Supporting Families in Crisis
County of Ventura
Human Services Agency
Yvette Anderson, Child Welfare Supervisor
Susan Davis, Child Welfare Social Worker

MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES IN VENTURA COUNTY

Mental Health Continuum for Students and Youth

Heather Guin, LCSW
Stephanie Cowie, LMFT
Heather Johnson, LMFT

June 3, 2020
Guided Meditation

Presented by:

Stephanie Cowie, LMFT
Clinic Administrator Phoenix Schools
How much of your attention has been focused externally and your energy has been directed to new challenging issues? Safety? Health? Teleworking while teaching your own children? Are you also giving of yourself constantly? You are the compassionate educator and the keeper of hope in the midst of a disaster with no end in sight. Stress is cumulative. Can you feel it? How do you feel it, where do you feel it?

Body, Mind, & Spirit?
Compassion fatigue is depleting.
All these new demands can create disintegration, but good health arises from integration.
Let’s shift your focus back from your exterior world of Zoom, Face Book, parenting and the News, back to your internal world.

Let’s take another breath....
ATTUNEMENT

Your mind is like an ocean, there is calm beneath the surface.” (Dan Siegel)
I would like to teach you a simple exercise to refocus your thoughts on a joy filled moment in time.

Are you willing to follow along?
Place both feet squarely on the ground. Cross your arms over your body so your hands are on the opposite shoulder. Start tapping gently, first left then right, keep tapping. This is called bilateral stimulation. Keep tapping softly while both sides of your brain are being stimulated. Breathe slowly, in through your nose, out through your mouth. Search in your memory or imagination for a pleasant memory. Focus on something that gives you great joy. Really picture it. Keep tapping. Savor that moment. Our brains can hold on to an experience, a joy filled moment and replay it for you in detail. Fully reexperience that time. Continue a bit longer. Immerse yourself in that moment. What do you see, feel, hear, smell, taste?

Take time for gratitude.
Supporting Families in Crisis

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Supporting Safety During the Pandemic

Impact of the crisis on children:
• Children have lost the safety net provided by teachers, counselors, and other personnel

• The risks of child abuse and neglect increase when caregivers experience stress and economic hardships

• Too much stress can overwhelm the nervous system and weaken the immune system, creating increased risk for anxiety, depression, decreased cognitive performance, and infections
Supporting Safety During the Pandemic (cont’d)

Encouraging well-being:
• Consider appropriate academic workload
• Promote healthy eating, sleeping, and exercise
• Be available and connect children with social supports or services as needed
• Check in with parents directly to ask how you can help
• Inform the student about ways they can communicate privately

Signs of concerns:
• Repeated missed video meetings, skipped homework assignments, no family contact
• Family disputes heard or seen on video
• Dirty home observed on video
• Significant change in child’s mood/behavior
Questions for parents/caregivers:
• Do you have any concerns for yourself or your children
• Do you feel safe? Do you need help?
• How is your family handling quarantine? Does everyone get along? What activities do you do together?
• Are there any new worries or needs due to the pandemic?
• Who are the supports in your life?

Questions for children:
• How is learning at home different than learning at school?
• What do you like most and least about staying at home?
• Do you have any responsibilities at home?
• When someone in your home has a hard time, what makes them feel better?
COVID-19

Reporting coronavirus exposure

• Generally, potential exposure to COVID-19 does not meet the criteria for an investigation

• However, if there are clear concerns to the child as a health risk, a report is warranted (example: Child has asthma and the parent exposes the child to someone who is knowingly ill from the coronavirus)

• Use discretion and a supervisor will make the determination
Our Goal

• The primary principle of Children and Family Services is family engagement; working holistically with families and developing safety networks

• A small percentage of reports result in formal interventions; many of the concerns can be addressed by connecting the family with resources to enhance safety
Pathways

What is Pathways?
- Children and Family Services works together with community organizations to provide services in effort to keep families safe and decrease involvement with the child welfare system

How Pathways Works
- If initial assessments do not meet criteria for investigation, although it’s determined that a family will benefit from interventions, a Social Worker will contact the family to offer services (they can accept or decline)
- If they accept services, community organizations and CFS will review the concerns and connect the family with appropriate services

Who is involved?
- Children and Family Services, additional Human Services Agency Employees, Aspiranet, Interface, Public Health Child Abuse Prevention Program
Pathways Community Partner Services

- Alcohol and Drug Services (ADP)
- Anger Management Workshops
- Child Care Referrals
- Clothing Referrals
- Counseling Services
- Domestic Violence Services
- Employment Services & Training
- Food Stamps/CashAid/Medi-Cal
- Housing Assistance
- Legal Assistance
- Parenting Classes
- Support Groups
Success of Pathways

- Families gained awareness of the concerns
- Families receive access to services which may not otherwise be accessible to them
- Children were safer in their homes
- Fewer future reports of child maltreatment
- Families appreciated the opportunity for involvement in decision-making and they benefitted from the intervention
Family Preservation

- Offers family-focused services to assist cooperative families in crisis by improving parenting and family functioning without any court involvement.

- Includes frequent face-to-face contact primarily in the home (1-4 visits/month based on risk level), feedback from safety network and teaming with service providers, goal-setting, and aftercare services.
What You Will Be Asked When You Report

- Are you a Mandated Reporter?
- Your name
- Relationship to client
- Agency you are from
- Name of the child(ren)
- Age / D.O.B. of child(ren)
- School child attends
- Parental information / Adults in the home
- Ethnicity / Languages spoken
- Location / Address of the child(ren)
- Description of injury or situation
- Special needs

- Family strengths
- Mental or behavioral health issues
- Alcohol / Drug issues
- Known domestic violence
- Was child a witness to domestic violence?
- Criminal activity / Restraining Orders
- Police Report
- Custody issues
- Are there weapons, dogs, or other obstacles in the home?
Indicators of abuse

**Neglect:** Poor hygiene, clothing dirty or inappropriate for the weather, lack of supervision, unmet medical/dental needs, homework never complete, unexplained absences

**Physical abuse:** Unexplained/improbable explanation for injuries, bruising and fractures in different stages of healing (indicating repeated trauma), fear of being home

**Sexual abuse:** Disclosure of abuse, sexualized behavior, excessive curiosity about sexual matters or genitalia, CSEC indicators (tattoos/branding, running away, seeking relationships online or with adults)

**Emotional abuse:** Anxiety, depression, withdrawal, aggressive behavior toward self or others, domestic violence in the home
When and How to Report

- Mandated Reporters must make a report of suspected child abuse if they have a “reasonable suspicion” and obtained the information in the course of their work.
- Mandated Reporters must report by phone immediately by calling the 24-hour child abuse hotline:
  
  (805) 654-3200

Mandated reporter form # SS8572 can be found online:  

Follow up with a Written Report within 36 hours by doing one of the following:

- Fax to: (805) 654-5597
- Mail to: Children & Family Services, 4651 Telephone Road, Suite 300, Ventura, CA  93003
Last Thoughts

• The goal of CFS is to Protect Children by strengthening their families. We can only do this with your help and collaboration.

• One Agency or Department cannot "fix" a family, rather we can work together to develop safety networks, understand family dynamics and prevent further trauma.

• Children & Family Services strives to engage with a family to create plans of safety that focus on the safety, permanency and well-being of children

• Provide safety and support for families during the pandemic through observations, connection to supports, and mindfulness about family needs

WE THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME AND ATTENTION!
Resources for Mandated Reporters

- The Office of Child Abuse Prevention
  (916) 651-6960

- California Law – California Legislative Information
  https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/codes.xhtml

- Child Abuse Mandated Reporter Training California
  Free online training for mandated child abuse reporters
  http://www.mandatedreporterca.com/training/training.htm

- Partnership for Safe Families and Communities of Ventura County
  www.partnershipforsafefamilies.org
CORONA VIRUS BEDTIME STORY

- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iJCMRxuiyrE&t=2s
GRIEF AND LOSS IN A GLOBAL PANDEMIC

Heather L Johnson LMFT
STAGES OF GRIEF

- Denial
- Anger
- Depression
- Bargaining
- Acceptance
CHILDREN AND GRIEF

“We are all grieving the world we once had” –David Kessler

Remember:
- Kids are aware
- Limit Media Exposure
- Listen and Validate feelings
- Find Connection and have an open discussion
TYPES OF SELF CARE AND SYMPTOMS OF BURNOUT

★ Physical
★ Mental Health

★ Symptoms to watch for:
  ▶ Strong feelings that interfere with daily functioning
  ▶ Increased trouble completing daily tasks
  ▶ Emotions that are difficult to manage
GRIEF RESOURCE

- www.grief.com
- “Finding Meaning: The Sixth Stage of Grief”; David Kessler
- Livingston Memorial https://www.lmvna.org/grief/

If you should need support, please contact your districts Employee Assistance Program. Details available through your HR Contact
MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES IN VENTURA COUNTY

June 10, 2020

Heather Guilin, LCSW
# Levels of Care

## MILD
- **History**
  - No significant trauma
  - No significant mental health treatment
  - No significant substance abuse

- **Symptoms**
  - Feeling sad, stressed or anxious
  - Periodic behavioral problems
  - Infrequent anger outbreaks
  - Attention span issues
  - Occasional panic attacks

- **Impairments**
  - Regularly late
  - Irritable with peers and family
  - Isolated, disengaged
  - Going to school but grades are dropping
  - Starting to get disciplinary action at school

## MODERATE
- **History**
  - Past mental health treatment
  - Suicide attempt over a year ago
  - Significant concurrent substance abuse

- **Symptoms**
  - Feeling anxious or sad most of the time
  - Frequent anger or panic attacks
  - Unexplained physical symptoms such as headaches, stomach aches
  - Superficial cutting, punching or hitting things
  - Frequent mood changes
  - Frequent behavioral problems and impulsivity

- **Impairments**
  - Having difficulty concentrating at school
  - Missing some classes
  - Getting in fights
  - Starting to affect relationship with friends and family
  - Repeated disciplinary action at school

## SEVERE
- **History**
  - Severe trauma
  - Suicide attempts or violence against others within the last 12 months
  - Current or recent thoughts of suicide
  - Current or recent thoughts of self harm
  - Severe substance abuse problems
  - Previous diagnosis and/or treatment for mental illness

- **Symptoms**
  - Extremely anxious or depressed
  - Unable to concentrate
  - Hearing or seeing things other people don’t see or hear
  - Extremely suspicious

- **Impairments**
  - Not going to school, failing classes
  - Not able to maintain relationships
  - Not taking care of basic daily activities (showering, eating)

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**Mental Health Provider by Insurance**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Private Insurance, Medi-Cal with Private Insurance HMO</th>
<th>Medi-Cal (Gold Coast)</th>
<th>No Insurance</th>
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<td>Primary care provider</td>
<td>Beacon Health Options</td>
<td>Community Resources</td>
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<tr>
<td>Insurance plan carrier</td>
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**Ventura County Behavioral Health**

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HOW A MEMBER ACCESSES MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES WITH MEDI-CAL’S GOLD COAST INSURANCE

855-765-9702

Mild to Moderate Impairment
Refer to Beacon contracted provider

Moderate to Severe Impairment
Refer to County Mental Health Plan
MENTAL HEALTH RESOURCES FOR FAMILIES WITHOUT INSURANCE COVERAGE

- **Mild to moderate mental health issues**
  - Local community providers
    - Jewish Family Services (805) 641-6565
    - Clinicas del Camino Real (805) 647-6353
    - CLU Counseling Center (Oxnard (805) 493-3059 and Thousand Oaks (805) 493-3390)
    - Coalition for Family Harmony (805) 983-6014
    - Westminster Free Clinic (805) 241-8366
    - Simi Valley Free Clinic (805) 522-3733
    - Livingston Memorial (Grief & Loss Resource) (805) 642-0239
    - Families or schools can contact directly

- **Moderate to severe mental health issues**
  - VCBH STAR (Screening Triage Access and Referral)
    - 1-805-981-4233
    - Families / schools can contact directly
    - Therapy, psychiatry, case mgmt., rehabilitation services
    - STAR Interagency Referral Form (handout)
COMMUNITY SUPPORTS – PREVENTION AND EARLY INTERVENTION

WellnessEveryday.org or SaludSiempreVC.org

- Online support and resources for professionals and families
- English and Spanish
- Mind, Body and Relationships Topics
  - Stress - Preventative Care
  - Self-Esteem - Sexuality
  - Parenting - Bullying
  - Anxiety - Domestic Violence
  - Depression - Couples Issues
  - Trauma - Suicide Prevention
  - Alcohol and Drugs - Where to Get Help
  - Coping During COVID19
COMMUNITY SUPPORTS – LOCAL RESOURCES

- **VCBH - Logrado Bienestar**
  - Outreach program with focus on increasing access to unserved/underserved Latino population in need of Mental Health services
  - Currently serving Oxnard and Santa Paula designated school sites
  - Questions and/or possible referral:
    - **Contact Clinic Administrator Sandra Tovar:**
    - **Phone Number:** 805-973-5220

- **VCBH-RISE (Rapid Integrated Support & Engagement)**

  RISE can help if someone has, or appears to have mental health problems and is unable or unwilling to access assessment and treatment.

  **Do you know someone...**
  
  - Who appears to be experiencing a low level crisis due to mental illness and is impacting the community that requires some type of intervention
  - Who suffers from or appears to suffer from a mental illness of some kind
  - Who is unable or unwilling to access further assessment or treatment
  - Who has been released from a psychiatric hospital one or more times, but never made it into outpatient mental health clinic but isn’t following up with outpatient treatment?
  - Who is homeless and has a mental illness but currently refuses, or is unable to access treatment
  - Who’s symptoms are so severe that they cannot leave their home or get to clinic for assessment

  **Please call RISE Engager of the Day at: 805-981-4233**
COMMUNITY SUPPORTS – LOCAL RESOURCES

United Parents
• **805-384-1555** or UnitedParents.org
• Provides resources to empower, strengthen and supports parents who have children with mental health, emotional, and behavioral disorders

National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI)
• **805.500.NAMI** or namiventuracounty.org
• Emotional support, education and resources for families affected by mental illness.

211 Information and Referral
• Maintained by Interface Child and Family Service
• Phone: dial 211 or online: [https://211ventura.org/](https://211ventura.org/)
• Services available in English and Spanish and in 150 additional languages
• Basic needs resources, physical / mental health, grief/loss referrals, domestic violence, substance abuse services, employment, rent and utility assistance, senior services and much more
VCBH - CRISIS SERVICES

- Ventura County Crisis Team
  - 1-866-998-2243 (24/7)
  - All ages
  - Crisis intervention and stabilization
  - Urgent or emergent mental health crisis
  - Mobile field response and/or by telephone
  - Assist the individual to remain in the least restrictive level of care possible
  - May place a psychiatric hold (5150/5585) if appropriate
  - Responds to all communities throughout Ventura County
  - During COVID19:
    - Phone health screenings occur for all field assessment calls
    - Zoom is being used for hospital assessments
    - If clinically indicated, in person field assessments (other than hospitals) are being conducted
    - During screenings, crisis team are checking for COVID19 symptoms prior to in person interviews
    - During Field Visit, crisis team is wearing PPE, following social distancing standards, and prefer large open space such as the outdoors to conduct interview
  - LA County residents call PMRT @ 1-818-832-2410 or 1-800-854-8881 after business hours and on weekends/holidays
When to call the Crisis Team during COVID19:

After you have exhausted your internal crisis de-escalation procedures and have consulted per your school’s established protocols

After you have contacted the youth’s parent or legal guardian, exhausted all caregiver de-escalation/stabilization options, and parents are on scene

During COVID19, it is recommended to ensure client safety during contact, encourage parent/guardian to call the Crisis Team to complete phone health screening

And when the following are still present:

- Threatening to harm/kill Self and/or Others
- Presenting as gravely disabled (could include signs of psychosis)
VCBH – CRISIS SERVICES

- **When NOT To Call The Crisis Team:**
  - For a Wellness Check
  - Youth demonstrates only behavioral issues, i.e. tantrum
  - Youth is “just sad and needs someone to talk to”
  - When student Needs Law Enforcement Intervention
    - Is physically assaultive
    - Has a weapon
    - Has eloped

*When to Seek Medical Attention:*
  - Injuries present (fresh cuts, substances ingested, trauma)
  - Bizarre presentation of unknown origin
VCBH – CRISIS GUIDELINES FOR SCHOOLS

Updated 02. 15. 19

Ventura County Behavioral Health Crisis Guidelines for Schools

CRISIS TEAM
Steps to take BEFORE calling CT:
1. Is there a “hands on” need (e.g., self-injury, violent behavior)? If so, call law enforcement.
2. Is there a medical concern, drug/alcohol intoxication, and/or recent overdose? If so, seek immediate medical treatment.
3. Have you consulted internally and exhausted all measures of de-escalation per your internal risk assessment/risk management protocols?
4. Have you involved the parents/caregivers? Best practice is to have parents on scene, gather background information, and attempt to collaboratively de-escalate the crisis prior to seeking outside intervention (e.g., Crisis Team).
5. If these steps have been taken and a higher-level emergency mental health assessment is indicated, VCBH Crisis Team can be reached at 866-998-2243

Please have the following ready to share:
- Client’s name, DOB, and preferred language
- Clinically significant information on why the youth is at risk of harming him/herself and/or others
- Mental health history (if any), including most recent diagnosis, history of suicidal/homicidal behaviors and psychiatric hospitalizations
- Name of parent(s)/guardian(s) currently on scene and the preferred language

LAW ENFORCEMENT
1. If there is an immediate safety risk:
   a. Potential for violence?
   b. Potential for AWOL?
   c. Anything that might require “hands on”?
   2. If Crisis Team not available

Possible Outcomes of the Crisis Team/Law Enforcement Crisis Assessment

MEDICAL ATTENTION NEEDED: Ambulance to ER

PSYCHIATRIC HOSPITALIZATION OR CHILDREN'S CRISIS STABILIZATION UNIT (CSU) ADMIT—Will be on involuntary (SSI or voluntary status:
* Transport may be conducted by ambulance (violin) or involv.; I.E. (typically only for involv to CSU or E.Ds), by parent/guardian (vol)

NOT GOING TO PSYCHIATRIC HOSPITAL OR TO CSU?
If Crisis Team
1. De-escalate/Stabilize Situation
2. Safety Plan
3. Linkage to needed services
4. Follow up next day (or sooner) by Crisis Team and/or RIDE (VCBH’s support and engagement team).

If Law Enforcement
1. De-escalate/Stabilize Situation
2. Connect with VCBH (Crisis Team 8668) and/or insurance to help link to treatment/services

911
WEBSITES & ADDITIONAL RESOURCES


- Insurance coverage: www.CoveredCA.com

- Ventura County Behavioral Health www.vchca.org

- Livingston Memorial https://www.lmvna.org/grief/

- Triple P Parenting: triplepparenting.com

- Aunt Bertha – Connecting People & Programs): https://www.auntbertha.com

- Ventura County SELPA www.vcselpa.org
THANK YOU FOR ATTENDING OUR PRESENTATION TODAY

Any Questions?