



It's Up to Us[®]

to Create a Healthy & Supportive San Diego

A special bulletin covering mental health topics for San Diegans



Edition Twenty-Three

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 and providing access to local resources, we aim to inspire wellness, reduce stigma and prevent suicide.

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 supports the County's *Live Well San Diego* vision to promote a community that is healthy, safe and thriving.

Up2SD.org[®]
LINK UP FOR INFORMATION AND MENTAL HEALTH RESOURCES

Access & Crisis Line
(888) 724-7240

COMMUNITY RESOURCES
2-1-1



Read Up: Don't Drive Like My Brother!

Sound familiar? "Car Talk" is the popular long-running radio show hosted by two brothers who dispense colorful advice to callers to help them solve their car problems. Wouldn't it be great to have a similar show where men – and those who care about them – could call in every Sunday morning to ask how to tune up their mental health, to keep their emotions from overheating, or their mind running smoothly?

Traditionally, men are raised to be self-sufficient, tough, and to protect their families and property. But what happens when the strong protector needs help? Fear of appearing weak or vulnerable, being unable to meet responsibilities or serve the role they expect of themselves can lead men to feel that they are a burden and that those around them might be better off if they ended their life. Men are less likely than women to reach out to mental health professionals or even to talk about their problems with doctors, family members, and friends.

To compound this, the signs of suicide among men are easily misinterpreted. Their despair may be concealed by stoicism, recklessness, drug or alcohol abuse, excessive working, isolation, irritability, anger, or resentment. These behaviors can further isolate men from those closest to them, pushing away the very people who would be in the best position to help.

So, don't drive like my brother! Help the men in your life take care of their mental health the way they take care of their most prized vehicle: with special attention to what's under the hood.

How can you help?

Know the Signs. Learn when and how to help someone you are concerned about. Visit www.SuicidelsPreventable.org to learn the warning signs and how to have a conversation with someone you're concerned about, and find resources in your area.

Learn more about resources developed specifically to help men. Man Therapy (www.ManTherapy.org) is an interactive website that provides practical tools for men to assess their mental health and find support. Watch the real stories of men who have struggled with mental health challenges and suicidal feelings, but found help and overcame their problems.



Did You Know?

Last year, 1,888 San Diegans were trained in QPR to learn how to recognize the warning signs of a suicide crisis and how to *Question, Persuade* and *Refer* someone to help.

Courtesy of: San Diego County Suicide Prevention Council

Shine a Light On...

How You Can Help Someone Experiencing Homelessness

We've all seen the increase in people experiencing homelessness around San Diego County. In fact, the Regional Task Force on the Homeless announced a 5 percent increase over the past year, which includes a 27 percent increase in Downtown alone.

While not all people who experience homelessness have mental health conditions, it is estimated that 39 percent of the 5,621 unsheltered homeless individuals in San Diego County struggle with mental illness.

For some people, mental health or substance use conditions can contribute to homelessness; because of challenges in managing their symptoms, difficulty with keeping a job, disrupted relationships, or keeping up with the tasks necessary to live independently. But for many others, mental health conditions may be the result of the stress that comes from being homeless.

San Diego County resident Mercedes used to be one of these people. Mercedes was homeless and living in her car when she was diagnosed with severe depression. Thanks to the support of local resources, she is now thriving and encouraging others to reach out, reminding us all that "mental illness is no reason to be alone."

Homeless people in your neighborhood can use your help in many ways. What can you do?

- Treat people experiencing homelessness with human kindness, smile and greet them with the courtesy you would extend to a neighbor or coworker.
- Volunteer or make a contribution to a local organization that serves people experiencing homelessness.
- Make a donation of clothing or food to a shelter in your neighborhood. Think about unexpected items too, like toys for kids or hygiene products for women.
- Offer information about resources in our community: for example, anyone needing immediate housing help can call 2-1-1 for assistance.

- Share the facts about homelessness and mental health and encourage open, honest conversations in your home and community.

We can all help and do our part by reaching out and getting involved. To find out more, visit HousingMattersSD.org or Up2SD.org.



Link Up: Walk in Our Shoes

Walk in Our Shoes is an innovative educational program for kids (ages 9–13), teachers, and parents to learn about mental wellness and have open, honest conversations about mental health challenges. Using real stories from teens and young adults, students are encouraged to have age-appropriate conversations about mental health. The interactive website contains sections for youth and grown-ups, and includes lesson plans, activities, and animated videos. These resources are available in English at WalkInOurShoes.org and in Spanish at PonteEnMisZapatos.org.

**WALK IN
OUR SHOES**



Growing Up: Why Parents Should Pay Attention to *13 Reasons Why*

The Netflix drama series *13 Reasons Why*, about a teenage girl who takes her life after being bullied, has been widely watched, praised, and criticized. Despite concerns about its provocative content, audiences were large enough that Netflix has announced it will air a second season.

Has your teen watched the show? Are they talking about it with their friends? If the answer is yes, this is a great opportunity as a parent to have important conversations about suicide. Suicide prevention specialist Stan Collins addresses the topic in a blog advising us to, “use this time as a teachable moment to open the door to conversations we too often avoid. Suicide is a big deal, but opening up about it doesn’t have to be.” Find important questions to ask and resources to help navigate what may be a difficult conversation by reading the full article here: www.EachMindMatters.org/Ask-the-Expert/13-Reasons-Why/. To find the warning signs and ways to offer support to a loved one, visit www.Up2SD.org.



Parents, ask your children and their friends:

- Have any of your friends ever thought about or attempted suicide?
- Do you know what to do in these situations? Will you promise to talk to me about it? I promise to help.
- Have you ever thought about suicide? Do you know you can talk to me if you do?
- Do you know about the Crisis Text Line or National Suicide Prevention Lifeline?

Liven Up Your Health:

Write to Feel Right

Feeling blue? Not sure if your mood is improving or getting worse? One simple way to keep track is to write your feelings down. Keeping a diary or journal doesn’t need to be pages and pages; a daily notation of your mood on a 10-point scale can be helpful as you look back, or as you discuss with a therapist how you’ve been doing since your last visit. Think of it as a Fitbit for your mental health.

The University of Rochester Medical Center reports that a journal can help you manage anxiety and reduce stress. Being able to name your feelings is powerful! Beyond that, you can prioritize which concerns are greatest by focusing on them, and then provide some positive self-talk for yourself on paper. A few minutes of writing each day can relieve stress, so pick up a pen or turn to your keyboard and find the words that work for you.

Support Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Awareness

Connect with the “It’s Up to Us” campaign for inspirational messages, educational facts, local resources, information on symptoms of mental illness, warning signs of suicide, updates on mental health and prevention efforts and more!

Continue the conversation here:



Facebook: www.facebook.com/up2sd



YouTube: www.youtube.com/user/up2sd

Prefer Paperless?

To view this campaign bulletin online or download as a PDF, visit: Up2SD.org

SUICIDE IS PREVENTABLE

These signs may mean someone is at risk for suicide. Risk is greater if the behavior is new or has increased and if it seems related to a painful event, loss or change.

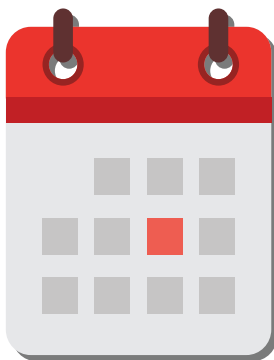
Warning Signs

- ▶ Talking about wanting to die
- ▶ Looking for a way to kill oneself
- ▶ Talking about feeling hopeless or having no purpose
- ▶ Talking about feeling trapped or in unbearable pain
- ▶ Talking about being a burden to others
- ▶ Increasing the use of alcohol or drugs
- ▶ Acting anxious, agitated or reckless
- ▶ Sleeping too little or too much
- ▶ Withdrawing or feeling isolated
- ▶ Showing rage or talking about seeking revenge
- ▶ Displaying extreme mood swings

What to Do

If someone you know exhibits warning signs of suicide:

- ▶ Do not leave the person alone
- ▶ Remove any firearms, drugs, alcohol or sharp objects that could be used in an attempt
- ▶ For life-threatening emergencies or immediate response, call 9-1-1
- ▶ For urgent and other concerns, contact the Access & Crisis Line at (888) 724-7240



LEARN QPR TO PREVENT SUICIDE!

QPR, which stands for Question, Persuade and Refer, is an emergency intervention to help a person who is considering suicide. Anyone who is in a position to recognize the signs that someone may be considering suicide is encouraged to sign up for a QPR training. In a one-hour workshop, individuals learn to recognize warning signs, what

questions to ask and how to offer hope and help. The workshop is designed for parents, friends, neighbors, teachers, ministers, doctors, nurses, office supervisors, caseworkers, firefighters and many others. QPR trainings are offered at no cost in San Diego. To sign up or to schedule a group workshop, visit www.SPCSanDiego.org and click on "Trainings," or contact Community Health Improvement Partners (CHIP) at lcayanan@sdchip.org; (858) 609-7971.



NEED TO TALK TO SOMEONE?

Unsure of where to go for help? Chat online or call a counselor today!

- Free confidential support
- Crisis intervention and suicide prevention
- Referrals for mental health and drug and alcohol needs



SAN DIEGO ACCESS & CRISIS LINE

- All languages
- 7 days a week / 24 hours a day

(888) 724-7240

LIVE CHAT

- Chat with a counselor today!
- Available Mon–Fri 4–10 p.m.

Visit: OptumHealthSanDiego.com or Up2SD.org

COMMUNITY RESOURCES
DIAL 2-1-1

