



## Key Objectives during COVID

Throughout the pandemic, ARCC staff and leadership have worked to adapt/modify program delivery to ensure continuation of services to our youth and families during this critical time. Within days of the pandemic hitting, leadership and managers were setting up new systems, forms, policies and procedures to provide needed services virtually (via telehealth) and to ensure continued client safety and protections.

Key objectives included:

- Assess youth/families for mental/behavioral health needs & need for other supportive services, so clients can receive timely, appropriate healthcare & support during and after shelter-at-home orders
- Improve clients' emotional and behavioral health through telehealth sessions, utilizing proven, evidence-based practices
- Enable youth and caregivers to minimize the negative impacts of the COVID-19 crisis, by connecting them to special relief programs and resources in the community, including those being made available specifically to low-income populations (e.g., meal programs, reduced cost internet/utilities, government support programs, etc)

## Program Adaptations & Additions during COVID

During COVID, ARCC staff have continued to offer most of our regular services but now via telehealth including individual counseling, family counseling, life skills classes (including coping during the pandemic), mentoring, parent education workshops, academic support sessions, substance use prevention presentations, and virtual enrichment activities. At times, our staff have delivered program supplies and basic needs supplies to clients' homes (e.g., groceries, diapers, hand sanitizer, etc.) following all public health guidelines and safety protocols.

Here is just a sampling of the pivots we made & extra services we provided during this challenging time:

### For Parents & Caregivers:

**Workshops (addressing timely topics):** What our counselors have seen during the pandemic is that, in many homes, caregivers (especially mothers) are carrying the stress and the burden of keeping the family above water, serving as the rock of the family. Often they are single parents, needing to juggle working/earning, distance learning, and taking care of home and bills. Employment has been unreliable and many worried about being evicted and/or the dangers of living in overcrowded households with multiple families during a pandemic. ARCC staff launched self-care and mindfulness workshops (in both English and Spanish) as a way to support caregivers and provide them with valuable tools and resources for how to take care of themselves. It has been a chance for them to build community and connect with others going through similar challenges during these times of stress.



**Direct Financial Assistance:** In partnership with Destination Home and a long time individual donor, ARCC staff distributed a total of \$62,000 (in \$1000 & \$2000 amounts) to 49 extremely low income families, many of whom were undocumented and/or ineligible for unemployment or other forms of federal support.

## For Youth:



**ARCC's Annual Toy Giveaway Event:** For the past ten years, ARCC's Holiday Toy Giveaway Event has provided gifts and a holiday celebration for youth who otherwise might not receive a gift during the holiday season. In 2019, with the support of over two dozen community partners and 100 volunteers, ARCC provided gifts to nearly 800 youth and families. This year, due to COVID, we were unable to host our in person celebration as in years past, but we knew the need would be greater than ever before. With the support of the Sharks Foundation, CEFCU and some of our long-time toy event supporters, we pivoted our toy giveaway model, and successfully & safely delivered gifts and gifts cards to families' homes, serving nearly 400 youth and caregivers this holiday season through our "Shelter-at-Home for the Holidays" project.

**Virtual Workshops for Students:** Topics for these workshops focused on needs particularly relevant to the pandemic and distance learning such as self-care, time management, and substance use prevention.

**Virtual Enrichment Activities & Support Sessions:** Staff helped youth build a sense of community during an otherwise isolating time, focusing their virtual sessions on needs related to mental/behavioral health (such as depression, anxiety, substance use, feelings of suicide in themselves or their families), and also providing fun activities of interest such as expressive writing, art, dance, yoga, cooking classes, podcast production, etc. We even pivoted a brand new groundbreaking, peer support program (being done in collaboration with Stanford Psychiatry and SCC Behavioral Health Services) called [allcove](#) to a virtual format called virtual you, before the program even had a chance to launch in person.

## For Educators:

**Trauma-Care Guides:** During the pandemic, especially early on, educators were extremely overwhelmed with the transition to distance learning, especially because many of their students were already dealing with ongoing risk factors and trauma situations in their lives, and distance learning made it only more difficult to connect with them. Because it was difficult for our staff to connect with school staff during this time (teachers & school counselors were largely unresponsive), we prepared informational guides for them, which they could use if/when they were ready. These guides provided signs/symptoms of detecting trauma in their students, ideas & practices for supporting students who were experiencing trauma/having trauma reactions, how they could detect vicarious trauma within themselves, ideas for self-care, and then also a slew of resources they could access for additional information. We created three different guides during the past twelve months: an overview guide to trauma-informed teaching and then two modules, one specifically focused on the pandemic and one focused on racial trauma.

- [Trauma-Informed Teaching \(OVERVIEW\)](#)
- [Trauma-Informed Teaching During a Pandemic](#)
- [Trauma-Informed Care & Racial Trauma](#)

**Classroom presentations on request/demand:** As school staff started to adjust to distance learning, some reached out to ARCC staff requesting presentations/workshops for their students. Topics that they requested often were related to issues that students were facing due to the pandemic and/or racial injustices. In some cases, teachers asked for our support re-engaging students who had become disengaged and providing them with coping, time management, and self-care strategies.

