



831.427.8020
WWW.NAMISCC.ORG

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NAMI SANTA CRUZ PRESENTS

An Evening with NAMI Peers

(Individuals living with Serious Mental Health Challenges.)

You are invited to meet NAMI Peer Program leaders who are reaching out to the community in many extraordinary and educational ways. About 15 panel members will be there to share with you, and answer questions after the program.

Come and bring your friends and family to hear inspirational stories of challenges, of hope, and of healing.

Learn about the In Our Own Voice program, Peer Connections, and Peer to Peer classes. (see page 5)

January 21, 2015

6:30 Social Networking
7:00 PM to 8:30 Program

Live Oak Senior Center
1777 Capitola Rd. near 17th Ave.
Santa Cruz, CA 95062



Family Support Groups

THURSDAY NIGHT SUPPORT GROUP FOR FAMILY MEMBERS

NAMI's Family Support Group provides opportunities for family and friends of people living with mental illness to explore ideas and support one another. Every Thursday 7-8:30 PM * Live Oak Family Resource Center 1740 17th Avenue, SC • 427.8020

PARENTS OF YOUTH

For caregivers of youth 17 & under. 1st Friday at 12:30 PM
3rd Thursday at 6:30-8:00PM
Old Sashmill in Santa Cruz
303 Potrero St., Suite 42, Rm 103 For more info, contact Emily ebc73@comcast.net or 476.1020 youth.namiscc.org

HOPE Bipolar Disorder & Depression Support

For individuals with Bipolar or Depression and their family and/or friends. Christian Based.
2nd & 4th Tuesdays, 6:30 - 8:15 PM
Santa Cruz Bible Church • 440 Frederick St. Room #20 • 336.5740

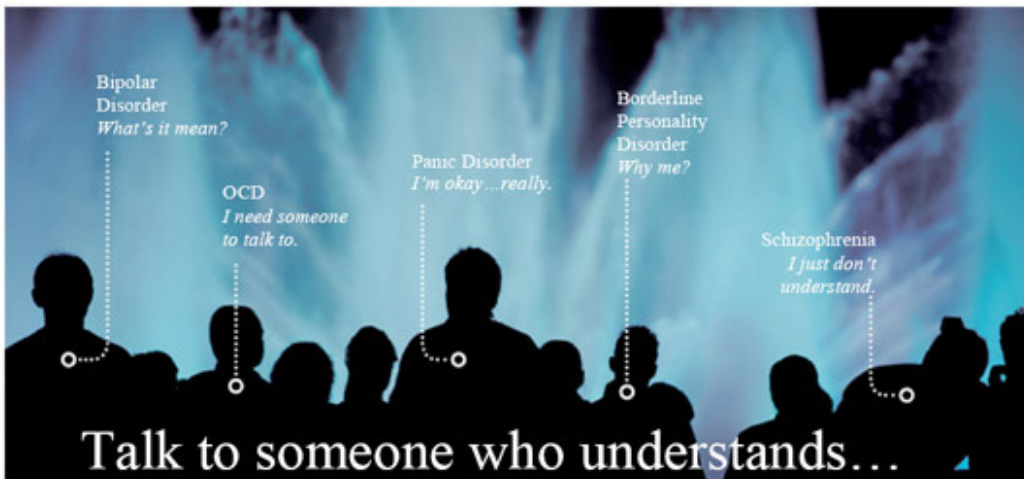
Parents with Hope - Al-Anon

For parents or relatives of individuals with addiction & mental health issues. Sundays from 6:30-7:45PM at the Inner Light Center, 5630 Soquel Drive in Soquel. For info, contact Rachel at 688.1792

ADHD Group

Parents Meeting: 6:30-8 PM the second Wednesday.
Adults with ADHD meet: 6:30-8 PM the fourth Wednesday. For information: Judy Brenis jbbrenis@comcast.net • 684-0590

Peer Connections



Talk to someone who understands...
someone just like you.

Client Support Groups

■ NAMI Peer Connections Recovery Support Group

NAMI Connection is a weekly recovery support group for people living with mental illness in which people learn from each others' experiences, share coping strategies, and offer each other encouragement and understanding.

Every Wednesday 1:00-2:30 pm
MHCAN: 1051 Cayuga St., Santa Cruz

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Santa Cruz Bible Church • 440 Frederick St. Room #20 • 336.5740

■ See full calendar of MHCAN Support Groups

831.469.0462 or www.mhcan.org

■ ADHD Group

Adults with ADHD meet:

6:30-8 PM the fourth Wednesday.
For information: Judy Brenis jbbrenis@comcast.net • 684.0590

Know your insurance rights

Some local NAMI members have been sharing that they are experiencing new difficulties in getting their insurance claims paid for psychiatric care. The new Mental Health Parity laws came into effect in 2014, so there are many changes to be sorted out, and NAMI members will be at the forefront of enforcement. We asked Board Member Rama Khalsa, former Health Services Agency director to write on this issue.

Last year the State of California followed the Federal government in making parity law related to mental health coverage required as a component of healthcare insurance law. As a result, mental health benefits can not have higher copays or restrictions than any physical health benefits. For example, many plans used to require 50 percent copays for mental health treatment and have very low treatment limits in terms of visits. Now, this can only be true if that is the plan's rule for physical health care services as well. Most plans have no limits on outpatient care visits and fixed copays.

This legislation was an important step in the right direction, but there are still many difficult and unclear areas of the law and families may need legal or advocacy assistance particularly if the child or patient needs residential care or intensive case management. These two services do not have parallels in the physical health world and so working this through in advance with your primary care physician and psychiatrist with good documentation of medical necessity is recommended. Many health plans still use behavioral health carve out plans which means

they do not directly manage the panel or providers to be sure it is adequate to meet local needs. Unless you are in a PPO where you can choose your providers and go out of the local network, you need to at least try to use the local clinical network first or ask your preferred clinician to consider joining the panel. PPOs do provide more flexibility but are often more expensive.

There are some good advocacy options if you feel your insurance provider is intentionally denying care or delaying payment to you or to the provider. If you are in an HMO you can complain to the California Department of Managed Healthcare. There are also more and more law groups specializing in health insurance law and legal issues. Often one strongly written letter from an attorney can get an issue resolved. In addition you can file a formal complaint with the Insurance Commissioner of California and let your plan know you have done this and will have representation for your claim. Having good documentation of medical necessity for the care is also a critical component and sometimes a second opinion helps. ■

Resources:

For a complete list of resources, please see our website: <http://www.namisc.org/parity.html>

Parity Implementation Coalition <http://parityispersonal.org>

Denials Management Inc. <http://www.denialsmgt.com>

Health Consumer Alliance - <http://healthconsumer.org>

California Department of Managed Healthcare - <http://www.dmhca.gov>

Disability Rights California - <http://www.disabilityrightsca.org>

California Commission on Mental Health <http://californiamentalhealth.org/>

Law Office of Lesley Harris, A local attorney who has been supportive and has insurance knowledge, 831-458-0502



Disability Rights California offers training on mental health parity laws

Through funding from CalMHSA's Stigma and Discrimination Reduction (SDR) Project, Disability Rights California trains on mental health parity laws and equips participants with tools and strategies to advocate for mental health and substance use abuse care. They can discuss individual mental health parity issues, provide counsel and advice, provide help filing complaints and in select cases raising systemic issues provide direct representation.

<http://www.disabilityrightsca.org>
 California's protection & advocacy system Toll Free 800.776.5746

NAMI Santa Cruz County would like to sponsor a local training. If you are interested in learning more about the project or would be willing to help coordinate a training, please contact info@namisc.org or call our Warm Line.

Education Classes

■ **NAMI Family to Family**

This 12 week educational program helps friends and families to understand and help their loved ones. Email Joane: joannecy@aol.com to get on waitlist for future classes or call 427.8020

■ **NAMI Peer to Peer**

The Peer to Peer class is a 10 week series taught by individuals who are experienced at living well with a mental illness. Contact Loren at lorencrabb27@gmail.com or 427.8020

■ **NAMI BASICS**

This 10 week educational program is designed for parents and caregivers of youth (10-17) to understand and help their loved ones. Contact Emily at ebc73@comcast.net or 427.8020

■ **NAMI Provider Education Program**

March 2015 - 3 hours a week for 5 Weeks, 15 CEU's

For all professionals who want to understand more about serious mental illnesses. Taught by a panel of a professional therapists, providers, people living with a mental illness, and family members. Call 427.8020 to be put onto wait list for notification of dates.

Holiday Party a Success!



The Holiday Party for people living with mental health challenges was another fun success. Over 300 people had a great time, with turkey & ham dinner, gifts of new jackets and other useful items, great music by the Fish Hook and the singing group, Shadow and Light Singers.

Special thanks to MHCAN's team of Sara, David, Jennie, Sylvia, and NAMI's Tina Landino and family, Melissa Watrous and family, along with the Moose Lodge, the Aptos United Methodist Church, and to every person who donated food, time, or money. ■



In loving memory of Mael Dinnell, and her powerful advocacy for "The Last Minority"

New Family Support Group for Caregivers of Transition Age Youth (18-26) now forming.

Transition age refers to 18 - 25. This age is unique because people are beginning to leave the family unit and venture out on their own. It can be a very challenging time for everyone but is especially challenging to young people with a mental illness. If you are interested in joining a Support Group for caregivers of this age group, please call our warm line or signup at: <http://www.namisc.org/tay.html>. You will be informed when the group is formed.

Presentations

■ **In Our Own Voice**

Community presentation designed to create understanding and compassion. NAMI 427.8020.

■ **Ending the Silence and Parents and Teachers as Allies**

Middle and High School presentations for students, teachers and parents. Call Sheryl at 331.9084



MAKING A DIFFERENCE IN 2015

NAMI SCC in 2015

Engage Volunteers and Human Race

We have so many projects rolling out. It is all very exciting, fulfilling and empowering to be involved in advocating for mental health and supporting our community. We are building a small pool of volunteers who we can call on occasionally to help stuff envelopes, make a few phone calls or help coordinate. Give us a call if you want to be part of this group of angels.

Spanish Language Programming

Many thanks to Juanita Sanchez and Marisella Valle who recently completed the de Familia a Familia training! We will be offering Spanish language Family to Family class in the spring! To sign up, please call our help line (831) 427-8020 or email info@namiscc.org.

As part of our goals to reach out to spanish language speakers, we will be presenting "Let's Talk about Mental Health: Facts, Support, Education" in both English and Spanish at the upcoming PVUSD Parent Conference on Feb. 22nd.

Support of School Club/Social Movement

When presenting *Ending the Silence* in schools, it has become clear that many young people want to take the next step to grow a movement that encourages mental wellness and takes the shame/blame away from mental health diagnosis. We have been working with LETS (project of UC Berkeley) to make this vision a reality. Cypress High School has implemented LETS with huge success! They even made the SC

The Human Race May 9th!

This year, NAMI Santa Cruz will be walking along our own beautiful coastline on West Cliff Drive, in the Human Race, May 9, 2015.

We want to be part of this powerful local movement, so that many more NAMI supporters can join us, and so that we build our local community's awareness of our cause.

There will be shuttles, continental breakfast, entertainment, and barbecue lunch.

The Human Race website will allow the same fundraising capabilities by individuals or teams. Stay tuned for more details!

We will not be doing the big bus trip to San Francisco Golden Gate park for the NAMI WALK on May 30th this year. However, many people probably will also drive to Golden Gate NAMI Walk on their own.

Sentinel in Dec! We look forward to encouraging more clubs and starting a Student Leadership Council.

Teamwork and Advocacy

We are continuing our work with Task Force for law enforcement training in Crisis Intervention Training (Memphis Model). It's been really rewarding to see the positive feedback and enthusiasm for this training in all of the jurisdictions and court system.

County Mental Health has been listening to the community and identifying gaps in our system. They have sought out various groups and are planning on continuing to work on solutions to identified gaps with work groups forming in the Spring. Right now, energy is being focused on "Innovative Projects" related to integrating family and peers into the system. It's so nice to know our voice has been heard. We look forward to working on this and other projects.

NAMI Needs:

- * Office space, preferably in mid-County 600+sq ft
- * Coordinator for In Our Own Voice program and Insurance Parity Training (flexible)
- * Volunteers for set up and bring snacks for speaker meeting (up to 6 times a year)
- * Human Race Walk committee members

Contact the NAMI line at 831-427-8020, or info@namiscc.org

Upcoming Events

1 Mental Health Advisory Board Meeting invites you to attend their monthly meetings. Meetings are held every 3rd Thursday, 3:00 - 5:00 pm. (Usually at the Live Oak Senior Center) Next meeting is January 15th.

2 Helping Adolescents Cope with Loss Teleconference Thurs, January 22nd 9:30 to 2:00 - <http://www.hospicesantacruz.org/HFA-Teleconference>. Open to Providers and Families.

3 Vet-Net Winter 2015 Summit - Identifying needs of Spouses, Dependents and Survivors. January 15th; 10:00 - 1:00pm Questions and RSVP at santacruzvet.net@gmail.com

4 Parenting Our Teens Through Life's Challenges: A conference on adolescent mental health and addiction. Sponsored by Menlo Park Presbyterian Church; Saturday, February 28, 2015; 9:00 to 3:30; <http://www.mppc.org/events/Parenting-Teens>

5 The Mental Health Coalition is gaining momentum. Mark your calendars! Meetings will take place at MHCAN every 2nd Wednesday of the month at 5:30. Contact Adrian for more information. adrian.camp@encompasscs.org

Jennifer's Corner

By Jennifer Wentworth

See Jennifer's blog at adayinthelifeofbeingbipolar.blogspot.com

NAMI "In Our Own Voice" is a unique presentation in which two trained speakers share their compelling personal stories of living with mental health challenges and achieving recovery. Audiences can range from individuals with mental health challenges, students of all ages, law enforcement officials and faith community members, to veterans and service clubs, and health providers. All organizations can benefit from this unique opportunity to speak to people who live with mental illness. While audiences benefit from the inspirational stories of the speakers, presenters increase their confidence and develop leadership skills while helping to inspire and motivate others. Thus we are excited to announce that we have 9 newly trained speakers for our "In Our Own Voice" program! Expanding our team to a strong 16 trained presenters! New speakers attended an intensive 2 day training by State leaders of In Our Own Voice. It takes much dedication, commitment and courage to share your story and journey of living with mental illness. NAMI is proud to welcome all trainees to the team! Thank you to our new presenters, Will Llewellyn, Tristan Arviso, Michael Chapman, Kathryn Russell, Kaitlin Chicca, Daniel Awai, Aubrey Campbell, Alex Demy & Alec Herberholz, as well as our veteran presenters Adrian Camp, Adrienne Bolles, Amanthe Libre, Hugh McCormick, Jennifer Wentworth, Kris Hunter, Bruce Thomas, & Larry Lester.

Here is what one of the current regular mental health venues has to say about the benefit of IOOV presentations.

"Both our clients and our staff appreciate the

In Our Own Voice presentations. We feel that it enhances the clients' experience while they are here at EDC. The presentation reminds clients that there is still a world out there with many pathways to wellness and recovery. It's refreshing to see previous clients who have graduated from various programs and done well for themselves. Our clients look forward to having outside speakers come in. I'm excited to hear that there are so many new speakers and so many new success stories to share!" - Laura, El Dorado Center

We are Ready for New Venues! One of our goals this year is to reach out to new community organizations and groups to dispel myths around mental illness and improve inclusion of people with mental illness. IOOV can be customized for the benefit of different groups. Do you know a club, church, organization, workplace, or group that would benefit from a presentation? Please help us spread the word. Contact the NAMI line at 831-427-8020, or info@namiscc.org.



