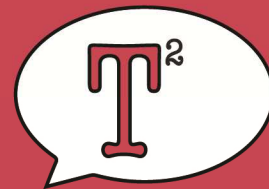


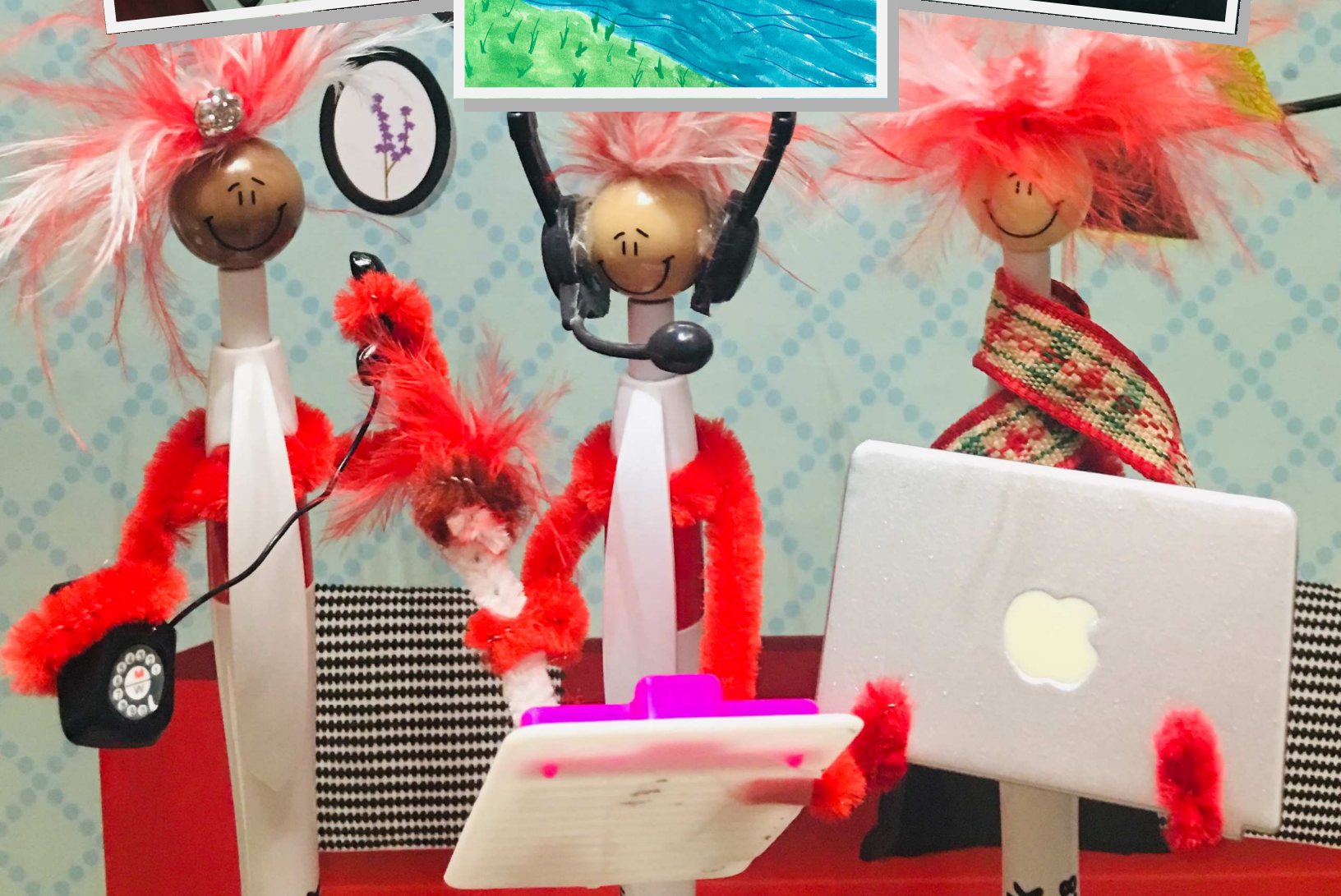
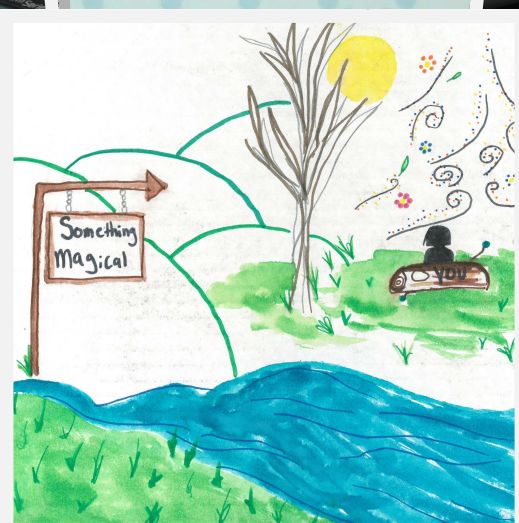


# Clark County TeenTalk

*Nonjudgmental support  
for teens, by teens*



## 2018 Annual Report





"I love talking to you guys.  
I actually have a sort of friend to  
talk to about my issues."  
— caller, May

"Even when we are rambling,  
it helps to talk. It helps things  
make more sense."  
— caller, September

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## What is TeenTalk?

We are an anonymous warm line, meaning you don't know who we are and we don't know who you are, and you can talk to us about whatever you want from how your day is going to talking about the hard stuff. While we are not a hotline, because those are only for people in crises or emergencies, we are mandatory reporters which means we would have to get help if you or someone else has been hurt or is at risk of being hurt. However, we try to tell you this during your first call so you can be empowered to share what you feel comfortable sharing.

We talk to teens in any way possible. You can call us, direct message us through our various social media accounts, or email us. We also send things out in the community to make sure the teens that need us, know about us. For example, pens, compassion boxes, booklets and more.

All the volunteers are teens which means a lot of the decisions are influenced by us. It also means we put a lot of work into everything we do, like talking to teens, making the information booklets, and planning outreach. We also get to grow and develop our skills while volunteering here, such as communication, photography and videography, managing social media accounts, and more. This is the best place on earth where talking to people in need is the number one priority and we can always go home happy knowing we helped the community.

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We are excited to tell you about our program! With a focus on improving young people's mental health, self-esteem and connection to resources, the efforts we make are ones all of Clark County can be proud of. Thank you for letting us share our story with you.

1

"TeenTalk is whatever you want  
it to be. Don't feel like you have  
to confess your deepest, darkest  
feelings. I'm just here to talk  
to you." — Nina

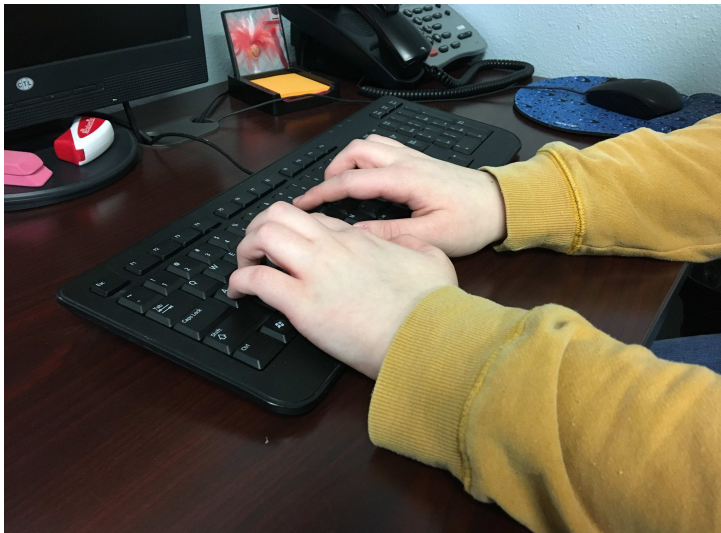
"Things that you are going  
through may be hard to explain  
and put into words, but we do  
understand that you are also trying  
to figure out the situation." — Faith

**"You gave me advice on how I should deal with these problems and I tried them. They really helped me."**  
– emailer, July

**"You're really special. You describe things really well."**  
– caller, September



It's really great when the phone rings and we get to talk to you. In 2018, half the conversations we had were on the phone, with an average call lasting 27 minutes.



We also like messaging you online. In 2018, one-third of the conversations we had occurred on Facebook and another 14 percent occurred through email exchanges.

**"I can promise you that when you talk to us about whatever is going on in your life, you won't have to face these issues completely alone. We got your back."** – Bri

## What's it like to call?

Well basically, it's amazing. Though, if that's not enough, here's a typical time on the talk line:

You grab your phone and dial 360.397.2428. Within a few rings, one lucky individual will answer your call. The conversation will start like: "TeenTalk, this is James," or whoever is on shift.

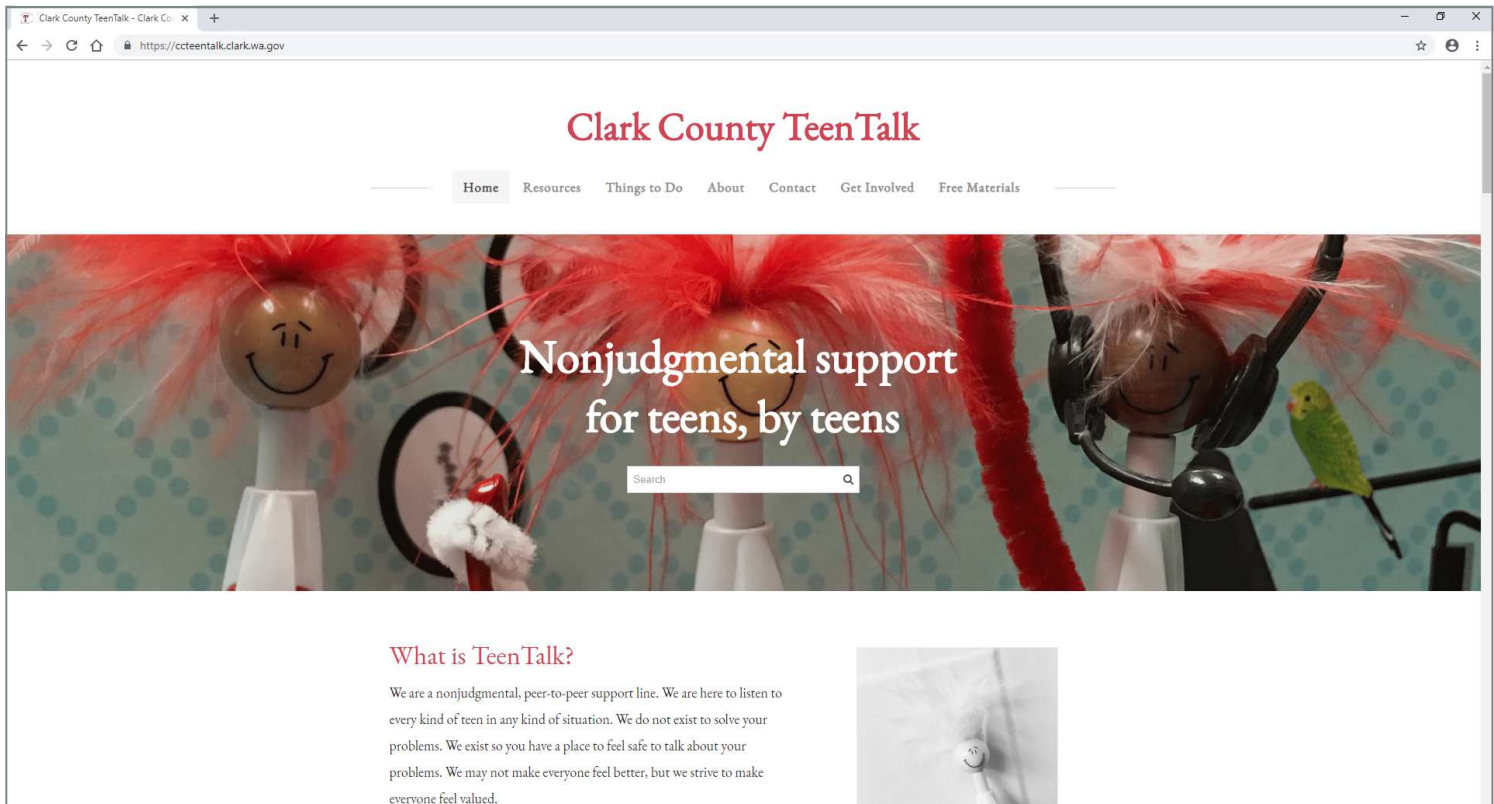
From there, most likely that lucky individual will ask how you're doing, or how your day has been. Though, by this moment, you are in control of the call. Whatever you wish to talk about, you may talk about: school, people, work, hobbies, life in general. Feeling down and wanting someone to just listen to you? We got you covered! Feeling up? We want to know about that too! Want some coping skills? We got a list! Need some answers to those hard-to-answer questions of life like, "Oh no! I don't feel safe. What do I do?" or maybe, "Hey, I'm homeless. Where can I live?" TeenTalk has a whole book of possible answers (literally a whole book) and will even invest time into researching better options and do the very best job to help.

Don't want to call due to embarrassment? Well, we are judgment free, and you might be surprised to hear some of us have been there before. It can be a rough, rough world to grow up in. Consider calling someone who is growing up too, and talk about anything you wish. Hope to hear from you soon!

**"We want you to know we believe in you and want you to believe in yourself."**  
– Sammi

**“Thank you so much for the advice! You don’t understand how much I needed it.”**  
– Facebook Messenger, July

**“I’m glad I had this talk!”**  
– Facebook Messenger, August



## Our new website

This year, we spent a lot of time and hard work in putting together a website that would be a go-to place for teens in our community who need resources and information, want ideas of free or low-cost things to do with their friends (or places to go to make new ones), and more.

In February, we brainstormed a long list of things we dreamed of being on our website—using our personal creativity as well as gaining inspiration from things we like about other websites we visit and social media we use.

Then, we immediately got to work compiling resources, adding events to our calendars and much more. We were excited to learn new skills such as coding, storytelling and website management. We accomplished a lot of things on our wish list, some of which we will be sharing in the next few pages. As our skills develop and grow, we hope to add more things that will increase the value of our website.

**Check out our new website:**  
[ccteentalk.clark.wa.gov](https://ccteentalk.clark.wa.gov)

3

**“That is just a brick wall in your path. When that wall crumbles down, more paths will open up and you will make it to where you want to be.”** – Milo

**“When that happens, check in with yourself to make sure you are OK.”**  
– El



– caller, November

– caller, September

4

"I hope I get to talk to you again.  
It was really nice talking to you."  
– emailer, August

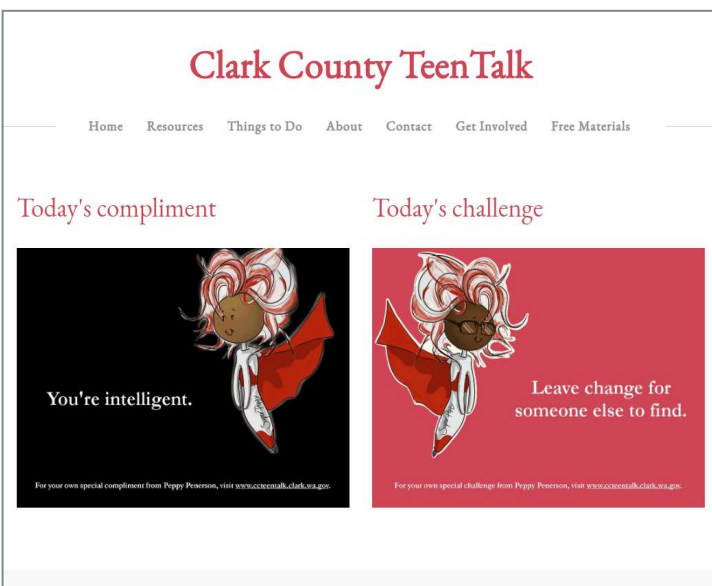
"I love talking to you."  
– caller, May

## Receive a new compliment and challenge each day

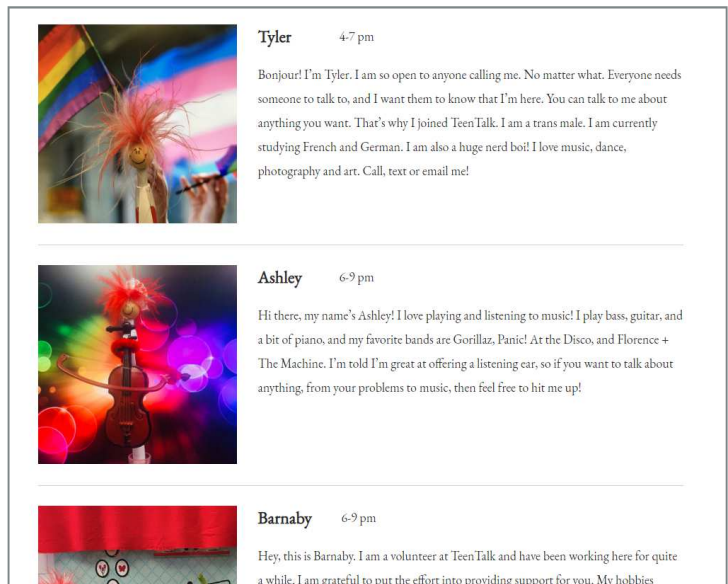
We wrote more than 70 compliments and 90 challenges to pop up in random combinations so you can receive a new compliment and challenge each day. It can be difficult to see the truth in the compliments Peppy gives you on our behalf. We hope you can find how each compliment is genuine to you. If you need help with this, reach out to us and we'll help you. If you give one of the challenges a try, let us know how it went. Learn more about Peppy, our mascot, on page 11.

**Visit our website to get today's compliment  
and challenge from Peppy:**

[ccteentalk.clark.wa.gov/todays-compliment-and-challenge.html](http://ccteentalk.clark.wa.gov/todays-compliment-and-challenge.html)



## Get to know more about our volunteers



If you haven't called yet because you don't know who we are, we thought we'd introduce ourselves. We each wrote something about why we joined TeenTalk, what we like about volunteering, what are hobbies and interests are, and what we are passionate about. Because we value anonymity, we can't show our faces so we took photos of Peppy (page 11) doing something that represents who we are. Our profiles show when we volunteer so you can get to know who you might be talking with before you call us.

**Call us or visit our website to get to know  
more about who we are:**

[ccteentalk.clark.wa.gov/our-volunteers.html](http://ccteentalk.clark.wa.gov/our-volunteers.html)

"I'm glad you aren't letting  
others affect your happiness."  
– Veronica

"I only know you as the  
person you aspire to be."  
– Red



**"I feel like I'm calming  
down just by talking."**  
– caller, December

**"I'm so glad you were  
here to talk with me."**  
– Facebook Messenger, September

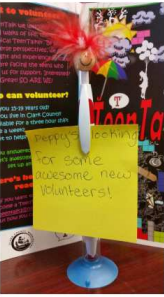
## Learn how to get involved or volunteer with us

Did you know there is more than just one way you can volunteer with us? You can be a TeenTalker, providing direct support to youth who contact us, or you can do things behind the scenes to promote the work we do, such as distributing posters, brochures and other materials at your school and in your community.

The hours you volunteer during pre-service, on the TeenTalk line, or promoting us can count toward your senior project and community service hours.

**Visit our website to sign up for more  
information about volunteering:**  
[ccteentalk.clark.wa.gov/get-involved-teens.html](http://ccteentalk.clark.wa.gov/get-involved-teens.html)

**Become a TeenTalker**



At TeenTalk, we welcome youth from all walks of life; there is no stereotypical TeenTalker. By seeking out diverse perspectives, we gain more insight and experience in issues facing the teens who contact us for support.

Are you 15-19 years old?

Do you live in Clark County?

Are you available for a three-hour shift once a week?

Exciting! Fill out this form and our program coordinator will contact you when we have our next pre-service training.

The hours you volunteer during pre-service and on the TeenTalk line can count toward your senior project and community service hours.

\* Indicates required field

Name \*

First Last

Email \*

Phone number \*

Why would you like to be a TeenTalker? \*

## Order free materials for yourself or youth you know

**Want free TeenTalk materials? Order here!**

We try our best to fulfill requests within 10 business days. Depending on the time of year and what we have in stock, it may take us longer and we appreciate your patience.

Teens Adults

**I would like something from TeenTalk (teens)**

\* Indicates required field

Name \*

Email \*

Please enter your mailing address if you'd like us to mail you TeenTalk materials. If you'd like us to drop them off at school, please skip the address section and let us know what school you go to and what teacher/counselor we can drop them off with. Please make sure your teacher/counselor knows to expect a package from us.

Address

**Teens:** Would you like a TeenTalk journal, a Peppy (page 11), or a card from us reminding you how awesome you are? Let us know. We would love to send you a care package.

**Adults:** Do you work with teens who can use some support from us? We would love to send you some of the many things we created, such as posters, business cards, journals, resource guides, booklets about different issues affecting teens, and much more.

**Visit our website and order free materials  
from us:** [ccteentalk.clark.wa.gov/free-materials.html](http://ccteentalk.clark.wa.gov/free-materials.html). You can also download some of our things directly from our website.

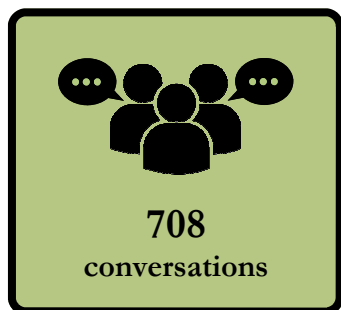
**"It's easy to fall into bad habits,  
but I'm proud of you for wanting  
to help yourself out."**  
– Sammi

**"If it is hard to move on, you can  
try to cope with whatever  
you're passionate about."**  
– Barnaby

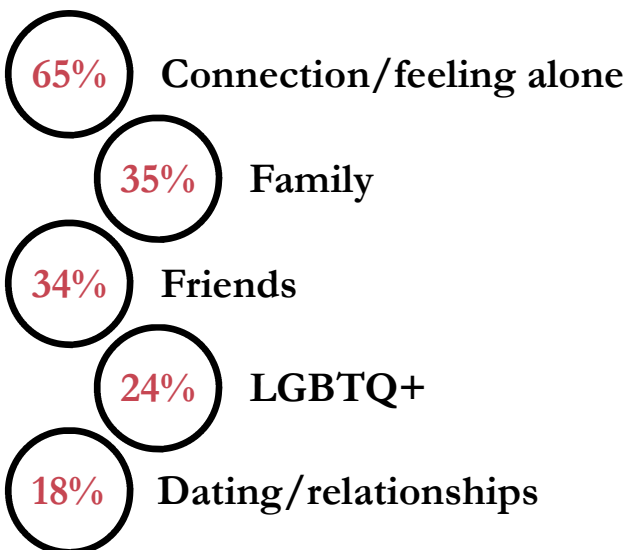
"I really value you and you guys are the first one of whom I think of whenever I have a problem."  
– emailer, August

"You're a pro at this!"  
– Facebook Messenger, September

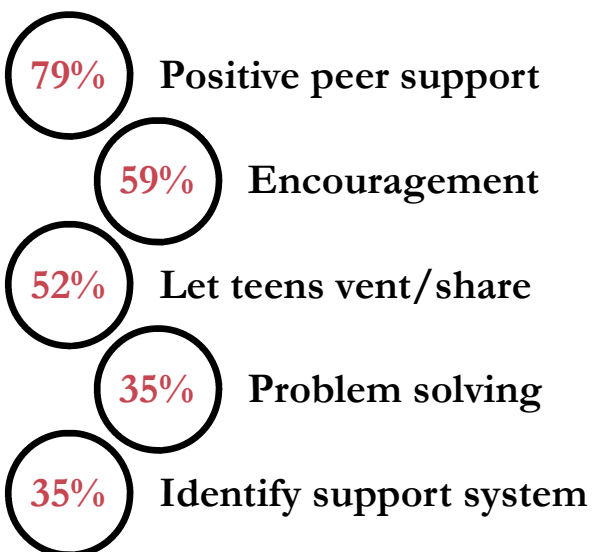
## 2018 statistics



## Top 5 topics\*



## Top 5 supports given\*



\*These numbers will not add up to 100 percent because each call may involve multiple topics and/or need multiple types of support.



"Talking to you about  
my problems has shown me  
a little hope in life."  
– emailer, June

"I can't wait to tell my friend  
that I contacted you guys and  
I'm finally getting help."  
– emailer, May

## Outreach: Teens

## Adults



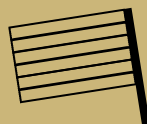
2,575

Peppy pens shared  
with the community



362

youth made Peppy  
cheerleaders



80

LGBTQ+ youth  
got Pride Peppys



more than 335  
parents learned about  
teen mental health



291

students participated  
in Challenge Day



104

youth in crisis got a  
compassion box



70

youth new to our  
community got  
care packages



64

school administrators  
learned about teen  
mental health



more than 330  
students learned  
about mental health



410

youth received  
TeenTalk journals



56

youth in foster care  
got Valentine's gifts



19

adults certified in  
Youth Mental  
Health First Aid



12

resource, health and  
wellness, and career/  
volunteer fairs



104

students were  
mentored



19

youth struggling with  
body acceptance got  
personalized mirrors



12

community meetings  
for adults who work  
with teens

"You're amazing.  
No matter what."  
– Shawn

"You make me want to  
be more open, go out there,  
and be my full self."  
– Nina

**"I guess I just trust you.  
In a way I have no reason  
not to trust you."**  
– Facebook Messenger, March

**"I like talking to you about this.  
It makes me feel more normal."**  
– caller, August

## Special outreach projects



## Youth in foster care

At our training in February, we had a guest speaker from Department of Social and Health Services—now called Department of Children, Youth, and Families—who spoke to us about the foster care system and some of the issues these youth deal with.

We then made 56 Valentine's gifts filled with Peppy cheerleaders (page 12) with encouraging messages, special rubber ducks, origami and candy. Social services workers gave these to some of the youth in foster care on our behalf so they could know there are teens they can talk to if they ever need someone to listen.

## LGBTQ+ youth

In July, we made 25 Peppys (page 11) holding rainbow flags with their pipe cleaner arms for Clark County's annual Saturday in the Park Pride event at Esther Short Park, and 55 very special Peppy "Love is Love" treat bags at our pre-service training for teens attending Clark County's first Queer 'Couve Youth Summit.

One in four conversations we have with teens are about gender identity or sexual orientation. Many of us are in the LGBTQ+ community too, or know someone who is, and can relate to what you're going through. We try to use our personal experiences, and our experiences with our friends and family, to help you explore who you are and feel empowered to be yourself. We are a safe place to talk to if you need someone to recognize and affirm you for the awesome and unique person you are.



**"It would be normal to  
feel uneasy after coming out  
with that to family."**  
– Xavier

**"It's who you grow up to be,  
not what you were born as."**  
– Michele



"I'm so happy you are accepting  
of me and so supportive."  
— caller, April

"You helped things  
be less confusing."  
— caller, July



## Youth struggling with body acceptance

In 2018, we put together 19 mirrors decorated with stickers, inspirational quotes and kind words about one's body image which we gave to Camas and Washougal high schools to hand out to students who are struggling with body acceptance. On the mirrors, we wrote things like, "You have so much love in your heart ... give some to yourself" and "You are beautiful the way you are."

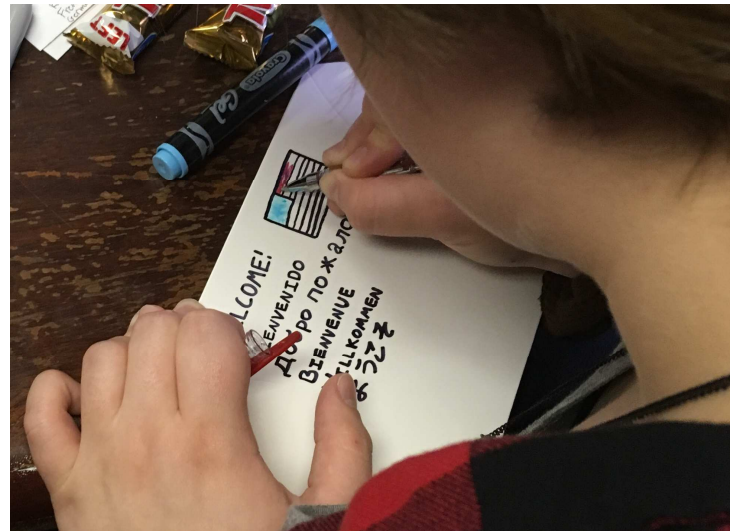
At TeenTalk, we are inclusive all body types and shapes. We always try to be supportive and uplifting when we have teens contact us who are struggling with body image issues. Sometimes, we share our own struggles to help connect with them and know they aren't alone. We work to help others be as accepting of their bodies as they are of others'.

"You should always be  
allowed to be who you are."  
— El

## Youth new to our community

At our training in November, we made 70 care packages for youth new to our community. Some of these were decorated with welcome messages in several languages, while others may have featured warm welcomes or a Peppy (page 11) ecstatically saying, "Wow! I can't believe I'm looking at the coolest person in the world!" These welcome gifts went to Fort Vancouver High School Center for International Studies where the Family Community Resource Center staff gave them to new students. The good wishes were greatly appreciated.

We know what it can feel like to be new, whether it's because we transferred schools or because we've moved from an entirely other state. If you're new here, we want you to know you are welcome and you are not alone. Thanks for making Clark County your new home.



"You must be pretty tough to  
be able to go through all of this  
and come out the other side."  
— Zach

“It was really nice getting to get all that stuff out.”

– caller, February

“Thank you for letting me cry on your shoulder. You’ve been a real big help.”

– caller, August

## Challenge Day

Since March 2010, we have been thrilled to coordinate Challenge Day events at two Clark County high schools each year. Selected schools come together for these eclectic, life-changing events to challenge youth and adults to step out of their comfort zones and share their truth.

Challenge Day is a global program that gives participants tools to explore how people separate from each other—and how to change the culture to one of acceptance and inclusion.

**This year, 291 students and 78 adults in Clark County participated in a Challenge Day we’ve sponsored.**

For more information about Challenge Day, visit [challengeday.org/](http://challengeday.org/).



## Peppy Penerson

Peppy Penerson, famous pen and mascot of TeenTalk, known traveler extraordinaire. This amazing mascot is a genderless empathetic pen who loves and supports everyone around. Through their powers of friendship and acceptance, they hope to make the world a better place. Peppy is a lot like the TeenTalk team and is a great representation of what we stand for. This mascot isn’t just a regular mascot as a general symbol of its group, this mascot is a way to bring people together, and encourage acceptance and empathy.

**This year, we launched multicultural Peppys and shared 2,575 of these smiling pens with the community.** We are thrilled Peppy can share multiple faces—all of which beam of kindness and support.



Photo courtesy of Challenge Day

“Sounds like you’re handling this better than most people would. It’s good to work through things like this instead of pretending it didn’t happen.” – Zach

“At the end of the day, you’re not alone in feeling this way, and it is okay to feel this way. Just remember: you are worth it.” – Emma



"I feel really good talking to you."  
— caller, April

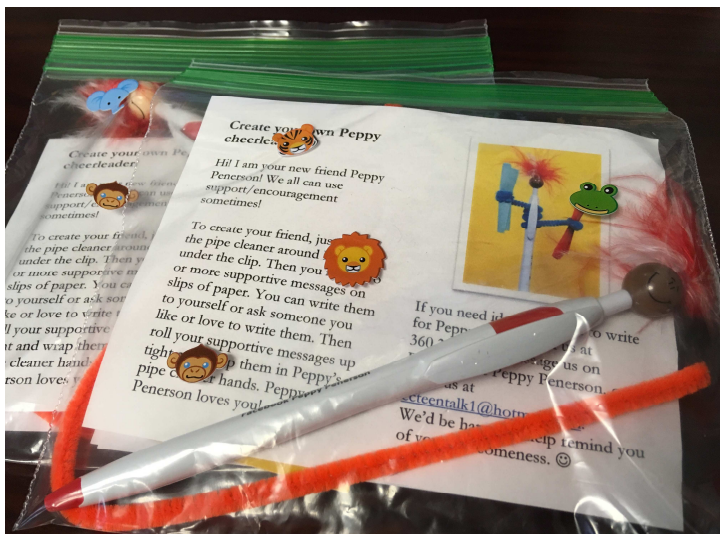
"I feel safe and comfortable  
talking to you. You actually  
understand me."  
— caller, July

## Peppy cheerleader kits

Recognizing that sometimes we can all use a little bit of support and encouragement, we started making Peppy cheerleader kits— sandwich bags filled with a Peppy, a pipe cleaner for its arms, two slips of paper to write kind messages to yourself (or a friend), and some stickers.

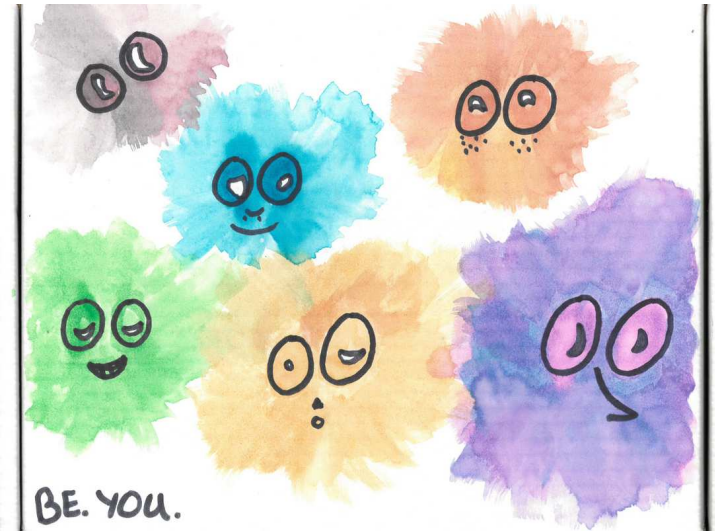
**This year, we gave out 362 cheerleader kits** for school-based events in the Camas, Vancouver and Washougal school districts.

If you know of an upcoming event for Clark County youth that might like some Peppy cheerleader kits, visit our website:  
[ccteentalk.clark.wa.gov/free-materials.html](http://ccteentalk.clark.wa.gov/free-materials.html).



"Don't let other people influence  
the way you feel about yourself  
in a negative way."  
— Willow

"I've definitely felt like that  
before, so here's what I did ..."  
— Kai



## Compassion boxes

Between calls, we work on compassion boxes. These are artistic, inspiring boxes filled with a heartwarming, handwritten message and some treats such as stress-reducing squeeze balls, coloring sheets, snacks or jokes. The boxes can range from quoting certain philosophers and inspirational people to providing a heartfelt tip on the cover. The cover also tends to be artistically related to the message which leads to many creative and inspirational pieces. When we finish these boxes, we give them to the Youth Mobile Crisis Intervention Services team who delivers them to teens experiencing mental health crises. Our hope is to make their lives just a little bit happier and let them know that someone their age cares about them.

**This year, we made and shared 104 boxes.**

"I want to cry  
every day like this."  
— caller, July

"Your last email encouraged me  
a lot and it was so cheering that  
I loved reading that again."  
— emailer, August

## Other outreach

- tabled two health and wellness fairs, six resource fairs, and four volunteer/career fairs
- taught teen mental health to approximately 270 students at various schools throughout Clark County
- taught teen mental health to approximately 60 youth at Teens Care Too, a prevention summit celebrating youth who are making healthy decisions and providing them with knowledge and tools to be leaders among their peers
- gave students in Fort Vancouver High School's Trappers4Trappers mentoring program 125 surprises (Peppy pens with a pencil and a message of kindness) to hide around school for their classmates to find
- certified 27 adults in Youth Mental Health First Aid—a training teaching adults how to recognize and respond to youth experiencing a mental health crisis (our program coordinator received an average presentation score of 4.93 out of 5)
- taught teen mental health to 64 principals, vice principals and other school staff at the School Administrators Emergency Training Summit
- taught teen mental health to approximately 335 parents, including 295 at Fort Vancouver High School and 40 at Camas High School



"No one would expect you  
to go through this alone,  
and you deserve support."  
— Camile

## What's it like to volunteer?

"Emotions are strange and confusing and sometimes painful to deal with. When you volunteer at TeenTalk, you start to learn how to make sense of them and how to deal with them in a way that feels less like you've gotten hit by a car. We have to put ourselves out there and feel a little vulnerable in order to grow, emotionally and mentally, and TeenTalk makes that easier. Every week I have to venture out of my comfort zone, and broaden my perspective by talking with different people, but I get to do it in an environment filled with familiar faces, colorful posters, and inspirational quotes. Every week I get to help people feel better in some small way, and I get a little bit closer to understanding my own emotions." — Denae

"While at TeenTalk you will face many interesting people whether from calls, emails, or other TeenTalkers, but every time you converse with them is another opportunity to grow and develop as a person as well as improve upon your empathy and sympathy skills. There are fun tasks to complete, many challenges to overcome, and of course snacks to eat. But the most valuable thing from being a TeenTalk member is, of course, the thought of making other people's lives more happy and healthy from the support and advice you give." — Barnaby

"There will be bumps in the road,  
but I know you can tackle  
them head on."  
— Scarlett

“Thanks for talking to me!  
... And know that you helped  
someone out today.”  
— caller, January

“Before [talking to TeenTalk],  
I believed that [the] world is full of  
fake people. But now, I know  
good people do exist. Thank you.”  
— emailer, June

## How do I volunteer?

At TeenTalk, we welcome youth from all walks of life; there is no stereotypical TeenTalker. By seeking out diverse perspectives, we gain more insight and experience in issues facing the teens who contact us for support.

- Are you 15-19 years old?
- Do you live in Clark County?
- Are you available for a three-hour shift once a week?

Great! Fill out a brief form on our website ([ccteentalk.clark.wa.gov/get-involved-teens.html](http://ccteentalk.clark.wa.gov/get-involved-teens.html)) and we will reach out to you when we start our next pre-service training. The hours you volunteer during pre-service and on the TeenTalk line can count toward your senior project and community service hours.



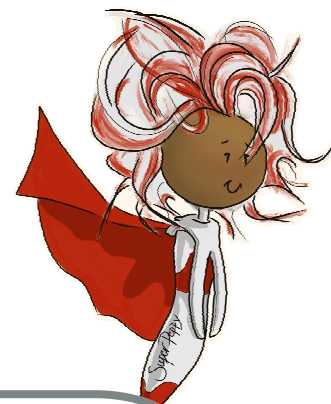
“You’ve helped us a lot too.”  
— Denae

## Thank you

When TeenTalk launched, long ago, I never would have believed all that was to come.

TeenTalk started with one staff person and seven teenagers who sat in a room and talked about what it would look like for support without judgment to go out to our community. We were wide-eyed then, and giddy with limitless possibilities. Now, years down the road, I am still lucky enough to be in contact with 5 of those 7 incredible human beings who were our first volunteers. All 5, not surprisingly to me, are in the helping professions, as are many of the volunteers who followed after them. While we have carefully tracked how many conversations the volunteers have had over the years, I wish there was a way to adequately track and measure incredible kindness. The empathy and compassion have gone out in so many creative ways, I get teary eyed just thinking about it. Given an opportunity and a place to feel safe and valued, young people can do amazing—no, EPIC—things. I feel ridiculously lucky to have been part of this adventure in radical kindness.

Kris Henriksen  
Program Coordinator

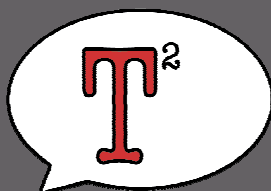


“Well, I like to talking to you  
‘cause you’re a good person.”  
— Tyler





## Contact us



TeenTalk offers anonymous,  
confidential and  
nonjudgmental support  
*for teens by teens*

Monday to Thursday, 4-9 pm  
Friday, 4-7 pm



360.397.2428



ccteentalk1@hotmail.com



ccteentalk.clark.wa.gov



@PeppyPenerson



Clark County TeenTalk



**For other formats, contact the Clark County ADA Office**

**Voice 564.397.2322 / Relay 711 or 800.833.6388**

**Fax 360.397.6165 / Email ADA@clark.wa.gov**