



Wellness & Prevention Center Impact Report 2020

From Our President

The Wellness & Prevention Center is making a difference in the lives of youth and families in South Orange County. Our mission, *helping youth and families lead healthy lives*, guides our work in the community and in secondary schools. Our staff and volunteers are dedicated to improving the health, well-being, and educational outcomes of our teens.

The Wellness & Prevention Center school-based services provide a safe place for youth to discuss stressors and conflict and then work on positive solutions. Universal programming and individual services are designed to encourage healthy coping mechanisms for the overwhelming demands on our local youth while promoting evidence based prevention models. Research has shown that the majority of our adolescents' social and emotional learning takes place at school and that a mental health professional on campus greatly helps these students thrive.

I would like to share a few highlights from fiscal year 2020:

- The Wellness & Prevention Center initiates services for youth and families in Aliso Viejo on middle and high school campuses.
- Our mental health professionals held **1,400** therapeutic sessions and led prevention education at Aliso Niguel High School, San Clemente High School, San Juan Hills High School, Don Juan Avila Middle School, Aliso Viejo Middle School, Vista del Mar Middle School, Bernice Ayer Middle School, Shorecliffs Middle School, and at our community clinic.
- Through a contract with the Orange County Health Care Agency we designed and implemented programming aimed at lowering the stigma surrounding the diseases of mental health and substance misuse.
- The coronavirus pandemic challenged us to rethink how we delivered support and prevention education services. Our team transitioned to telehealth and virtual prevention events and continued to serve the community.
- The Wellness & Prevention Center continues to train graduate student interns in Social Work, Marriage and Family Therapy, and Clinical Counseling. This past year we hosted 8 interns, helping to increase the number of mental health professionals serving communities in Orange County.

From our day-to-day operations to our vision of creating a community of care where all individuals have access to mental health services, we rely on the power of giving. Thank you for helping us to be a source of support for students and their families, and also for helping us empower the community to do the same. We extend our heartfelt thanks to all who donate funds, time, expertise, and passion to help us build healthier futures.

William H. Carson
Board President

OUR TEAM



SUSAN PARMELEE, LCSW -Executive Director

Susan is one of the founders of the Wellness & Prevention Center. A graduate of Cornell University and San Diego State University, Susan has been working in non-profits and mental healthcare for 18 years. Susan is dedicated to access for all to quality prevention and mental health services. She has witnessed an increase in the number of teens diagnosed with anxiety and depression and is striving to help communities in Orange County target the causes of this increase while helping teens who are struggling.



LAUREN GALLEGOS, ACSW - Prevention Director

Lauren holds a bachelor's degree in psychology from California State University Fullerton and a master's degree in social work from the University of Southern California. Lauren grew up in San Clemente and attended the schools we now serve. Lauren started her social work career as a Prevention Coordinator at Phoenix House Behavioral Health. She joined the WPC in 2017 and manages our Drug Free Communities coalition programming as well as other prevention education services.



SOPHII SANDOVAL, ACSW -Lead Bilingual Therapist

Sophii has been with the Wellness & Prevention Center since 2017. After graduating from San Clemente High School in 2010, she received her bachelor's in sociology from California State University San Marcos and her master's in social work from the University of Southern California. Sophii believes that at its core, social work is about giving back to one's own community, which is why she joined the WPC in its mission to help youth and families lead healthy lives.



FATIMA MENDOZA, APCC -Project Coordinator, Therapist

Fatima began her work with the Wellness & Prevention Center as a graduate school intern and stepped up to implement mental health stigma reduction programming through a contract with the Orange County Health Care Agency. Fatima earned her masters in educational counseling from the University of La Verne. She enjoys working directly with youth and with the Latino community. In addition to her prevention tasks, Fatima provides therapy to WPC clients in English and Spanish.

Graduate School Interns, Volunteers, and Teen Leaders

The Wellness & Prevention Center is grateful for the work of our volunteers. Graduate school interns play a vital role in the delivery of services and leverage our resources so we can meet the needs of community members. This past year we had students from California State University Long Beach, La Verne University, Tulane University, and Azusa Pacific University. These students gained valuable experience working directly with youth and families as well as increasing their advocacy and prevention education skills. These students go on to become mental health professionals in our community, increasing access to mental health care in Orange County. Our youth leaders lead by example and bring initiatives to the table, recruit their peers to attend events, and remind us of our mission and the value of our work.



Our Directors

WPC Directors provide professional support, expert management, and tireless fundraising and promotion of our mission.

- William H. Carson, President
- Dr. Charlene Underhill Miller, Vice President
- Megan Hernandez, Secretary
- Mark Murphy, Treasurer
- Dr. John Redmond
- Carolyn Ward
- Leslie Davis
- Aron McKay
- Maureen Aitken
- Laurie Melby

Director's fundraising efforts contributed \$95,500 to our FY20 and FY21 budget.

Impacting the World through Wellness - October 2019

Our most successful fundraiser to date - special thanks to our hosts, Chris and Maureen Aitken, Fundraising Chair, Laurie Melby and her committee, restaurants and vendors who donated food and auction items, and the community members who came out to support the well being of teens and their families!

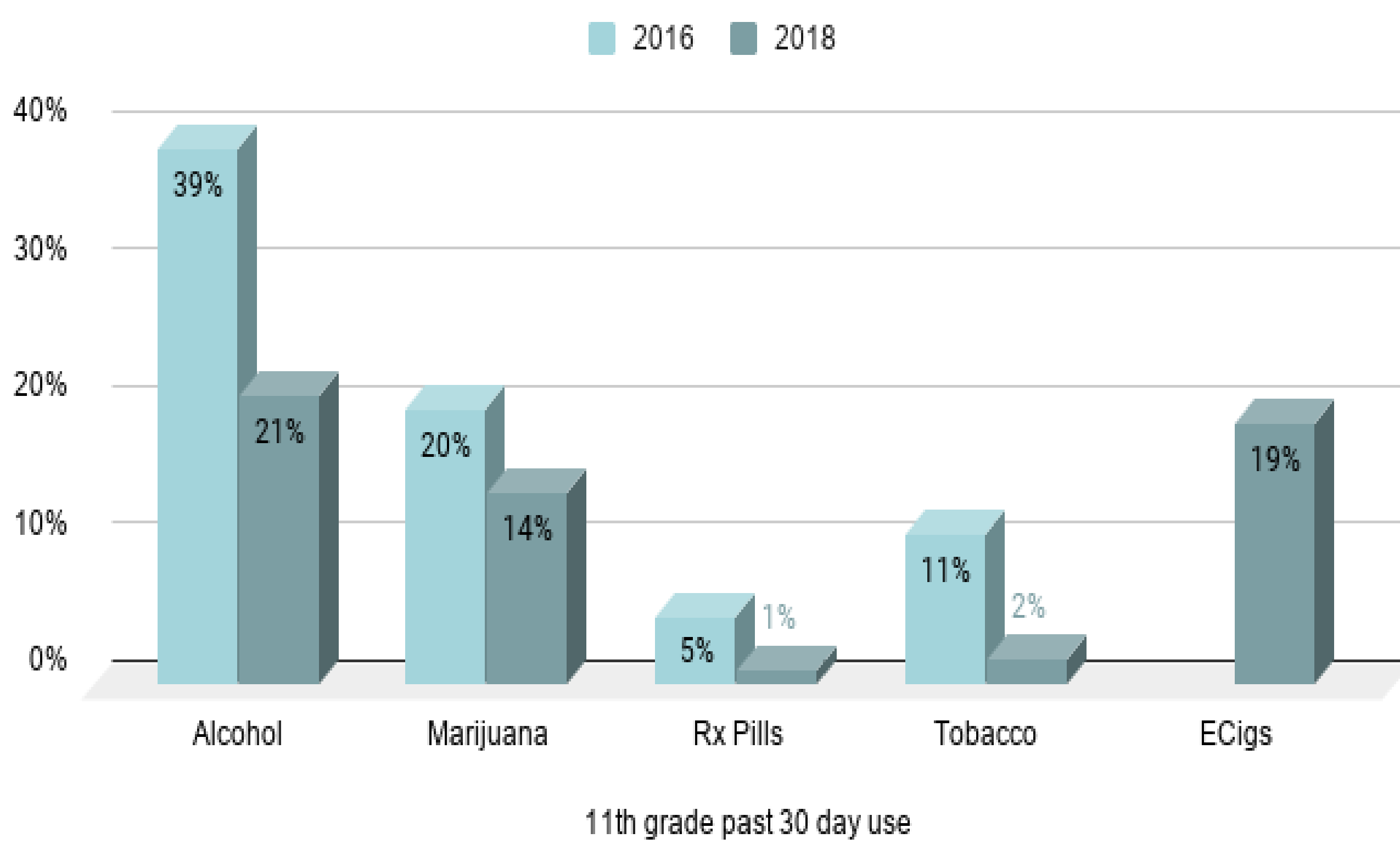


Wellness & Prevention Coalition



The Wellness & Prevention Coalition - funded by the Drug Free Communities Program - started the year w with a sector leader strategic planning session. The coalition hosted a youth leadership conference, where 25 youth explored the root causes of substance use among local youth and developed strategies to address the environmental and social issues in their communities. In February, the coalition collected core measure data and found that use of alcohol, tobacco, and marijuana is down among South Orange County Youth.

2016 and 2018 - CA Healthy Kids Survey Capo Unified School District



Through community collaboration the W&P coalition has contributed to lowering substance use among our youth

Wellness & Prevention Youth Coalition

Coalition leaders Amarii Sandoval and Gabby Zeni built a strong team that developed and implemented strategies to reduce youth substance use and to increase mental health awareness. Youth coalition members hosted red-ribbon week activities. During fall finals week, the club decorated the campus with positive messages in chalk and posted memes on social media to inspire students to take care of their mental health. In February, three youth members attended CADCA's National Leadership Forum in Washington DC where met they with Congressman Mike Levin to discuss the importance of youth participation in substance use and mental illness prevention.



- 95% of 7th graders
 - 81% of 9th graders
 - 76% of 11th graders
- choose **NOT** to use vaping devices in South Orange County



What's New In Prevention

In November 2019, the WPC was awarded funds from the Orange County Health Care Agency through Prop 64 - California's Mental Health Services Act. The funding supported programming to reduce the stigma surrounding the diseases of mental health and allowed the WPC to expand our reach of prevention services in South Orange County. The events included in person community education events in English and Spanish, support of student mental health clubs, and the development of a stigma reduction public service campaign.



299 adults and youth attended Teen Toolbox prevention education events



35 youth participated in Project Pandemic Override



250 youth signed pledges to be drug free



25 teams submitted entries in the "let's chalk about mental health" contest



450 people voted in the "let's chalk about mental health" contest!



On March 13th CUSD announced a temporary school closure due to COVID 19, soon after the state government initiated stay at home orders. WPC staff and interns quickly adjusted service delivery to provide support to youth and families through virtual events. Client sessions were moved to telehealth, meetings rescheduled to Zoom, and as a team, WPC came up with creative ways to engage youth and families in prevention. The youth coalition hosted a *Quaren-Teen Essentials* drive-thru where teens could pick up bags of supplies to support their mental health. "Let's Chalk About Mental Health" challenged students to share chalk art with mental health messages. The coalition shifted their youth prevention programming online, partnering with Community Outreach Alliances to produce *Project Pandemic Override*. The virtual grand finale was a summer kick-off with comedy, music, and games.

Partnering for Prevention

In October the WPC co-chaired *Together4Teens*, a conference for youth and parents exploring mental health and substance use. The event featured comedian and mental health advocate Adam Grabowski, who talked about mental health with humor and empathy. Breakout sessions discussed coping with anxiety, building resilience and positive communication skills. The day finished with a teen panel of youth who shared their perspective on teen mental health and how adults can help. The event was a great success thanks to the collaboration of our community partners: Bloom Foundation, Olive Crest, CHOC, Laguna Niguel Youth Committee, NCADD, and CalOptima.



70 youth attended
Together4Teens



60 adults attended
Together4Teens

Peer Support Training

In partnership with Santa Margarita Catholic High School, a team from the WPC trained 20 students to become peer ambassadors. As part of the school's suicide prevention education, students performed a student written play - *SpeakUP!* Peer ambassadors then led classroom discussions about mental health. These students are available to support their peers through their high school years both formally and informally.





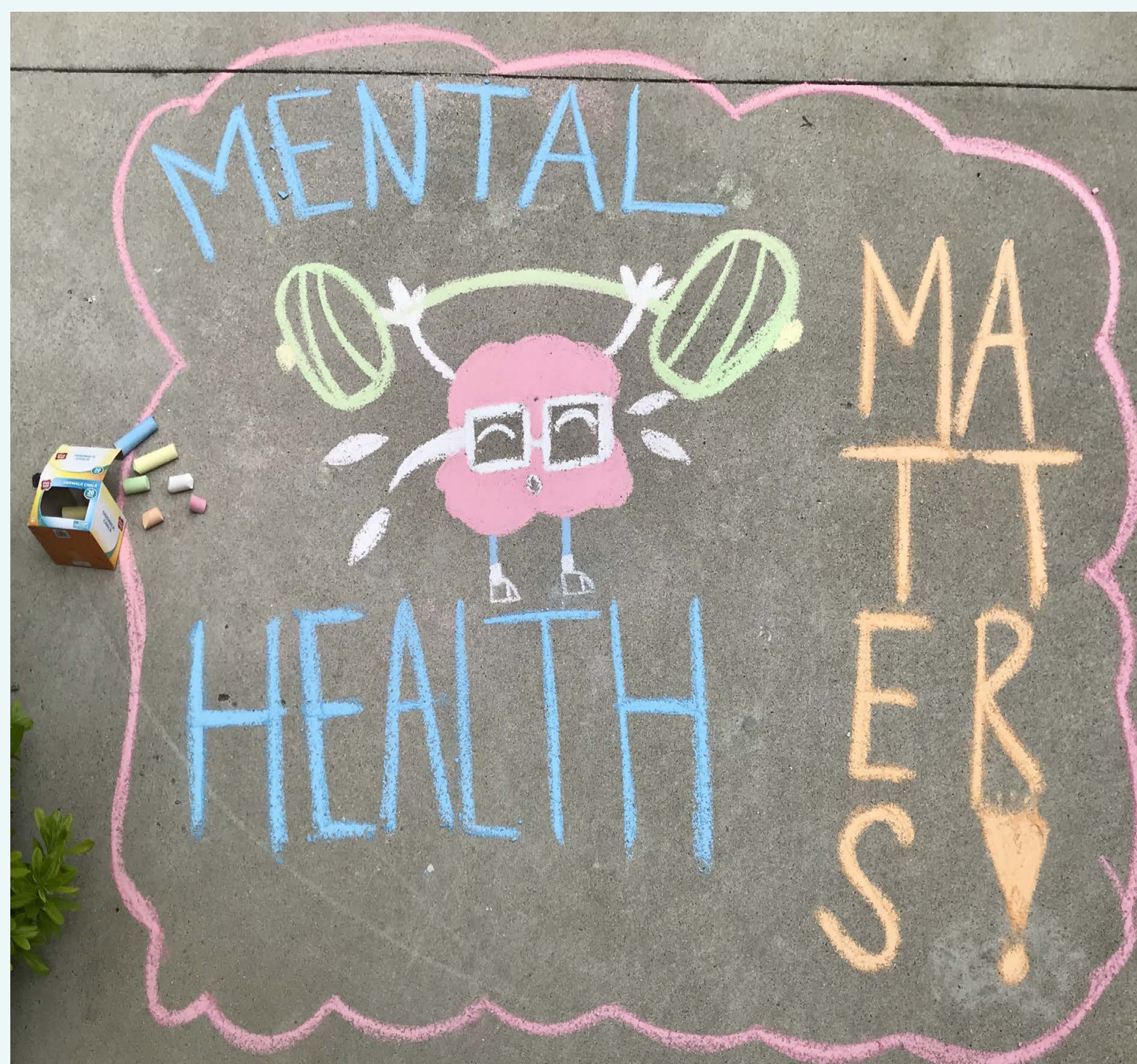
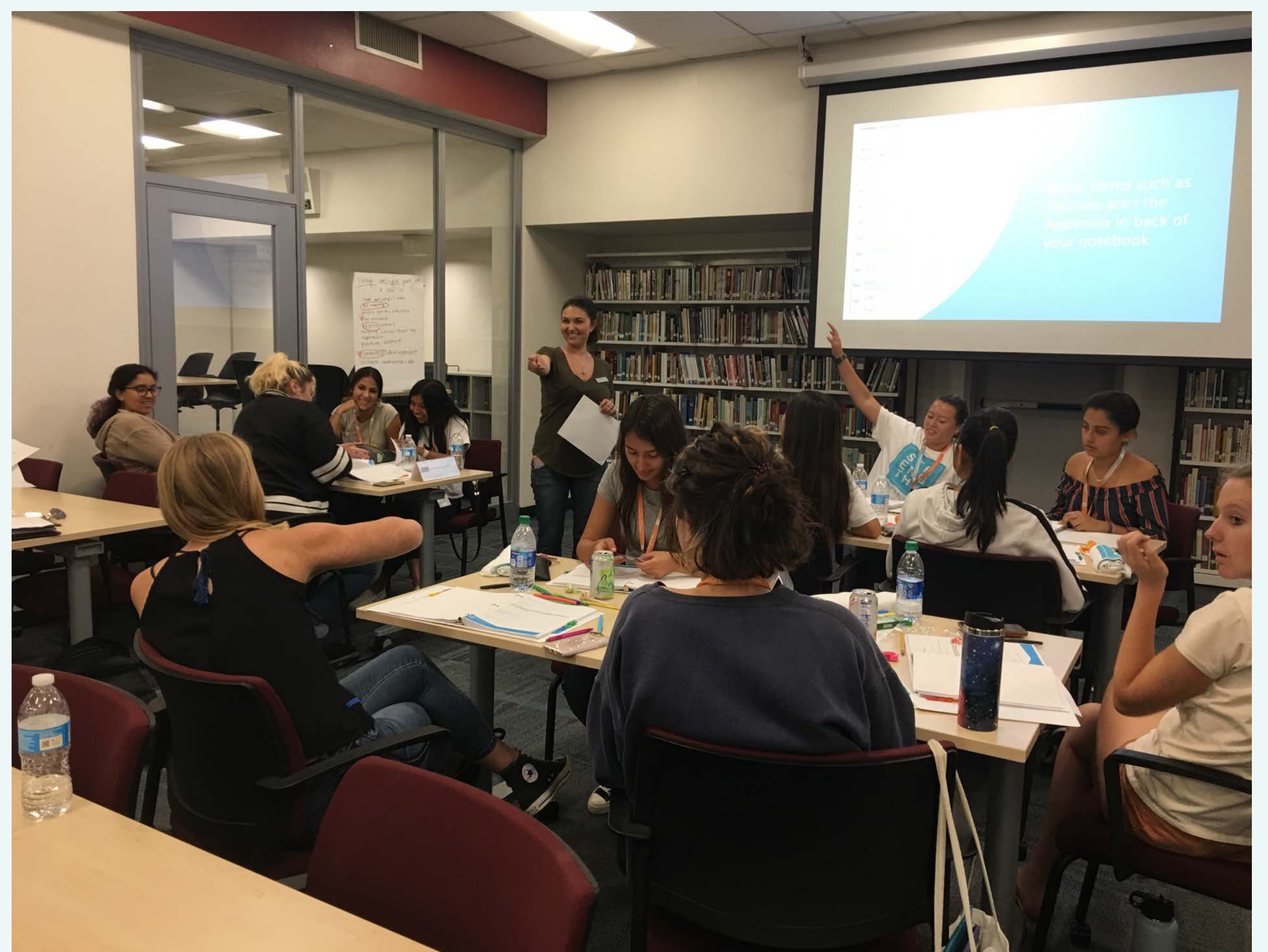
40 youth participated in leadership activities



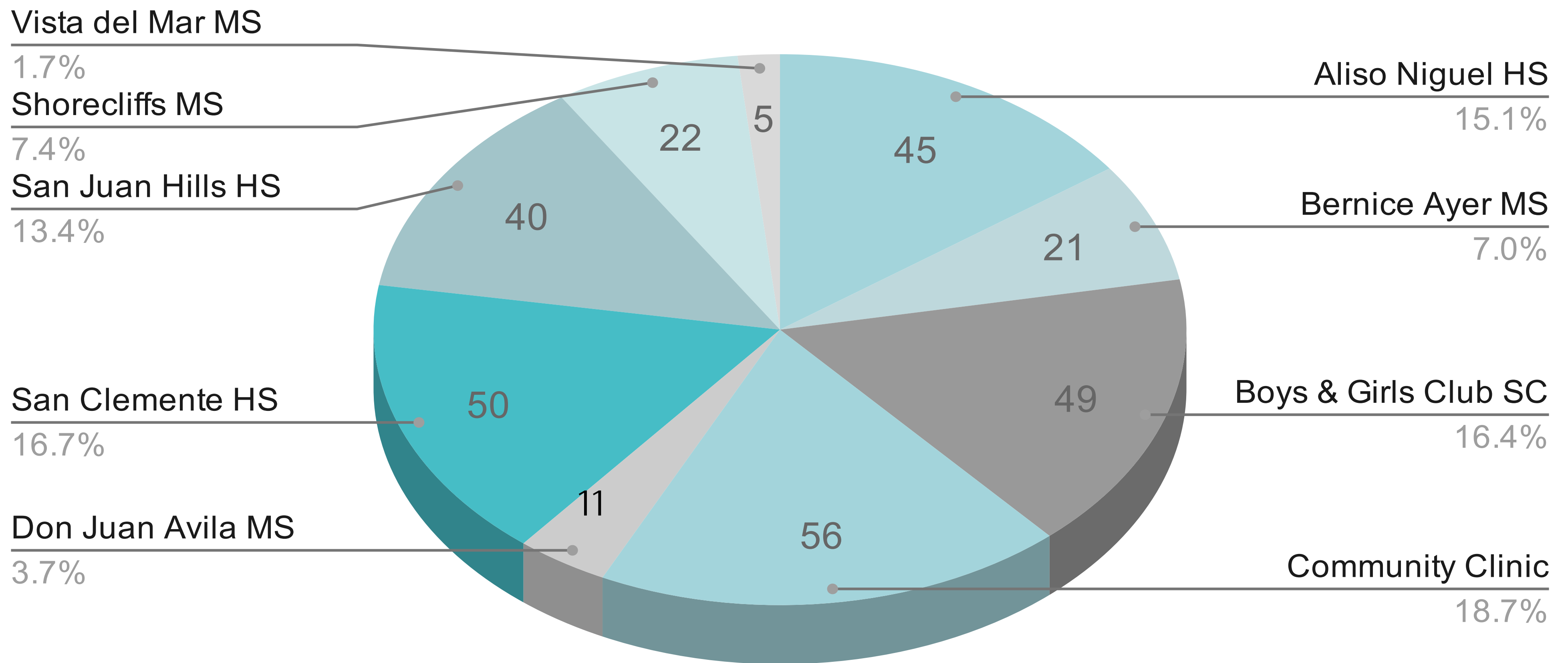
25 youth created a strategic prevention plan for their community

Youth & the Wellness & Prevention Center

The WPC includes youth in every aspect of our work. Teens are the experts on their lives. We look to them to help us understand the stressors in teens' lives and for help in forming strategies and implementing programming. The passion and dedication our teen leaders bring to the Wellness & Prevention Center is an invaluable part of our success.



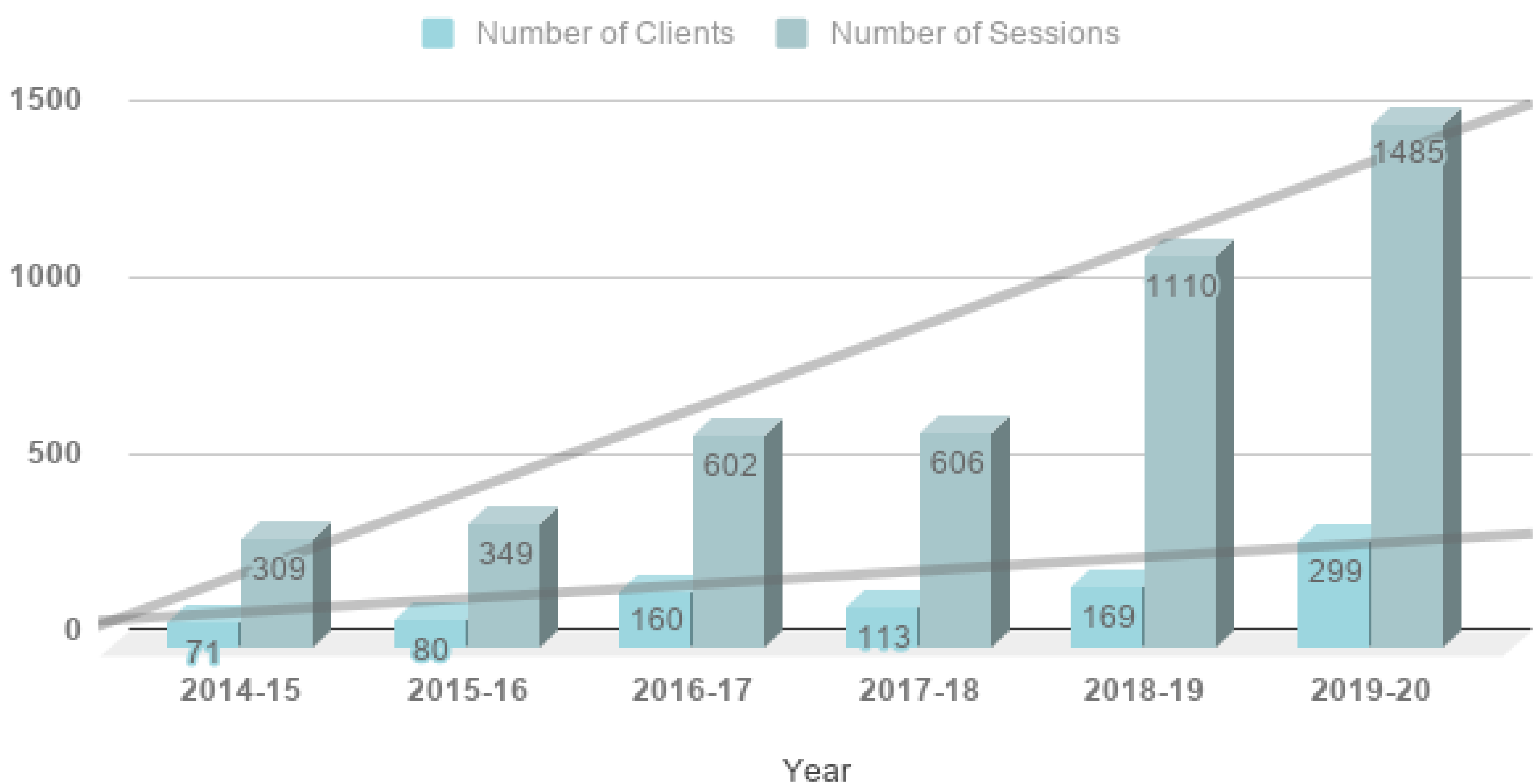
Clients per School/Community Site



Mental Health Services

The Wellness & Prevention Center provides an open door (regardless of insurance coverage or ability to pay) to mental health services for youth and families in the South Orange County area, in offices within secondary schools and at our community clinic in San Clemente. A core strategy for fulfilling our mission is providing youth access to supportive mental health professionals.

Number of Clients and Number of Sessions



The Wellness & Prevention Center has increased services through successful fundraising events and online campaigns, generous support from Orange County foundations, and aggressive fund development through grant writing and corporate sponsorship.

2019-2020 REVENUES & EXPENDITURES

REVENUE	CASH	IN-KIND	TOTAL	%
Foundation Grants	66,750			
Municipal Grants	7,000			
Office of National Drug Control Policy	156,790			
County of Orange Health Care Agency	37,338			
Total Grants			267,878	42%
Individual Donations/Special Events	95,546		95,546	21%
Rent - Capistrano Unified School District		110,000		
Media Space - Picket Fence Media		6,400		
Professional Mental Health Services		45,788		
Community Prevention Education		3,000		
Total In-Kind			165,188	37%
TOTAL REVENUE	363,424	165,188	528,612	100%
EXPENDITURES	CASH	IN-KIND	TOTAL	%
Clinical Services	94,165	45,788	139,953	32%
Drug Free Communities Program	127,202	119,400	246,602	56%
County Community Education	42,462	0	42,462	10%
Administration & Overhead	14,384	0	14,384	3%
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	278,213	165,188	443,401	100%

REVENUES & EXPENSES OVER 5 YEARS

REVENUES	14/15	15/16	16/17	17/18	18/19	19/20
Grants	22,390	77,700	88,590	113,479	159,384	267,878
Donations			37,431	67,587	74,967	95,546
In-Kind	20,672	35,650	47,800	156,805	138,846	165,188
TOTAL REVENUES	43,062	113,350	173,821	337,871	373,197	528,612
EXPENSES	14/15	15/16	16/17	17/18	18/19	19/20
Programs	41,224	97,162	163,958	268,215	326,870	405,670
Fundraising & Community Awareness		4,299	15,668	29,786	29,980	23,347
Administration & Overhead	1,493	7,300	3,042	11,060	17,805	14,384
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	42,717	108,761	182,668	309,061	374,655	443,401



1 in 5

teens struggle with mental health symptoms

Thank you to the partners and funders who have joined us on this journey to support teens and their families

