

Board of Supervisors Presentation

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El Dorado County Youth Commission

Youth Commission Purpose

- Helps identify the needs of our county's youth and communicates those needs to our local representatives.
- Co-sponsored by BOS and EDCOE
- Develops and expresses the opinions, ideas, and visions of youth in our county
- Serve as leaders and voices for our peers and classmates
- Always looking for ways to help youth implement projects and ideas that will benefit the community



Connecting with the Community

- Behavioral Health Commission
- California Youth Advocacy Network Youth Board of Directors
- EDH Community Council
- California Health Improvement Plan Taskforce
- National Week of Conversations
- Work with NAMI El Dorado

Bridging Divides

- Youth commissioners attended an event which included various community sectors such as education, public health, and public safety
- Learned how to have an effective conversation without allowing opinions or personal bias to prevent the success of its outcome
- These conversations proved effective in building connections between different aspects of our community

Our Timeline

- We were inspired to focus on empowering students to make connections
- Conversations from new and returning Commissioners led us to the same question - *How can we make sure students feel supported and improve the culture on campus?*
- Met with Mr. Smith and analyzed data (over **80%** of our county's youth have struggled with anxiety)
- Learned about Peer Advocacy programs from Mr. Bryant from Golden Sierra High School
- Found Peer Advocacy to be a solution that truly tackles addresses the issue of mental health at its roots

Peer Advocacy Program

- Mentors trained in:
 - Confidentiality, communication, mindfulness, mental health, and coping strategies
- 9th grade students each have a mentor
- Mentors have 7-10 mentees
- What they do:
 - Listen to their mentee and guide them to resources they may need.
 - Present to 9th grade health classes about drug abuse and various mental health problems and solutions
 - Work with 7th and 8th graders in activities to increase overall social awareness

Why Peer Advocacy?

- Students have indicated they feel MOST comfortable communicating with their peers
 - Due to common experiences students can relate to peer advocates facilitating better communication and support
 - 58.1% of mentees from Golden Sierra feel more comfortable talking to their Peer Advocate than an adult
- A peer advocacy program would give students an active role in improving the mental health of their peers and simultaneously improve campus culture

Future Goals

- Goal is to establish Peer Advocacy district-wide in fall 2023
- Onsite Events to recruit mentors
 - Continuing to empower students
- Continuing to customize and establish each HS Program to fit onsite issues
 - Class Level/ Club Level/ In Class Level
 - Working with on campus administrators
- Incorporating Peer Advocacy and existing onsite programs
- Using Peer Advocacy as a tool to increase awareness of Wellness Centers and other existing resources

Thank you for listening!
