



IT'S UP TO USSM

to Create a Healthy & Supportive San Diego

A special bulletin covering mental health topics for San Diegans.



Edition Five | Fall 2011

About the Campaign

The "It's Up To Us" campaign is designed to empower San Diegans to talk openly about mental illness, recognize symptoms, utilize local resources and seek help. By raising awareness and providing access to local resources, we aim to inspire wellness, reduce stigma and prevent suicide.

Recovery is possible and help is available. It's Up To Us to make a difference in the lives of San Diegans experiencing mental health challenges by offering support and providing opportunities.

This campaign is developed through the County of San Diego Health and Human Services Agency, and supports the County's "Live Well, San Diego!" plan to promote a community that is healthy, safe and thriving.

Up2SD.orgSM
LINK UP FOR INFORMATION AND MENTAL HEALTH RESOURCES

SD CRISIS HOTLINE
(800) 479-3339

.....
COMMUNITY RESOURCES
2-1-1

Live Well, San Diego!

COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO



HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES AGENCY
Funded by the Mental Health Services Act

Read Up: For Men Only (and those that love them) **MAINTAINING A HEALTHY BODY AND MIND**

When you're feeling pretty good about yourself, chances are you're happy at home, hitting the gym, doing well at work, and simply enjoying all that beautiful San Diego has to offer.

The reality, however, is that times are tough and life circumstances can be challenging. In August, for example, the unemployment rate in San Diego County was 10.2 percent and California was second only to Nevada among states with the highest unemployment rates.

But whether it's dealing with finances, loss of a job, or a relationship problem, significant change in mood is something to be concerned about.

Men often ignore issues like chronic pain, fluctuating weight, lack of sleep, and digestive problems, which could actually be physical symptoms of stress and anxiety or other mental health problems. Historically men have shown a tendency to bottle up stress and refuse to talk about it. This makes the problem worse.

But stress should not be brushed off lightly as

it can trigger chest pains or lead to a potential drop in testosterone levels.

To prevent these symptoms from persisting, talk to someone that can help, like your healthcare provider, or check out a website like www.ToughTimesSD.org to help you identify symptoms for anxiety, stress, depression and to learn about local resources.

Dr. Jean Bonhomme of Men's Health Networks says although anger is a normal feeling, it's also one of the few emotions that society has permitted men to show openly. Men then often convert other negative emotions (like fear, pain, loss, anxiety, or feeling vulnerable) into anger. But it's important to realize there is something deeper going on when these feelings aren't going away.

Your physical and mental health are more closely associated than you think and small changes will significantly improve your overall well-being. Simple changes like spending time with buddies and loved ones or working out for 30 minutes serve as a good start.

**FOR AN EXTENDED LIST OF TIPS TO STAY WELL AND
KEEP YOUR MIND HEALTHY, VISIT www.ToughTimesSD.org.**

Call (800) 479-3339 for immediate help.

Trained and experienced professionals are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week to talk with you.

Call 2-1-1 for local resources that can help you get through tough times.

This hotline connects you to community agencies that assist with employment, health problems, housing, legal issues, relationship problems, alcohol and drug problems, etc.
Dial 2-1-1 or visit www.211sandiego.org

Veterans call 2-1-1 to reach Courage to Call

This Helpline by Veterans for Veterans is available to all active and former members of the military and their loved ones. You'll be connected to someone who knows exactly what you're going through thanks to a peer-to-peer support program.

Men's Health Network www.menshealthnetwork.org

This network provides a variety of information specific to men's physical and mental health.

One in five children and teens in the United States is impacted by emotional, social and behavioral disorders? This is more than those impacted by physical disorders such as asthma and diabetes.

Source: National Institute of Mental Health

Did You Know:

Listen Up: Stories of struggle, perseverance and hope are shared by countless San Diegans.

Facing stigma and discrimination, overcoming hardships such as abuse, homelessness and traumatic memories can be difficult, but it can get better. Finding inner strength and connecting with the right people or local programs can make all the difference. Visit www.Up2SD.org to view personal story movies created by San Diegans to inspire, offer hope and challenge stereotypes.

“In my Asian culture, mental illness is taboo. When we’re sad, we say we don’t feel well or have a headache because you certainly would never say the word “depressed.” We don’t want to embarrass or bring shame to our family.

I struggled with body image issues from 9 years old through high school. Every day I felt I wasn’t pretty enough, skinny enough, not good enough. When I got accepted to college, I became nervous, anxious and overwhelmed. I lost interest in the things I once loved, slept all day and isolated myself from the world. I considered ending my life.

My family noticed the changes, but didn’t understand what was happening. So they took me to the hospital. Treatment included support groups and art therapy, which reconnected me with my love of drawing and painting. I don’t know where I would be without the help and unconditional support of my family.

I’m blessed to still be breathing and know I’m strong, beautiful and I love myself.”



-Susan

Watch Susan’s story at: www.Up2SD.org

Link Up: Positive Solutions Program

The Positive Solutions program serves homebound seniors (60+) with minor depression from all cultural backgrounds in the County’s Central, North Inland, and North Coastal Regions. Trained staff is able to help clients recognize symptoms of minor depression, identify possible causes and ways to cope. This is achieved through short-term psycho-education, evidence-based PEARLS (Program to Encourage Active and Rewarding Lives for Seniors) model, and other brief interventions. The program is administered by the Union of Pan Asian Communities (UPAC). For more information on assistance, benefits and appropriate resources, visit upacsd.com or call (619) 238-1783.

“Our senior clients manage their lives better by learning a method to solve problems that contribute to the way they are feeling. Clients learn to increase pleasant, social and physical activities. We focus on small goals in the beginning, such as getting the mail every day or calling a friend or family member, and gradually clients can work on bigger issues in their lives. We remind them that depression is not a normal part of aging and that they can feel well. Our goal is to empower seniors to gain control over their daily life struggles and to make positive impacts in their lives.”

Pei-Chen Emily Wu, Psy.D.
Program Manager

Shine A Light On... Eating Disorders

If left untreated, eating disorders can cause many physical and emotional problems and even lead to death. The most common eating disorders are ***anorexia nervosa*** (a pattern of self-imposed starvation), ***bulimia*** (a pattern of binge eating followed by self-induced vomiting) and ***compulsive overeating***. The causes may be psychological, biological or social. Individuals experiencing these eating disorders often have low self-esteem, are obsessed with food, and need help and support from professionals and family. These disorders often develop from stress, social pressures or psychological problems, which lead to poor feelings about their body.

To learn about symptoms and resources, visit one of these websites:

National Eating Disorder Association
www.nationaleatingdisorders.org

University of California San Diego
www.eatingdisorders.ucsd.edu

Courtesy of www.ulifeline.org

Liven Up Your Health:

Eat Healthy. Be Happy.

The following five foods help improve your mood, according to Judith Wurtman, Ph.D., a former Massachusetts Institute of Technology research scientist and coauthor of *The Serotonin Power Diet*.



1 Oatmeal - Yes, you *can* eat carbs! Wurtman says just 20 minutes after eating a bowl of oatmeal, your body sends an amino acid called tryptophan into the brain to trigger the manufacture of serotonin. Serotonin makes you feel tranquil and better able to cope. Just make sure you stick with carbohydrates rich in fiber, including whole wheat pasta and beans. Both keep serotonin flowing steadily.



2 Snack on nuts! Pistachios provide fiber, antioxidants and unsaturated fatty acids, which are all linked to lower blood pressure. These also keep you cool and calm. Almonds contain magnesium, which turns carbohydrates, protein and fat into your boost of energy! And walnuts keep the blues away thanks to omega-3 essential fatty acids – proven to give you a more positive outlook for the day!



3 Guacamole- Gracias Avocado! Because it's high in monounsaturated fat and potassium, an avocado-based guacamole dip is great for lowering blood pressure, according to the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute. Monounsaturated fat also helps keep receptors in the brain sensitive to mood-boosting serotonin. Half an avocado a day will do the trick.



4 Chocolate- Chocolate releases endorphins, the chemicals in the brain that make you happy. In addition, chocolate has been known to lower blood pressure and reduces your risk of a stroke. The darker the better, and less is more... we're talking a couple Hershey's Kisses here.



5 Eat fresh and buy local! All of the choices above, in addition to an abundance of fresh fruits and vegetables, can be found at your local farmer's markets.

For more information on nutrition and other paths to healthy living, visit healthyworks.org

Courtesy of National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute, The Serotonin Power Diet

Growing Up:

Military Children: Making it a Smoother Transition after a Deployment

Living in San Diego, chances are you have a loved one in the military. The separation is hard for everyone, but especially for children. Try out these tips to help your kids cope with separation- they might provide some comfort to you as well.

- ▶ **Talk about the change**- When possible, both parents should talk to the children together. Tell them where the deployed parent is going, but keep answers short and simple.
- ▶ **Be a protective shield**- Be mindful of what's on television. Young children should not be exposed to the sights and sounds of war. Be available to talk to your older children about what they're hearing at school or on the news.
- ▶ **Remain connected with the deployed parent**- Encourage kids to make cards, write letters and keep photos of the parent in the child's bedroom.
- ▶ **Stay positive** - If you are confident about an upcoming change, your child will be positive too.
- ▶ **Seek help**- The good news is that you don't have to get through it alone. Thankfully, various organizations provide ways to alleviate the initial shock of knowing daddy or mommy will be gone for a while. Visit www.Up2SD.org for a list of resources.

Courtesy of Operation Military Kids, Superintendent of Public Instruction/State of Washington; Parents Guide to the Military Child During Deployment and Reunion.



Risk Factors

- ▶ Previous suicide attempt
- ▶ Mental illness and/or substance abuse
- ▶ Recent losses, including of job, loved ones, role, status
- ▶ Access to lethal means
- ▶ Barriers to care

Warning signs

Call 9-1-1 or seek immediate help from a mental health provider when you hear or see any one of these behaviors:

- ▶ Someone threatening to hurt or kill themselves
- ▶ Someone looking for ways to kill themselves: seeking access to pills, weapons, or other means

If you are concerned about someone because their behavior has changed and they are exhibiting any of the warning signs of suicide listed below, seek help by calling the Access & Crisis Line at (800) 479-3339.

- ▶ Withdrawing from family and friends
- ▶ Acting reckless, hopeless, angry, or anxious
- ▶ Increasing their use of alcohol or drugs

What to Do

If someone you know exhibits warning signs of suicide:

- ▶ Do not leave the person alone
- ▶ Remove any firearms, drugs, alcohol, or sharp objects that could be used in an attempt
- ▶ For life threatening emergencies or immediate response, call 9-1-1
- ▶ For urgent and all other concerns, contact the Access & Crisis Line at (800) 479-3339

THIS FALL, IMPACT THE LIVES OF FELLOW SAN DIEGANS BY BECOMING A VOLUNTEER!

San Diego Youth Services

SDYS is a nationally recognized non-profit organization that works with homeless youth and youth in crisis. Numerous volunteer opportunities are available, including: working with adopted youth, mentoring, outreach to homeless youth, volunteering at teen homeless shelters, administrative and donor development, and special projects.

Website: www.sdyouthservices.org



Senior Community Centers

These centers provide nutrition, social and medical services, advocacy, homeless outreach, housing assistance, and intergenerational activities for seniors age 60 and over. They also offer skill-based activities for seniors and are always looking for volunteers to assist in leading fun activities.

Website: www.servingseniors.org

For other volunteer opportunities visit www.volunteersandiego.org and under "Search Projects" type in "mental health."

SAVE A LIFE SAN DIEGO COMMUNITY WALK



DATE:
Sunday, November 13, 2011

WHERE:
Balboa Park
(6th Ave. & Laurel St.)

TIME:
Registration: 6:30-8:00am
Opening Ceremonies: 8:00am

FEE:
There is no fee to participate, but consider sponsoring a participant or registering a team.

WEBSITE:
www.savealifewalk.kintera.org

Need help immediately?
SD CRISIS HOTLINE
(800) 479-3339

COMMUNITY RESOURCES
2-1-1

