

# news galleryweek

September 21, 2022

## Children First special airs Sunday, features Behavioral Health Services

Omar Lopez, a social worker with Behavioral Health Services (BHS), meets with students at Kings River Union School throughout his day. Lopez often plays board games



with them or engages them in drawing. While the students are enjoying themselves, Lopez uses the time to check in with them about their struggles and successes in class or at home.

Lopez, along with BHS administrators Dr. Jennifer Newell and Mary Xavier, will be featured in a segment of ABC30's upcoming *Children First* special, "Let's Talk About Mental Health." The BHS team will discuss how two grants are increasing the amount of mental health services Tulare County students are receiving, and how another grant – through the California Center on Teaching Careers – is helping to prepare more men and women to be social workers.

The special will also feature segments on increased mental health services throughout the valley, what parents can do to help their kids de-stress, the importance of early mental health intervention, and the warning signs of suicidal behavior.

In 2018, the Mental Wellness Triage Grant (MWTG) was awarded to Tulare County Office of Education (TCOE) in partnership with the Tulare County Health & Human Services Agency (HHSA). The state-funded MWTG is currently providing mental health support to students in grades TK-12 at 24 school districts throughout Tulare County. Two years later, TCOE was awarded a Mental Health Student Services Act (MHSSA) grant in partnership with the Tulare County Department of Mental Health to expand upon the Triage Grant program. The four-year grant is being used to place Triage Social Workers at 16 additional school sites in districts across Tulare County, plus the Tulare County Juvenile Detention Facility.

Through the California Center on Teaching Careers, the Rural Access to Mental Health Professionals (RAMHP) program expands the capacity of Tulare County's high poverty, rural school districts to train and support school-based mental health providers. The program also recruits and trains Master of Social Work (MSW) candidates to be placed as interns in Tulare County schools.

To see "Let's Talk About Mental Health," tune in to ABC30 Sunday, September 25 at 5:00 p.m. or visit [abc30.com/ChildrenFirst](http://abc30.com/ChildrenFirst) after the special airs Sunday.

Photo above:

~ TCOE social worker Omar Lopez (right) meets with a student at Kings River Union School. Lopez is being filmed by ABC30 cameraman Reuben Guerra for a segment in the station's upcoming Children First special, "Let's Talk About Mental Health." The special will air Sunday, September 25 at 5:00 p.m.

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## Theatre Company workshops planned for October

This October, the Theatre Company is proud to offer three high-quality workshops to Tulare County students in grades 1-12. The single-day, multi-discipline workshops are available for vocal, dance, and acting. All workshops will be held at First Presbyterian Church of Exeter, located at 200 South E Street in Exeter.



The vocal workshop will be held on October 1 and led by vocal director Charlotte Garcia Da Rosa. It will include basic vocal technique instruction, tips on how to have a great vocal audition, and performance preparation coaching.

At the dance workshop on October 22, students will receive instruction in musical theatre dance styles from choreographer McKenna Friend-Hoffman. This instruction will include a technical warmup, traveling exercises, and center floor combinations.

Theatre Company Director Bethany Rader will lead the acting workshop on October 29. This workshop will include monologue work, scene study and partner work, improv work, character study, and acting audition preparation. Rader will also answer questions and have discussions on what it's like to prepare and attend a professional acting audition and go over best practices.

For each workshop, there are three levels based on experience. Prices are \$10 for level one, \$15 for level two, and \$20 for level three. To learn more or register for workshops, visit [www.tcoe.org/TheatreCo/Catalog/workshops](http://www.tcoe.org/TheatreCo/Catalog/workshops) or contact Bethany Rader at [bethany.rader@tcoe.org](mailto:bethany.rader@tcoe.org).

The Theatre Company will have workshops and masterclasses available in the spring as well. To stay updated on those and other Theatre Company offerings, sign up for the Theatre Company newsletter at [www.tcoe.org/TheatreCo/MailingList](http://www.tcoe.org/TheatreCo/MailingList).

Photo above:

*~ Each semester, the Theatre Company offers a variety of dance, vocal, and acting workshops for students of all ages and experience levels.*

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## Teachers invited to register their students' artwork for the annual Student Art Exhibition

TCOE's annual Student Art Exhibition will be held online again this year during California Arts in Education month, March 1-31, 2023. Open to students in grades PK-12, the annual exhibition showcases the county's gifted young artists who create two- and three-dimensional pieces utilizing a variety of mediums.



A panel of local artists will judge all entries submitted to the virtual exhibition. Pieces selected for a Best of Show award will receive a special designation within the exhibition.

Teachers interested in participating in the exhibition should preregister by November 1. All artwork is due to event coordinators by February 1.

For registration information, please visit [www.tcoe.org/StudentArt](http://www.tcoe.org/StudentArt). Teachers needing support on integrating the arts into their curriculum are encouraged to contact Kate Stover, Visual and Performing Arts curriculum specialist, at [kate.stover@tcoe.org](mailto:kate.stover@tcoe.org).

Photo above:

~ *Pointillism Girl* by Tyler Stout, Central Valley Christian High School

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## Elementary and middle school teachers invited to prepare students for annual Reading Revolution competition

Elementary and middle school teachers are invited to participate in the annual Reading Revolution event by encouraging their students to read selected books this fall that will be part of the competition held in May.

A preselected list of 12-14 books is now available at [www.tcoe.org/ReadingRevolution](http://www.tcoe.org/ReadingRevolution). Fourteen titles were selected for elementary school participants (grades 4-6); 12 titles for middle school participants (grades 7-8).



Reading Revolution is a fun and engaging competition designed to promote literacy and the joy of reading for students in grades 4-8. The goal of the event is for students to experience a variety of quality literature and nonfiction text while increasing reading comprehension and promoting collaboration and teamwork.

During the school year, teams of four students led by a school coach, read, discuss, and practice quizzing each other in preparation for the yearly competition held during the month of May.

During the competition, students answer questions in a variety of formats and with varying levels of difficulty. Students work together to test their knowledge of the books they have read in four exciting battles: “Stand & Deliver,” “Heads Together,” “Convincing Characters,” and “Full Circle.” An optional competition entitled “Cover That” encourages an individual team member or the entire team to reimagine and illustrate the cover for one of the books read that year.

Coaches and students enjoy and have fun at the Reading Revolution event. Last year, an elementary school coach said, “My students had, according to them, ‘The best day of their lives!’ What a great experience for all the participants.” A middle school coach added, “I think it’s a wonderful opportunity for kids to read outside of their comfort zone. It’s also a very fun thing to work towards all year long.”

The deadline to register to participate in the 2023 Reading Revolution is November 18. Individual team registration is due in April. For more information about Reading Revolution, contact Paula Terrill, Student Future Ready Events coordinator, at [paula.terrill@tcoe.org](mailto:paula.terrill@tcoe.org), or visit [www.tcoe.org/ReadingRevolution](http://www.tcoe.org/ReadingRevolution).

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## Districts train to implement Say Something school safety program

Last week, over 150 staff members from 18 Tulare County school districts, and the Tulare and Fresno county offices of education attended a training on the anonymous reporting system that’s part of Sandy Hook Promise’s no-cost Say Something program.



The 18 districts registered earlier this year to implement the Say Something program, which trains everyone on campus to recognize and report threats.

The anonymous reporting system gives students and staff the ability to report potential threats on their campuses before they happen. Working through the system’s app, its

website, or a toll-free number, Sandy Hook Promise's staff collect and evaluate information from anonymous tipsters. If a life-threatening event is imminent, the call center – which operates 24 hours a day/seven days a week/365 days a year – will contact designated personnel at the district office, the school site, and law enforcement.

On district campuses this fall, staff and students will be trained in the Say Something program. Middle and high school students will learn to recognize the warning signs of someone at-risk of hurting themselves or others. Students will also learn how to ask for help from a trusted adult.

Through annual trainings, Say Something helps students learn to empathize with others, seek help when needed, and identify problems and analyze situations. Schools that adopt the Say Something program are encouraged to create SAVE Promise (Students Against Violence Everywhere) clubs to support student wellness on campus.

"I've seen this system work in an actual emergency," said Tim Hire, Tulare County Superintendent of Schools. "The Sandy Hook staff is impressively thorough in vetting risks and passing information onto the appropriate school and law enforcement contacts."

Members of the School Safety Department, within TCOE's CHOICES Program, hosted the Say Something training. For more information on becoming a Say Something school, contact Tony Cavanagh at [tcavanag@tcoe.org](mailto:tcavanag@tcoe.org).

Photo above:

*~ Last week, Myra Leuci with Sandy Hook Promise conducted a training on the Say Something anonymous reporting system for Tulare County districts implementing the program on their campuses.*

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To receive the News Gallery Week, sign up [here](#), or contact Jennifer Fisher at [jenniferf@tcoe.org](mailto:jenniferf@tcoe.org) or (559) 733-6172.