

HEALTH CARE

Treatment center offers support for teens with eating disorders

By Hannah Kanik

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The Campbell-based Los Gatos Therapy Center opened the South Bay's first and only residential eating disorder treatment center for teenagers earlier this month after seeing a spike in local cases.

The center, located in San Jose, can accommodate six teens who need extra monitoring and support while they heal from their eating disorders like anorexia, bulimia and binge eating.

Eating disorders "have been an issue for a long time, but I feel like with COVID, it was really a catalyst for a lot of kids and adults to get confronted with what already has been happening with them," program director Azhar Sultanova said. "That's when we've seen a huge increase in people actually realizing that they need help and asking for that help."

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COURTESY OF LOS GATOS THERAPY CENTER

The Campbell-based Los Gatos Therapy Center opened its first Residential Treatment Center for teens with eating disorders, located in San Jose. The center's kitchen is pictured here.

lar increases nationwide. Emergency department visits for teenage girls dealing with eating disorders doubled nationwide during the pandemic, according to a study published earlier this

year from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Teen rates of anxiety and depression are on the rise as well.

During lockdown, Sultanova said, it was harder

for teens to hide their disorders and parents picked up on missed meals. The pandemic also pushed school online and made it easier for families to accommodate therapy and care.

"Especially for younger people nowadays, social media plays a big part in the proliferation of eating disorders," said Jared Schriener, outreach coordinator for the Campbell-based Eating Disorders Resource Center. "It's definitely harmful for young kids seeing all these images of what people see as the ideal body type, like the way that can affect them."

Bay Area eating disorder treatment centers were filling fast and unable to take new clients, which inspired LGTC to meet the demand and develop a residential treatment program.

"Initially, our goal is to prevent people from getting to the point where they need to go to residential," executive director Eugene Tilman said. "Unfortunately, that's not always possible. We would like to be in control of the treatment for the client."

Patients with eating disorders can enter outpatient treatment programs, where

they see a therapist once a week, or intensive outpatient, which is typically three to five days a week for three hours at a time.

If they need more support and structure or their vital signs are inconsistent, patients will typically be enrolled in residential treatment centers for round-the-clock care, where they receive medical monitoring, medication, therapy sessions and community building.

Though it's a serious situation, the patient doesn't need to be hospitalized. Patients do not attend school while at the treatment center, but instead are home-schooled.

The National Eating Disorder Association offers a helpline at 800-931-2237, and an online chat service at <https://www.nationaleatingdisorders.org/help-support/contact-helpline>. To find local resources, contact the Eating Disorders Resource Center online at edrcsv.org.

Community briefs

Street repairs

The road to better roads continues as the Town of Los Gatos pushes its annual street repair project forward. Crews have already completed rubber chip sealing, which is when they put down a layer of asphalt and rubber. Today is the final day of the slurry seal application, which smooths out any small imperfections in the roads' surfaces. Crews will finish painting stripes on the newly-resurfaced roads by the end of September.

Residents who live on affected streets have received notice that crews will be doing work, but Los Gatans should be aware of no-parking zones and one way traffic.

Music in the Park

The Los Gatos' Music in the Park summer series wraps up Sunday evening. Zeppelin Live, a traveling Led Zeppelin tribute band, will headline the free con-

cert series with a performance that begins at 5 p.m on the Civic Center Lawn, located at 110 East Main St. The show is open to all ages.

Measure AA funds

Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District, or Midpen, is looking for residents to help oversee the district's use of \$300 million in Measure AA funds. The funding, passed via a general obligation bond in 2014, helps the district carry out its mission of preserving open spaces, maintaining and restoring the environment and providing chances for residents to enjoy local green space.

A citizen oversight committee is charged with keeping track of their application to ensure the funds are used properly. The seven-member committee has three vacancies, which the district is looking to fill. Committee members serve four-year terms. The application deadline is Sept. 5. Applications are available on-

line at openspace.org/BOC.

Basketball Academy

Tryouts begin this weekend for the Los Gatos-Saratoga Recreation Basket-

ball Academy, open to students entering 3rd-8th grades. There are multiple tryout sessions for each age group. To choose a time and pay the \$20 registration fee, visit <https://tinyurl.com/LGSBasketballAcademy>.

Contact us

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