

Mental Health in High Schools



NAMI Urban Los Angeles and NAMI California

- ▶ 2017 began a project to support student and family wellness in the Lynwood and Compton Unified School Districts:
 - ▶ Supporting schools to develop Multi-tiered Systems
 - ▶ Social / Emotional Learning
 - ▶ Suicide Prevention / Stigma Reduction
 - ▶ Connecting schools to communities
 - ▶ Increase awareness of the connection between trauma, social emotional needs, and mental wellness
 - ▶ Improve systems of support for ALL Students



About NAMI California

- ▶ Part of the largest grass roots mental health organization in the country
- ▶ 62 Affiliates and 19,000 members in California made up of family members and individuals with mental health conditions
- ▶ About 75% Affiliates completely volunteer run
- ▶ Lived experience is key in the success of our organization and programs
- ▶ Mission: We advocate for lives of quality and respect, without discrimination and stigma, for all our constituents. We provide leadership in advocacy, legislation, policy development, education and support throughout California



History of NCHS

- ▶ CalMHSA
 - ▶ Prevention and Early Intervention (PEI) Programs
 - ▶ K-12 Student Mental Health Initiative
- ▶ Eliminating Barriers to Learning trainings
- ▶ CDE partnered with NAMI CA for youth voice
- ▶ CDE and NAMI CA collaborated to create NCHS
- ▶ Launched in 2014
- ▶ Growing and expanding



NCHS Goals

- ▶ Promote the voices of students within the high school environment
- ▶ Increase awareness
- ▶ Inspire advocacy
- ▶ Promote acceptance for students experiencing a mental health condition
- ▶ Improve school climate and student mental wellness



NCHS Nuts & Bolts

- ▶ High school club open to all grades
- ▶ At least one advisor with a mental health background
- ▶ Promotes mental health and wellness
- ▶ Plan meetings, activities, and outreach to campus
- ▶ Raises awareness, reduces stigma, changes the campus climate
- ▶ Partners with school administration and local NAMI Affiliate



Benefits For Students

- ▶ Reduce stigma on campus
- ▶ Become a mental health advocate
- ▶ Have a positive impact on peers
- ▶ Develop leadership skills
- ▶ Provide students with resources regarding mental health beyond high school



Benefits For Administration

- ▶ Establish or strengthen a relationship with local NAMI
- ▶ Support mental health in students and faculty
- ▶ Provide resources to teachers
- ▶ Create a safe and supportive school environment



Benefits For Counties

- ▶ Have schools with more awareness of mental health and available resources
- ▶ Stigma reduction in youth
- ▶ Collaboration between local organizations and schools
- ▶ Early Universal Prevention



Benefits For Campus

- ▶ Establishing themselves as a school that values the mental wellness of students
- ▶ Promoting a campus of student leaders
- ▶ Having a club on campus that focuses on raising mental health awareness
- ▶ Creating an accepting and safe environment for students with a mental illness or who know someone who has one



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 on reducing stigma on campus by being role models of acceptance and supportive behavior towards others



NCHS Isn't...

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



NCHS Resources & Materials

- ▶ 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
 - ▶ How you can help
 - ▶ What to do in an emergency situation
 - ▶ Worksheets for clubs to identify on 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



Training Day

- ▶ 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



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."



Training Outcomes

- ▶ 1 Trainings in 2017
 - ▶ Lynwood Unified
 - ▶ Compton Unified

- ▶ Over 50 students and 7 Advisors

- ▶ 7 schools represented



NCCHS Activities to Bring to Campus

- ▶ Ending the Silence (ETS)
- ▶ Directing Change video contest
- ▶ Partnership with local NAMI Affiliate
 - ▶ Participate in NAMI Walks event
- ▶ Each Mind Matters messaging
- ▶ Stress relief activities (yoga, dance, etc.)
- ▶ Info and resources
- ▶ Stigma busters (posters of public figures with mental health conditions)
- ▶ More in manuals



Ending The Silence (ETS)

- ▶ 50-minute program designed for high school audiences
- ▶ Delivered by a trained two-person team
 - ▶ A presenter
 - ▶ A young adult who shares his/her journey with a mental health condition
- ▶ Students are given a resource card with valuable phone numbers and websites for mental health agencies



ETS Student Testimonials

- ▶ "I want to thank you for sharing your personal story. I know now that I am not alone. I felt connected."
- ▶ "Please continue to visit schools and share your experience with many people. I know you can help inspire many people, just like you inspired me."
- ▶ "Thank you again, sharing your stories with people, especially teenagers, can be hard but I am really glad you did. Thank you thank you thank you."
- ▶ "Thank you for coming out and sharing great information with our class. I learned a lot from the slideshow and the personal stories."



Parents & Teachers As Allies (P&TasA)

- ▶ The option of a 2 hour, 90 minute, or 60 minute presentation
- ▶ Focuses on helping school professionals and families within the school community better understand the early warning signs of mental illnesses in children and adolescents
- ▶ Provides a monograph and resources for teachers and school professionals



Get Involved with NCHS!

- ▶ Know of a school that may be interested?
 - ▶ Contact Local Affiliate
 - ▶ If local Affiliate not known, contact NAMI CA
 - ▶ Or Contact Mike Lombardo @ Placer County Office of Education
 - ▶ Local Affiliate, NAMI California and school take part in a 1 day training
 - ▶ Schools must either have attended EBL training
- OR**
- ▶ Have an advisor with a mental health/social work background



QUESTIONS?



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