

For release on September 1, 2022 at 8:00 AM PST

It's Suicide Prevention Month, and Bay Area teens are doing family photoshoots to raise \$10,000 for new mental health education program at local schools

SAN MATEO, CA — A group of High Schoolers, as a part of The Community Photobooth, a youth-led nonprofit initiative in the Bay Area that combines photography and philanthropy, are aiming to raise \$10,000 and help relaunch a mental health stigma reduction education program with the National Alliance for Mental Illness (NAMI) for San Mateo County middle and high schools—by doing family photoshoots.

After the death of Katie Meyer (Stanford Women's Soccer team captain) went public back in March, Charlotte Rosario, the 15-year-old founder and executive director of [The Community Photobooth](#), felt compelled to take action using her love for photography and the local community. Charlotte has been doing family photography since she was 11 years old, and in the past, The Community Photobooth has raised thousands of dollars for local parks, first responders, and food banks. But now, the initiative's focus is on addressing the mental health crisis in youth. Charlotte's dad had suffered from depression since he was young, and it has made her aware of the stigma that is impacting those with mental health conditions. "Stigma can prevent those suffering from a mental health condition from getting the necessary help, leading to potentially regrettable consequences that we hear about today like gun violence and suicide," says Charlotte.

The young generation has been battling a mental health crisis for years now.

- Between 2007 and 2018, the rate of suicide for those ages 10 to 24 increased by nearly 60% ([Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#)).
- Coming out of the pandemic, Gen Z is facing even higher rates of self-harm and suicide; a global [study](#) on children and adolescents during the pandemic suggested that 1 in 5 youth experienced clinically elevated symptoms of depression or anxiety, which is double pre-pandemic estimates.
- While more than half of the individuals with a mental health condition begin experiencing symptoms by age 14, the average delay in receiving treatment is 8-10 years ([Mental Health First Aid](#)). Stigma is serving as a barrier for youth with mental health conditions to speak up and get help.

Charlotte believes that the way to end the stigma is by having conversations about mental health in the classroom. "I believe that sometimes we, Gen Z-ers, feel like only people our own age can truly understand what we're going through," says Charlotte. "If youth are leading the conversation around mental health then other youth will listen." This is why for September Suicide Prevention Month, The Community Photobooth is partnering with the [National Alliance for Mental Illness \(NAMI\)](#) in San Mateo County for its [2022 Photoshoot-Fundraiser](#) to raise \$10,000 to help relaunch *Ending the Silence*, a mental health and suicide prevention education

program for middle and high schools around the Bay Area. The purpose of the Ending the Silence program is to have young adults educate youth on the warning signs of conditions, share inspiring stories of recovery, and what steps they can take to find support for themselves or their friends. As a way to say thank you, and since September is also holiday card photo season, The Community Photobooth's team of youth photographers is offering all donors in the Bay Area free 30-minute photoshoots at Washington Park.

For more information on how to donate and receive your free photoshoot, visit communityphotobooth.com or find the initiative on [Instagram](#), [Twitter](#), or [Facebook](#). To learn more about the backstory of the fundraiser, The Community Photobooth has released an eye-opening 10-minute [documentary](#), *It's Time We Talk About It*, that features mental health perspectives of local youth like Andrea Kitahata, a member of the Women's U20 US National Soccer Team and Stanford Women's Soccer Team, and Terry Delaney, a High School student and member of the trans and queer community.

About The Community Photobooth:

The Community Photobooth is a nonprofit initiative and collective of Bay Area youth who collaboratively raise money and awareness for local community needs by combining photography and philanthropy. Every year, the initiative focuses its attention on 1-2 important causes and takes action by hosting "Photoshoot-Fundraisers", running community events, and engaging in creative projects like documentary filmmaking. For the last three years, The Community Photobooth has held over 200 photoshoots and raised nearly \$10,000 for things like purchasing wildfire prevention equipment at County parks and bringing hundreds of pounds of food to local food banks. For more information, visit www.communityphotobooth.com, 'like' us on [Facebook](#), or follow us on [Instagram](#) and [Twitter](#).

Contact:

Charlotte Rosario
The Community Photobooth
charlotte@communityphotobooth.com
650-436-2577