

PACIFIC CLINICS

Advances Magazine | Spring 2021

Meet Ellen Leyva

ABC Eyewitness News Anchor
and Walter Cronkite School of
Broadcast Journalism Hall of
Famer

.....

National Hispanic Media
Coalition Impact Award for
Excellence in Television
Recipient

.....

Champion of
Mental Health

ESSENTIAL WORKERS MAKING A DIFFERENCE

IN THIS ISSUE

A Card Can Show You Care

— 3 —

Connecting with Individuals
Who Feel Alone

The Future of Mental Health

— 4 —

Telehealth is the New Normal
for the Mental Health Field

Meet Our Team

— 6 —

Victoria Onwualu, MBA, LCSW,
Divisional Director

Meet Ellen Leyva

— 8 —

An Interview with ABC News
Anchor Ellen Leyva

Talking to Children About Race

— 10 —

Open Dialogue Helps to
Bridge Understanding

Donor Acknowledgments

— 12 —

Thank You to Our Supporters

Is Your Child Stressed?

— 14 —

Self-Care Tips to Decompress

STAFF AND CONTRIBUTORS

Writers and Editors:

Myeisha Peguero Gamiño, MA;
Tiffany Garcia

Contributor:

Annabel Secaida; Steve Cahn

Graphic Design and Photography:

Summer Scott; Rosie Chuong

EDITORIAL COMMITTEE

James J. Balla, MBA; Shawn Caracoza, LCSW;
Jennifer D'Alvarez, MBA; Rhiannon De Carlo, LMFT;
Kris Giordano; Laura Pancake, LCSW;
Kristopher Stevens, PhD

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A MESSAGE FROM THE CEO

Overcoming the Challenges in Our Communities

Dear Friends,

As the coronavirus pandemic has upended most lives, adding multiple challenges to many of Pacific Clinics' clients, we have continued to deliver care in meeting the increased needs of our diverse and at-risk communities. Early last year, at the start of the pandemic, we provided our employees with personal protective equipment, retrofitted our sites with plexiglass and added enhanced daily cleaning protective measures, we updated our housing units to accommodate physical distancing, and we invested in technology and telehealth services to support our delivery of services. We also offered resources and training to help our clients learn to use the new technological systems so that they could access the care and services needed.

Throughout the multiple challenges of the past year, we remained inspired by our supporters who continue to elevate the need for mental health services. Among them is the highly respected voice of ABC7 Eyewitness News' anchor, Ellen Leyva. Ellen received Pacific Clinics' first Champion of Mental Health award in 2018 and continues to be one of our strongest mental health advocates, always ready to lend a supportive hand. In this issue of Advances, Leyva details her experiences with mental health with honesty and compassion and why she continues to advocate and lift her voice to battle the stigma that remains around mental health.

In this issue, we also share:

- How Pacific Clinics utilizes the delivery of in-person services with telehealth in best supporting the needs of our clients' during the pandemic. To learn more on how we responded to COVID-19, we invite you to view our film, "Now More Than Ever: Pacific Clinics Responds to Crisis" at tinyurl.com/pcnowmorethanever
- Ways to explain race and injustice to children while embracing differences
- Tips for self-care and reducing children's stress while keeping them engaged at home
- How to support suicide prevention through caring contacts
- Stories about employees and donors who support Pacific Clinics' mission

A critical component in the addressing COVID-19, has been, and remains the work of our dedicated and caring employees. We are especially grateful at this time to our many supporters and to each of our employees who have helped to ensure that our services continued despite the fiscal and emotional challenges of the pandemic.

We hope this issue conveys to you a deeper understanding of our life-changing and life-saving work, as we provide the communities we serve with access to high-quality care and resources to meet behavioral health needs, find hope and achieve a better quality of life.

Stay safe and be well.

Sincerely,



James J. Balla, MBA
Chief Executive Officer



WHAT ARE CARING CONTACTS?

A Card in the Mail Can Show You Care

During the pandemic, many felt isolated and lonely. Others have felt the opposite with homes that are cramped with people, competing for space or internet bandwidth and have caused some of us to momentarily forget to check on those who may be feeling alone. An act of kindness like writing a note can save a life.

A Caring Contact is a written note or card expressing care. Mental health therapists use these cards as adjunct treatment for those who have increased risks related to mental illness. These cards are intended to help individuals feel a sense of connectedness and increase positive engagement.

Over the past year, the feeling of depression and anxiety has increased among youth and adults. The symptoms of these disorders can include feeling restless, easily fatigued, having difficulty concentrating, being irritable and feeling worried. A Caring Contact can help cheer someone up and offer support when they need it the most.

In the 1970s, Stanford University conducted a study that followed more than 800 people after they were discharged from the hospital for suicidal ideation or depression. One group of individuals received handwritten letters from a health-care provider, while the other group received no letters. Those receiving letters showed lower rates of suicide over the five-year period.

"Caring Contacts are incredibly effective in promoting a feeling of social connection especially during this time of social isolation. This simple intervention has been proven over the past 45 years as an effective tool to decrease suicidality," says Audrey Read Brown, clinical director. "Clients have expressed how much they have appreciated this added outreach of care during this challenging time." For those who have attempted suicide or are considering it, Read Brown states that they often cannot identify one person who cares about them. A handwritten note can counteract this feeling. A client recently expressed gratitude to Read Brown for sending them a Caring Contact. "It meant so much to me and I'm reminded

that I'm not alone and that someone is thinking of me," the client shared. They went on to say that they carry the card in their purse as a reminder that they matter to someone.

Keep these tips in mind when writing a Caring Contact:

- Let the recipient know that they are important to you. When someone's experiencing depression, they may feel the exact opposite.
- Don't worry about finding the perfect words to write. Instead focus on authenticity, sincerity and compassion.
- Consider drawing a picture or using stationery that is memorable. Our therapists use special cards that include images of hope and are designed by clients.

Feelings of hopelessness or being trapped and the emotional pain of losing loved ones are just a few signs that someone may be thinking of taking their own life. Every 28 seconds someone attempts suicide. Suicide is the third leading cause of death among children ages 10-14 and the second leading cause of death for those ages 15-34.

If you suspect that someone is suicidal, the first step is to reach out and ask. Ask if they are experiencing suicidal thoughts. This may be difficult, but by asking the question and listening to the response you are starting an open and honest dialogue and creating a safe environment for them to share their feelings. Let them know that you care about them and encourage them to seek treatment from a qualified therapist or doctor.

*If you feel like you are having thoughts of suicide or know someone who might be in crisis, call the **National Suicide Prevention Lifeline 24 hours seven days a week at 800-273-8255.***

TELEHEALTH

The Future of Service Delivery

During a typical counseling session, a small, natural gesture can play a crucial role in establishing a safe and healing space, says Dr. Valeria Romero, a licensed clinical psychologist and the director for psychology training at Pacific Clinics. “The simple act of handing someone who is crying a tissue box – it feels useful and helpful.”

Throughout the pandemic, these simple acts of direct face-to-face contact have been less frequent and sometimes replaced with screens. This has required a new level of creativity to strengthen the connection between our therapists and clients, Dr. Romero says. For a teenager coping with depression, a shared poem, which during an in-person session would get passed back and forth, might get created over a series of emails as a session progresses. For preschool-aged children, letting them choose the virtual background on the screen behind their clinician can make a world of difference. “When you leave that decision up to the kids, it helps them to be more engaged in the session,” Dr. Romero adds. “It says, ‘I’m not there in person with you but I’m still here *with* you.’”

Previously, Pacific Clinics piloted and grew telehealth sessions for psychiatric services, growing the program from 6 to 11 sites. When the pandemic shut some businesses down and forced work to move online, Pacific Clinics was prepared for the sudden, seismic shift in how it supported clients and met their diverse needs. “We had the equipment,” Romero says. “We had laptops. We had cellphones. We were not in a scramble for that. I am very grateful to Pacific Clinics for making it a priority that we had the equipment we needed even before all of this.”

During the first months of moving to telehealth services, Pacific Clinics increased the number of sessions provided, averaging more than 9,000 per week.

These increases offer a glimpse into some of telehealth’s many benefits. “With telehealth, clients are given the opportunity to engage and participate in treatment even if they face any challenges, such as transportation difficulties, phobias or fears of being around people,” says Erlinda Uribe, licensed psychiatric technician.

Pacific Clinics’ move to telehealth services mirrors the broader mental health field. According to a June survey by the American Psychiatric Association, prior to the coronavirus outbreak, 64% of respondents had never seen clients via telehealth. Two months later, 85% were seeing at least three-quarters of their clients virtually, and far more clients were keeping appointments than when they were having just in-person sessions.



64%

of respondents had never seen clients via telehealth prior to the pandemic.



85%

of respondents were seeing at least three-quarters of their clients virtually, during the pandemic.

Providing telehealth services is not free of challenges. While telehealth can increase accessibility for some, for those without a computer, a smartphone or reliable internet, access can be a significant challenge. And technological difficulties can disrupt a session, Dr. Romero says. “Using a tiny screen on a cellphone for telehealth services can be difficult.”

For all the benefits of taking sessions into clients’ homes, for some, the safety and security of being at a Pacific Clinics location were critical to their progress and to the success of their treatment. Clients who live with family, or in smaller spaces with multiple people, may not be able to have a private conversation, Romero notes.

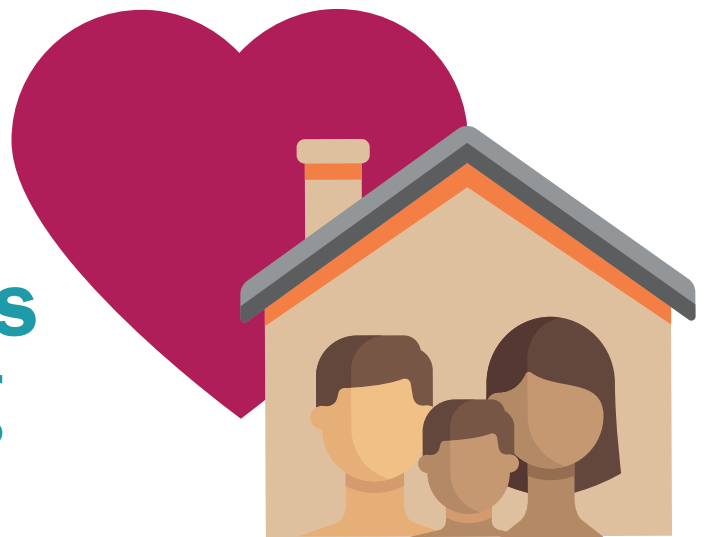
Simply by being new, telehealth also presents challenges for therapists and clinicians. Social, physical and visual cues that can help direct a session come across differently over video or just by phone, Uribe says. “Certain clients may have a better connection in-person versus on a Zoom call or telephone, which can cause regression and cause them to feel disconnected with their therapist.”

Both Uribe and Dr. Romero expect telehealth to continue to play a central role in mental health services long after the pandemic has receded.

“I don’t see it going away,” Dr. Romero says. “I think we were headed in this direction prior to the pandemic. COVID-19 accelerated the process. I think we’ll see a hybrid in order to meet client needs – if you like in-person you can get that, if you like telehealth you can have that too.” ■

Convenience *without* compromise.

Now offering **Pacific Clinics Telehealth Services** for families staying safe at home



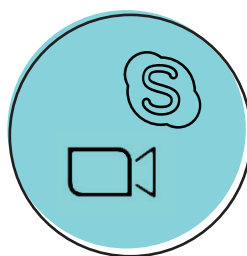
We're here for you. Wherever you are. Our expanded telehealth services are equipped to support you and your family's needs during this difficult time. Book online or call for your telehealth appointment.

Services available in Spanish and other languages.

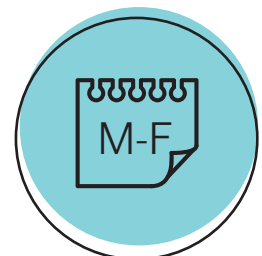
HOW IT WORKS



**Computer or
smartphone
with internet access**



**Partner Apps:
Teams, Zoom
and Lifesize**



**Sessions available
Monday through
Friday**

Staff Spotlight

**Victoria Onwualu, MBA, LCSW,
Divisional Director**



Victoria Onwualu, MBA, LCSW is divisional director of our Portals sites in the mid-Wilshire neighborhood of Los Angeles. Born into a large family in the country of Nigeria, her upbringing played a major role in her career path and everyday life. She recalls fond memories of when she and the children in her family would go to the village and help others who were less fortunate. They gave them food and helped with their educational goals.

After moving to the United States and earning two master's degrees in business administration and social work, she continued working with children, particularly those with behavioral issues.

Focusing on quality services, employees like Victoria make the agency what it is today. She has made it her life's mission to help others thrive - employees and clients alike.

What's the favorite part of your job?

With 18 years under my belt with Pacific Clinics, my employees keep me coming back. For the most part, we've been together since 2002. When you have a great team whom you trust and they're invested, that's what makes it easy for me to do my job. We all have the same goal: seeing a client do better, having a client go from living on the street to living in their own home, or managing their own life.

Share the most impactful client that you worked with. What was their journey like and why did it impact you?

We were able to help a client find permanent housing, as well as support him emotionally. He has now been in his own home for the last 15 years. He has been with the program for such a long time that he has had a profound impact on our team. When his father passed away, some of our employees attended the funeral and sent flowers as a way to show support. He told me, "I'm not going to forget what you all did for me." In the day-to-day, we do whatever it takes to help those we serve. But when the clients thank you or call and ask if you can help their parents or their friend, it's such a fulfilling feeling to truly know that we have made a positive difference.

"We all have the same goal: seeing a client do better, having a client go from living on the street to living in their own home, or managing their own life."

– Victoria Onwualu

Share your most rewarding accomplishment at work.

Being at Pacific Clinics for nearly two decades has been rewarding. A little after I started at the agency, I helped to implement the Assertive Community Treatment (ACT) program. This program is a team-based treatment model that provides multidisciplinary, flexible treatment and support to clients around the clock.

How do you practice self-care?

After a long day, I enjoy cooking and evening walks. Also, I prioritize sleep as a way to promote mental health. It is proven that sleep is closely connected to mental and emotional health. So I try to maintain a consistent sleep schedule, take a long evening walk, and put away my electronic devices before bedtime.

How has the pandemic changed your work?

COVID-19 has made us more nimble in meeting client needs, whether in person or remote. At Pacific Clinics, I have seen how the health crisis has brought the team even closer together to seek innovation and identify solutions that uplift and serve our community. ■

Join our team. Visit
www.pacificclinics.org/careers-and-training/careers.

PACIFIC CLINICS RESPONDS TO PANDEMIC

Caring for Others Is What We Do



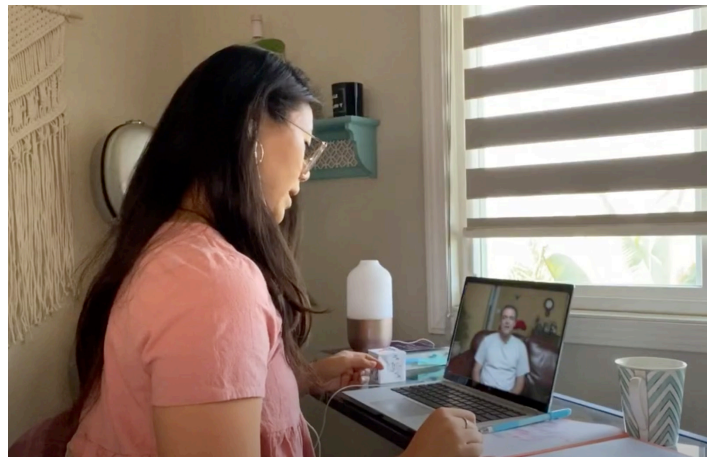
Our housing team ensured the residents at our residential facilities were supplied with meals and personal protective equipment (PPE).



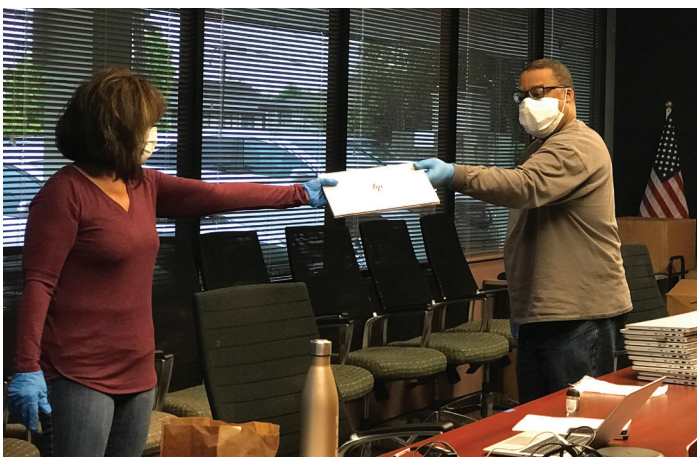
Donning personal protective equipment, our nurses are ready to see clients who need injectable medications.



Our early education program, Head Start/Early Head Start, put together care packages including diapers, food and educational toys for the families and children.



Our mental health therapists continue to provide services to clients remotely.



The agency acted quickly and secured laptops for employees to work safely from home.



All of our open clinics and headquarters were retrofitted with plexiglass to ensure client and staff safety.

ELLEN LEYVA

A Familiar Face and a Champion for Helping Others

Ellen Leyva has been a familiar face in Southern California for over 25 years. The award-winning journalist joined ABC7 in 1995 and now co-anchors the station's Eyewitness News at 4 pm and 6 pm. As colleagues and others who know her will quickly report, her familiar face does not hide anything. The Ellen you see on TV is the same person you will meet in person.

A steadfast supporter of Pacific Clinics, Ellen was named the inaugural Champion for Mental Health at the 2018 annual gala. Over several years, she volunteered her time and raised her strong, unwavering voice to underscore the importance of mental health services, especially for underserved communities.

It is a topic she knows firsthand. The Ellen who speaks about the struggles of those needing behavioral health support is the same person who has experienced some of those very same challenges.

Ellen's thoughtfulness and commitment to the community is evident. We were honored she accepted the invitation to be interviewed by Pacific Clinics' VP of Public Affairs and Advocacy Myeisha Peguero Gamiño. Here's what the Mental Health Champion had to say.

Tell us about your upbringing. What was your childhood like?

My younger sister, Cindy, and I were raised in a lower-middle class family in Tucson, Arizona. My mother was born and raised in Mexico and my father was from Oklahoma. When I was about 3, my mother's son, Ricardo, came to live with us. With his arrival, our lives were forever changed and it would begin many challenging years of living with a man with severe schizophrenia. At the time, Cindy and I were unaware how living with Ricardo would shape who we would become and the challenges we would face. My parents did the best they could. However, it wouldn't be until years later that I learned how living in a stressful home could affect my emotional growth. But kids are resilient and Cindy and I made the best of it.

What were you like as a young girl and how did your upbringing influence who you are today?

I believe my upbringing made me a very adaptable person who can fit into just about any situation. Living with a sibling with schizophrenia, a mother with depression and a distant father, not knowing what to expect day to day became normal. But through this experience, I learned to anticipate others' actions. Early on, I adopted being a people pleaser, very much shaped by trying to lessen the household stress and ease my mother's anxiety. I was very much my mother's

emotional caregiver. It wouldn't be until my own children were born that I began to understand more clearly that both of my parents were managing the best they could with challenging circumstances. They loved us very much, were always there for us when we needed them and were exceptional grandparents to my two daughters. It's sad that they couldn't afford or even consider therapy or medical intervention. That just was not a priority then.

“While I still have moments of feeling sadness and doubt, I have come to accept myself the way I am. I have flaws, but I no longer need to mask them.”

– Ellen Leyva

How did Ricardo's mental illness impact you and your advocacy of mental health?

Ricardo's schizophrenia was severe and my mother tried her best to find resources for him. She even got a second job so we could afford his medication, which he often decided not to take. At a young age, I learned to be self-reliant so that my mom could spend more time with him. While Ricardo has since passed, I sometimes think what could have been possible for him had we known about a resource like Pacific Clinics.

Self-care has been a matter of importance during the pandemic. What do you do to practice self-care?

Self-care is critical! I watched my mother go through her life sacrificing her own self-care to take care of everyone else. For me, I have to consciously remind myself that I deserve to have a break at times because it is so easy to forget to take care of ourselves. There's a Zen teaching that I am reminded of: “If you don't have time to meditate for an hour every day, you should meditate for two hours.” So, I take my vacation time to decompress from work and the all-consuming news business. I try to exercise to relieve stress - and work off the sweets! I have taken meditation courses and love how I feel when I do it. Part of my self-care is carving out quiet alone time. Some people get their energy from being out and socializing. I have to recharge my battery in solitude. My youngest daughter, Audrey, is like me in that way; Emma, on the other hand is very social. I am working to become better at self-care.

What do you wish people knew more about mental health?

Mental health care is so important and we need to end the stigma attached to mental illness.

It is just as important as physical health. If someone needs medication for their mental illness, it should be as accepted and natural as taking blood pressure medication. I hope that people will view mental health as a priority to living a content and full life.

When I was 18, I suffered from an eating disorder. I was bulimic and later found an expert who treated me and I recovered. Also, during various times of my life, I experienced depression and sought treatment. I was fortunate to be able to afford an incredible therapist in my 40s. I spent time with him each week and came out of it proud of the work I did to understand myself. I learned that my childhood left me with some feelings of unworthiness, lack of confidence and lack of self-awareness. My therapist would joke and say that I was “amazingly normal,” which would always make me laugh. While I still have moments of feeling sadness and doubt, I have come to accept myself the way I am. I have flaws, but I no longer need to mask them. It’s liberating to know you’re doing the best you can, even if it’s not perfect.

Pacific Clinics is doing a wonderful job of raising awareness and acceptance.

You were named Pacific Clinics’ inaugural Champion of Mental Health. What does that mean to you and why do you feel it is important to give back?

Mental health services should not just be for the wealthy and Pacific Clinics has been a godsend for countless families and individuals who would not be able to afford services, just like my mother.

Being recognized by an organization that is making a positive difference was an honor. The event itself was even more special because my boss, President and General Manager Cheryl Fair, chaired the event, and many of our leaders and my colleagues at ABC7 also attended.

Standing on stage during the celebration was surreal. It was great to be honored! However, I feel like I am the messenger and doing what I am called to do: supporting others. I hope that by volunteering and sharing my story, others will feel hopeful and know that there is no shame in seeking help. ■



Ellen with her parents, Thomas and Emma



With daughters, Emma and Audrey



The ABC7 Eyewitness News family



Being honored by CEO Jim Balla and board member Zaven Kazazian

If you or someone you know is suffering from an eating disorder, contact the **National Eating Disorder Association's** Helpline Monday - Thursday from 11am to 9pm ET, and Friday from 11am to 5pm ET. You can also chat with their Helpline here: www.nationaleatingdisorders.org/help-support/contact-helpline

ACKNOWLEDGING DIFFERENCES

Talking to Children About Race and Racism



Vikki Charles, LMFT
Clinical Team Supervisor

Vikki has been with Pacific Clinics for 14 years. As a clinical team supervisor, she is responsible for

overseeing mental health therapists, case managers and other clinical employees while ensuring staff provides high-quality and culturally appropriate mental health services, including psycho-diagnostic assessment, group and family therapy. Prior to Pacific Clinics, she worked at a human services agency providing counseling and parent training for families with developmentally disabled children and teens. Vikki received both her bachelor's and master's degrees from Pacific Oaks College in Pasadena, California.

Discussing race and our differences in engaging and relatable ways can help children grow to be accepting and to acknowledge and stand up to racial bias. But where do we begin? Clinical Team Supervisor Vikki Charles, LMFT offers insights on how to start these conversations and where to find resources to continue having open dialogue with children as they grow up.

"The first step in talking to children about racism is to talk about race itself. Let kids know that there is nothing wrong with observing physical characteristics and differences. Emphasize that being different is not weird or bad."

When talking about people's differences, it is important to not make negative judgments. For example, if someone's skin tone, hair or clothing is different, describe the style accurately so they know the correct term – like an afro or sari. Highlighting differences in a positive way helps children develop a positive identity and it helps them think about the world as a diverse place.

Additionally, discussing the United States' history involving slavery, the Civil Rights Movement and Japanese internment camps, can help them understand why it is important to respect people's differences and why certain words or statements are hurtful.

Not only is history a great way to explain race and racism but using tools like books and movies help kids engage in the conversation and can visually portray concepts. Share how

they can make change by being kind to all people of all backgrounds, as well as listening to and understanding the experiences or feelings of others.

"Keep in mind children's developmental level and ask questions to understand what they are currently thinking, how they are feeling, and what they want to know. Take their lead. If they ask follow-up questions, they are showing you they are ready for more."

As young as six months of age, children are noticing skin color and by the time they are between the ages of two and four, they are internalizing bias. Meaning they begin to believe the stereotypes and misinformation they hear about themselves.

These types of conversations should be ongoing throughout their development. It begins the groundwork for your child to accept and respect everyone's differences and know that they can come to you with questions. As children mature, the answers to questions will become more complex. These are moments to learn what your child understands or is struggling to understand. Also, remember that it is OK to not know all the answers.

PRESCHOOLERS

Children may notice and point out differences in the people they see. If your child asks about someone's skin tone, you might say, "Isn't it wonderful that we are all so different!" You can even hold your arm against theirs to show the differences in skin tones in your family.

GRADE SCHOOL

This is the age that is important to have open talks with your child about race, diversity and racism. Discussing these topics will help your child see you as a trusted source of information on the topic, and know he or she can come to you with any questions. Point out stereotypes and racial bias in media and books, such as villains or "bad guys" in movies. It is OK to talk about more serious topics by making it easier for them to understand. For example, comparing racism to a game of baseball where the team captain is only picking players based on skin color or cultural clothing.

“Highlighting differences in a positive way helps children develop a positive identity and it helps them think about the world as a diverse place.”

– Vikki Charles

TEENAGERS

Because of social media and other generational differences, teens can be exposed to more than their parents were at the same age. They may hear, and even use, derogatory words they do not fully understand. Parents should remember that kids, including teenagers, can only take in a certain amount of information at a time. Be direct and say their words are not acceptable and ask where they heard it or what they think it means. It is OK if they become uncomfortable.

Since teens often judge others by their appearance or physical characteristics, it is important to teach them when certain words are disrespectful. Teaching the correct terms like African American or Asian helps teens talk about others respectfully.

It is up to us to teach kids to stand up for what is right. Let them know they should speak up for people who are being mistreated and to challenge the behavior, not the person.

“It is important that children be reassured of their essential worth and be exposed to people who are not like them so they can appreciate the diversity of the world. It is important to share your belief in a brighter future.”

Additional Resources for Parents to Address Race and Racism:

- “A People’s History of the United States” by Howard Zinn
- “The Hate U Give by Angie Thomas” – Read the book or watch the film together
- “Ways to Make Sunshine” by Renée Watson
- “Stamped: Racism, Antiracism, and You” by Jason Reynolds and Ibram X. Kendi
- “Let’s Talk About Race” by Julius Lester and Karen Barbour
- “So You Want to Talk About Race” by Ijeoma Oluo
- “Teaching Tolerance. How White Parents Should Talk to Their Young Kids About Race” by Melinda Wenner Moyer ■



*Photo by: Emily Blackwell, Head Start,
Family Child Care Specialist*

YOU MAKE ALL THE DIFFERENCE!

Your tax-deductible gifts help provide mental health treatment and supportive services to more than 22,300 low-income individuals and families and those experiencing homelessness in Southern California every year. Our goal is to grow our services to help even more people in need.

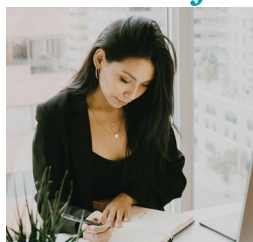
Matching Gifts



When you make a donation, your gift can be matched dollar for dollar by your employer. Many employers will match charitable contributions or

volunteer hours made by their employees, retirees and/or employees' spouses. Visit www.pacificclinics.org/giving to find out if your company has a matching gift program.

Planned Gifts



Planned gifts allow you to manage your affairs, save taxes and benefit your heirs while supporting Pacific Clinics. Making a bequest to Pacific Clinics is a simple

way to ensure we are able to serve future generations. You can name Pacific Clinics as a beneficiary of your will, trust, retirement plan, life insurance policy, financial account, or fund a charitable gift annuity that may provide you with tax benefits. Learn more by contacting our Development Department at 626-254-5057 or development@pacificclinics.org.

Gifts of Stock



When you gift stock that you have owned longer than one year, you are entitled to an income tax deduction for the full value of the asset, not just the amount you paid for it.

All capital gains that would be due on the sale are avoided. You can use the profits from your investment to reduce the amount of income tax you might owe. This is an excellent vehicle for stock that has substantially appreciated in value. Learn more at www.pacificclinics.org/giving.



HOW OUR COMMUNITY IS HELPING

Crisis Relief Fund

We are pleased to announce that Pacific Clinics' COVID-19 Crisis Relief Fund – created to support our agency during the coronavirus pandemic – exceeded our \$50,000 goal and resulted in donations exceeding \$237,000! We could not have accomplished this without the support of our loyal donors, partners and community members. We are incredibly grateful for their generosity to support our efforts to ease the burden on children, youth and families during this unprecedented time.

Champions of Mental Health

The coronavirus pandemic has forced all of us to acclimate to a different way of life, and Pacific Clinics has not been immune to the challenges presented by COVID-19. Last year's annual Champions of Mental Health celebration was cancelled, but was anticipated to raise more than \$400,000 to support our agency's core programs and client support services. We are pleased to share that our corporate and philanthropic sponsors honored their financial commitment for the cancelled event, helping us raise \$220,000 and assisting Pacific Clinics in meeting its budgeted charitable income goal for the fiscal year.

Housing Renovation in Los Angeles

Pacific Clinics recently completed the renovation of Rampart House, a transitional housing facility that offers a welcoming environment for intensive support services to 28 men experiencing homelessness and living with mental illness who receive intensive support services. Built in 1937, the 5,786-square-foot home was renovated to include energy-efficient windows, new kitchen and restroom fixtures, improved accessibility with a wheelchair lift and a fresh coat of paint. The near \$500,000 renovation project was funded through generous grants provided by the S. Mark Taper Foundation, The Ahmanson Foundation and The Ralph M. Parsons Foundation.

DONOR SPOTLIGHT

Pacific Clinics is honored to recognize the remarkable generosity of the donors who have supported our mission.

Philanthropic partners are the foundation of our work, creating a legacy of support and empowering our highly trained and expert team members to deliver quality mental health and substance use disorder services by building on people's strengths.

Your contributions allow us to provide life-changing services to the thousands of clients we serve each and every day.

Our major funders list recognizes donors who made one-time gifts of \$5,000 or more as of January 1, 2020. Thank you for your extraordinary investment and dedication to Pacific Clinics.

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Blue Shield of California
Gregory Bowman
Community Foundation of the Verdugos
Richard M. Dominguez
East West Bank
Epic Insurance Brokers
Everychild Foundation
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Meet Michele Hamlett

Michele Hamlett has been named Chair of Pacific Clinics' Resource Development Committee. As the Chair, Michele serves as the volunteer leader of the Committee working to implement a comprehensive development strategy in collaboration with the vice president of advancement and the CEO, while also encouraging committee members to take an active role in fundraising initiatives. The Resource Development Committee acts in an advisory capacity and assists in the

planning and organizing of fundraising efforts and related activities, while also helping to promote a culture of philanthropy throughout the agency.

Michele has been a Pacific Clinics Board Member since 2019 and has served as a member at large of the Resource Development Committee since November 2019.

Michele is the chief operating officer at Retirement Choices of California. She has a demonstrated history of working in the financial services industry and is highly skilled in the areas of portfolio management, risk management, banking, business development and strategic planning. Michele has served in a variety of managerial roles for Goldman Sachs, UBS Wealth Management, Wedbush Morgan Securities and JPMorgan Chase.

CENTER AT SIERRA HEALTH FOUNDATION TO FUND PACIFIC CLINICS' TELEHEALTH PLATFORM TO IMPROVE MENTAL HEALTH ACCESS

The Center at Sierra Health Foundation funded the launch of a new virtual telehealth platform in the amount of \$200,000. The platform, MeU Care (MeU), is an all-in-one telehealth and communication tool that can be easily accessed via mobile device or computer and will improve mental health outcomes by helping clients to remain connected in between visits.

The platform allows for virtual screenings, ongoing counseling and therapy sessions for clients facing multiple physical and behavioral health challenges, successfully addressing issues of both quarantine and care. Ultimately, the platform is designed to improve Pacific Clinics' clinical practice, ensure HIPAA compliance, and operate as a long-term telehealth service delivery system.

IS MY CHILD STRESSED?

Self-care Tips to Live a Balanced Life

The pandemic has not only been hard on adults, but also on young children. Pre-COVID, children were able to attend school, socialize with friends and attend birthday parties. With current restrictions and virtual learning, children are having difficulty coping with the new normal.

Young children who are not able to use words to communicate can get frustrated, and so can caregivers when they are unable to understand children's needs. So how can you tell if your child is stressed or needs additional support? Typically, if children are upset or stressed it shows up in their behavior. Signs a child is stressed include throwing tantrums, bathroom accidents, climbing furniture, biting and hitting, or refusing to eat.

The following self-care tools will help your child decompress and have balance:

- **Identify emotions.** Helping children to identify emotions is imperative. If parents can emulate those feelings, this will help children better understand feelings. If they see parents are stressed or that family members seem anxious, they will begin to imitate those feelings. Program Director Chris Leucht says, "Communicating what is stressing you at an age-appropriate level for kids is helpful to both the children and parents. Helping them understand why we wear masks and why we're staying at home will give them better comprehension of what is going on in today's world and how they feel about it."
- **Create a routine.** Parents and caregivers may struggle not knowing what to expect each week. For children, they do not know what the next hour looks like. At school they had structure, but having structure at home may prove difficult. Creating a routine can help establish organization and structure that the child may be craving. Set a time to wake up, eat, play and go to bed.
- **Enjoy being outside.** Between working from home and virtual learning, it can be difficult to balance life. However, during breaks and when feasible, find time to go outside. While there are many safety restrictions in place, going to the park or taking a walk in the neighborhood can be a mood booster. Kids need that time to run and jump around to exert their extra energy.
- **Practice yoga.** Practicing yoga movements and breath work not only can help children be mindful, they are activities that parents and caregivers can benefit from and join. If a child is throwing a tantrum or being disruptive, doing deep breathing exercises can help calm them. One way to make this more fun is to get a stuffed animal and place it on your child's stomach. Have them focus on the toy moving up and down as they practice breathing.
- **Build a sensory toolkit.** A sensory tool kit is a portable box or bag of sensory toys or items that help calm or stimulate an individual's nervous system. Research has proven that sensory toolkits can help increase brain activity and emotional response. When considering items to place in your toolkit, make sure each item reflects the five senses – taste, smell, touch, hear and sight. Some examples can be flowers to smell, a fuzzy blanket for touch, or a favorite snack to taste.

SELF-CARE CUBE INSTRUCTIONS

To support your mental health, it is imperative to practice self-care at all times, but particularly during trying times. Self-care is defined as the practice of taking an active role in protecting one's own well-being and happiness, particularly during periods of stress.

Mental Health Therapists Brooke Dicken, MSW and Angela Wu, AMFT, APCC teach us an activity that you can do for yourself in order to engage in self-care daily.

Use each side of this cube to develop six different healthy activities to prioritize your health each day.

Materials Needed:

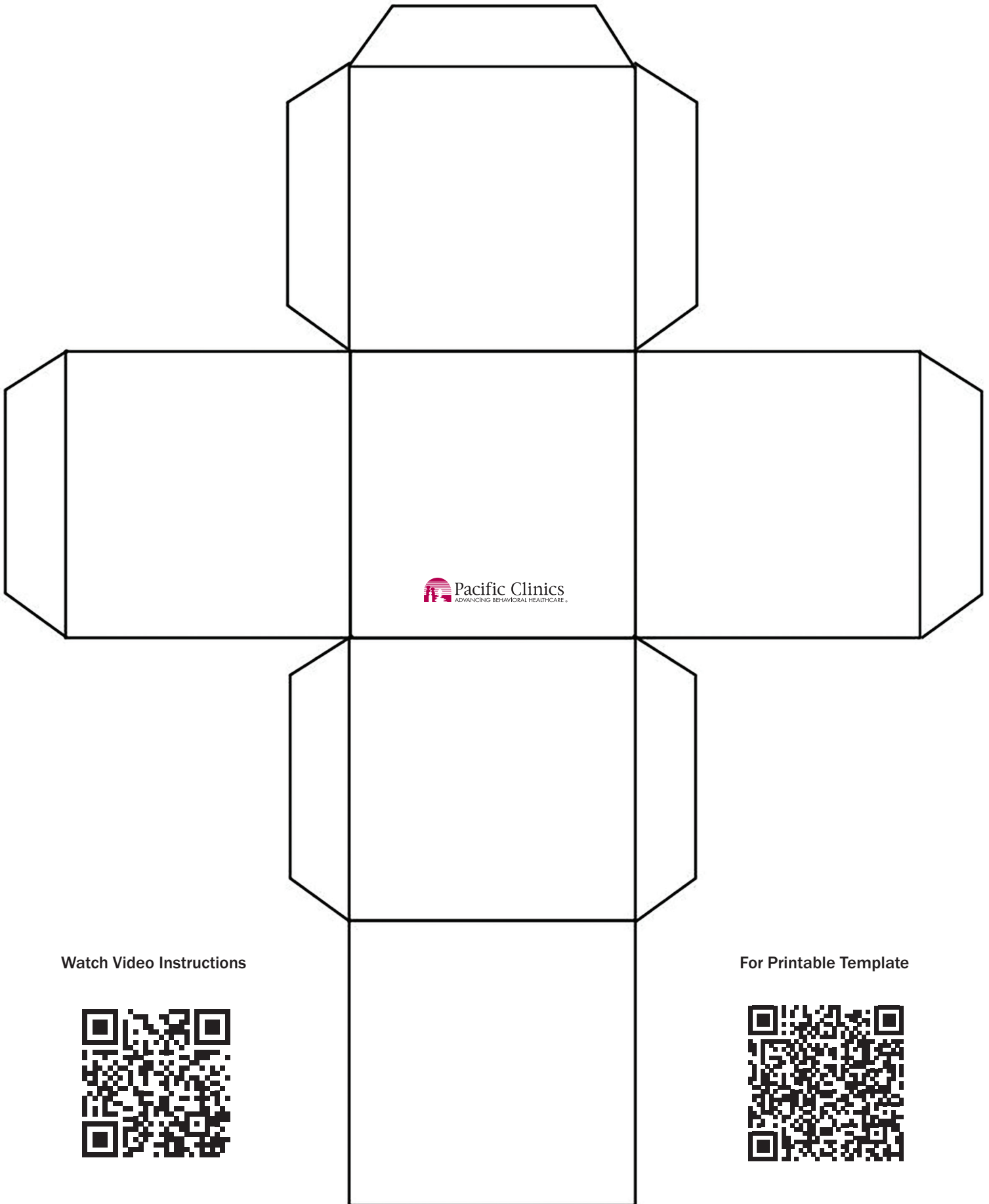
- Cube template
- Scissors
- Markers
- Tape

Instructions:

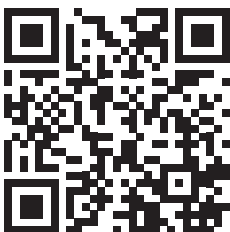
- Before you start, write down what you like to do on a notepad. Once you have an idea of what you want to include, draw images to go with each self-care item on the cube. Don't forget to have fun and be creative.
- Take scissors and cut it out. Do not cut off the flaps because you'll use them to put the cube together.
- When finished cutting, fold edges of flaps on the outer rim.
- When edges are folded, tape the inside of the flap and begin to connect the edges together to form the cube.

Remember: Be kind to yourself and be patient with yourself, because you're not alone in how you're feeling. Reach out to your support circle and take breaks.

Watch the video instructions at tinyurl.com/33m23fa5.



Watch Video Instructions




For Printable Template





Pacific Clinics
800 S. Santa Anita Ave.
Arcadia, CA 91006
626-254-5000
www.pacificclinics.org

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Save The Date

THURSDAY, MAY 20, 2021 | 5:30 PM | A VIRTUAL AFFAIR

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