

# Children's Behavioral Health Building

## Numbers to Know

**\$53.25 million**

Request from the state

**\$17.75 million**

25% matching funds from the UO

**\$71 million**

Total project cost

**54,000-square-foot facility**

Replacing four outdated buildings totaling 44,000 square feet

**323** construction jobs created

**160** full scholarships annually

**Reflecting inclusive design principles, the new building will include:**

- **Welcoming spaces where children and families can access free behavioral health services and participate in community outreach and educational programs to support wellness.**
- **Modernized classrooms and instructional spaces to prepare Oregon's future behavioral health professionals to deliver evidence-based care to children and families.**
- **A behavioral health clinic providing opportunities for community members to engage in clinical research focused on innovative care approaches.**
- **A telehealth center enabling students and faculty to deliver behavioral health services to youth in underserved and rural communities statewide.**



**Too many Oregon youth are struggling with behavioral health challenges, underscoring the need for better support statewide.**

Rates of depression, anxiety, and suicidal thoughts and behaviors have increased dramatically in adolescents. Oregon ranks 49th in the country in Mental Health America's 2024 Youth Ranking, indicating that Oregon's youth have higher rates of mental health problems and lower rates of access to behavioral health care than nearly every other state.<sup>1</sup>

The **Child Behavioral Health Building** will help expand the state's capacity to deliver innovative, evidence-based care while preparing a new generation of highly skilled behavioral health professionals. This facility will serve as an innovation hub, advancing research that leads to practical solutions, and training professionals who can deliver care to Oregon's children and families where it is needed most. **By combining education, service, and discovery under one roof, this project ensures that Oregon is investing in long-term strategies to support youth behavioral health.**

The University of Oregon is asking the State of Oregon to contribute \$53.25 million toward this \$71-million, 54,000-gross-square-foot project, which includes the removal of four older buildings totaling 44,000 gross square feet. Located at UO Portland, it is the **top-ranked capital project** on the Higher Education Coordinating Commission's (HECC) 2025-27 list of public university capital requests. This ranking reflects the project's alignment with the state's strategic goals for workforce development, equity in student success, and cost efficiency.

<sup>1</sup> Reinert, Maddy, et al. The State of Mental Health in America 2024. Mental Health America, July 2024. Note: Ranking includes all 50 U.S. states and the District of Columbia.

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## Two Revolutionary Programs, One Roof

The new Child Behavioral Health Building will house the Ballmer Institute and Prevention Science Institute, creating a hub for addressing the mental health needs of youth and families. With this facility, Oregon will lead efforts to train a robust and diverse behavioral health workforce,

develop and implement groundbreaking research, and deliver innovative care to children and families across the state. By leveraging the strengths of these two institutes, the building will amplify Oregon's ability to meet the urgent mental health needs of its youngest residents.

### Ballmer Institute

Launched in 2022 through a lead gift from Connie and Steve Ballmer, the **Ballmer Institute for Children's Behavioral Health** is transforming the field with a first-of-its-kind undergraduate program in child behavioral health. This innovative training program equips students with the skills to identify behavioral health challenges early and implement interventions that prevent issues from escalating. Through 700 hours of supervised practice in schools, the healthcare system, and other community settings, graduates are ready to deliver evidence-based care and make an immediate impact in the workforce. By reducing barriers to entry and awarding up to 160 full scholarships annually, the Ballmer Institute is expanding and diversifying Oregon's behavioral health workforce to meet the state's critical needs.

### Prevention Science Institute

The **Prevention Science Institute (PSI)** seeks to improve the lives of children, individuals, and families through interdisciplinary research. Since 1995, the Portland PSI office has facilitated nearly \$60 million in grants and worked with over 4,000 families in the Metro area. PSI focuses on identifying intervention targets, examining brain-behavior interactions, developing and evaluating interventions, and supporting schools and community organizations in implementing research-backed programs. Current projects address children's behavioral health, developmental delays and disabilities, and the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on families.

## The University of Oregon and NE Portland: Engaging with the Community

The UO has been a proud member of the Portland community for more than 100 years. Since acquiring the NE Portland campus in Summer 2022, the UO has demonstrated its continued commitment to investing in

and engaging with the Portland community, including:

- Holding regular open houses with the community
- Inviting community involvement in the campus master planning process
- Providing a Multnomah County Library branch on campus
- Participating in Concordia Neighborhood meetings
- Securing a Conditional Use Permit to open athletic fields for public use as available