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Adolescent Counseling Services
Helping Teenagers Find Their Way

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I like to think of Adolescent Counseling Services (ACS) as the social and emotional

equivalent to medical first aid. Like paramedics and urgent care clinics, ACS provides the professional care that teens and families need when they are dealing with issues of varying degrees. From arguments with friends to substance abuse to suicide, ACS is available to help teens and families with the wide range of issues they face every day. Our well-trained, professional staff is ready at a moment's notice to deliver the expertise and emotional resuscitation adolescents need in times of distress.

Whether a teen and their family require on-site, short-term, long-term, or intensive care, ACS is equipped with a force of over 50 trained therapists to work with them and provide the healing they need. The depth and range of the emotional injuries we address demonstrate the scope of our services and knowledge of our hard-working therapeutic team. Through our three programs, we are prepared to treat whatever walks through the door: some injuries are minor, some are severe, and others we help prevent.

With a 36 year history, ACS has the experience needed to effectively help those who are in need of social and emotional first aid. In times of crisis, frustration, despair, and confusion, our three programs and extensive community outreach and education give local teens and families the opportunity to get the care they need to lead emotionally healthy lives.

I hope you will take a few minutes to read through the overwhelming list of emotional injuries we help teens deal with every day, the programs ACS offers to treat these issues, and how you can join us in our efforts of "helping teenagers find their way"!

Best Regards,

Philippe Rey, PsyD
Executive Director

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A list of the real-life issues that local teens were facing when they came through ACS doors last school year:

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Academic Stress
Adoption
Anger Management
Anxiety
Attention Deficit (ADD/ADHD)
Bullying
Child Abuse
Communication with Parents
Cross-Cultural Issues
Cyberspace Issue
Depression
Divorce/Single Parent
Domestic Violence
Eating Disorder

Gangs
Gender Identity
Grief/Loss
Illness of a Family Member
Isolation/Withdrawal
Joint Custody Issues
Law Violation
Learning Disability
Medical Condition
Neglect
New Student
Obsessive Compulsive Disorder
Peer Relationships
Post-Traumatic Stress
Poverty
Teen Pregnancy
Remarriage/Blended Family

School Attendance
School Discipline
Self-Esteem
Self-Harm
Sexuality
Sibling Conflict
Special Needs
Substance Abuse (Family)
Substance Abuse (Significant Other)
Substance Abuse (Student)
Suicidality

There is a huge need for ACS in our community. Adolescence is a difficult time in life and today's teens are dealing with a variety of problems. No matter how big or small the issue, teens need the accessible and personal expertise that ACS offers.

We can only expect that the list of presenting issues this school year will be just as long.

“...and he admitted to contemplating ways to commit **suicide.”**

Jason seemed to have it all—brains, popularity, athleticism, and leadership. He was extremely involved in extracurricular activities at school, was well-liked by his peers and was averaging a 4.0 GPA. However, under the surface things were not as they seemed. Jason’s guidance counselor could sense that something wasn’t right and referred him to Adolescent Counseling Services.

While Jason was ready to admit he was unhappy and needed someone to talk to, his parents needed a little convincing. His family was in denial that this seemingly happy, straight-A student needed help. After declining consent for Jason to receive the social-emotional support he needed, an ACS therapist reached out to them and explained how beneficial therapy could be for Jason. Realizing how important their son’s happiness and health were to them, they agreed and Jason began seeing his ACS therapist regularly.

Jason didn’t realize how relieved he was to have someone to talk to until he started meeting with his ACS therapist. Jason began sharing things he had never spoken about before his involvement with ACS. He was worried about the fights he heard his parents having at home. His constant sadness turned into depression and he admitted to contemplating ways to commit suicide. His ACS

therapist took his suicidal thoughts very seriously, consulting with outside resources and providing Jason and his family with referrals for additional services. She followed up on his progress with the referrals and continued to see Jason regularly. She met with Jason’s parents and helped them get the family and couples counseling they needed for a better home life.

Along with his ACS therapist and the outside referrals she gave him, Jason made progress throughout the year. His depression decreased, he was receiving more support from his parents, and his suicidal thoughts had ceased. Jason recognizes that his work isn’t done, but the progress made in just one school year encouraged both him and his family to continue with treatment. With the help of ACS and additional services, Jason’s parents learned that grades and success in school are not necessarily measurable factors for mental wellness.

The attentive care and persistence he received from his ACS therapist was instrumental in **saving Jason’s life.**

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On-Campus Counseling Program

The On-Campus Counseling Program provides individual, family and group counseling at no cost to students and their families at the five secondary schools in the Palo Alto Unified School District, at Menlo-Atherton High School and Redwood High School in the Sequoia Union High School District and La Entrada Middle School in the Las Lomas School District.

The goal of the On-Campus Counseling Program is to provide life-saving early intervention for teens dealing with challenging issues of adolescence. With accessible, compassionate therapists available on school campuses, teens have a safety net of professionals with whom to confront their issues.

After-School Counseling Program

The After-School Counseling Program offers support groups and affordable individual, group and family counseling for teens and their families in and around the Peninsula with services available in English, Spanish, and Mandarin.

The After-School Counseling Program helps families through a wide range of issues through both short and long-term therapy, providing individual sessions to teens and parents as well as group counseling. Session rates are determined by a sliding scale with financial assistance provided on a demonstrated need basis.

The After-School Counseling Program partners with the Boys and Girls Clubs of the Peninsula's Redwood City campus and the East Palo Alto Youth Court to provide counseling to teens in their programs.

Adolescent Substance Abuse Program

The Adolescent Substance Abuse Treatment Program provides outpatient, intensive outpatient treatment, professional assessment and prevention education to teens and families in San Mateo and Santa Clara Counties. ACS offers an effective and unique approach to adolescent treatment by focusing on the Family Therapeutic Model, 12 Step Community Reinforcement and individual and group therapy.

The Adolescent Substance Abuse Treatment Program accepts referrals from the community as well as from the Palo Alto Unified School District (PAUSD) and East Palo Alto Youth Court. Referrals for substance abuse assessment made by PAUSD and East Palo Alto Youth Court are free of charge to the family of the teen being assessed. Sliding scale fees are available for families with a demonstrated need.

Preventive Education

ACS provides education to parents and teens in the community through forums, presentations and written materials provided both in print and online:

99 Tips for Talking with Your Teenager

is a free booklet distributed to hundreds of parents each year providing advice for improving parent-child communication. The booklet is available in English and Spanish both online and in hardcopy formats.


Teen Talk is a blog updated 2-3 times per week, containing articles and advice from ACS staff on parenting teens and links to recent news articles pertaining to teen mental health and substance abuse.

<http://acsteens.wordpress.com>

Breaking the Stigma is a series of educational community forums hosted by ACS, featuring commentary from experts on a variety of issues, including depression and anxiety, substance abuse, sexuality, bullying and self-esteem, among others.

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In times of crisis, frustration, despair, and confusion,
our three programs give local teens the care they need.



Join Us.

For over 36 years, Adolescent Counseling Services (ACS) has served as critical social-emotional first aid for teens and families. With free counseling available to students at eight campuses, outpatient adolescent substance abuse treatment, and affordable counseling for teens and families in the afternoon and evening hours, ACS makes sure that teens have the support they need when they experience emotional distress during the turbulent years of adolescence.

You can continue to make ACS accessible and available to teens in need. By making a gift to support our valuable programs, you ensure that no matter how minor or severe the issue, teens have the assistance of ACS to heal and go on to lead emotionally healthy lives.

Join ACS today in helping teenagers find their way!



What need could your gift fulfill for teens seeking help and healing from ACS?

\$1,000 will pay for two and a half weeks of treatment in the Adolescent Substance Abuse Treatment Program

\$500 will provide a semester long grief counseling group at a middle school in the On-Campus Counseling Program

\$250 will support substance abuse prevention workshops at all 8 secondary schools ACS serves

\$100 will grant one individual or family an On-Campus Counseling Program session

\$50 will provide one teen access to a support group offered in the After-School Counseling Program

\$25 will pay for one drug test at the Adolescent Substance Abuse Treatment Program

They can't do it alone and neither can ACS.

A gift of any size will help ACS provide the social and emotional first aid local teens and families need.

SUPPORT



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