



For Immediate Release  
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**PVPSA NAMED ONE OF 32 STATE-WIDE ORGANIZATIONS  
TO RECEIVE ELEVATE YOUTH CALIFORNIA FUNDING**

**Watsonville, CA** – Pajaro Valley Prevention and Student Assistance (PVPSA) has been named one of 32 statewide non-profit organizations to receive awards of up to \$1 million to develop or increase youth voice, leadership and engagement efforts for substance use disorder education and prevention.

PVPSA’s initiative "Youth Reclaiming Voice and Power”, will be funded by the award and develops leadership and civic engagement skills for youth in Santa Cruz County and Monterey County. These efforts work upstream to prevent substance use and promote youth health and wellbeing. Youth will engage more purposefully in shaping policies that support this outcome.

“Elevate Youth California is building a strong foundation for a statewide movement to increase youth voice and address these critical issues. We are honored to be a partner in that movement,” stated Erica Padilla Chavez, CEO of PVPSA. “Our commitment to the wellbeing of children, youth and families is the core mission of our agency. We are excited to expand the engagement of youth voice to help shape their neighborhoods and communities.”

Elevate Youth California is a statewide program supporting community leaders who are addressing substance use disorders by investing in the youth development and activism of youth of color and LGBTQ+ youth ages 12 to 26. Elevate Youth California brings together a growing network of youth-serving community-based organizations throughout California to reduce and prevent substance use disorder. Funds support mentorship and peer-led support lifting up youth empowerment and leadership with a focus on impacting policy, systems, and environmental change.

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