

October 10, 2019

RE: Wellness Week Participation

The El Dorado County Youth Commission is a group of dedicated public high school students from throughout the county, appointed by the El Dorado County Board of Supervisors and El Dorado County Office of Education, to represent the voice of local youth.

Over the past two years, the Commissioners have focused on the importance of supporting mental health awareness and the needs of their peers. Their research and firsthand exposure illustrates a growing number of youth struggling with mental health concerns, as well as the need for students to embrace wellness, reach out for help when they need it, and break the stigma surrounding mental health discussions.

The Youth Commission has created a website to support students with resources, while emphasizing that good mental health is about wellness and not just illness. The Commission also promotes that good health is as much about students' mental, emotional, and/or spiritual state, as it is their physical condition. As such, they are working with educational and government leadership to declare October 14-18 *Self-Wellness Week*. The goal of this student-driven awareness campaign is to help create a community culture where students can reach out for support and connect with a peer or professional when feeling overwhelmed - and that this should be as normal and acceptable as going to the doctor when *you* have the flu.

Participation:

Recognizing that wellness looks different at every grade level and school, participation in *Self-Wellness Week* is optional, with planned activities outlined by grade level below:

Elementary School (grades TK-5)

- The Youth Commission will purchase and donate 2 books promoting self-wellness for each elementary school library.
- Principals and/or Librarians are encouraged to read/share the books during the week of October 14-18 and consider sharing information about *Self-Wellness Week* on their school websites and/or social media accounts.

Middle School & High School (grades 5/6 - 12)

- The Youth Commission will distribute wristbands with the YCHEALTH.org website address for students to wear during the week. The website will provide a list of wellness-related activities that students can choose to participate in - e.g., physical activity, working with animals, art and writing, music, spirituality, or participation in community service activities. These easy, no cost suggestions provide options for students to reconnect with each other and themselves, and find a healthy way to cope with daily stressors.
- We encourage principals and student leadership clubs to participate on campus and post activities on school social media sites.

It is an honor to represent local youth and bring awareness to the importance of wellness among county students. Additional information can be found on the Commissioners' website at YCHEALTH.org.