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## **Section 1: Introduction to the Certified Wellness Coach Role**

### **Welcome to the Team**

As a School-Based Wellness Coach, you've been hired to support youth behavioral health in a unique and impactful way. Whether you're a Certified Wellness Coach Level I or II, or an Intern working toward certification, your work will help fill critical gaps in school-based mental health services.

### **This guide provides:**

- A comprehensive explanation of your responsibilities.**
  - Context for your role within the broader mental health system.**
  - A breakdown of activities you'll be doing with students.**
  - Strategies for success on campus.**
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## **Section 2: History and Policy Context**

### **The Emergence of Wellness Coaching**

Wellness Coaching is a newly adopted mental health support role in California, authorized by the Children and Youth Behavioral Health Initiative (CYBHI). Recognizing the shortage of licensed mental health professionals, the state developed this position to expand access through a workforce of trained paraprofessionals.

#### **Key Purpose**

- **Immediate Need: Rapid deployment of certified wellness coaches**
- **Long-Term Goal: Create a career pathway toward licensure for those entering the mental health field.**

"Wellness Coaching" in this context is not traditional life or performance coaching, but rather a support role under the supervision of mental health professionals. Wellness coaches also serve as on-campus promoters and coordinators and resources for student social, emotional and mental well-being.

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## **Section 3: Understanding Your Role – Paraprofessional Support**

### **Think of your role like that of:**

- A paralegal: Supporting therapeutic work but not delivering therapy.
- A server in a restaurant: Responding to student needs and connecting them with the "kitchen" (licensed professionals).

### **Your Primary Functions**

- **Deliver wellness education**
- **Facilitate screenings**
- **Coordinate care**
- **Provide check-ins and support sessions**
- **Refer crisis situations to professionals**

You're part of a care team—not a therapist. Your work extends the impact of licensed professionals.

## Section 4: Dual Supervision and Role Clarity

### Two Supervisors, Two Functions

<b>Supervisor Type</b>	<b>Role &amp; Responsibility</b>
<b>5 Peaks Supervisor</b>	<b>Professional development, site visits, coaching, feedback</b>
<b>School Supervisor (PPS)</b>	<b>Assign daily activities, ensure campus integration</b>

### Key Insights

You may feel tension navigating between two supervisors. It's normal. Stay clear on:

- Who directs daily duties (school PPS staff)
- Who supports your growth and role performance (5 Peaks)

You'll also interact with:

- School counselors
- On-site therapists
- Administrators and teachers

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## Section 5: Core Service Areas Defined by CYBHI

**According to CYBHI, your activities fall under six primary domains:**

1. Wellness Promotion and Education
2. Screening
3. Care Coordination and Extension
4. Individual Support
5. Group Support
6. Crisis Referral

Each area includes specific duties described in the next section.

## **Section 6: Detailed Descriptions of Duties**

### **1. Wellness Promotion & Education**

**Deliver structured classroom presentations or facilitate small groups covering topics including:**

- **Mental health literacy** (individual skills training, building positive relationships, bullying prevention, and understanding nutrition and exercise in relation to behavioral health)
- **Life skills** (stress management, time management, problem-solving)
- **Behavior activation** (identifying, engaging in, and evaluating activities that promote positive emotions and well-being)
- **Overcoming maladaptive thinking patterns**
- **Distraction strategies** (demonstrating and practicing how to redirect attention to enjoyable activities, practicing mindfulness, or using sensory techniques to shift focus)
- **Emotional regulation** (recognizing and understanding emotions and teaching strategies to regulate them in a healthy and adaptive manner)

### **2. Screening**

- Help students complete behavioral health screeners
- Administer universal screening tools (under supervision)
- Identify students who may need referrals

### **3. Care Coordination & Extension**

- Connect students to behavioral health providers
- Facilitate communication between mental health and school programs
- Support educators and staff with behavioral health needs (non-clinical)

### **4. Individual Support**

- Conduct brief check-ins or structured 1:1 meetings
- Topics may include:
  - Emotional regulation
  - Goal setting

- Mindfulness
- Nutrition, sleep, and exercise
- Skill practice from therapy sessions

Note: Curriculum and coaching tools will be provided to support your individual sessions.

### **5. Group Support**

- Facilitate small wellness or skills-building groups (3–6 students)
- Inward-facing groups: Stress, organization, conflict resolution
- Outward-facing groups: Anti-stigma, behavioral awareness, community empathy

### **6. Crisis Referral**

- Follow protocols for responding to signs of emotional/behavioral crisis
- Identify at-risk students and escalate appropriately
- Provide warm hand-offs to licensed staff

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### **Section 7: Key Questions for Self-Reflection**

1. Am I comfortable serving in a support role rather than a therapeutic one?

You may be asked to shift tasks, work behind the scenes, or serve without recognition.

2. How will I manage supervision by two organizations?

Consider your communication style, flexibility, and personal boundaries.

3. How will I manage the high level of self-initiative and proactive connections required by this role?

Write your answers here:

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

## Section 8: Next Steps – Campus Integration

### When you first arrive on campus:

- Network with school administration and ensure that you understand school protocols that impact your function on that campus
- Build relationships with school counselors
- Understand daily priorities: Ask what’s needed today.
- Communicate clearly with both supervisors
- Use idle time proactively:
  - Initiate developmental relationships by connecting with students informally
  - Make yourself available for assisting where needed

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## Section 9: Glossary of Key Terms

<b>Term</b>	<b>Definition</b>
<b>CYBHI</b>	<b>Children and Youth Behavioral Health Initiative</b>
<b>PPS</b>	<b>Pupil Personnel Services – credentialed school support staff</b>
<b>LCSW/LMFT</b>	<b>Licensed Clinical Social Worker / Licensed Marriage &amp; Family Therapist</b>
<b>Warm handoff</b>	<b>Personally connecting a student with a professional rather than simply referring them</b>

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## Section 10: Resources and Support

- 5 Peaks Site Supervisor: Your primary contact for job performance
- On-Campus PPS Staff: Daily task direction
- Training Materials: Basecamp curriculum, My-Life Explorer curriculum wellness toolkits, coaching engagement strategies.
- Professional Development: Webinars, on-going training, supervision debriefs

## **Closing Notes**

You are part of a growing movement to make mental health support more accessible to young people. This role is new, evolving, and crucial. Stay curious, adaptable, and student-centered.

“You are not here to ‘fix’ students—you are here to walk with them, provide tools, and connect them to resources that support their healing and growth.”

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