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October 2012 Issue

OCTOBER NAMI EVENTS

Education and Advocacy Meeting



The *Education and Advocacy* meeting for October was held on Wednesday, October 3, 2012 from 6:00pm to 7:00pm at NAMI - Sonoma County, 1300 North Dutton Avenue, Suite A, Santa Rosa, California, 95401. Suzie Daines is a Bay Area based singer and songwriter who performed songs off her new album, *Love is Absolutely Free*.

Her raw vocals sounded a bit like Jewel, Natalie Merchant, and Sarah McLachlan, yet distinctly "Suzie". She has won the Best Song Award at the monthly West Coast Songwriters Open Mic competition three years in a row for her songs: *I Give In*, *Absolutely Free*, and *Beauty*. She also won Best Performance for her song, *One More Day*.

EDUCATION

Suicide Prevention & Awareness Symposium: Educating The Community



NAMI Sonoma County organized a fantastic event on September 10th, 2012 in commemoration of the 10th anniversary of World Suicide Awareness Day. NAMI sold out its annual free event and had 370 attendees registered along with various Bay Area community agencies tabling at the Symposium. With the generous support of the Lytton Band of Pomo Indians, NAMI Sonoma County produced a community event that included a key note address by its Chairperson of the Sonoma County Board of Supervisors, Shirlee Zane, and concluded with an uplifting performance by local comedian/activist, Brian Wetzel. In between these two presentations, the day was filled with breakout sessions including a lecture on Compassion Fatigue, Native Americans as a High Risk Group, Older Adults as a High Risk Group, LGBTQI Adults/Youth as a High Risk Group, QPR training by Sonoma County Behavioral Health, Operation S.A.V.E. gatekeeper training by the San Francisco VA Medical Center, and an interactive panel presentation of suicide attempt survivors.

Another presentation was given by Kognito Interactive showcasing its school interventions, strategies for supporting youth and adolescents after the loss of a parent. Our affiliate also took the opportunity to award several outstanding individuals and groups for their work in the mental health community.

NAMI Sonoma County was recognized by the International Association for Suicide Prevention and several local newspapers for its leadership in taking the courage to increase awareness and emphasize protective factors around this public health issue of suicide.

Your Vote Matters!!!



October 22, 2012 is the last day you can register to vote for the November 6th election; and October 30, 2012 is the last day you can apply to vote by mail or absentee ballot.

If we want recovery from mental illness, we have to vote for recovery. Candidates across the political

spectrum need to hear that mental health is important for Americans. We can each do our part by registering to vote and voting on November 6, 2012. We must connect with our candidates in order to take a stand on mental health issues.

How do you find out if you are already registered? If you voted in the primary in June or in the 2010 election without any problem and you haven't moved since, your registration is probably up to date. If you want to check, here is a county by county listing of phone numbers for voting officials:

www.sos.ca.gov/elections/registration-status

If you do choose to vote by mail or to fill out the ballot and bring it to your polling site, your ballot must be received by the close of voting on November 6, 2012.

NAMI's Ending the Silence Program



NAMI's newest program was presented at the Sonoma County Office of Education at their *Ending Barriers to Learning* workshop. The attendees included counselors, school social workers, psychologists, and teachers. With new contacts made from this event, NAMI is looking forward to start presenting *End the Silence* in front of schools across the county.

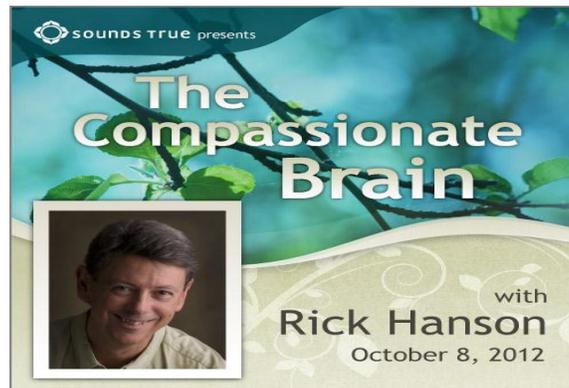
Ending the Silence is a 50-minute program designed for high school audiences and is typically presented in the freshman/sophomore health classes during the mental health portion of the curriculum. This transformational program is devoted to giving students an opportunity to learn about mental illness through informative PowerPoint, short videos, and personal testimony.

Through the presentation, students learn symptoms and indicators of mental illness, and are given ideas about how to help themselves, friends, or family members who may be in need of support. The program is delivered by a trained two-person team, including an individual who relates to the student population by sharing their own journey with a diagnosable mental health condition. A primary goal of this program is to create a generation of students that are well-positioned to eradicate the stigma associated with mental illness through education and advocacy.

We are looking for presenters to take part in this incredible program. Training will be provided. Contact NAMI at stigma@namisoco.org for information on how to get involved.

For additional information on the *Ending the Silence* Program, please visit www.endingthesilence.org.

The Compassionate Brain: An Online Web Series That Explores Effective Ways to Change Your Brain, Your Heart, and Your Life



Beginning October 8, 2012, on seven Monday nights, 8-9 pm Eastern time (GMT -4), Dr. Rick Hanson, Neuropsychologist, will interview world-class scholars/teachers (in order): Richie Davidson, Dan Siegel, Tara Brach, Dachar Kernel, Kelly McGonigal, Kristin Neff, and Jean Houston. Each week, they'll discuss different ways to use the power of neuroplasticity -- how the mind can change the brain to transform the mind -- to open the heart, build courage, find compassion, forgive oneself and others, speak and act from both kindness and strength, and heal the world.

You can watch live or see the archived videos if you miss a session. These unique conversations with first-rate experts are freely offered - along with their practical tools for cooperation, empathy, and kindness. (The series is particularly timely in light of a U.S. Presidential election occurring right in the middle of it.)

Our world has needs at different levels (economic, environmental, cultural, etc.) but the common factor in all of these is the human brain, whose ancient fight-or-flight circuits are dragging humanity toward if not over the brink. If more people and more brains -- and thus more hearts and hands -- turned toward compassion, that could make a real difference.

Parents and Teachers as Allies



Parents and Teachers as Allies is a two hour in-service program that focuses on helping school professionals and families within the school community better understand the early warning signs of mental illnesses in children and adolescents. They also learn how best to intervene so that youth and mental health treatment needs are linked with services. This program also presents the lived experience of mental illnesses and how school can best communicate with families about mental health related concerns.

To bring this in-service program to your school, please contact us at info@namisoco.org.

Trainings for the roles as client, family member, and mental health professional are coming up and individuals to fit these roles are needed. Please contact us if you are interested at: stigma@namisoco.org

Provider Education



The *Provider Education* Course emphasizes the involvement of clients and family members as faculty in provider-staff training. The teaching team consists of five people:

- Two family members trained as *Family-to-Family* Education Program teachers
- Two clients who are knowledgeable about their own mental illness, have a supportive relationship with their families, and are dedicated to the process of recovery
- A mental health professional who is also a family member or consumer.

Few teaching programs employ consumers in this kind of sustained training effort in which they are paid to participate on a teaching team as they present a 5-week course.

The course reflects a new knowledge base -- the "lived experiences" of people coping with a mental illness or caring for someone who lives with a mental illness including this deeply personal perspective creates an appreciable difference in the program's content. It adds a means of teaching the emotional aspects and practical consequences of these illnesses to the academic medical information in the course.

For more information contact: stigma@namisoco.org ([Recruiting for trainers and presenter](#))

RESOURCES FOR MENTAL HEALTH

Behavioral Health's Mobile Support Team



Sonoma County Supervisors last December approved funding for a mobile support team that will assist law enforcement in dealing with mental health and substance abuse crises – an area that is increasingly common and difficult for enforcement to deal with. The creation of the Behavioral Health Mobile Support Team will “help foster better outcomes for individuals in crisis and their families and provide support for law enforcement personnel confronting extremely difficult situations,” concluded the report. Furthermore, the Mobile Support Team will be teaming up with NAMI Sonoma County so these individuals and families can utilize our outstanding recovery programs--details to come!

Petaluma Housing

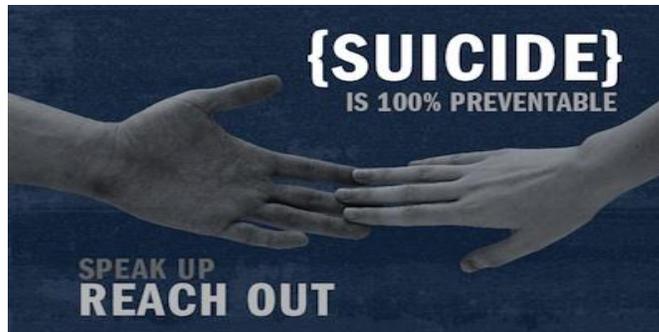


We have two vacancies, for veterans living with emotional and mental challenges. Please call Rosemary at 707-527-6655 x 1102 if you are interested in interviewing for one of the vacancies.

Housing Wish List

Gently used sheets, towels, blankets, comforters, toiletries, pillows, food, plants (indoors and outdoors) furniture and lamps (both indoors and outdoors), pictures and or anything you would like to donate that would make the living space more comfortable and homey.

The North Bay Suicide Prevention Hotline



In 2011, 69 people committed suicide. About 80 percent were white men, including 22 men who were 50 and older, according to Sonoma County Coroner's office data. With that said, a new lifesaving resource is now available called The North Bay Suicide Prevention Hotline of Sonoma County. The 24-hour, seven days a week phone lines are staffed by volunteers who work out of San Rafael's Family Service Agency of Marin, part of the new North Bay Suicide Prevention Project. Trained staff will be familiar with the names and phone numbers of Sonoma County services. These amazing organizers hope local residents will step up to volunteer for such a crucial and lifesaving cause.

The toll free number is (855)-587-6373.

NAMI CLASSES

Tai Chi/Qi Gong Class



NAMI is offering a FREE Tai Ci and Qi Gong class. These are ancient Chinese fitness systems based on relaxed body alignment and smooth flow of energy. It is a good way to relieve stress and develop body-breath-mind awareness. This class is led by Jacob Newell and is open to all. This class is held on Mondays from 6:00-7:15 pm at the NAMI office. Specific days are indicated on the October 2012 calendar.

Art Group



In June, NAMI Sonoma County was excited to announce the restart of its fantastic art group facilitated by True Sirenidie. This group meets on Tuesdays from 3:00 P.M.- 4:30 P.M.

In August, they attended the Chalk Hill Artist Residency at the Warneke Ranch and Vineyards outside of Healdsburg with Artist in Residence, Jessica Dunne, a San Francisco artist.

They are looking forward to another outing soon and are actively looking to find a "Drop In" studio space where they can paint. Donations to this program are greatly appreciated.

Link to Our October 2012 Calendar:

<http://www.namisoco.org/calendar.shtml>