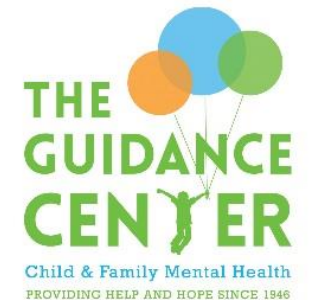


Long Beach Economic Development Commission Panel Presentation January 28, 2020

Patricia Costales, LCSW and CEO
The Guidance Center



“Epidemic of Anguish”

According to the US Department of Health and Human Services, in the last ten years:

- Rates of Major Depression amongst US youth have more than doubled
- Serious psychological distress (hopelessness, anxiety, suicidal thoughts) has increased by 71%
- 1 out of every 5 girls experiences a Major Depressive Episode before adulthood

**SUICIDE RATES AMONGST 10 – 21 YEARS
OLDS HAVE INCREASED BY 56%**



WHAT THIS MEANS FOR LONG BEACH

- The Guidance Center – largest provider of children’s mental health in Greater Long Beach
- Ten years ago our budget was \$8 million, we had 85 staff and served 1,000 children annually
- Today our budget is \$18 million, we have 220 staff and serve 3,500 children annually
- What has not changed – our waitlist for services



The proverbial finger in the dam...

We are Failing Our Children



- We do not need the city to steer families to our services
- We need the city to change the circumstances under which too many families live
 - Housing insecure/unsafe even though parents work
 - Living in cars, garages or on couches
 - Overcrowded housing = unsafe housing
 - Food insecure – hungry at the end of the month, when school is out
 - Walking to school past homeless camps, drug deals, gang graffiti

Then we wonder why a child is anxious, feels hopeless, gets in trouble or can't concentrate in school

We are Failing Our **Employers**

- The Guidance Center employs 220 staff across Greater Long Beach
- In the last three years, staff turnover has increased from a steady 14% to 30%
- The reason staff cite for leaving – they can't afford to live in Long Beach
 - Predominantly professional staff with graduate degrees
 - Young families having their first children, wanting to buy a house
 - Leaving Long Beach and a job they value, to cities they can afford

This impacts client care and the overall demographic of Long Beach



What Do We Need?

- Affordable, safe housing for young professionals with young families
- Affordable, safe housing for working class families
- A living wage
- Neighborhoods that are safe
- Targeted efforts to fix 90805, 90813 and surrounding neighborhoods

The urban lofts are beautiful.
We need to take care of the families that live here first

