Directing Change Program & Film Contest

Youth and young adults submit short films in suicide prevention, mental health, and explore these topics through the lens of diverse cultures.

❖ Submission Deadline: March 1, 2019
✓ Open to students in grades 6-12
✓ Open to Youth and Young Adults ages 14-25
✓ Red Carpet Award Ceremony
✓ Cash prizes for winning teams and schools

www.DirectingChangeCA.org
TOP FILMS OF 2018 PROGRAM

A Fighting Chance
(2nd Place Regional)
Mental Health Matters
https://vimeo.com/259420976

Behind the Smile
(1st Place Regional)
Mental Health Matters
https://vimeo.com/258653288

Dear Best Friend
Suicide Prevention
https://vimeo.com/279707806

There Is Hope
(1st Place Regional)
Suicide Prevention
https://vimeo.com/258132480

Stronger Together
(2nd Place, Youth & Young Adult)
Mental Health Matters
https://vimeo.com/258020590
Mission Statement

To educate young people about critical health topics through the medium of film and promote social justice by changing conversations in schools and communities.
Directing Change Overview

Submit 30-second or 60-second films in one of the following categories:

- Mental Health Matters (MHM)
- Suicide Prevention (SP)
- Through the Lens of Culture (MHM or SP)
- SanaMente (Spanish, 30-seconds)
- Animated Short (30-seconds)
- **Walk In Our Shoes** (60-seconds, MHM or SP, middle school only)

The contest is open to students in grades 6-12, youth and young adults ages 14 to 25

Submission Deadline: March 1, 2019
Hello! Are you curious about what it's like to be in someone else's shoes? Do you want to learn about other people's lives? Curiosity and learning are great, so lace up, strap on, or slip on your sneakers and let's learn about mental health. Learning about other people can help you understand that they're still a lot like you — they're just on a journey in different shoes.
FOR GROWNUPS

NEED HELP NOW?

FOR TEACHERS

Mental health challenges are more common than one realizes. As an educator, you play a crucial role in introducing the subject of mental health to your students. In fact, some of your students have probably experienced their own mental health challenges.

The following resources provide information about mental health, a synopsis of the Walk In Our Shoes campaign and a Classroom Facilitation Guide, with accompanying activities, that familiarize students with mental health and wellness.

INTRODUCING MENTAL HEALTH (TEACHERS)
ABOUT WALK IN OUR SHOES
CLASSROOM FACILITATION GUIDE
CLASSROOM LESSON PLANS
CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES

www.walkinourshoes.org/for-grownups
Walk in Our Shoes

While we all experience different things in life, there’s more that unites us than divides us. We’re all on the same journey — we’re just in different shoes.
Walk in Our Shoes

Developed for middle school (6th – 8th grade) students to start conversations about mental health and suicide prevention at a developmentally-appropriate level. Ties into Each Mind Matters’ Walk In Our Shoes program.

Students (or teachers) choose one of three themes to cover with their film:
1. What is Mental Health? – Mental Health
2. Words Matter – Mental Health
3. The Superhero in Each of Us – Suicide Prevention

In addition, all films have to include at least one specific action that someone could do to help someone else and/or get help for themselves.
What is Mental Health?

We talk a lot about physical health, but what about mental health?

What does that look like: Are you happy all the time? Can you be mentally healthy if you’ve had a mental illness?

Are there things you can do to improve your mental health like you do for your physical health, or is it something only a professional can do?

Create a film that teaches people the truth about what mental health is, or teaches them how someone can build better mental health.
Words Matter

We’ve all casually thrown around words like “crazy” in everyday life when we were talking about something. But how does that make you feel if you, or someone you care about, is dealing with a mental illness? Does that make you feel like you can talk about what you’re going through or does it make you feel ashamed or different from others?

The words you use can have a big impact. Even if you know they are untrue, labels that people throw around can still hurt and make you feel disconnected from everyone else.

Your film should tell a story that encourages people to use kind and accurate words to talk about mental health.
The Superhero In Each Of Us: *Strengths, Purpose, and What Happens When We Lose Them*

Every superhero has a strength, or something that they are especially great at. These strengths can often feel like a person’s purpose, or reason for them to be alive... but what happens when someone loses this strength or purpose?

How can someone tell that a person may no longer want to live? What could an ordinary person do to help?

Create a film that looks at the world through someone else’s eyes and shows the challenges that someone might face if they feel like they have lost their strength or reason for their life.
Walk in Our Shoes

Learning Objectives

(1) Students will understand the concepts of purpose and strength

(2) Students will explore the warning signs for suicide and ways that a young person could help those who are thinking about suicide

(3) Students will reflect on what makes a superhero a “hero” and how an ordinary person can become a hero in suicide prevention
Walk in Our Shoes

What makes someone a superhero?
Walk in Our Shoes

Activity: Let’s Talk Superheroes

• Who are some of our favorite superheroes?

• What are their strengths? What are they best known for?
Walk in Our Shoes

Activity: Pick a Superhero

• How might they feel if they lost this strength/their purpose?
Walk in Our Shoes

Activity: You’re the Superhero!

The Personality Compass is an exercise for brainstorming ideas for the character and story. The compass is divided in 4 directions: North, South, East and West.

a. Compass Cardinals:
   i. North: What puts you on top of your game (e.g., feeling good activities)?
   ii. South: What makes you feel you are losing your game (e.g., feelings of frustration, fear, etc.)?
   iii. East: What can you do to overcome those negative feelings (e.g., challenges)?
   iv. West: What can you do to stay positive (e.g., strengths)?
Walk in Our Shoes

Activity: Be the Superhero for Someone Else

• How might you know that someone else is feeling this way?
  • Warning Signs

• How could an ordinary person do to help someone who is feeling this way?
  • Action Steps
Walk in Our Shoes

What makes someone a superhero?

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kMbFbq4yXHE&feature=youtu.be
Walk in Our Shoes

Resources specific to Walk in Our Shoes:
- Lesson Plans for the ”Words Matter” and “Superhero in Each Of Us” themes.
- Activities for middle school students to be implemented in classrooms
- Vignettes and resources on the Walk In Our Shoes website

Film Requirements
* Students submit a 60-second film about one of these themes
* Separate judging form and category for the film contest, so middle school films are only being compared with other middle school films.
* Must include a resource on their end slate
Learning Methodology

Directing Change integrates sound pedagogical principles into the filmmaking process so that participants are engaged via all methods of the “learning spectrum”: to see, experience, discuss, and apply. Once created films are used in schools and communities to raise awareness and start conversations about these topics.

https://vimeo.com/92756723

That was until I learned that there is hope.

https://youtu.be/0lRYraBAZis

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IFFICLJNbQ8
Directing Change is effective at:

- Increasing knowledge and skills
- Changing attitudes and behaviors related to mental illness and suicide prevention

“It is remarkable that significant findings persisted even months after the program had ended—with fielding of the survey among participants in the program 3 - 6 months after completing their film submissions”
“Everybody needs help at some point in their lives. I realized how important it is to eliminate the stigma behind mental health and to encourage others to open up the dialogue with their friends, families, and colleagues. While working on this film, I also realized how much everyone benefitted from an open dialogue and the increase in trust and stronger friendships that resulted... I think there is no better time to advocate for this open dialogue and for everyone to realize that mental health is just as important as physical health.”

LA County, student at UCLA
“The inspiration I got to make my film came from the way I felt when I was very depressed. Everyone goes through different experiences but to realize that you're not alone and can count on someone makes everything a lot easier. I wanted to get the message of finding hope with the people who are near you like friends and family because you don't have to always be alone throughout your struggles.”

LA County, student at John F. Kennedy High School
THE DIRECTING CHANGE PROGRAM AND FILM

engages young adults throughout California to learn about the warning signs of mental health and how to help a friend by creating short films. Throughout the filmmaking process, participants are engaged via all methods of the “learning spectrum” to see, experience, discuss, and apply concepts learned about suicide prevention and mental health. These films are used in schools and communities to raise awareness and start conversations about these topics.

Findings from a cross-sectional case-control study by NORC at the University of Chicago demonstrated knowledge, attitudes and behavior changes:

Directing Change participants more frequently agreed that suicide is preventable, identified more warning signs and were more willing to encourage others to seek help, beyond their own social circles.

Directing Change participants are more willing to engage in conversation aimed at suicide prevention and have fewer attitudes that contribute to stigma.

Teachers report impact on students and school climate such as gaining skills for dealing with mental health issues later in life, reducing social isolation, increased sense of safety and sensitivity to the feelings of others, and knowledge of how to connect peers with resources.

Directing Change provides an effective, tangible, and supportive way to generate open discussion about mental illness, prevent suicide, increase help-seeking, and to reduce stigma and discrimination.

Since 2012, 5,343 youth have participated in the Directing Change Program and Film Contest. Their commitment and creativity towards raising awareness about suicide prevention has helped inspire a new generation to know warning signs, reach out for help, and initiate conversations that could make a personal effort to find out more about mental health in the past 12 months.

82%

2,138

77,343

86%

58%

86%

58%

86%
“We began this project because we're filmmakers and the contest intrigued us, but found that the making of the film was what really benefitted us. We had the opportunity to learn about the warning signs of an individual in need of help and hope that our film will encourage others to reach out to those around them.”

- Student, University of California Irvine
To Get Started:

**REVIEW**
- contest overview prezi.

**READ**
- the contest rules and FAQ.

**SELECT**
- select a submission category.

**SUBMIT**
- an Intent to Direct (one per team).

**UPLOAD**
- Entry forms and your film (allow plenty of time). Sign release forms.

Review the Getting Started Prezi presentation:
http://prezi.com/l0typvnnf49e/
Educational Resources

The Directing Change Program is an evaluated education program that can easily be integrated into classroom, club, or extracurricular activities.

Example of educational resources:

• Lesson plans
• Short educational films and Prezi about mental health, suicide prevention and how to help a friend
• Fact sheets
• PowerPoint presentation for schools with lesson plans
• Getting started Prezi presentation and participation booklets
• Prevention programs, staff and parent trainings

www.DirectingChangeCA.org/schools/
Additional tips and ideas for integrating Directing Change in classroom or after school activities

✓ Offer as an extension to a script writing or creative writing lesson.
✓ Offer as extra credit with option to work on project outside and during class time.
✓ Offer as a final class project.
✓ Break students into teams and ask them to research topics, pick a category, and write script for a film. Have entire class vote for best script and have groups create films based on top voted scripts.
✓ Require as part of graded senior project and present films to entire school in a science fair type of format and also broadcast in each classroom.
Sign up to be a judge!

• Judge up to fifteen 60-second films
• 2 hour commitment
• Brief judge training in Feb/March
• Send me an email if interested:
  
  devin@directingchange.org
How to Access Films

www.directingchangeCA.org/films

• By category (SP, MHM, TLC...)
• By diverse community
• By county
• By year

❖ View: YouTube link
❖ Download: Vimeo link

Attend the Awards Ceremony!

May 21, 2019 in downtown Los Angeles

All are welcome!

Come and view inspiring videos produced by students across California. These youth used their creativity to tackle the important topics of suicide prevention and ending the silence of mental illness. Winners will be announced and recognized at the award ceremony.
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www.DirectingChangeCA.org