



Directing Change Program and Film Contest – 2016 Talking Points for Media

The Directing Change Program & Film Contest is part of Each Mind Matters: California's Mental Health Movement. The program offers young people the exciting opportunity to participate in the movement by creating 60-second films about suicide prevention and mental health that are used to support awareness, education and advocacy efforts on these topics. Learning objectives surrounding mental health and suicide prevention are integrated into the submission categories of the film contest, giving young people the opportunity to critically explore these topics. Program participants - whether they are making a film, acting as an adult advisor, or judging the films - are exposed to appropriate messaging about these topics, warning signs, how to appropriately respond to someone in distress, where to seek help, as well as how to stand up for others who are experiencing a mental health challenge. In addition, schools and organizations are offered free prevention programs and educational resources.

Submission Deadline: March 1, 2016.

At a glance the contest:

- **Provides** each school or organization the opportunity to receive prevention programs and educational resources
- **Is open** to high school students in California
- **Is also open** to youth and young adults ages 16-25 in California, who are associated with a college, university, club, program, or community-based organization
- **Asks** young people to develop a 60-second film about ***Suicide Prevention*** or ***Mental Health*** during the 2015/16 school year
- **Now accepts submissions in a third category:** "Through the Lens of Culture" - requires participants to choose suicide prevention or mental health as a focus, but with additional requirements including creating a film in a language different than English and/or with focus on how these topics impact people from different cultures
- **Encourages** youth and young adults to advocate for these issues on their campus, in their local communities, and with local policy makers
- **Recognizes** youth, schools, and organizations at an award ceremony in May

For more information visit: www.directingchange.org

Funding

Directing Change is part of *Each Mind Matters: California's Mental Health Movement* and statewide efforts to prevent suicide, reduce stigma and discrimination related to mental illness, and to promote the mental health and wellness of students. These initiatives are funded by counties through the voter-approved Mental Health Services Act (Prop 63) and administered by the California Mental Health Services Authority (CalMHSA). CalMHSA is an organization of county governments working to improve mental health outcomes for individuals, families and communities, and administers programs on a statewide, regional, and local basis. For more information on CalMHSA visit: www.calmhsa.org

General Talking Points

- More youth have knowledge of warning signs of suicide, mental health challenges, and how to appropriately respond to a person in emotional distress (e.g. asking a trusted adult for help, not keeping suicide a secret).
- More youth have a voice to speak up about suicide prevention and mental health and become advocates for these topics in their schools or communities.
- Increased early identification and intervention by those in a position to help (e.g. teachers, parents, staff, peers).
- More schools implement prevention programs, staff trainings, and have protocols in place for helping students at risk for suicide or in emotional distress.
- More community members and members of the media and entertainment industry are aware of appropriate messaging for suicide prevention and mental health.

Additional Talking Points

- Approximately one in five youth ages 13 to 18 experiences a mental health challenge in a given year. Another way to look at this is that in an average class room of 30, 6 students experience a mental health challenge. Mental health challenges take many forms including depression and anxiety. Challenges can also lead to substance abuse that can affect school work, social opportunities and the future.
- Stigma has a Negative Impact – Youth and young adults can Stand Up – Speak Out and Put a Stop to Stigma. Feeling hurt and isolated impacts youth and their families. It can be difficult to ask for help for fear of judgment but this can lead to discrimination, bullying and in extreme cases suicidal thoughts and self-harm.
- Pain isn't always obvious but knowing signs that someone you care about is contemplating suicide can be learned, we all can help. Just like CPR, we can all learn the skills that could save a life.
- Studies show that although about half of teens who are thinking about suicide tell a friend, less than 25% of those friends tell an adult. Youth need to know how to respond appropriately to a friend in need.