Stakeholders

- Goal: develop and implement improvements in Texas for the youth and young adult (YYA) homeless response system
- Includes: **engagement with over 600 YYA and 475 providers across the grant; partnerships with agencies and providers across Texas and our 7 systems**
 - We need to hear from the YYA and youth-serving professionals most impacted by youth homelessness
 - Statewide Survey Goal: **250 YYA and 100 providers**



Take TNOYS' Statewide Survey on Youth Homelessness!

Support our research with your expertise

SCAN THE QR CODE to access the survey

OR **COPY THE FOLLOWING LINK** in your web browser:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/WDR5BT7>



SCAN THE QR CODE

QUESTIONS/COMMENTS?

Registration Now Open For TNOYS' 43rd Annual Conference

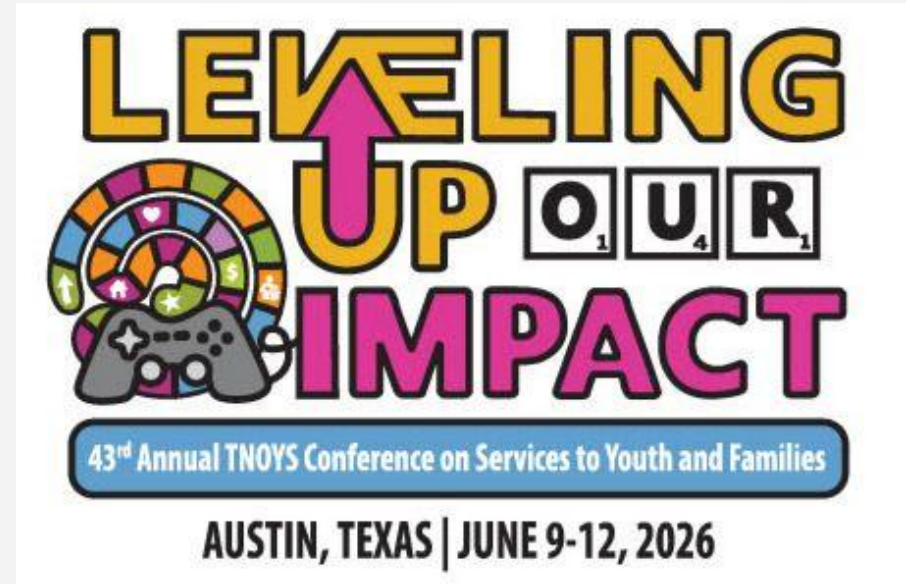
June 9-12, 2026 | Austin, TX

Join nearly 500 attendees from across youth services!

- 40+ workshops led by professionals and young people
- Inspiring keynote speakers
- Networking with professionals from across youth services

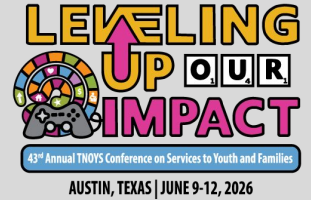
If you have questions, please email us at annualconference@tnoys.org.

Visit www.tnoys.org/2026-annual-conference for more info!



Pre-Conference Institute Highlight

June 9, 2026 | 9:00 AM - 2:00 PM | Renaissance Austin Hotel



Looking to take your skills to the next level? Pre-Conference Institutes are full-day (4-6 hours) training sessions that take place on Tuesday, June 9 at the Renaissance Hotel.

- **Experiential Strategies for Addressing Trauma and Grief** - Nik Johnson
 - Explore how developmental trauma and loss shape internal experience, attachment, behavior, and relational capacity across the lifespan, from early childhood through adolescence and young adulthood. Participants will leave with a toolbox of intervention skills designed to help clients externalize, explore, and integrate difficult experiences.
- **Motivational Interviewing Basics: Building Skills for Effective Change Conversations** - Erin Espinosa, PhD
 - Learn the core principles of MI, emphasizing practical application and skill development, helping participants recognize change talk, respond effectively to ambivalence, and avoid common conversational traps.
- **Take advantage of this additional opportunity to earn an additional 4 CEUs!**

Visit www.tnoys.org/2026-annual-conference for more info!

Upcoming Youth Homelessness Systems Improvement (YHSI) Opportunities

- **Statewide Collaborative on Youth Homelessness (SCYH)**
 - Engage stakeholders working on behalf of YYA experiencing, or at risk of, homelessness to align on shared values and approaches; this collaborative emphasizes ongoing participation through bi-monthly workgroup meetings, as well as quarterly general meetings.
 - **Practice Workgroup**
 - Connect with youth-serving professionals across our seven systems to discuss best practices in serving youth and young adults.
 - **Policy Workgroup**
 - Connect to develop policy recommendations for preventing and addressing youth homelessness and supporting youth and young adults experiencing homelessness.
 - **SCAN THE QR CODE TO JOIN:**



Improve Your Skills with our CSE-IT User Training Series

The **Commercial Sexual Exploitation-Identification Tool (CSE-IT)** a research-based screening tool that helps improve early identification of **commercially sexually exploited youth (CSEY)**. Our trainings on this tool are appropriate for any provider serving youth, including:

- child welfare workers
- probation officers
- mental health clinicians
- first responders

**Next session on
May 20!**

Earn 3.5 CEUs upon completion!

Visit tnoys.org/events/ for info on the next session!



PLEASE JOIN US

FOR THE "CONSORTIUM 2030" GENERAL MEETING

Thursday, May 14, 2026

8:30 am - 11:30 am,

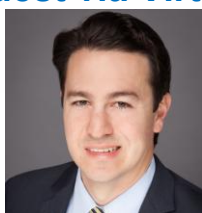
At

Endeavors Health and Wellness Center

12135 Pebble Hills Blvd

El Paso, TX 79936

With Special Guest via Virtual Connection:



**Nelson Jarrin, JD, Senior Vice President of State Policy
for The Meadows Mental Health Policy Institute**

and

Consortium progress Presentations by Community Leaders including:



Tracy J. Yellen

President and CEO

*Paso del Norte Community Foundation
Paso del Norte Health Foundation*



Rene Hurtado

Chief of Staff

Emergence Health Network



The Honorable Anna Perez

Judge of the 41st District Court



Ivonne Tapia

CEO

Aliviane, Inc.

[TO REGISTER CLICK HERE](#)

We look forward to seeing you all there!

For Questions Contact

Enrique Mata (915) 253-0287 or Josue Lachica jlachica@mmhpi.org

Hosted By