



Contact:

Erin Morrissey, Thrive program manager, North Valley Community Foundation. Email: emorrissey@nvcf.org, 530-891-1150, ext. 420.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Feb. 19, 2021

In an effort to understand and address mental health struggles and suicide among Butte County teenagers, Thrive is organizing small focus group discussions about the topic.

Statistics from the 2019/2020 California Healthy Kids Survey results for Butte County underline the magnitude of the problem. According to the survey, 50% of seventh-graders, 33% of ninth-graders and 54% of 11th-graders reported feeling so sad and hopeless almost every day for two weeks or more that they stopped doing some usual activities. In addition, 30% of seventh-graders, 17% of ninth-graders and 38% of 11th-graders reported they had seriously considered attempting suicide.

"Preventing suicide is a something our community must put at the forefront of our efforts," said Danelle Campbell, Thrive program director. "It is critical that we reduce the stigma, normalize the conversation and end the silence about suicide and mental health, creating opportunities for young people to feel safe and supported. Hearing youth voices, youth perspectives and youth stories is one of the most powerful components in creating change."

Organizations that serve young people can sign up for mini-grants to help organize the discussions under the "End the Silence" initiative. Thrive, Butte County Behavioral Health, Butte County Office of Education and Boys and Girls Clubs of the North Valley are among the organizations involved in the effort.

The focus groups will consist of 10 to 12 high school students and will be led by trained young people supported by an adult from the collaborative team.

Organizations that sign up to organize and host a focus group will receive a mini-grant that will pay for facilitation, food and drinks and a \$20 gift card for each participant. The focus group sessions are about 90 minutes long.

Organizations or schools can sign up here: <https://tinyurl.com/thrivegroups>

"End the Silence" hopes to engage 200 to 300 youths from across the county for the focus groups.

Thrive is an initiative led by NVCF and focused on emotional healing for children, families and individuals after the Camp Fire and other local crises. Thrive brings together a collaboration of people, organizations and agencies committed to engaging in work surrounding the impact of childhood trauma across all generations.