In this studio, we start from a perspective that the physical setting is a key mediator in mental health treatment.

The focus of this studio is the annual IIDA student design competition as described here: https://iida.org/competition/2022-student-design-competition. Be ready for a stimulating and rigorous 10 weeks as we strive to go beyond the given program and to generate clear design intentions and graphic communications required for success in the competition, while also following the intentions of the competition to analyze and apply research to create a Human Centered Design solution.

As young people, you are no doubt aware that mental health and substance abuse problems are increasing exponentially among children and teens. The pandemic, along with other societal maladies have only intensified these problems, resulting in a large influx of young people who need treatment. The competition centers on a behavioral health center that will respond to the unique needs of the young patients who suffer from a whole spectrum of mental health challenges and substance abuse issues. We will begin by widening the scope of the given program (a list of spaces to design) to include design research and precedent to inform our work to create actively therapeutic and uplifting spaces for the kids, while also supporting parents and staff. Creative ideation and clear graphics will be essential throughout the studio.

The IIDA student design competition mirrors contemporary design practice in that the Pediatric Behavioral Health Clinic occupies a lease space within an existing commercial building. Constrained opportunities for large scale changes to the site will focus our attention inward, so we can develop and articulate strategies for healthy and ecological materials / practices, universal access / wayfinding, as well as important behavioral and sensory attributes. These strategies and features will be refined and integrated into the given presentation format for the competition.