“The biggest way in which making the film impacted us is the conversations that it opened up. Through the backdrop of filmmaking the three of us had some serious talks about the subject of suicide, its effect on our generation, and the effects it has had on each of us personally.”
- Student, Riverside Poly High School - Riverside County

“As part of my team, I felt it was important to make a film that was culturally relevant to my and other first-generation college students’ experiences with accessing mental health services. This is a topic that is of great importance and must be addressed, as first-generation college students represent a growing minority on college campuses. We wanted to give a voice to those who may feel that seeking help for mental illness isn’t an option. Part of our filmmaking served as a healing process, as both of us have dealt with mental illness on a personal level in the past.”
- Student, San Francisco State University, San Francisco County

The Directing Change Program & Film Contest encourages young people to learn about suicide prevention, mental health, and how to support a friend in an innovative way: a film contest. Researching these topics, applying knowledge to the making of the film, and thinking deeply about impacting the opinions of others requires a level of involvement that has lasting impact.

To view the films visit: www.directingchange.org

These initiatives are funded by counties through the Mental Health Services Act (Prop 63) and administered by the California Mental Health Services Authority (CalMHSA), an organization of county governments working to improve mental health outcomes for individuals, families, and communities. The program is implemented by Your Social Marketer, Inc.
Changing the minds of many and possibly saving a life: 2012 through 2016.

308 High schools that have participated in Directing Change.

4,000 Students around California that have participated in Directing Change.

1,651 Short films created by youth for youth.

49,000 and counting... Number of times films have been viewed online.

Innumerable the number of minds touched by watching the films.

Participation in Directing Change opens the door to introduce prevention programs to schools and organizations.

Schools are offered support with reviewing safety protocols and a variety of trainings, programs and educational resources on these topics.

Participation in Directing Change is the catalyst to increase conversations about mental health and suicide prevention in families, schools and communities.

Schools have implemented awareness weeks, broadcasts and assemblies on these topics and films have been integrated into classroom curriculums.

87% Proportion of youth who agreed that as a result of the contest they have a better understanding of the warning signs of suicide and what to do if they are concerned that a friend is thinking about suicide.

95% Proportion of young people who pledged to support a friend experiencing mental health challenges.

88% Proportion of teachers who agreed that the contest stimulated discussion among students about mental health and suicide prevention.

Based on 227 student and 67 teacher responses to an online survey, April 2016.

479 Judges that have been trained; drawn from fields in which their level of understanding regarding appropriate messaging for suicide prevention and mental health has the greatest potential for impact.

To view the films visit: www.directingchange.org