



YOUTH CREATING CHANGE



Directing Change
Program & Film Contest



Selection of Directing Change Mental Health PSAs

(60-second films, updated June 2025)

Tag us when sharing films!

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2025



To My Younger Self

Los Alamitos High School, Orange County

This film tells the story of youth struggling with depression and the pressures of daily life who learns that there is hope.

([view/download](#))

Binded

Jurupa Hills High School, San Bernardino County

“Binded” examines the impact of transphobia and dysphoria on mental health, encouraging both self-acceptance and compassion for others.

([view/download](#))





Therapist

El Dorado High School, Orange County

In this film, a youth tries to serve as her own therapist. In the end, she realizes that she can't take care of herself alone and must reach out to others.

([view/download](#))

I'm Fine

Johansen High School, Stanislaus County

In "I'm Fine," a youth comes to understand that it's okay to reach out for help and that we all deserve to feel our best.

([view/download](#))



Work in Progress

Sierra Vista High School, Los Angeles County

This film addresses the fact that anxiety can manifest differently in different people and encourages those who are struggling to seek help.

([view/download](#))

You Are Not Alone

Sanger West High School, Fresno County

This film looks at mental health from the perspective of many different people, showing that even though we all face challenges, we aren't alone and there is help available.

([view/download](#))





Under Pressure

Heritage High School, Riverside County
This film depicts an anxiety attack while addressing some of the unique pressures faced by student athletes.

([view/download](#))

The Mask

Entrepreneur High School, San Bernardino County

In “The Mask,” a high-achieving youth realizes that perfectionism is taking a toll on her mental health and reaches out for help.

([view/download](#))



Distant

Pleasant Valley High School, Butte County
In this visually creative film, a youth discusses his mental health struggles and provides encouraging words to those trying to heal.

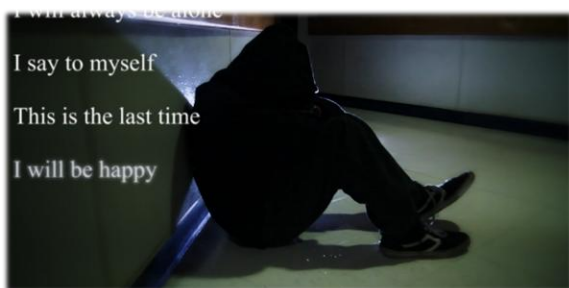
([view/download](#))

It's Okay to Get Help

Temple City High School, Los Angeles County
In this film, a youth talks about the impact of negative thoughts in his life and the importance of reaching out for help in difficult times.

([view/download](#))





Forward

Temecula Valley High School, Riverside County

“Forward” offers youth a powerful reminder that, even when things feel hopeless, help is still available and their mental health can improve.

([view/download](#))

Prioritize You

El Dorado High School, Orange County

This film reminds youth that everyone needs to take care of their mental health and that there are healthy coping mechanisms we can all work into our routines.

([view/download](#))



Don't Hold Back

Claremont High School, Tri-City (Los Angeles County)

“Don't Hold Back” follows a cheerleader who finds the courage to open up about her mental health with the support of her friends.

([view/download](#))

Breaking Free

Eleanor Roosevelt High School, Riverside County

In this film, a struggling youth begins his healing journey and starts attending therapy.

([view/download](#))



Opening Up

El Dorado High School, Orange County

This film shows a youth isolating himself due to his mental health challenges until a friend reminds him that he is not alone.

([view/download](#))

2024



Beyond the Surface

Los Alamitos High School, Orange County

"Beyond the Surface" takes a creative approach to telling the story of someone experiencing a mental health challenge and shares the message that no matter the circumstance you are going through regarding mental health, there is help available.

[\(view/download\)](#)

Emergence

Ramona High School, Riverside County

"Emergence" is a short film about breaking free from depression and learning to live again. The story follows a girl who is dealing with depression and shares her story in the hopes that it will help reduce the stigma around mental health.

[\(view/download\)](#)



Unfold Hope

Dougherty Valley High School,

Contra Costa County

Using crumpled paper as a metaphor for mental health struggles, this film reassures youth that they aren't alone and don't need to hide what they are going through.

[\(view/download\)](#)

Fortress

Johansen High School, Stanislaus County

"Fortress" centers on a group of young men and encourages youth to reach out to friends who may be isolating or need support.

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Distraction

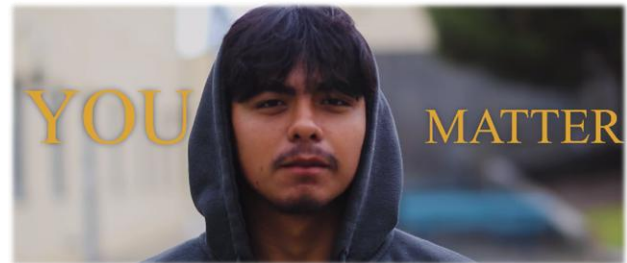
Pleasant Valley High School, Butte County
This film is about a girl that attempts to distract herself from the pain she's experiencing. However, even though it's uncomfortable, she realizes that being honest with herself and reaching out to supportive friends is the best way to begin healing.

[\(view/download\)](#)

You Matter

Martin Luther King High School,
Riverside County
"You Matter" gives insight into what people should do if they are feeling depressed and empowers the audience by telling them that they matter.

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Problem? Solution

Highland Park High School,
Los Angeles County
"Problem? Solution" is a uniquely comedic film, which addresses the fact that many use humor to deflect when discussing topics that may make them uncomfortable. In doing so, the film helps reassure youth that it's OK to talk about mental health and seek support.

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Don't Ignore the Signs

Ramon C. Cortines VAPA, Los Angeles County
The filmmakers behind "Don't Ignore the Signs" aimed to provide a realist portrayal from the perspective of high school students and learned that it is critically important not to ignore or be scared to talk about mental health.

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The Green Ribbon

Canyon High School, Orange County
Mental health comes in many colors, each with a different meaning and a different story. Told through the metaphor of mental health's symbolic green ribbon, this entry inspires young adults to reach out, break the stigma, and come together to face the challenges life throws at us.

([view/download](#))

Shift in Perspective

Pleasant Valley High School, Butte County
This visually striking film emphasizes the bravery it takes to shift one's perspective regarding depression, as well as the strength it takes to reach out for help.

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You are Seen

Redding School of the Arts, Shasta County
This film aims to validate people who experience anxiety and challenges stereotypes surrounding what the condition can look like.

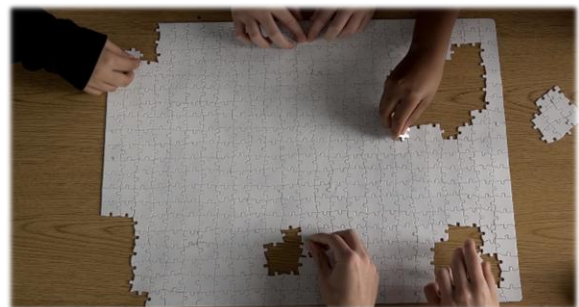
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Piecing it Together

Claremont High School,
Tri-City (Los Angeles County)

"Piecing it Together" centers on a teenage boy reflecting on his younger years (before he began struggling with mental health). The film uses puzzles as a metaphor, illustrating the complexities of mental health and the importance of support.

([view/download](#))





The Truth Behind the Smile

Upland High School, San Bernardino County
This film highlights the fact that there may not be just one thing that causes someone to experience symptoms of anxiety or depression; just like people, these conditions are complex, but that doesn't mean they define those living with them.

[\(view/download\)](#)

Find Your Power

Fremont Academy of Engineering and Design,
Tri-City (Los Angeles County)

This creative film puts a fresh spin on the superhero genre and inspires those who've been bullied to find their inner strength so they can be a positive force in the lives of others.

[\(view/download\)](#)



2023

**How does expressing or
not expressing your
gender affect your
mental health?**

A Genderqueer Perspective

Sage Creek High School, San Diego County
In this film, youth describe the way gender expression impacts their mental health, reminding viewers of the importance of allowing people to express their authentic selves without judgment.

[\(view/download\)](#)

I Hate

Eleanor Roosevelt High School,
Riverside County

This film encourages help-seeking and depicts the way depression and other mental health issues can make people feel like they are stuck in an endless loop.

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Invisible Ink

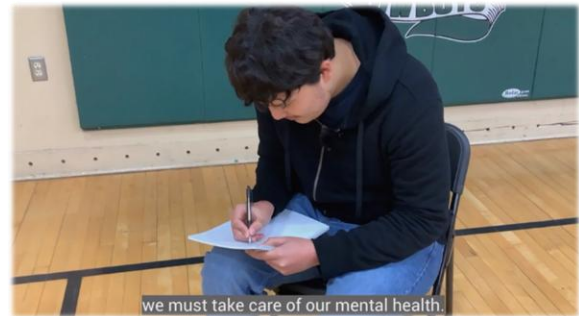
Encore High School, San Bernardino County
This film combines live action and animation, discussing the ways those suffering from mental health issues often hide their pain from others.

([view/download](#))

Nosotros/ We

Riverdale High School NAMI Club, Fresno County
In this Spanish-language film, students share their perspective on importance of youth mental health.

([view/download](#))



Overthinking

Lloyde High School, Los Angeles County
This animated film explores the experience of living with anxiety and encourages those suffering from the disorder to reach out and take small steps where they can.

([view/download](#))

The Pressure Cooker

Rio Americano High School, Sacramento County
Using a pressure cooker as a metaphor, this film focuses on the pressures youth can feel and the importance of helping them when they are stressed.

([view/download](#))





Reconociendo los Sintomas de Trastornos Mentales en el Cuerpo

UCR Coachella Valley Free Clinic, Riverside County

In this Spanish-language film, youth personify different organs of the body, illustrating the impact mental health can have on physical health.

[\(view/download\)](#)

The Secret of ADHD

Acalanes High School, Contra Costa County

A youth describes the experience of living with ADHD, the difficulty she faced before getting a diagnosis, and the ways in which neurodivergence can even be viewed as a blessing in disguise.

[\(view/download\)](#)



Sensory Overload

University High School, Orange County

This film combines animation and live action to educate viewers on sensory processing disorder and provide hope to other youth you might be suffering.

[\(view/download\)](#)

Turning the Page

Pleasant Valley High School, Butte County

A youth describes her mental health struggles and shares how she found hope by reaching out to others and accepting help.

[\(view/download\)](#)



2022



Alone

El Dorado High School, Orange County

This spoken word, stop motion film describes the experience of a teenager living with depression and empowers youth to speak up about their mental health.

[\(view/download\)](#)

Be the Change

Southwest High School, Imperial County

In this film, a student struggling with her mental health is inspired to become a mental health advocate in her community.

[\(view/download\)](#)



Not an Adjective

Ramona High School, Riverside County

This film is about the misinformation around OCD and how therapy can provide helpful tools and coping skills.

[\(view/download\)](#)

Pulling Strings

San Bernardino County, Encore High School

This film creatively uses puppets to illustrate how to take the first step in reaching out for help.

[\(view/download\)](#)



2021



Another Light

Hilda Solis Learning Academy, Los Angeles County

This inspiring film focuses on two girls who reach out to people they trust (including a parent and a teacher) for the resources and support they need.

[\(view/download\)](#)

Bloom

Portola High School, Orange County

In this film, a garden represents a girl's mental health. In the beginning, she and her garden suffer, but with the help of her loved ones, they recover and grow.

[\(view/download\)](#)



Courage

Franklin High School, Sacramento County

When a girl feels nervous about reaching out, a friend texts her to check in on her wellbeing. This gives her the courage to talk openly and get support.

[\(view/download\)](#)

2020



Abbreviated Soliloquies

Ghetto Film School, Los Angeles County

This film features spoken word about a girl's diagnosis with ADHD and social anxiety. She talks about both good and difficult days, as well as how she finds hope.

[\(view/download\)](#)

The Beauty of Mental Health

Hillsdale High School, San Mateo County

This film is about using people-first language, speaking up about mental health, and reducing stigma.

([view/download](#))



Conflicting Currents

Upland High School, San Bernardino County

A boy who first refuses to accept help for his depression decides to reach out for help after sharing a resource with someone else who is struggling.

([view/download](#))

Hashiru

Warren High School, Los Angeles County

After a boy loses interest in his favorite activity (running), he notices changes in himself and decides to get help.

([view/download](#))



A Stroke of Hope

Irvington High School, Alameda County

A boy decides to accept help and finds hope in his connection with others, which brings color back into his life.

([view/download](#))

2019



I AM

Los Angeles High School, Los Angeles County
A girl is aware of the subtle changes in her friend and how they may be warning signs of suicide. She asks him about this directly and connects him to help.

([view/download](#))

Rainy Days

Pleasant Valley High School, Butte County
In this film, a boy sees that he is not the only one experiencing “rainy days” and finds a supportive group that understands him.

([view/download](#))



Speak Up

Claremont High School,
Tri-City (Los Angeles County)
This film is about the importance of taking mental health as seriously as physical health.

([view/download](#))

The Weight

Canyon High School, Orange County
A boy with depression normalizes his experience and encourages youth to lift “the weight” from their shoulders by getting help. He also recommends being aware of the signs of depression in others.

([view/download](#))



2018



Behind the Smile

Santee Education Complex, Los Angeles County

This film is about how to support a friend with depression by noticing changes in their behavior, being open minded, and listening. It also encourages conversations about mental illness to break down stigma.

([view/download](#))

Esperanza en Nuestra Corazon

Rancho Minerva Middle School, San Diego County

A girl looks back on how she felt when she started experiencing symptoms of mental illness. The film reminds youth that there is help, treatment, and support available.

([view/download](#))



A Fighting Chance

The School of Arts and Enterprise, Los Angeles County,

This film provides a window into a girl's mind as she fights the symptoms of mental illness. The film reminds youth that they are not alone, and that people are there to listen to and help them.

([view/download](#))



Hear the Music

Canyon High School, Orange County

A girl living with depression compares her depression to music and worries about how her family will react. When she decides to talk openly with them anyway, they stay by her side.

([view/download](#))





I Am Not Ashamed

Pleasant Valley High School, Butte County
A boy speaks openly about the symptoms of his mental illness and takes pride in his strength and his courage to seek help.
([view/download](#))

Scribbled

Encore High School, Riverside County
A boy with depression learns he's not the only one struggling and shares his story to make others feel less alone.
([view/download](#))



2017



Instinct

Canyon High School, Orange County
This film encourages youth to reach out to a friend experiencing a mental health challenge, and highlight the fact that people often wait years to get help (even though 70-90% of people report improved quality of life after treatment).
([view/download](#))

Rising Up

Franklin High School, Sacramento County

This animated film conveys a hopeful message about facing the challenges of mental illness with the help of friendship.

([view/download](#))



2016



The Full Story

Pleasant Valley High School, Butte County

This story of a young adult diagnosed with depression highlights the important message that a mental illness is just something a person is dealing with and that it does not define their character.

([view/download](#))

The Journey

Redwood High School, Marin County

This film takes viewers on a road trip, showing the metaphorical journey of one youth's experience in which he opens up to friends about his mental illness and receives support.

([view/download](#))



Naivete

Analy High School, Sonoma County

This clever film discusses societal stigmas associated with mental illness and why no one should be treated differently.

([view/download](#))

Off the Script

Pleasant Valley High School, Butte County
This metaphorical film reminds youth to not hide how they are feeling and to instead talk openly and honestly about their mental health.
([view/download](#))



Real Life Superhero

Redwood Voice, Del Norte County
This inspiring film teaches youth that anyone can be a superhero by supporting a friend experiencing a mental health challenge.
([view/download](#))

2015



This Is Me

Torrey Pines High School, San Diego County
This film tells a story about how life isn't always what it looks like on social media and how opening up to friends about mental health challenges can be uplifting.
([view/download](#))

2014



If We All Speak Loud Enough

Canyon High School, Orange County
When one friend begins showing warning signs for suicide, another notices and seeks the help of a school counselor.
([view/download](#))

2013



Circling Stigma

Novato High School, Marin County

In this creatively shot film, students in a support group discuss the stigma surrounding mental illness.

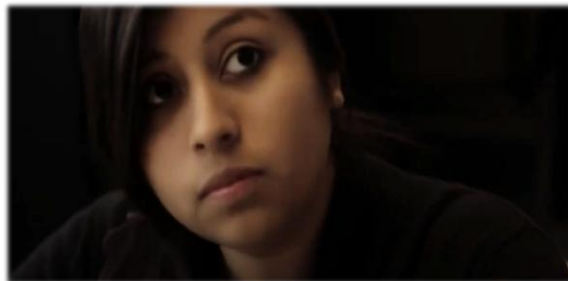
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Emily's Monster

California Virtual Academies, Los Angeles County

This film tells the story of a student diagnosed with schizophrenia who expresses her feelings by drawing monsters. When her teacher disapproves of her art, classmates show support and reassurance.

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More Than a Mental Illness

Montgomery High School, Sonoma County

This film reminds youth that they are not defined by their mental illness and encourages standing up for those experiencing a mental health challenge.

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