



PRESS RELEASE:

**Beach Cities Health District, South Bay Families Connected
Partner With Local School Districts to Offer Free Monthly Parent Education Series**

*The series includes workshops led by nationally recognized
parenting experts, including a former L.A. Dodger*

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REDONDO BEACH, Calif. (January 22, 2018) – Student stress, social media and substance use are top concerns for Beach Cities parents. To tackle these topics and more, Beach Cities Health District (BCHD) and South Bay Families Connected are partnering with Hermosa Beach City School District, Manhattan Beach Unified School District and Redondo Beach Unified School District to offer a variety of free, monthly parent education events. The Families Connected Speaker Series spring lineup includes national parenting experts, a former Dodger and local counseling professionals. The series kicks off on Tuesday, January 30 with “Why Empathetic Kids Succeed in our All-About-Me World,” presented by renowned expert and author of “Unselfie,” [Dr. Michele Borba](#).

Other speakers in the lineup include former Dodger [Eric Karros](#) and professional mindset coach [Adam O’Neil](#), to name a few. The series will conclude with a presentation from [Dr. Denise Pope](#), co-founder of Challenge Success, a program offered in all Beach Cities high schools that helps develop healthier students.

According to the California Healthy Kids Survey, teens in the Beach Cities report higher than average rates of missing school in the past 30 days due to feeling very sad, anxious, stressed or angry. They also report higher than average rates of alcohol and drug use, with use doubling as students transition from 9th to 11th grade. More than 20 percent of 11th grade students report binge drinking (5+ drinks in one sitting) within the past 30 days – which is significantly higher than the Los Angeles Unified School District and state-level trends.

“The rates of stress and substance use among our youth are concerning,” said Tom Bakaly, Beach Cities Health District CEO. “The goal of the Families Connected Speaker Series is to connect parents with experts, and with each other. These concerns aren’t limited to one school district, which is why we’re partnering with South Bay Families Connected to bring Hermosa Beach, Manhattan Beach and Redondo Beach parents together to have these important conversations.”

More than 1,100 parents were reached through the Families Connected Speaker Series and partnering events last fall. However, Bakaly hopes the new lineup of speakers will draw even more participants this time around.

The Families Connected Speaker Series is the first time the three Beach Cities school districts have partnered to offer parent education events, and all South Bay parents are welcome.



“Who doesn’t want to be a better parent?” said Dr. Steven E. Keller, Superintendent at Redondo Beach Unified School District. “This series provides something for everyone, whether you are a parent, grandparent, aunt or uncle. Plus, the speakers are dynamic and very well respected. Please, take the time to attend at least one session.”

“Each day, our students demonstrate how they are mindful, empathetic, inclusive and compassionate toward others,” said Patricia Escalante, Superintendent at Hermosa Beach City School District. “The Families Connected Speaker Series is a way for parents to learn more about what their students are doing at school, and how to create a more mindful, empathetic, inclusive and compassionate home.”

“One of our highest priorities is to create an environment that encourages health, balance and resilience for students,” said Dr. Michael Matthews, Superintendent at Manhattan Beach Unified School District. “When teachers, counselors, parents, administrators and board members work together to prioritize the social-emotional wellness of every student, we give them the tools to succeed at school, and at life.”

The partnership between BCHD and South Bay Families Connected also provides the Families Connected Parent Chat, a free weekly support group for parents led by a licensed professional from the Thelma McMillen Center at Torrance Memorial Medical Center.

The Families Connected Speaker Series is free to the public and includes the following scheduled workshops:

*All events are held from 6:30-8 p.m.; register at southbayfamiliesconnected.org/events

Why Empathetic Kids Succeed in our All-About-Me World, presented by Dr. Michele Borba, author of "Unselfie"— Tuesday, Jan. 30

Purpose vs. Performance: Shifting the Mindset from Outcomes to Experience, presented by former Dodger Eric Karros and Mikah Maly-Karros— Thursday, Feb. 8

Issues on the Minds of Teens: Teen Panel and Discussion, presented by Mindset Coach Adam O’Neil and Leah Niehaus LCSW— Tuesday, March 20

Overloaded and underprepared: Helping Students Find Balance in the South Bay Pressure Cooker, presented by Dr. Denise Pope of Challenge Success— Tuesday, April 17

For information on professional health resources, visit bchd.org/resources.

To learn more about the Families Connected Speaker Series and Parent Chat, and to register for these free events, go to southbayfamiliesconnected.org/events.

About Beach Cities Health District

Beach Cities Health District (BCHD) is among the largest preventive health agencies in the nation and has served the communities of Hermosa Beach, Manhattan Beach and Redondo Beach since 1955. As a



public agency, it offers an extensive range of dynamic health and wellness programs, with innovative services and facilities to promote health and prevent diseases in every lifespan. In 2010, BCHD began implementing the nationally acclaimed Blue Zones Project community health initiative, which aims to help residents live longer, better lives. Additionally, BCHD operates AdventurePlex, a health and fitness center where kids play their way to good health, and the Center for Health & Fitness, a comprehensive, medically based fitness center. Visit www.bchd.org or call (310) 374-3426 for more information.

About South Bay Families Connected (SBFC)

South Bay Families Connected is a not-for-profit whose mission is to improve the social and emotional wellness of area youth by supporting parents in their efforts to help their kids reach their full potential and live healthy, fulfilled lives. South Bay Families Connected offers parents free resources, education and opportunities to connect around parenting issues and challenges, including helping kids navigate the new social media landscape, to reducing the likelihood that they will use drugs and alcohol.



Please visit www.SouthBayFamiliesConnected.org for more information and to access free resources.

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