



Santa Cruz County

NEWSLETTER



March Speaker Meeting

ENDING THE SILENCE: YOUTH AND MENTAL HEALTH

Wednesday, March 20
6:30 - 7:00 Meet & Greet
7:00 - 9:00 Program & Q/A
Live Oak Senior Center
1777 Capitola Rd., Santa Cruz



**COME LEARN ABOUT NAMI'S MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS PRESENTATIONS
FOR SCHOOL STAFF, FAMILIES, AND STUDENTS!**

Learn:

- How to recognize the early **warning signs** of mental health conditions in youth
- **What to do** as a family member or staff working with youth exhibiting challenging behaviors
- **Resources** offered in Santa Cruz County
- How to **bring mental health awareness** to your school
- How **stigma** prevents youth under 18 from seeking treatment

Presenters:

- FOR STAFF: Former school administrators **Mary Gaukel** and **Les Forster** will present highlights from NAMI's Ending the Silence presentation for staff who work with youth.
- FOR FAMILIES: Incredible, long-time NAMI volunteer **Donna Cederlund** will present highlights from our Ending the Silence presentation for families of youth with mental health challenges.
- FOR YOUTH: NAMI-SCC's Program Manager **Anastasia Baboulevitch** will present highlights from our Ending the Silence presentation for middle and high school students.

Featuring information and resources for youth with mental health conditions from:

•Santa Cruz County Children's Behavioral Health

•Pajaro Valley Prevention and Student Assistance

•Encompass Youth Services

•Santa Cruz County Office of Education

We always appreciate volunteer help with snacks, set-up, greeting, and take-down. Please contact us at: (831)-824-0406, or email anastasia@namiscc.org if you'd like to help us with this event.



Join NAMI-SCC at the Human Race on May 11th!

Save the date!



It's fun!



Volunteers Needed to Join Our Team: Donate! Walk! Fundraise!

**Raise funds for NAMI Santa Cruz County to bring education, advocacy, and support for those affected by mental illness and their families!*

Walk with us along beautiful West Cliff Drive, and enjoy the food and entertainment! We can help you set up your fundraiser page for online donations. Contact **(831)-824-0406** or info@namiscc.org

START FUNDRAISING OR DONATE TODAY: Search "NAMI Santa Cruz" at www.humanracesc.org

VOLUNTEER HIGHLIGHT

Tristan Jacob McCormick



Our incomparable volunteer Tristan McCormick has volunteered with NAMI Santa Cruz County for almost 10 years (!!!) He is our most dedicated Ending the Silence peer, with the highest number of hours logged on the storyteller part of the team. Tristan regularly shares his mental health journey with youth, inspiring them to speak up and seek support for the difficulties they face. Along with his story, Tristan also loves sharing his passion for music with young students, performing his well-loved rap "Killing the Stigma" about mental illness and discrimination at every presentation. Thank you, Tristan, for your commitment, dedication, and unparalleled energy in the classrooms! We love you!

If you are interested in volunteering with Ending the Silence like Tristan: call the office at (831)-824-0406, or email Anastasia at anastasia@namiscc.org

Dear parents of youth with mental health challenges,

Parents and guardians are crucial participants in their children's education. As such, your visibility, advocacy, and awareness extend to all aspects of support, as partners with schools, academically, socially, and emotionally. When a parent has concerns about what MAY BE a mental health issue, her/his ability to access key support personnel is vital to early intervention. Some recommendations:

1. Attend school functions so that you get to know school staff (i.e. teacher(s), instructional aides, support staff, administrators, etc.) This underscores your commitment to supporting your child and **a willingness to partner with staff.**
2. Ensure that you understand and **follow the school's preferred methods of communication** (e.g. phone, email) with staff. The school's website will usually have all staff contacts posted, too.
3. Depending on your child's grade level, there may be more than one teacher as part of his/her school day. Classroom teachers may spend more time with your child than you do during the week; getting to know them is crucial in order to **establish a common conversation around how best to support your child.**
4. When you have a concern about behaviors that are affecting academic performance, attendance, motivation, or social interactions, **contact your child's teachers first.** Depending on the response you receive, you may also reach out to the school administrator, counselor, or social/emotional counselor if one is site-based. Your efforts to initiate conversation will reinforce your commitment to your student's success and well being.
5. **Request a meeting with staff** if you feel one is necessary. Persist if need be. School staff are quite busy, but you are your child's best advocate, first and foremost.
6. Occasionally, you may feel that you're not being heard at the school site, for varied reasons. In such cases, you have every right to **contact the school district which oversees your child's school.** Call the district office with concerns that you feel are not being met. Again, this reflects your advocacy and that your child be seen, heard, and supported.

Santa Cruz County, and its many school districts, have made great strides toward supporting students' mental health in many ways, including staff professional development with a focus on trauma-informed care, investing in site-based social/emotional counselors, and raising school staff awareness around how mental health issues can present. This resource may help your search for local supports across a variety of student-support areas: <http://www.sccstudentresources.org/>

Best,
Les Forster, former school administrator

Youth Mental Health Resources Santa Cruz County



Santa Cruz County Child and Adolescent Behavioral Health Services

Behavioral health services including psychiatry, community programs, and therapy. Medi-Cal eligible.
1-800-952-2335

Family Services Agency Crisis Line

If you or someone you know is experiencing the warning signs of suicide, please call this local crisis number.
1-877-663-5433

Family Services Agency (Santa Cruz)

Counseling and education for youth and families
(831)-423-9444
www.fsa-cc.org

Encompass Youth Services (Santa Cruz/ Watsonville)

Counseling and education for youth. Must be in Santa Cruz County health system (see first number) to be eligible for certain services.
(831)-688-8856, x0
www.encompasscs.org/youth_family_behavioral_health

Coastal Turning Point

Intensive teen (13-17) outpatient program, including therapy and psychiatry services.
(831)-234-2010
www.coastalturningpoint.com

The Trevor Project

For LGBTQ youth with mental health concerns. The website also has chat and text options.
1-866-488-7386
www.thetrevorproject.org

A website to share and read personal stories
www.OK2TALK.org

Pajaro Valley Prevention and Student Assistance (Pajaro Valley District)

Counseling and education for youth and families.
(831)-728-6445
www.pvpsa.org

ASPIRE (El Camino Hospital, Los Gatos)

Intensive youth outpatient programs for children and teens, located in Los Gatos.
866-789-6089

Walnut Avenue Center (Santa Cruz)

Support groups, workshops, and education for youth and families
(831)-426-3062
www.wafwc.org

NAMI Santa Cruz

Support groups and classes for parents of those with mental health conditions
For program information:
(831)-824-0406

For mental health support and resources:
(831)-427-8020

www.namisc.org



RAISING A CHILD WITH MENTAL ILLNESS

By Melinda Cook

Excerpts from the original article in NAMI Blogs: October 2018



I remember sitting in a counselor's office, staring intently at a picture on the wall as my son told the counselor about the voices he heard and the things he saw that I knew didn't exist. My son talked about a hand that came over our car and a shadow that came out of his bedroom wall. I tried so hard to concentrate on the picture so I wouldn't cry. It didn't work. When the tears began to roll down my face, I was careful not to make a sound. The counselor noticed, so he spoke reassuringly to me, "A lot of things can make a person see things that are not there."

My son explained how hard it is for him to determine that these things aren't real, because they feel real to him. He just wanted them to stop. The counselor thanked my son for telling him about what happened and told him he believed him. We went from the counselor's office to the psychiatrist's office, where my son had to tell the story again. I never realized how tired you can get from just listening. I was exhausted, and nothing was even happening to me.

Be The Reason Your Child Gets Help

Acceptance is the first step for a person's mental health recovery. Self-acceptance is important, but just as important is receiving acceptance from loved ones.

Accepting your child's condition doesn't mean that you aren't scared. It just means that you see the problem for what it is—not the person as being the problem. We must accept and believe our loved ones to start getting them help. If we don't, we run the risk of being the reason they don't get help.

"My children are the strongest people I know. They keep going, despite anything and everything that tries to stop them. And I do my very best to help as their mother."



Lessons to Follow for Parents:

- A diagnosis provides a roadmap to recovery
- Open communication is key
- Care for yourself, too
- A family crisis plan is crucial
- Learn acceptance

We can't discount or ignore our loved ones' thoughts, feelings and behaviors just because we don't understand them or wish they were different. We have to do better than that. We need to seek to understand their reality. We need to truly listen to what they say. Do not listen to speak or refute, but listen to understand.

I remember thinking how simple and matter-of-fact my son's counselor was when he said those three simple words, "I believe you." I also remember how relieved my son seemed after he heard them. Odds are, your children won't go to a counselor when they first feel something isn't quite right. They'll come to you. So please, stay open and believe them. Believe them so they don't have to be alone. Believe them so they can get help. Believing may save their lives.

To read the lessons Melinda has learned along the way, and for the entire article, please visit www.nami.org/Blogs/NAMI-Blog/October-2018/

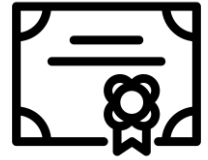
Raising-Children-with-Mental-Illness. You may also find this article, and many more, by looking through the archives at:

www.nami.org/Blogs/NAMI-Blog

EDUCATION



**NOW ENROLLING
SPRING 2019**



*Our classes are no-cost, but do require registration ahead of time.
For more information, please visit us online or contact the coordinators.*



*For **parents of youth** (12-17) with mental health challenges.*

Next 6-week series starts: **Tuesday, March 19th**
6:30 - 8:00 p.m. in Scotts Valley (details provided upon registration)

For more information and to enroll, visit www.namisc.org/nami-basics.html
or contact Dyana Zweng: (831)-706-7327 or dzweng@comcast.net



*For **Spanish-speaking family members** of adults
with mental health challenges*

*Para **miembros de familia** de un ser querido que vive con
un desafío de salud mental.*

Next 12-week series starts: **Monday, April 22nd**
7:00 - 9:00 p.m. in Watsonville
(details provided upon registration)

Próxima serie de 12 semanas comienza: **el lunes 22 de abril**
7:00 - 9:00 p.m. en Watsonville
(más detalles durante la registració)

For more information and to enroll, visit:
www.namisc.org/de-familia-a-familia.html
or contact Claudia Saggese: (408)-348-6864,
cisaggese@hotmail.com

Para más información y para registrarse, visite
www.namisc.org/de-familia-a-familia.html
o comuníquese con Claudia Saggese: (408) 348-6864,
cisaggese@hotmail.com



*For **adults with mental health challenges***

Next 10-week series starts: **Saturday, April 27th**
11:00 - 1:00 p.m. in Santa Cruz (details provided upon registration)

For more information and to enroll, visit www.namisc.org/peer-to-peer.html
or contact Anastasia Baboulevitch at: anastasia@namisc.org, (831)-824-0406