



**CASAP**

Coalition for Asian Substance Abuse Prevention

*Dear CASAP Member,*

Thank you all who attended our last CASAP meeting!

Please look through this quarterly newsletter for substance use news, counseling resources, community updates, and coalition activities.

It is CASAP's mission to prevent substance use and improve health outcomes among Asian Americans in Chicago through community partnerships and capacity building, needs and resource assessment, strategic planning, and culturally appropriate prevention implementation and evaluation.

At your service,

Nishita Conjeevaram Program  
Manager Asian Health Coalition

## In This Issue

- **September is National Suicide Prevention Awareness Month**
- **CASAP's New Youth Advisory Board**
- **Program Recap and Upcoming Programs**

**CASAP Quarterly Meeting: Monday September 28<sup>th</sup>, 4-5pm**

## September is National Suicide Prevention Month

For National Suicide Prevention Month, we wanted to raise awareness about the effects of COVID-19 on mental health and share some helpful resources for seeking care during this time. Below are some ways that COVID-19 has affected our mental health and children’s mental health as well as ways we can take care of our emotional health and support children during this time:

Stressors During COVID-19	Stress in Children and Adolescents
Fear and worry about your own health and the health of your loved ones, your financial situation or job, or loss of support services you rely on.	Excessive crying or irritation in younger children
Changes in sleep or eating patterns.	Returning to behaviors they have outgrown (bedwetting)
Difficulty sleeping or concentrating.	Excessive worry or sadness
Worsening of chronic health problems.	Unhealthy eating or sleeping habits
Worsening of mental health conditions.	Irritability and “acting out” behaviors in teens
Increased use of tobacco, and/or alcohol and other substances.	Poor school performance or avoiding school
	Difficulties with attention and concentration
	Avoidance of activities enjoyed in the past
	Unexplained headaches or body pain
	Use of alcohol, tobacco, or other drugs

Ways to Take Care of Your Emotional Health	Ways to Support Your Children’s Emotional Health
Take care of your body	Answer questions about COVID-19 in a way your child understands
Get regular sleep	Reassure your child that they are safe
Connect with others	Let them know it is okay if they feel upset
Physical activity	Limit your family’s exposure to news, including social media
Manage Stress	Keep up with regular routines
Stay informed	Take breaks, get plenty of sleep, exercise, and eat well.
Avoid too much exposure to news	Connect with your friends and family members
Seek help when needed	Spending time with your child in meaningful activities, reading together, exercising, playing board games

For more information and mental health resources, check out the following links:

- <https://www.crisistextline.org>
- <https://suicidepreventionlifeline.org>
- <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/daily-life-coping/stress-coping/index.html>
- [AANHPI In-Language COVID-19 Resources](#)

## *CASAP's New Youth Advisory Board*

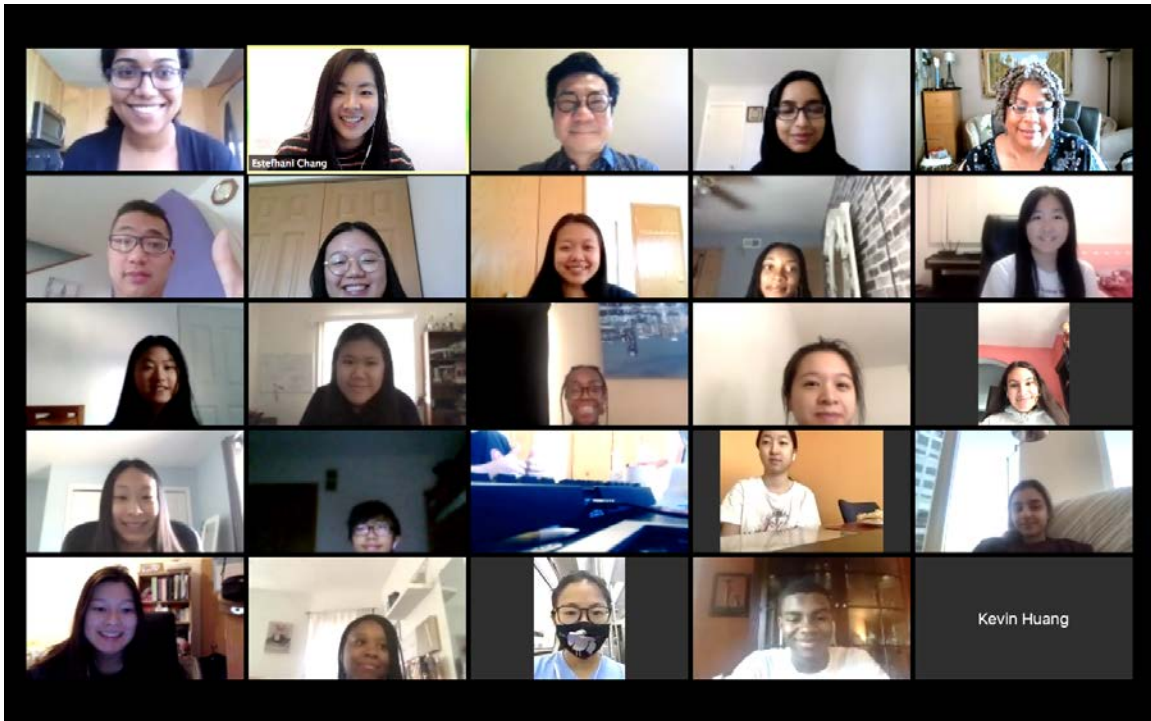
This year, CASAP has initiated a Youth Advisory Board (YAB) to bring the youth sector to the forefront of our coalition's work and to empower youth to lead social change projects in the communities we serve. We have recruited 12 youth that participated in our Youth ACT summer leadership program to join the YAB. Over the course of the next year, these youths will work alongside our adult coalition members to implement 4 project proposals created by 4 of our YAB members. Below is an overview of the YAB members' roles and responsibilities:

- YAB members will meet once every month.
- The board will be made up of 2 Co-chairs and 1 secretary.
- There are four Work Groups led by the 9 other board members that will meet together during the monthly YAB meetings. The four Work Groups are the **Media Campaign Work Group**, **Prevention Education Work Group**, **Community/Environmental Work Group** and the **Policy and Advocacy Work Group**.
  - The **Media Campaign Work Group** will be responsible for maintaining the coalition's website and social media accounts as well as developing social media campaigns focused on substance use prevention.
  - The **Prevention Education Work Group** will be leading the development and recruitment for the Youth Advisory Board. They will also be responsible for developing educational interventions for youth and parents focused on alcohol and tobacco use prevention.
  - The **Advocacy and Policy Work Group** will be responsible for planning and coordinating any advocacy and policy efforts pursued by the Coalition.
  - The **Community/Environmental Work Group** will be responsible for coordinating and planning all activities that are related to engaging the community such as Town Halls, Responsible Beverage Servers training, and outreach activities.
- A YAB member's term will be for at least 1 academic year and will start at the beginning of October 2020 and end in September 2021.
- YAB members will receive a stipend of \$250 each quarter to implement CASAP-related activities (\$1000 in total).
- Members will be encouraged to stay on the board for multiple years to grow into leadership positions and will be offered other incentives determined by CASAP.

We are very excited for the start of this new board and look forward to seeing the wonderful work of our youth leaders put into action!

# *Program Recap and Upcoming Programs*

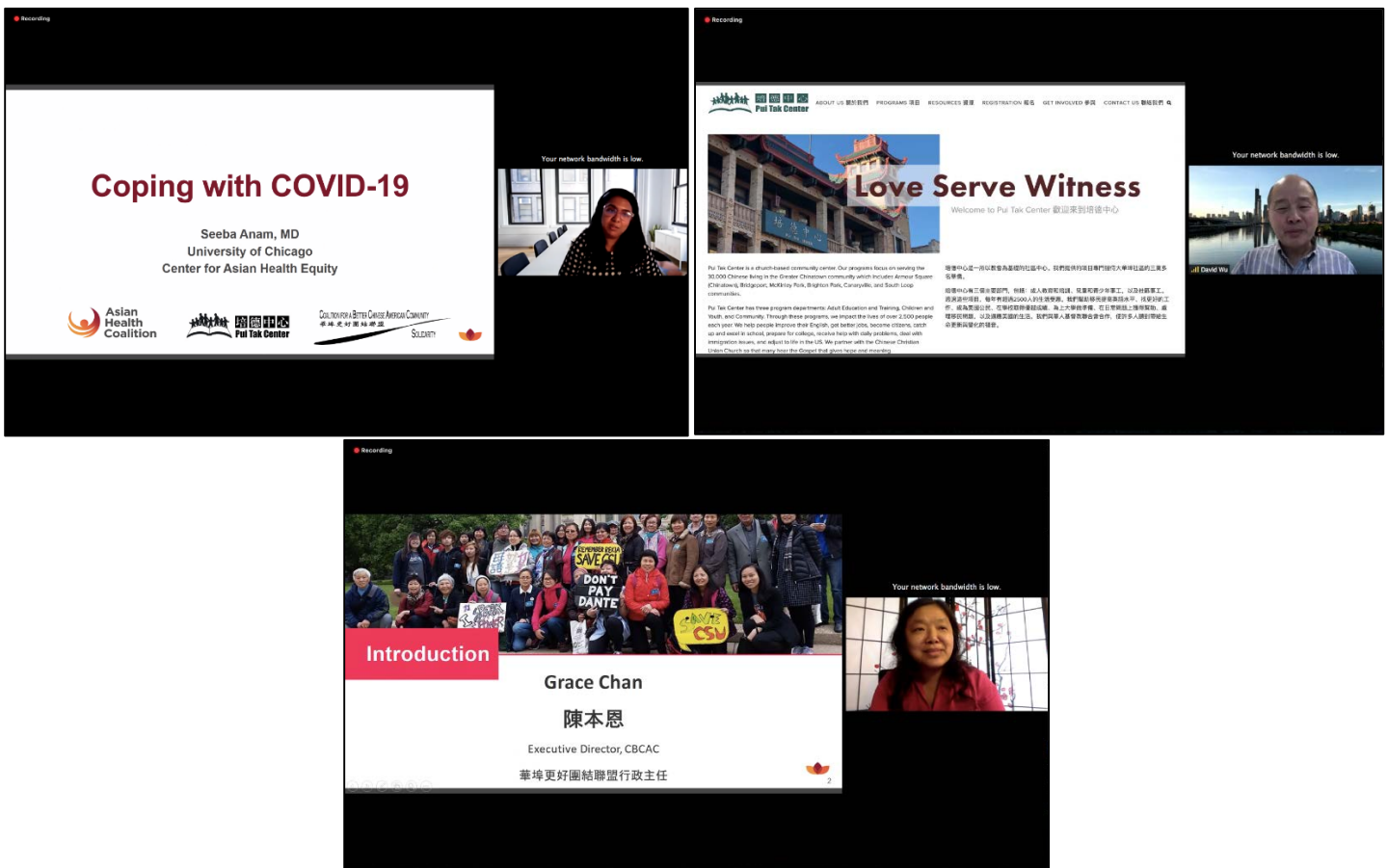
## Youth Advancing Communities Together (ACT) Program



This past August, we selected 20 diverse high school students from public schools across Chicago to receive training on how to evaluate community health issues and create their own programs to address a public health issue that is important to them and their communities. Through a 2-week intensive program, they learned how to develop leadership skills, research skills, relationship building skills and heard from community partners about the social change work being done to prevent substance use and how they could be involved. We wanted to empower our participants with the knowledge, skills and confidence to advocate for substance use and mental health prevention and treatment services for their communities. This was our first year implementing the Youth ACT program virtually through Zoom, and it proved to be a success!

100% of students attended 100% of the sessions and filled out the pre-program and post-program surveys. The overall feedback was very positive, as a majority of the students either “agreed” or “strongly agreed” with gaining a greater understanding of substance abuse prevention and mental health. They also reported gaining skills from Youth ACT to address issues in their community. Most of the students were also more interested in substance use and mental health and more willing to be involved in their community after the program. 100% of the students were “extremely likely” (60%) or “moderately likely” (40%) to recommend Youth ACT to their fellow peers. We are so proud of our youth participants for their hard work and dedication during this program and are thankful that 12 participants have joined our coalition!

# Community Town Hall Meeting: How to Deal with Stress and Build Resiliency During a Pandemic



We held a virtual town hall meeting at the end of August, along with our co-hosts from the Pui Tak Center and Coalition for a Better Chinese American Community, to address all of the stressors of dealing with a pandemic and to remind people that we have a strong community with many resources to help one another and uplift each other. The purpose of this town hall was to educate everyone on the resources available to them within Chinatown, understand how to manage stress and anxiety during this time, and learn what is being done by local organizations to address the COVID-19 pandemic. We had 3 wonderful guest speakers with us to share their insight on the COVID-19 situation and we followed their talks with a question and answer session.

Dr. Seeba Anam, an Assistant Professor at the University of Chicago Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Neuroscience, talked about how the pandemic has affected our mental health, what forms of loss have people experienced during this time, and how can we manage our stress and anxiety and help children manage their stress and anxiety. David Wu, Executive Director of Pui Tak Center, talked about what the Pui Tak Center has been doing to help Chinatown residents during the pandemic and what resources are available in the community. Finally, Grace Chan, Executive Director at the Coalition for a Better Chinese American Community, talked about what CBCAC been doing to address COVID-related issues, what the community can do as a whole to address this pandemic, and how can we all work together to build resiliency. We are thankful to our guest speakers and our co-hosts for making this event possible and for sharing such valuable information with the community! If you would like more information or resources shared from this event, please reach out to us at [casap@asianhealth.org](mailto:casap@asianhealth.org).



**Are you a medical professional, social service practitioner, or student who wants to work with Chinatown youths?**

Email [nishita@asianhealth.org](mailto:nishita@asianhealth.org)

**Asian Smokers Quitline**

English: 1-800-QUIT-NOW

Chinese: 1-800-838-8917 (Mandarin and Cantonese)

Korean : 1-800-556-5564

Vietnamese: 1-800-778-8440

Website: <http://asiansmokersquitline.org/>

**Illinois Tobacco Quitline**

Phone: 1-866-QUIT-YES

Website: <http://www.quityes.org/>



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