

**MARCH 16, 2021**

**District Five COMMUNITY FORUM ON CHILDREN AND YOUTH HEALTH AND EMOTIONAL WELL-BEING**

A Pandemic Generation

What are Kids Thinking, Feeling and Talking about?

**Participant Question and Answer**

**Q:** Can we get more information why females with early period puts them at risk of experiencing depression?

**A:** It is thought that this places them at risk in multiple ways — for instance, they are exposed to hormonal changes earlier on, which could place them at risk for mood-related changes that are secondary to the hormone changes. In addition, they then may experience some social consequences of early pubertal timing (for instance, unwanted sexual attention from males, sexualization before they are ready for it). So there could be multiple pathways for risk to higher incidence of depression.

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**Q:** Does teen line have team members that can support teens on the autism spectrum?

**A:** Our teens are trained to be nonjudgmental and empathic towards all different types of people. They do not specialize in people on the autism spectrum per se; however, they are there to listen and support whatever a teen is struggling with.

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**Q:** Of the primary indicators of how children are faring, Behavioral Health did not - and this is concerning as we go into 2021 and the pandemic. At Casa de la Familia, we served 8,500 individuals and over 1,000 children (under 18). 72% were survivors of trauma - of those 64% survivors of domestic violence and 14% of sexual violence. These are the children and families we were able to identify - there are many more. What can we do to help reach the unidentified - those who have been further pushed into isolation? Thank you Supervisor Bartlett for passing the resolution for access to wifi/internet. Many families can't afford these services when they are fighting to get food on the table.

**A:** The Conditions of Children's report considers behavioral health related hospitalization rates among youth and suicide rates. We, in part, did not show this data since it is 2018 and does not reflect COVID-19 pandemic. The Resolution approved by the Board of Supervisors on March 9, 2021 was the first step toward addressing broadband issues in Orange County. The American Rescue Plan, which was recently passed by Congress and signed into law by President Biden, provides \$10 billion for states, territories, and Tribes to cover the costs of capital projects like broadband infrastructure. Orange County expects to be receiving some of this funding and will work with our community stakeholders to address broadband concerns. Until then, I suggest looking into current programs that aid in the costs of broadband for users including the FPPC Lifeline program. <https://www.fcc.gov/lifeline-consumers#:~:text=Lifeline%20is%20the%20FCC's%20program,participating%20wireline%20or%20wireless%20providers>

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**Q:** What services does our community has (either in terms of government and/or from non-governmental agencies) to the LGBTQ community?

**A:** The Trevor Project is a resource for LGBTQ youth in Orange County. The Trevor Project - 866-488-7386 and <https://www.thetrevorproject.org/>

Another resource that was noted includes The LGBTQ Center OC - for youth LGBTQ. <https://www.lgbtqcenteroc.org/>

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**Q:** Are there any of these organizations (SENECA and Teen Line) that offers Zoom talks on the subjects discussed here at schools or churches? And an educational event for the teens themselves?

**A:** There is a contract in OC called Behavioral Health Training Collaborative that offers free trainings on a variety of topics. There are five agencies that participate in this collaborative and post events on event brite. Additionally, Teen Line also provides presentations for schools and other organizations. Contact Cheryl Eskin at [cheryl@teenlineonline.org](mailto:cheryl@teenlineonline.org) to learn more.

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**Q:** Where would we find information on increasing access to internet access/broad band for families in 5th district?

**A:** On March 9, 2021, the OC Board of Supervisors passed a Resolution stating the County's commitment to resolving local broadband issues. This was the first step in addressing this problem and its many components. The American Rescue Plan, which was recently passed by Congress and signed into law by President Biden, provides \$10 billion for states, territories, and Tribes to cover the costs of capital projects like broadband infrastructure. Orange County expects to be receiving some of this funding and will work with our community stakeholders to address broadband concerns. Until then, I suggest looking into current programs that aid in the costs of broadband for users including the FPPC Lifeline program. <https://www.fcc.gov/lifeline-consumers#:~:text=Lifeline%20is%20the%20FCC's%20program,participating%20wireline%20or%20wireless%20providers>

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**Q:** What about those kids who have NOT had a good family connectedness experience, and don't have these good things to share aloud with their classmates? How can we engage and support them?

**A:** Yes, it may be very possible that there will be some children that have difficulty identifying something “positive” that they may have experienced during the pandemic and this is where it’s important for teachers (assuming they are referring to returning to in-person education), to connect with children and families (and vice versa) so that there is an understanding of what will be presented in the classroom. The use of language (something positive vs. something different/new, for example) can help with several things such as inclusivity, normalization, feelings of being “alone”, etc.

Granted the opportunity for meetings may not always present themselves for a variety of reasons, but leaning on language that may be inclusive and mindful of “all” experiences would be helpful. It is often about language and not labeling things in polarities (good vs bad) versus something you liked or

enjoyed. I also thought about the importance of giving children the space and option to share in different formats. So in addition to verbal communication/sharing, provide opportunity to write or draw pictures. This may help the educator identify additional strengths or better assess what they experienced and how to best intervene.