



IT'S UP TO US

to Create a Healthy & Supportive San Diego

A special bulletin covering mental health topics for San Diegans.



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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, educating the community and providing easy access to local resources, we can initiate change in perception, inspire wellness and reduce the stigma surrounding mental health challenges.

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 funded by the Mental Health Services Act. Visit our Web site to learn more!

www.Up2SD.org



Need help immediately?

SD CRISIS HOTLINE

(800) 479-3339

Community Resources

2-1-1

Suicide is Preventable DO YOU KNOW HOW?

It's not always easy to recognize the warning signs that someone is thinking about ending their life, or to start that difficult conversation. What if you are mistaken? What if they get angry? Although there is no simple answer, it is safe to say that if you are concerned about someone else and your gut is telling you that something is off, you should not hesitate to take action.

Here's what you can do:

1. Learn the warnings signs for suicide.
2. Has the person been difficult to get in touch with? Reach out and be persistent.
3. Start a conversation. Try something like: I am worried about you. It seems like something is bothering you. You don't seem like yourself lately. How can I help?
4. Don't hesitate to ask direct questions, like: Are you depressed? Are you feeling like there is no way out? Are you thinking about ending your life?
5. Ask for help. If you don't feel like this is something you can take on, or you are not able to get through to the person, reach out to a friend, family member or a professional by calling the confidential San Diego Access & Crisis Line.
6. Provide the person you are concerned about with resources and a number to call for help.
7. Most importantly, if you are with a person who is thinking about ending their life:
 - Stay with them
 - Take them seriously
 - Really listen to them
 - Call for help immediately!



"People often fail to ask about suicide in the mistaken belief that posing the question may raise the person's risk of suicide. But the contrary is true. In fact, asking about suicide sends a message that you care, and is a great opportunity to encourage the person showing the warning signs of suicide to seek professional help."

– Beth Sise, JD, RN, MSN, CPNP

Director, Trauma Research & Injury Prevention at Scripps Mercy Hospital and Co-Chair of the Suicide Prevention Action Plan Committee

"I believe one barrier to speaking up is the fear of alienating a loved one who may be showing warning signs. There is also the silence and denial that sometimes grips a family after a suicide. They avoid talking about their loss and cannot imagine that another loved one would end their life. They carry their grief in silence and this precludes talking to a family member showing warning signs of suicide."

– Bonnie Bear

Executive Director, Survivors of Suicide Loss

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Did You Know:

Each year, approximately 950,000 women in the US suffer from postpartum depression. That's nearly 5 times more women than are diagnosed with breast cancer each year. (Sources: Centers for Disease Control and National Cancer Institute)

Listen Up: STORIES OF STRUGGLE, PERSEVERANCE & HOPE

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.



“When the doctor told me I had clinical depression and Post Traumatic Stress Syndrome (PTSD), my first thought was how stigmatized, alone and sad my daughter would be from now on. Mental illness had been drilled in my mind as being the worst thing to have in the Latino culture I grew up in. Many events contributed to my eventual diagnosis: losing my family to terrorism in Colombia, losing my house in Lake Tahoe and being homeless in San Diego. Many times I felt like giving up, but my daughter gave me the courage to get up and keep on trying to get somewhere in my life. And I did! I completed four Bachelor’s and two Masters Degrees, and currently I work for Recovery Innovations of California. Today’s reality is that mental illness is no reason to be alone or for your family to be stigmatized. Receiving help is just as humble as giving it!” – Mercedes Weber

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LOCAL RESOURCES:

San Diego Access & Crisis Line

(800) 479-3339

Confidential, available 24/7 and in multiple languages.

Yellow Ribbon Suicide Prevention Program

(760) 635-5904

www.YellowRibbonSD.org

A program that provides outreach, education and training to assist adults and youth to ask for help for themselves and how to respond to others asking for help.

Survivors of Suicide Loss

(619) 482-0297

www.soslsd.org

A nonprofit, self-help support group system for those who have lost a loved one to suicide.

For San Diego specific data and statistics, visit www.sdchip.org, go to CHIP Library and review the report: *Suicide in San Diego County: 1996-2001*.

Warning Signs for Suicide

Warning signs are the earliest detectable signs that indicate heightened risk for suicide in the near-term (i.e., within minutes, hours, or days), as opposed to risk factors which suggest longer-term risk (i.e., a year to lifetime.) It is often a constellation of signs that raises concern, rather than one or two symptoms alone.

Tier 1

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
- Someone talking or writing about death, dying, or suicide

Tier 2

Seek help by contacting a mental health professional or calling (800) 479-3339 for a referral should you witness, hear, or see anyone exhibiting any one or more of these behaviors:

- Hopelessness
- Rage, anger, seeking revenge
- Acting reckless or engaging in risky activities, seemingly without thinking
- Feeling trapped—like there’s no way out
- Increasing alcohol or drug use
- Withdrawing from friends, family or society
- Anxiety, agitation, unable to sleep, or sleeping all the time
- Dramatic mood changes
- No reason for living; no sense of purpose in life

Courtesy of www.sprc.org



Shine A Light On... Postpartum Depression

Postpartum Depression Is More Than Just The Baby Blues

The baby blues after childbirth can commonly include mood swings, anxiety, irritability and crying spells, but typically fade quickly. Postpartum depression is a more severe, long-lasting form that may occur soon after delivery or up to a year later. Most of the time, it occurs within the first 3 months after delivery. Factors that contribute to postpartum depression include changes in brain chemistry, hormone levels and lifestyle. The condition can last up to a year, but with appropriate treatment it usually goes away within a few months. Learn more about postpartum depression by contacting the Postpartum Health Alliance in the Link Up section below. ▼

Link Up:

POSTPARTUM HEALTH ALLIANCE

The Postpartum Health Alliance, located in San Diego, offers moms in crisis and their concerned friends and relatives support, information and referrals. Call their warmline at (619) 254-0023 or visit www.postpartumhealthalliance.org for more information, a blog and upcoming events.

Growing Up:

EMOTIONAL HEALTH FOR NEW MOMS AND MOMS TO BE

Pregnancy and caring for a newborn are blissful, yet also stressful times. Here are a couple of resources to help moms and moms-to-be maintain their mental health.

Text4Baby provides pregnant women and new moms with



information they need to take care of their health and give their babies the best possible start in life. Topics include birth defects prevention, immunization, nutrition, seasonal flu, mental health, oral health and safe sleep. Women who sign up for the service by texting BABY (or BEBE for Spanish) to 511411 receive free SMS text messages each week, timed to their due date or baby's date of birth. For more information, visit: www.text4baby.org

New Moms New Babies is an online radio program and forum with useful information and guest speakers on a wide range of topics for new parents.

For more information, visit: www.newmomsnewbabies.com



Get Up & Participate!

One in four adults and one in five children suffer from a mental disorder or have behavioral challenges. It's Up To Us to reduce the stigma that surrounds mental illness. Speak up and support those who suffer from mental health challenges.

May is Mental Health Month! There are many opportunities to get involved in stigma reducing events and activities around the county. Visit www.Up2SD.org for a complete listing.

Here are a few additional actions each one of us can take to reduce stigma in our neighborhoods:

Stand Up against "NIMBYISM" (Not In My Back Yard):

Decent affordable housing for people with mental illness requires active public support. Join your Homeowners or Neighborhood Association to help educate members and/or attend Building and Safety Planning Commission Hearings to support permits for small group homes, apartments for individuals with mental illness, or other facilities. For more information visit: www.HousingMattersSD.org

Speak Up:

The San Diego chapter of the national organization Mental Health America is dedicated to promoting mental health through advocacy, education, research and service. Their advocacy network is a powerful voice for change that is made up of thousands of individuals nationwide who speak up through legislative advocacy. For more information and to sign up for their Action Alerts, visit: <http://takeaction.mentalhealthamerica.net>

Volunteer:

Visit www.volunteersandiego.org and under "Search Projects" type in "mental health"



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