

AAP-CA3 Chapter Town Hall #2: Mental Health
Wednesday, May 6, 2020 at 6:30pm
Via Zoom

Attendees: 59 participants, 84 registered on CC including our guest speakers

1. Introductions and Welcome: Michelle Dern, MD- AAP-CA3 Executive Board President
 - May is Mental Health Awareness Month
 - Dr. Dern is seeing more patients with anxiety, mental health issues coming up 6-7 weeks into the pandemic.
 - Introduced the moderator: Pradeep Gidwani, MD; and speakers: Wendy Pavlovich, MD, MSH; Yi Hui Liu, MD, MPH; Mark Chenven, MD; Howard Taras, MD.

2. Wendy Pavlovich, MD, MSH- How can we support our patients and promote resiliency during and after the crisis?
 - COVID-19 has disrupted our lives. Impacted stress and anxiety for children, parents, and the healthcare system. We will see a long-term impact.
 - Adverse childhood impacts are a leading cause of death in our country.
 - ACEs Aware- www.acesaware.org is reimbursing screening for Medicare patients. ACEs Aware has many patient and provider resources.

How are we dealing with this trauma?

- Dr. Pavlovich has been practicing telehealth for four weeks. From a trauma informed perspective, some drawbacks to telehealth may be not able to pick up on some physical cues.
 - Establishes safety first- “Are you in a safe place? Is this an ok topic to discuss?”
 - Provide all patients with universal safety resources- “if anyone you know needs them”
 - Use phrases like, “Lots of people are experiencing stresses right now.” Uses terminology such as “A lot of my families are experiencing...”
 - Get into direct questions- “How is COVID-19 affecting you?” “Do you have enough food?” “Has this situation changed your mood?” Uses terminology such as “A lot of my families are experiencing...”
 - Asks PHQ questions and food insecurity over the phone. These questions are asked once you have established safety.
 - Be sensitive about isolation best practices, e.g. “When do you want to reach out to me next?”
 - Safety is paramount concern.
 - “All in the same storm. Everyone has a different boat and crew.”
 - Prior to a telehealth appointment Dr. Pavlovich is doing chart prep, taking a deep breath, centering and collaborating with other staff.
 - Protective factors- Confidence, Competence, Connection, Contribution, Character, Coping Control from Dr. Kenneth Ginsburg.
 - Stress Busters- balanced nutrition, mindful practice, mental health care, supportive relationships, quality sleep, physical activity.
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3. Yi Hui Liu, MD, MPH
 - Has been using telemedicine since March. Has found it to be a positive experience. Great feedback. Pretty engaging to use with patients. Focused on both developmental and mental health.
 - Using observation and listening skills.
 - Preparing for a telehealth appointment- mail out forms for families to complete. During appointment, the family can show on the screen their responses. Some tools have online platforms, e.g. Ages and Stages, www.agesandstages.com.

- Parents and physicians can both access the information, by sending a link to the parent.
- Some tools have a guide specifically about how to use their tool during COVID-19.
- Images of ASQ screening pages can be texted.
- Interview family and discuss screening, e.g. Autism screening. Follow up telephone interview to address or another appointment.
- The Modified Checklist for Autism in Toddlers (M-CHAT), www.m-chat.org
- Developmental tools- assess child's ability - using scissors to cut, throwing a ball or soft toy.
- Mental health questionnaires are available in different formats.

What do you do once you have a concern?

- A mix of in-person and telehealth services. Some organizations are providing at home services. Some services are being incorporated into telehealth, e.g. OT, PT, Psych eval, Psychiatry.
- Telehealth has opened some access to families that may have challenges attending appointments. Parents are now forced to be more engaged with some therapies.
- San Diego Regional Center, www.sdrcc.com, is using a combination of telemedicine, remote testing, program planning. Able to connect with providers doing in-home services.

Q: How can people find ABA therapist right now?

- ABA therapists are primarily serving clients who were already actively receiving services. Contact Regional Center to get connected with a care provider for ABA therapists.
- Dr. Pavlovich- ACE identified; actual mental health, which child is expressing the stress; educating and normalizing. Safety first.
- Dr. Liu- Starting with existing patients. Both new and established patients, interesting to see them in their home environment, different experience, rich medium for these evaluations.

4. Mark Chenven, MD

- SmartCare Resources: Provider Consult 858.880.6405
- Patient & parent line: 858.956.5900
- Mental health- psychiatry has been able to move rapidly to phone and video appointments. Tech issues, depending on bandwidth. Transition made without much discomfort.
- Been practicing telehealth for over a decade.
- Seeing people at home gives a different perspective, e.g. socioeconomics.
- County funded programs are doing telehealth.
- *Provider forum* available on Wednesdays from 12pm-1pm. To access: <https://call.lifesizecloud.com/209571> pw: 1234
- *Patient and Parents forum* available on Thursdays from 2pm-3pm. To access: <https://call.lifesizecloud.com/209471> pw: 1234
- Enormously stressful for everyone. Being sensitive for providers and families with stay in place order continues.
- Experience with younger kids and will typically have additional staff. Engage children with drawing pictures. Can be quite revealing.
- Home videos from families and sent to therapists.
- Teenagers are more challenging. You need to be present.

5. Howard Taras, MD- How to support kids who access special education services during home school?

- Special Education teacher coordinates instruction with classroom teacher. Special Education teacher attends class and can pull kids out for special sessions with distanced learning.
- Especially concerned about children with Autism not being challenged socially.
- Problems being seen with children who have mild to moderate needs and socio/emotional issues. Parents report these children tend to be lonely and have trouble managing their feelings.
- Parents are stressed - may be between jobs, balancing multiple children and possibly sharing one computer.
- Children with moderate to severe needs receive half an hour of contact per day. Sometimes the services are checking in with the parent.
- Educators would love the medical field to check on families.

- School nurses can be contacted to discuss mental health issues. Parents get HIPAA. Finding there is some mistrust between parents and their schools.
- Family schedules have changed- bedtimes are later, mealtimes are different, there is no longer a set time to get up for school.
- Special Education teachers notice the lack of schedule is harmful for all children. It is helpful for medical professionals to reinforce the message about keeping routines around bed and mealtimes.
- Boardmaker is a tool that can help families make a schedule www.goboardmaker.com. Offers special education solutions to help teachers, parents and children of all ages in the home, school or therapy practice.
- Relationships and routines are important.

Q: How is the transition to online school going?

- Most children have computers at this point, as 40,000 were distributed.
- Home visits are in place to make contact with families who have not initiated distance learning.
- Teachers are reaching students. Grades will not go down; they can only go up.
- Families with involved parents, are doing well. Families that are not involved, may be doing worse.
- Counselors can reach out to parents, though counselors are primarily educational.
- School therapists are doing telehealth with students.
- School staff is still finding their footing.

6. Well-child Checkups (WCC)

- Dr. Dern shared that WCC are encouraged, especially with children under age two, as these visits are important for immunizations.
- Many clinics are doing WCC in the morning, and sick visits in the afternoon, car visits or telehealth.
- Dr. Taras shared that immunizations will all be required when school is back in session.
- Pediatricians may have a back log of children needing immunizations over the summer.
- If unable to complete school evaluation, before school starts, submit as much information as possible to school
- DHCS recent guidance is that telehealth is allowed for WCC but if a visit is split between some of the portions in person and other parts telehealth, DHCS has provided guidance that this should be billed as only one visit. <https://www.dhcs.ca.gov/Documents/COVID-19/EPST-Well-Child-Visits.pdf>
- Here is the link to the latest National AAP Guidance on WCC. <https://services.aap.org/en/pages/2019-novel-coronavirus-covid-19-infections/guidance-on-providing-pediatric-ambulatory-services-via-telehealth-during-covid-19/>

Q: How can we support ourselves in a pandemic? This is a big change, there is a lot of stress

- Dr. Pavlovich- twice weekly Zoom sessions to help with mindfulness, regulation. Some of this has been hard, not feeling isolated, increase in promoting provider wellness programs.
- Dr. Liu- Things we tell patients/families, we need to do ourselves, e.g. routines, wellness, exercise nutrition. Choose what you can control. It's o.k. not to be perfect. Take time for ourselves.
- AAP-CA3 has several committees such as DB Peds, ACEs, Infectious Diseases, San Diego Pediatric School Health- if you'd like to get involved please contact us at info@aapca3.org.

Q: How can we help support transitions?

- Parents and children may present with more mental health concerns.
- Children may be depressed, not knowing when they can connect with their friends.

Q: What happens after shelter in place? How much influence does National and local AAP have?

- National AAP has been in talks with national leaders. They have provided information and science behind it.
- AAP has a voice, not necessarily influence.
- Dr. Pavlovich- Advocate with the Surgeon General's office, e.g. ACEs. Very hopeful that funding will trickle down to help resiliency programs. At least for the follow up Mental health and ACES CA is in a good place for state level support and advocacy www.acesaware.org
- Dr. Gidwani- What will kids remember of this time? How we shape this experience. Parents can help their children and what is remembered from this time.

