

Behavioral Health Summit County

What We Started

- In 2018, Summit County voters passed Measure 1A (Strong Future), **dedicating \$2–5 million a year for ten years to mental-health and substance-use services.**
- **The need was real: 37.3% of residents who needed mental-health care couldn't get it,** and only half (50.5%) felt it was easy to talk about mental health locally.
- **Voters chose to fund the full continuum of care including prevention, intervention, crisis response, treatment, and recovery.**

What We Built

- Since 2019, **over \$20 million** has supported 20+ mental-health and suicide-prevention programs across 13 local organizations.
- **Building Hope Summit County** coordinates the system so no one has to find help alone. **Building Hope Summit is the scholarships, provider support, and navigation partner for the county.**

What Has Changed

- **Residents who needed care but couldn't get it fell from 37.3% (2020) to 12.3% (2026)** – about a two-thirds drop.
- **87.7% of those who needed care were able to get it in 2026,** up from 62.7% in 2020.
- **Stigma is easing** (50.5% → 61.8% say it's easy to talk about mental health) and help is more visible (84.6% know where to find care).
- **Youth suicidal ideation fell from 18% (2017) to 8.8% (2025).**

Why Work Isn't Finished

- **Access has largely been addressed,** but the leading barrier reported by community has shifted: the top reason people don't get care is that they didn't look for it (29%), ahead of cost (24%) and provider supply (15%).
- **Need is rising and concentrated: 45.5% of residents needed care this year, the highest since 2020,** with the greatest need among LGBTQ+ residents (69%), newer community members (59%), younger adults 18–39 (58.8%), and lower-income residents (~55%).
- **Men's reported need rose from 28% to 36%,** and recent suicide loss has centered in the male demographic.
- **Loneliness is climbing (34.8%, above the national rate) and excessive drinking (37.9%) is nearly double Colorado's rate.**

The Decision Ahead

- **This November, Summit County voters decide whether to reauthorize Strong Future.**
- **The case is built on evidence:** a visible, working system of care and a need that hasn't gone away.
- **Reauthorization sustains capacity, protects the progress made,** and reaches the neighbors who still aren't asking for help.
- **Without Strong Future, programs and access will be jeopardized, and the community risks losing hard-won progress.**