Dear AACI Supporters,

Depression is not only a struggle for the child but for the entire family. Andrew was only 14 when he moved from Shanghai to the United States with his family. He soon started high school in a new country and found himself overwhelmed by the academic pressure and cultural differences.

“For me, depression isn’t just sadness, it’s a loss of meaning, it’s numbness, like you are isolated in a glass shell…”

- Andrew, AACI behavioral Health Client

Language barriers made it difficult for Andrew to make friends or even take the same classes as his peers. He felt isolated and alone. He stayed in bed all day and felt numb to the world; things he had once been passionate about were no longer interesting. This also led to countless arguments with his father Chia-Hao.

Initially, Chia-Hao assumed Andrew was being lazy or making excuses. Chia-hao thought, “A person should be able to control his emotion...I was not willing to believe Andrew had depression.” But as days passed, they both came to realize that Andrew needed professional help. That’s when they found AACI!

Andrew began working with Yifan, a counselor at AACI who spoke Mandarin. Therapy gave Andrew a safe space to release his emotions, explore who he was, and learn healthier ways to express himself. Yifan eventually encouraged Andrew to involve his father in their counseling sessions which transformed their relationship. Over the next few months, they worked together. “Many sessions would end up with all of us in tears,” his father said. Through these sessions, his father began to understand how to better communicate with Andrew and change his parenting methods in order to support his son.

Chia-Hao learned,

“Give your children some patience. Put aside all your hopes and expectations, it’s enough to understand them.”
Today, Andrew feels like a completely different person. He is attending university and exploring his passion for the liberal arts. When asked what he would say to someone with depression, he said,

"What I learned was acceptance, love, and gentleness to myself and others, it taught me to find happiness from life, it taught me to be involved in my community, the people around me, because you don't have to be the president of the United States to change the world."

This transformation was possible because of heroes like you. YOU made it possible for him to feel loved and to have the sense of community. YOU helped Andrew to overcome depression and feel closer to his father!

This month, 100 more children will walk through AACI’s doors. Each one of these children will need help coping with depression, anxiety, and trauma. Without mental health counseling many of these youth will continue to feel isolated, hopeless and disconnected with their families. YOUR gift will provide this critical support.

A group of generous friends in our giving community will be matching all donations received up to $10,000 by August 15! We are thrilled to have this matching opportunity and request your help to get us there. Your gift today will help these children and families receive the counseling and support they need to overcome depression.

YOUR support will change real people’s lives at AACI every day!

“If a client believes one person is kind, he would feel safe and nourished with one person. If a client sees everybody is kind in AACI, he feels safe and optimistic about the world.”

- Yifan, AACI Behavioral Health Counselor

Please make a gift today and join the community of supporters that help our clients feel safe and optimistic about the world. Contribute by August 15 to DOUBLE your gift!

Your partner in health,

Sarita Kohli
President & CEO

P.S. Remember - Your gift by August 15th can be doubled!