

## *Clark County Children's Mental Health Consortium*



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE---May 8, 2014--Clark County Children's Mental Health Consortium highlights local teen suicide prevention efforts to celebrate National Children's Mental Health Awareness Day.**

Thursday, May 8 has been designated by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services as National Children's Mental Health Awareness Day. Like at least 1000 other communities across the country, the *Clark County Children's Mental Health Consortium* is using National Mental Health Awareness Day to spread a message of hope about the resilience of children and youth who are dealing with mental health issues.

The *Clark County Children's Mental Health Consortium* is spreading this message of hope by highlighting the implementation of Signs of Suicide (SOS) Program throughout Clark County Schools. The SOS Program is a nationally recognized teen suicide prevention program for 11-18 year olds. SOS is a voluntary education and screening program that has been used by thousands of schools across the United States over the past nine years. It has proven successful at increasing help-seeking by students concerned about themselves or a friend and is the only school-based suicide prevention program selected by SAMHSA for its National Registry of Evidence-Based Programs and Practices. In at least two randomized control research studies, the SOS program showed a reduction in self-reported suicide attempts by 40%.

This spring, the CCCMHC has sponsored an *SOS Program Poster Contest* for students who have participated in the SOS Program. Middle schools and high school health teachers have submitted posters created by their students that best reinforce the message of the SOS Program to: *"Acknowledge, Care, and Tell Someone" (A.C.T.)* about feelings associated with depression and thoughts of suicide. The CCCMHC will select the top posters from all participating schools and award prizes to the winning schools. The winning posters will be posted on the following website by May 8, 2014: [https://www.nvselfharmprevention.org/2014\\_poster.php](https://www.nvselfharmprevention.org/2014_poster.php). Other sponsors of the Poster Contest include: the *Clark County Family Court Judges, Spring Mountain Treatment Center, and Mojave Mental Health Services*.

In collaboration with the Clark County Children's Mental Health Consortium, *Nevada Parents Encouraging Parents (PEP)* will also distribute green ribbons to be worn by community members, including parents, teachers, and providers throughout the month of May in order to raise awareness of the importance of children's mental health issues.

When it comes to mental health issues, Clark County children and youth are among the most vulnerable in the nation. At least 1 in 5 children in Clark County are experiencing mental health problems and two-thirds of these children are not getting the help that they need. Recent national studies have shown that teenagers are more likely to experience anxiety and depressive disorders than any other medical condition. A recent study by the Clark County School District found that

almost one-quarter of Clark County's public middle school students had seriously thought about killing themselves, and over 13% had attempted suicide. The *Clark County Children's Mental Health Consortium* has identified children's mental health as a major public health issue in our community. The Consortium has recently developed a 10-year Strategic Plan to guide the community in providing needed mental health services to children and their families. The Consortium's 10-year Strategic Plan represents a commitment to all children in Clark County and their families, who deserve the supports necessary for optimal mental health and social-emotional development, early access to treatment when problems arise, and intensive services when mental health problems become severe and chronic. The Consortium's plan cites numerous research studies *demonstrating the effectiveness of programs and activities for children in preventing later, more costly mental health disorders and other problems*. The CCCMHC published its *2014 Service Priorities Report* in February, 2014. For more information about the Clark County Children's Mental Health Consortium, please contact Janelle Kraft-Pearce, Chairperson at [fjpearce@cox.net](mailto:fjpearce@cox.net), or c/o Lori Brown (775)688-1633 ext 231.

**Helpful Links:**

[www.samhsa.gov/children](http://www.samhsa.gov/children)

[www.nvsuicideprevention.org](http://www.nvsuicideprevention.org)

[www.suicideprevention.nv.gov](http://www.suicideprevention.nv.gov)

[www.crisiscenter.org](http://www.crisiscenter.org)

[www.sprc.org](http://www.sprc.org)

[www.dcf.state.nv.us/DCFS\\_ChildMentalHealth\\_CCCMHC.htm](http://www.dcf.state.nv.us/DCFS_ChildMentalHealth_CCCMHC.htm)