



IN -DEPTH: COMMUNITY OUTREACH

The Teen Line Community Outreach Program is an essential component of our organization providing presentations to thousands of teens, educators, and organizations each year in Southern California. It aims to reduce stigma, increase knowledge and promote help-seeking by fostering an open dialogue about teen issues. Our adult Outreach Coordinator provides an interactive, educational presentation, including specialized topics such as bullying, LGBTQ and suicide prevention. The general presentation covers issues from self-harm and anxiety to substance abuse and healthy relationships.

The Community Outreach Program has active participation from trained Teen Line teens helping to teach students to understand and recognize mental health conditions (to help reduce stigma and increase self-identification), determine healthy ways to cope with stress, identify a youth's support network (including a trusted adult) and provide helpful resources. These facets address several of the reasons why youth do not seek help regarding emotional health. The use of teen peers in delivering the program creates a social norm that talking about mental health is ok, validates those that are struggling and provides the hope that comes with reaching out for help. Research suggests that adolescents are more likely to modify their attitudes and behaviors if they receive health messages from peers.

By demonstrating that each one of us can help reduce stigma and encourage compassion, we aim to dispel negative stereotypes and encourage youth to reach out for help.

Evaluation:

To evaluate the program, a survey is administered to participants. The survey asks attendees to rate items across 6 domains on a 5-point scale, with 1 representing 'strongly disagree' and 5 representing 'strongly agree'

- 99% of students have a better understanding about teen issues – depression, suicide, self-harm and anxiety
- 99% of students learned new ways to manage stress and anxiety

Impact:

Teen Line's Outreach Programs reached:

- 2019: 20,336 participants
- 2018: 12,415 participants
- 2017: 14,500 participants

