Best Practices for Engaging Youth in Mental Health Programming

An overview of youth engagement principles and mental health programming resources for high school students.
Webinar Housekeeping

- Everyone is in “listen-only” mode.
- Two listen options: phone or web (phone tends to be better!)
- Call in #: 415-655-0003, Access Code: 668 468 202
- Type questions in "chat box" located in the sidebar to the right.
- If you are having technical difficulties please be sure to address the panelists and we will do our best to help you.
- The webinar is being recorded.
- Supporting materials will be emailed to you and available on our website.
Presentation Objectives

Upon completion of this webinar, participants will be able to:

• Define effective techniques for youth engagement.

• Identify examples of mental health programming for high school students.

• Describe resources and next steps for engaging youth in mental health programming.
Agenda

1. Introductions
2. About Our Agencies
3. Youth Engagement 101 (CSHA)
4. Mental Health Programs on High School Campuses (CDE & NAMI)
5. Additional Resources
6. Close-out
Introductions

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Education Programs Consultant
Mental Health Services Program
California Department of Education

Erik Villalobos
Family and Peer Programs Coordinator
NAMI California

Molly Baldridge, MPH
Program Manager, Adolescent Health,
California School-Based Health Alliance
Roll Call!

In the chat box to the right, type (be sure to address everyone)...

- Your first name
- Organization
- When you’re feeling stressed, what do you do to take care of yourself?
California Department of Education’s Mental Health Services Program

• Provide information and support to schools;
• Provide training opportunities for school staff, community partners, parents;
• Impact policy to support ALL students experiencing mental health issues;
• Increase access to and opportunities for mental health services.
Student Mental Health Policy Workgroup

- The State Superintendent of Public Instruction convened this work group in May 2012 with funding from the CalMHSA;
- Membership of diverse backgrounds;
- Public quarterly meetings;
- Identify student mental health challenges in California that can be addressed by changes in student mental health policies;
- Make annual policy recommendations to the State Superintendent of Public Instruction and the California State Legislature;
- Serve as an advisory group to the California Department of Education’s (CDE) mental health projects.
Project Cal-Well

“Now is the Time”

Project Advancing Wellness and Resilience in Education

State Educational Agency Grant
NITT- AWARE-SEA
Component 1

• Address the mental health needs of children, youth, families/caregivers, and communities;

• Builds off of the Safe Schools/Healthy Students model to support school and community partnerships by encouraging integrated systems that promote students’ mental health, enhance their academic achievement, prevent violence and substance use, and create safe and respectful school climates.

• Provide local communities with increased access to school and community-based mental health services through improved coordination of state and local policies and resources;

• Broad spectrum of services from which to select
Component 1 Goals

Establish referral processes to ensure access to school- and community-based mental health service programs;

Develop the capacity of LEAs to leverage state and local funding to support school-based mental health services/activities;

Support youth violence prevention and school climate strategies by utilizing research-based violence prevention and positive behavioral intervention programs;
Component 2

• Provide Youth Mental Health First Aid (YMHFA) training at the state and local levels;

• LEA instructors will train a minimum of 125 “first aiders” annually;

• State instructors will train 360 “first aiders’ annually;

• Saturate the state with YMHFA trainings.
Youth Mental Health First Aid

- Australian based public education program;
- Increase mental health literacy among youth serving adults;
- Based on the concept of medical first aid;
- 8-hour course.
- Trainings available at no cost
A Guide to Student Mental Health and Wellness in California

- Based on the Minnesota Association for Children’s Mental Health (MACMH)
- Collaboration to make it California specific
- For use by ALL school staff and adults on school campuses
- Released August 2014
Online Professional Development for California Educators and School Staff

https://california.kognito.com/

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California School-Based Health Alliance

The California School-Based Health Alliance is the statewide non-profit organization dedicated to improving the health and academic success of children and youth by advancing health services in schools.

Our work is based on two basic concepts:

• Health care should be accessible and where kids are
• Schools should have the services needed to ensure that poor health is not a barrier to learning.
Youth Engagement 101
Think of an adult that was a mentor to you when you were a teen…

What is one quality that you remember about them?

(Please type your answer in the chat box and be sure you are addressing everyone.)
Youth Engagement vs. Tokenization

Rung 8: Young people & adults share decision-making
Rung 7: Young people lead & initiate action
Rung 6: Adult-initiated, shared decisions with young people
Rung 5: Young people consulted and informed
Rung 4: Young people assigned and informed
Rung 3: Young people tokenized*
Rung 2: Young people are decoration*
Rung 1: Young people are manipulated*

*Note: Hart explains that the last three rungs are non-participation

Part 1: Are you and your organization ready for Youth Engagement?

- We want to start a program!
- We have a program already!
- We are thinking about starting a program!
- We have been doing this for years!

Youth Engagement!
Part 2: Build Capacity for Youth Engagement & Create an Action Plan

Key Questions:

• How can we get funding to support youth engagement?
• How do we allocate appropriate staff/adult ally time?
• Where can we receive adult ally training on youth development principles and youth facilitation?
The Youth Engagement Process

Develop a strategy for youth engagement → Recruit young people to participate → Build the capacity of the team

Identify project goals and objectives → Provide ongoing support → Facilitate ongoing assessment of team dynamics and leadership development

Evaluate both the process and the product of youth engagement → Celebrate successes! → Use program evaluation and feedback to inform the process for the following year
5 KEY PRINCIPLES

YOUTH ENGAGEMENT

The core of youth engagement is a meaningful partnership between adults and young people.

1. INCLUSIVENESS & EQUITY
2. RESPECT & AFFIRMATION
3. AUTHENTICITY & VULNERABILITY
4. TRUST & ACCOUNTABILITY
5. FLEXIBILITY
Next Steps:
“Let them reach for the sky and help bring the sky to them”

- Are supportive and caring i.e. trauma-informed
- Trust youth
- Take risks, not afraid of challenges
- Are good listeners & facilitators
- Comfortable working with youth
- Help network/navigate institutions
- Step up, step down
- Are respectful of youth’s views, diversity, culture, time (don’t ask too much of youth!)
Mental Health Programs
What is NCHS?

- High school club open to all grades
- Promotes mental health and wellness
- Plan meetings, activities, and outreach to campus
- At least one advisor with a mental health background
NCHS Goals

• Promote the voices of students within the high school environment
• Increase awareness of mental health and wellness
• Promote acceptance for students experiencing emotional distress or a mental illness
• Improve school climate and student mental wellness through activities
• Inspire lifelong advocacy
NCHS is...

- A place to learn about mental health and wellness
- An inclusive club—everyone is welcome!
- A group of young people passionate about creating a safe and supportive environment
- A group that works to reduce stigma on campus by being role models of acceptance and supportive behavior towards others
NCHS isn’t…

- A support or therapy group
- A place to get diagnosed
- About identifying or labeling others who may or may not have a mental illness
NCHS Resources

• Advisor and Student Manuals
• Advisor Technical Assistance/Coaching Webinars throughout the year
• NCHS Toolkit: Flyer templates; sample agendas and meeting minutes; meeting ideas, etc…

• Mental Health Resource Guide
  • Addresses mental health disorders
  • Symptoms of most common mental illnesses
  • How you can help
  • What to do in an emergency situation
  • Worksheets for clubs to identify campus-, local, and national resources that can help those in need of services
Policies and Confidentiality

• Clubs are required to follow ALL school and district policies

• Advisors are mandated reporters so no promise of confidentiality

• Advisors and students are given resources and guidance on what to do if an emergency occurs
Club Activities
Ending the Silence (ETS)

• 50 minute presentation, designed for one high school class period

• Presentation delivered by a trained two-person team that includes a young adult sharing their story with mental illness

• Students given resources following the presentation on where to go for help or if they are concerned for a friend

• NCHS Clubs can bring ETS to campus to spread more awareness about mental illness
Directing Change

• Student film contest open to all high schools students and youth and young adults (ages 16-25) in California

• Two categories: Ending the Silence of Mental Illness and Suicide Prevention

• All films are 60 seconds long and multiple teams from one high school can enter
Advocate for Change

• Challenge *all* students to attend an Ending the Silence presentation
• Challenge *all* school staff to complete the Kognito At-Risk Online Simulation
• Challenge *all* students to complete the Friend2Friend online learning
• Deliver a student mental health presentation to local school board
• Host lunch time presentations about mental health and wellness
• Advocate for the inclusion of mental health into science/health curriculum
• Support or draft mental health bills
• Write letters to legislative staff
Let’s See What the Training Looks Like
All clubs must attend a full day of training

Training topics include:

• Mental health
• Stigma reduction
• How to be a friend
• Resources on campus and in community
• Club leadership
• Outreach/promotion
• Being an advocate
• Club management
Activity: Club Ground Rules

1. Respect others
2. Start on time and end on time
3. Confidentiality
4. One mic
5. Open mind
6. Assume a good intention
7. Accept non closure
8. Thou shall not be judgmental
9. Be positive
10. No Profanity

- Pay Attention
- Respect those talking
- *Respect (DON'T SHUT IT DOWN)
- Self
- Others
- *Assume good intentions
- One Mic
- Confidentiality
- Step up, Step down
- Approach everything with a positive attitude
Activity: Inclusive Club Flyer

Brain & Psychology Club Presents

* When? Tuesdays
  * Where? Mr. Ryan's Room #1781
  * Time? 12:15 - 1:00pm (1 Lunch)

NAMI

Advocate, Support, Educate

#EndTheStigma #Psychology #NAMI #MENA

We NAM-eate you to join our club.
Student Testimonials

What was your favorite part of today?
“Getting closer with my group!”
“Learning.”
“[Learning] The new facts I didn’t know”
“Hearing other students!”

What are you most excited about after the training?
“Getting our club started.”
“Tell people about it.”
“I’m excited about making other kids feel like they are not alone and that they do have resources.”
“Bringing school wide activities to our campus and making mental illness known to our peers and classmates.”
Get Involved!

• Know of a school that may be interested?
  Contact your local NAMI Affiliate; or Beth Larkins or Erik Villalobos at NAMI CA

• Local NAMI Affiliate, NAMI California and school advisor, and identified students take part in a 1 day training

• Schools must have identified an advisor with a mental health/social work background
Let’s get California High School Students Talking about Mental Health
• 15-min online mental wellness peer support learning activity
• Created for high school students
• Includes a “practice” conversation with a virtual student
• Uses game mechanics to engage youth
• Lesson plans available for integration in Health and Language Arts
• Available at no cost to all California Public and Charter Schools
Friend2Friend Learning Objectives

01 Increase awareness of mental wellness and of signs that a peer might be suffering from psychological distress, including suicidal thoughts.

02 Learn best practices for approaching friends that might be suffering from psychological distress and referring those students for support.

03 Decrease stigma and correct misconceptions surrounding mental health disorders.

04 Increase awareness of support and resources available to students, both locally and nationally.
How it Works

1. Assume the role of a student and engage in a virtual conversation

2. Control the conversation by choosing what to say

3. Learn effective techniques to support, motivate help-seeking

4. Receive feedback throughout the conversation

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So you've got some intense stuff going on, and that's why you're freaking out.

So your big sister is causing a lot of drama, and you have to pick up the slack.

All that stuff going on in your house sounds really hard.
How to Access

http://kognitocampus.com/peer

Enrollment key: calfriend

Access training program
Create an Account
Additional Resources:

• NAMI California

• Ending the Silence

• CSHA Website: Youth Engagement Tools
Thank you!

Reminder: All materials and a recording of this webinar will be available by the end of this week.

Please respond to our evaluation as well.
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