

Mental Health – Let's Talk Wellness

*A family engagement series focusing on Mental Health and
Wellness*

September Workshop

Rosa Rivera, Outreach Coordinator

rosa.rivera@pacificcharters.org 916 693-4620



Disclaimer

This is for informational purposes only and should not be a substitute for medical advice.



MENTAL HEALTH AND CHILDREN

Raising a child can be challenging. Even under the best circumstances, their behaviors and emotions can change frequently and rapidly.

Children can be sad, anxious, depressed, irritable, aggressive at times. Occasionally they find it challenging to sit still, pay attention, or interact with others.

In most cases, these are just typical developmental phases. However, in some behaviors it may be a concern and need professional evaluation.



IS THIS JUST A CHILDHOOD STAGE?

The NATIONAL INSTITUTE of MENTAL HEALTH states that, mental health disorders can begin during childhood.

Examples include anxiety disorders, attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), autism spectrum disorder, depression and other mood disorders, eating disorders, and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).

Without treatment, these mental health conditions can prevent children from reaching their full potential.

Many adults who seek mental health treatment, reflect on the impact of their mental health during their childhood, and wish they had received help sooner.



FIRST STEPS FOR PARENTS

If you are concerned about your child's mental health, you can start by talking with others who frequently interact with your child.

For example, child's teacher, grandparent, and babysitter, ask them about your child's behavior in school, daycare, or on the playground.

You can talk with your child's pediatrician or health care provider to take the necessary steps to help your child.

You can ask the health care provider for a referral to a mental health professional who has experience and expertise in treating children.



How Can Parents Support Their Child

- Parents' it's good to **model healthy coping skills**- this is a great way to help your child learn how to **deal with emotions**. Remember that your child doesn't understand what they are feeling, this is all new. When we model **healthy coping skills**, we are **teaching** them **positive life skill**.
- You can make every situation a **teachable moment** and **guide** them with healthy skills, this will **help them** handle a situation they might have to face someday alone. You can tell them on how to make better **choices and decisions** on their own, **remember** everything is happening for the **first time with your child** and we are there to help them understand those feelings.
- **Activities:** deep breathing, stress ball, making an art journal (painting, coloring, doodling) going for walks, playing outside, or playing a sport, can be great strategies for coping with our kid's feelings.



Behavior Changes

- It's very normal for kids to go through changes in behavior while going through different developmental stages.
- However, if you notice that your child has become more **withdrawn or isolated** from their friends, family or routine, it may be a sign that they're experiencing a situation or feeling that they don't know how to process their feelings on their own.
- **Check-in** with your child is important and letting them know you're here and ready to **listen and support them**.
- Make an **appointment** with their **healthcare provider** to **seek help or provide child counseling**.
- Remember, asking for help is not a bad thing. Give yourself some grace and allow yourself some kindness and be okay and not have the answer to everything.



Keep Communication, Open, Honest, and Supportive

- It's **important** that your children know they can **approach you** with **any issues**, and you are open to listen with **love, compassion, and support**.
- Simply letting them know that you are **not here to judge them**, you are here to **validate their feelings and** keep the **lines of communication open**, this **builds trust**, and helps them come to you when they have a problem.
- For a child, one of the most important things you can provide is a **positive safe environment**.
- When children feel **supported** it **increases confidence** about their feelings and thoughts, they are more **willing to share**, and it helps them have a sense of **security and safety** in life and at home.



Create a Routine and Setting Clear Boundaries

- **Uncertainty** about day-to-day activities can lead to a lot of **stress** or **anxiety** in a child's life.
- **Creating** a general **routine** at home-school can **provide** some **relief** and **peace** for your child. Whether it's a schedule for daily meals, bedtime or a weekly family movie night.
- Having **clear boundaries** of **house rules** and **chores** is important for you and your child. It helps them understand, **what is expected** of them at home and can **minimize** feelings of **frustration** for both parent and child.



Involve Your Child In The Decision-Making

- As adults, we feel we know what's best for our child, often they feel left out of the **decision-making**. But by 3rd grade we can start to involve them more.
- Including your children in the **making decisions**, can help them **find their voice**. It makes them feel **heard, understood** and **validated**.
- **Ask them**, how can I better support you? What happen to you? How does it make you feel? How can we make it better? This helps them feel that their **feelings** are **being heard, have a voice**, and **gaining confidence**, to **trust** their **choices** and use them to **make decisions for themselves**.



LGBTQ+ Youth Concerns

- **LGBTQ+ youth** are nearly **twice** as likely to be **bullied**, be called names, harassed or physically assaulted at school compared to their non-LGBTQ+ peers. Their mental health and education and their physical well-being is a **concern**.
- **How Is Their Mental Health Being Affected?**
- **Substance Use:** is more than **twice** as likely to experiment with drugs and alcohol.
- **Happiness:** is only **37%** of the LGBTQ+ youth has reported **being happy**. However, over **80%** of LGBTQ+ youth believe they will **eventually be happy**, when they **move away** from their current hometown, they were born.
- **Self-Harm:** with each instance of verbal or physical harassment, the risk of self-harm among the LGBTQ+ is **2 ½ times more likely**.
- **Suicide:** Among gay, lesbian, and bisexual, trans youth they are **4 times more likely to attempt suicide** than their heterosexual counterparts.
- Information by The American Institute of Suicide Prevention



Teens Talking Emotions

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BgZhHxUwllU>



Warning Signs

- While every child experience emotional ups and downs, there are some red flags that indicate that they may need to see a healthcare provider, a counselor or a mental health professional. Reach out to someone right away if your child displays any of these red flags:
 - Crisis Text Line
 - HELLO to 741741
- Displays excessive worry or anxiety
- Appears less confident or feels bad about themselves
- Withdraws from you, their friends, or activities they used to enjoy
- Displays significant changes in eating or sleeping habits
- Struggles academically or has issues with friends
- Expresses hopelessness, seems depressed, or talks about suicide
- Engages in negative behaviors more often
- Talks about or participates in self-harming behaviors
- Participates in self-destructive behaviors or has issues with impulse control
- Seems overly irritable, emotional, or easily upset
- Makes comments like "Nobody would notice if I ran away"





JJ's Hello Foundation

The mission of JJ's Hello Foundation is to prevent youth suicide, promote mental health awareness, and create a message of hope for pre-teens, teens, and young adults in our community.

A local foundation by Joshua and Michelle Anderson, founded on behalf of their son.



The background of the entire image is a top-down view of numerous light-colored wooden blocks scattered across a white surface. Each block has a black question mark printed on its top face. The blocks are arranged in a somewhat random pattern, with some overlapping and others spaced apart. A semi-transparent white rectangular box is overlaid on the left side of the image, containing text.

Questions

Please email me or call and text?

916 693-4620

rosa.rivera@pacificcharters.org

Resources

- [Screenagers NEXT CHAPTER \(official trailer\) - YouTube](#)
- **National Suicide Prevention Lifeline**
 - 1800 273-TALK (8255)
 - **Crisis Text Line**
 - HELLO to 741741
- **Hello Foundation, JJ's Hello Foundation**
 - Their mission to prevent youth suicide, promote mental health awareness, and create a message of hope for tweens, teens, and kids in our community. 916 207-8688
- **National Institute of Mental Health Science**
 - 1-866-615-6464
- ACCESS 916 874-6015 (**Mental Health Help**)
- **Thetrevorproject.org**: LGBTQ+ resources
 - **Sacramento LGBTQ+ Comm. Center**
 - 1015 20th Street, 916 442-0185
- **Outreach Coordinator, Rosa Rivera**
 - **Call or text 916 693-4620**
 - *services and resources*

