

## Each Mind Matters



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Every day, millions of people face stigma related to mental health because they or their loved ones are facing a challenge. Many of these people feel isolated and alone, going many years before receiving any help. Recognizing this, the Orange County Health Care Agency (HCA) supports the Each Mind Matters movement which strives to put an end to mental health stigma, thereby creating a community where everyone feels comfortable reaching out for the support they deserve. The Each Mind Matters campaign is an initiative implemented by The California Mental Health Services Authority (CalMHSA), to improve mental health outcomes for individuals, families and communities. By focusing on Stigma and Discrimination Reduction efforts, Suicide Prevention and Student Mental Health, CalMHSA's goal is to transform the community mental health system from a crisis-driven system to one focused on prevention and wellness. As part of this initiative, HCA has participated in many collaborative activities promoting the importance of mental health awareness and suicide prevention by initiating conversations and educating the community about mental health and wellness.

Most recently, HCA staff and community partners participated in the national Suicide Prevention Month in September to highlight the importance of engaging the community to learn the signs associated with suicide. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, suicide is not just a mental illness; it is a result of a combination of factors operating at the individual, community and societal level. Recognizing that suicide prevention efforts are more likely to succeed if they move beyond health care settings to include the community, HCA's Public Health Officer Dr. Eric Handler spearheaded a public/private partnership with the Children's Hospital of Orange County to organize a suicide prevention forum titled: "Advancing Hope: Youth Suicide Prevention as a Life Skill." The first effort of its kind in Orange County, this event brought together a diverse group of stakeholders including representatives from schools, healthcare, mental health, public health, courts, faith-based communities, law enforcement and survivors of suicide to focus on suicide prevention in children and youth. This Forum was the kickoff for a comprehensive Suicide Prevention Coalition to be formed in the near future to set priorities for Suicide Prevention for all of Orange County.

For more information go to: <http://www.ohealthinfo.com/bhs/about/pi/mhm>;  
#UpliftOC; <https://www.eachmindmatters.org>