



It's Up To Us[®]

to Create a Healthy & Supportive San Diego

A special bulletin covering mental health topics for San Diegans.



Edition Eighteen

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* plan 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

COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO
HHSA
HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES AGENCY
Funded by the Mental Health Services Act

Read Up: Unleash the Picasso Within and Benefit Your Emotional Health

For centuries art has existed as an outlet for people to share ideas, inspire action and pass down personal and cultural stories. Whether you enjoy drawing, painting, music, sculpting, dancing or simply coloring with your crayons, you are not only creating art but also benefiting your mental and emotional health. Studies have found that engaging in artistic activities can increase self-esteem and confidence and reduce anxiety.

According to Michael Friedman, Associate Professor at the Columbia University School of Social Work, "art can also be a healing force for people experiencing a mental illness, helping them connect with and deal with their emotions. Through the arts people can find voices to express dimensions of self usually left in silence."

In an article he recently wrote on art and mental health, Mr. Friedman refers to the book *Flourish* by Martin Seligman: "Often regarded as the father of positive psychology, Mr. Seligman maintains that there are five critical elements of psychological well-being, 'positive emotion,' 'engagement,' 'accomplishment,' 'positive relationships,' and 'meaning.' In simple terms, living well involves feeling good about life, having something to do that you care so much about that you immerse yourself in it, becoming good enough at something to take some pride in it, having people in your life whom you care about and who care about you, and feeling connected with

Continued on page 2...

Searching for a fun, artistic outlet?

- **Community:** San Diego Continuing Education has affordable (and often free) art classes with a wide range of opportunities including printmaking, jewelry-making and woodworking.
- **Recreational:** Find a local dance or actor's studio to express yourself through acting, filmmaking or dance.
- **Online:** There is an endless supply of art projects on websites such as Pinterest and YouTube. Simply search what you're looking for or browse the DIY & Crafts section.

"For about a year now, I have been taking drum lessons and playing drums with the worship team at my church," said Julie Benn, Communications Specialist for NAMI San Diego. "Banging on the drums is not only stress relieving, but creating rhythms and getting to play as part of a team is an amazing balm for my soul. I experience clinical depression and anxiety, but after a drum session my anxieties calm dramatically and are replaced with an uplifting sense of peace, staving off the darkness and despair. I'm blessed to have this opportunity and hope to keep learning and improving so that I can play for many years to come."



Did You Know?

Mental health challenges are common. Yet research shows that many people do not reach out, particularly young people who wait an average of 6 to 8 years from onset of symptoms before they get help. It's up to us to read up on symptoms and reach out to a friend or family member.

Source: *Each Mind Matters*

Liven Up Your Health: Hike for Mental Health



Nature offers incredible healing powers for our mind and body. Research has shown that blue skies and scenic outdoor views can reduce stress, relieve mental fatigue and increase happiness. A hike on one of San Diego's beaches or mountain trails is a great way to give yourself a moment to unwind, breathe in some fresh air and enjoy some peaceful moments. And best of all, it's free!

Luckily, you don't have to travel far for breathtaking ocean views and great hiking trails in San Diego County:

- **Los Peñasquitos Canyon Trail:** Great for a warm day, this 3-mile hike takes you past a river and several waterfalls.
- **Cowles Mountain:** This hike is 4.7 miles long and offers an incredible 360-degree view of the city.

For more information, visit: alltrails.com

Hike for Mental Health

The mission of this nonprofit is to increase public awareness of the challenges and suffering faced by those afflicted by mental illness and their families. Visit the website to learn how you can volunteer, join a hike, lead a hike or sponsor a hiker. Funding goes toward scientific research to prevent or treat mental illness and to preserve wilderness trails.

hikeformentalhealth.org

Read Up: Unleash the Picasso Within and Benefit Your Emotional Health

...continued from front page

something that takes you beyond yourself, such as your family, your community, your work and so forth. Art can provide each of these elements of well-being.”

Art can also be used to increase understanding about mental illness and reduce the stigma surrounding it. NAMI San Diego held an art benefit show featuring creative pieces made by individuals who were personally impacted by mental illness.

Each item represented the artist's struggles and triumphs over mental illness and was accompanied by a written story about their recovery.

Whatever your reasons may be for participating in or being a spectator of the arts, know that your involvement is having a positive impact on your life. Even if your clay horse looks more like an alligator, you're still coming out on top.

Growing Up: Healthy Snacking

Healthy nutrition is essential for physical and mental development in young children, increasing energy and focus. Yet providing healthy snack options for kids can feel daunting. Eating healthy doesn't have to be boring or tasteless. Try out these tips to encourage nutritious snacking in your children.

- **Keep it fun:** Cut cheese with cookie cutters or make silly faces from a plate of veggies.
- **Create accessibility:** Make a nutritious snack station in your home full of ready-to-eat foods.
- **Improvise:** Hide veggies in your kids favorite foods. For example, you can substitute apple sauce and banana for sugar in baking; add mashed, cooked cauliflower into mac and cheese; add shredded carrots or zucchini to pancakes or muffins; or have your child come up with a smoothie recipe that tastes great and

includes veggies and fruits that represent colors of the rainbow.

- **Team up:** Go grocery shopping with your kids and let them find healthy foods they enjoy or put them in charge of preparing veggies for dinner on certain nights of the week.

For more ideas to stay healthy as a family, visit: parenting.org



Get Up and Participate:

Young People Can Use Creativity to Promote Mental Wellness

Young people can make a difference in a variety of ways, including using their creativity to develop films about important topics such as mental health, suicide prevention, reaching out to others in need or standing up for others to prevent bullying. Here are just a few opportunities for youth to get involved and make a difference using the fun creative medium of filmmaking!

- **Directing Change Student Film Contest:** Create a 60-second film about preventing suicide or ending the silence of mental illness and compete to win cash prizes, a trip to Sacramento for an award ceremony and legislative briefing at the Capitol, and get mental health education and resources for your school. www.directingchange.org
- **The 48-Hour Film Project:** Compete with other filmmakers from the San Diego area to see who can make the best short film in only 48 hours. www.48hourfilm.com/en/sandiego
- **Art With Impact:** Share your voice, time and talent by creating a short film that connects people to global issues. www.artwithimpact.org
- **Innovative Video Education (iVIE):** Create a film that raises public awareness of an issue or inspires others, as part of this San Diego County wide student video competition. ivieawards.sdcoe.net
- **The Great American No Bull Challenge:** Tell your own personal story by creating short films and public service announcements that spark dialogue about bullying. www.nobullchallenge.org

These are just a few of the ways that youth can use their creativity and passion to influence change and empower other youth and adults to live healthier lives. Get up and express your creativity today!



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



Pinterest: www.pinterest.com/up2sd



YouTube: www.youtube.com/user/up2sd

Prefer Paperless?

To view this campaign bulletin online, download a PDF or receive it electronically, visit:
Up2SD.org/connect/bulletins.

SUICIDE IS PREVENTABLE

These signs may mean someone is at risk for suicide. Risk is greater if 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

Link Up: First 5 California “Talk” Campaign

First 5 California’s new campaign encourages parents to talk, read and sing to their young children as a way to promote healthy brain growth, especially in the early years between 0 and 5 when 90% of a child’s brain develops. By talking and reading to young children, parents contribute significantly to their child’s speech and language skills, increasing the likelihood that they will have stronger learning capabilities by the time they reach kindergarten. Singing also plays a key role in early brain development as a positive influence on a child’s mood and as an effective way to strengthen his or her thinking skills. The First 5 California website provides free songs that parents can download.

For an activity center, free music and ideas to practice with your child, visit: www.first5california.com/parents



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 4pm–10pm

Visit: optumhealthsandiego.com or Up2SD.org

COMMUNITY RESOURCES
DIAL 2-1-1

