Mental Health and Well Being

When mental illness affects us or someone we love, we may feel isolated and afraid. Alone and unsure, we may not know where to turn. Fortunately, each county in California provides a variety of services through County Behavioral Health, as well as through community based organizations like Interface Children Family Services.

According to SAMHSA’s (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration) National Mental Health Information Center “each year 44 million American’s experience a mental disorder”. 661,604 Californians are receiving helpful, state funded mental health services.

We invite you to take a few minutes and become familiar with the resources at the end of this article as well as the services available in our community. Join with us to help create a supportive community of informed assistance, acceptance and encouragement towards one another. Help eliminate the negative attitudes that surround mental illness.

DO
use respectful language
emphasize abilities, not limitations
tell someone if they express a stigmatizing attitude

DON’T
portray successful persons with disabilities as super human
use generic labels such as retarded, or the mentally ill
use terms like crazy, lunatic, manic depressive, or slow functioning

Resources

Statewide Agencies

Mental Health
Department of Mental Health
Health and Welfare Agency
E-mail: dmh.dmh@dmh.ca.gov
Internet: www.dmh.cahwnet.gov

State Substance Abuse Agency
Contact your State substance abuse agency for information about treatment and care of substance abuse disorders:
Department of Alcohol and Drug Programs
Internet: www.adp.cahwnet.gov

State Protection and Advocacy Agency
Each State has a protection and advocacy agency that receives funding from the Federal
Center for Mental Health Services. Agencies are mandated to protect and advocate for the rights of people with mental illnesses and to investigate reports of abuse and neglect in facilities that care for or treat individuals with mental illnesses.

Protection and Advocacy, Inc.
E-mail: infor@pai-ca.org
Internet: www.pai-ca.org

*Spanish language assistance available*

**Family Support**
The Center for Mental Health Services awards grants to statewide, family-run networks to provide support and information to families of children and adolescents with serious emotional, behavioral, or mental disorders.

Parents Helping Parents
E-mail: info@php.com
Internet: www.php.com

The National Alliance on Mental Illness maintains a helpline for information on mental illnesses and referrals to local groups. The local self-help groups have support and advocacy components and offer education and information about community services for families and individuals.

NAMI California
E-mail: support@namicalifornia.org
Internet: www.namicalifornia.org

*Spanish language assistance available*

Statewide consumer organizations are run by and for consumers of mental health services and promote consumer empowerment. These organizations provide information about mental health and other support services at the State level and are active in addressing and advocating for mental health system issues.

California Network of Mental Health Clients
E-mail: main@californiaclients.org
Internet: www.californiaclients.org

The National Mental Health Consumers’ Self-Help Clearinghouse, funded partly by the Center for Mental Health Services, promotes and helps to develop consumer-run self-help groups across the country. Technical assistance and materials are available on such topics as organizing groups, fundraising, leadership development, incorporating, public relations, advocacy, and networking. For more information, contact:
The National Mental Health Consumers' Self-Help Clearinghouse
E-mail: info@mhselfhelp.org
Internet: www.mhselfhelp.org

The National Empowerment Center is a Technical Assistance Center run by mental health consumers/survivors. The Center's mission is to carry a message of recovery, empowerment, hope and healing to people who have been diagnosed with mental illness. The Center provides information and referrals to consumer/survivor resources nationwide and offers technical assistance to individuals and groups involved in consumer empowerment activities. The Center distributes recovery-related publications and sponsors education and training activities.

The National Empowerment Center
E-mail: info4@power2u.org
Internet: www.power2u.org

The Consumer Organization & Networking Technical Assistance Center (CONTAC) funded by the Center for Mental Health Services, is a resource center for consumers/survivors and consumer-run organizations across the United States. Services and products include informational materials; on-site training and skill-building curricula; electronic and other communication capabilities; networking and customized activities promoting self-help, recovery, leadership, business management, and empowerment.

Consumer Organization & Networking Technical Assistance Center (CONTAC)
E-mail: usacontac@contac.org
Internet: www.contac.org

Local Agencies
To receive a referral to a Ventura County agency or provider, dial 2-1-1 from your home or business phone or 1-800-339-9597 from your cell phone

2-1-1
Internet: www.2-1-1ventura.org

Interface Children Family Services
805-485-6114
E-mail: interface@icfs.org
Internet: www.icfs.org