



# It's Up to Us<sup>®</sup>

to Create a Healthy & Supportive San Diego

A special bulletin covering mental health topics for San Diegans



Edition Twenty-Two

## 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<sup>®</sup>**  
LINK UP FOR INFORMATION AND MENTAL HEALTH RESOURCES

Access & Crisis Line  
**(888) 724-7240**

COMMUNITY RESOURCES  
**2-1-1**



## Read Up: Mixed Up About Rx?

If you have seen the many headlines about prescription drugs you may be wondering: *fact or fiction?* The truth is that many medications are over-prescribed and may have serious risks, including addiction and overdose. In recent years, opioid overdoses have skyrocketed, causing more deaths than car crashes. And improper disposal of old pills can contaminate our water supply or make it easier for the wrong people to get access to them.

- *If you have ongoing pain*, seek experienced physicians who can assist you beyond just writing a prescription, such as with physical therapy, surgery or psychotherapy.
- *Always follow the written instructions on your medications.* Research shows that many people who overdosed took too many pills in an effort to obtain faster relief, used someone else's prescription or combined medications that should never be mixed, including with alcohol.
- *Dispose of unused medicines properly* (do not flush or throw in the trash!). Wondering what to do with those pills already in your medicine cabinet? One in ten teens report using pills to get high in the past year, and they generally get them from friends and family. Consider storing prescriptions in a lockbox. But don't keep them "just in case." To find collection sites in San Diego, visit: [www.SanDiegoRxAbuseTaskForce.org/blank](http://www.SanDiegoRxAbuseTaskForce.org/blank)

*Want to learn more or ready to take action?* The San Diego County Prescription Drug Abuse Task Force website offers a wealth of resources including information on getting help for addiction, actions you can take to address problems in your family, a page for teens, local statistics and legislation.

San Diego County Prescription Drug Abuse Task Force:  
[www.SanDiegoRxAbuseTaskForce.org](http://www.SanDiegoRxAbuseTaskForce.org)

To find local resources for mental health, substance use and co-occurring disorders, visit: <http://Up2SD.org>



**Did You Know?** An estimated 1 in 5 adults over the age of 50 are affected by isolation? It's Up to Us to help older adults stay connected and well.

Source: AARP Foundation

## Get Up and Participate: Mental Health First Aid Training Program



Mental Health First Aid is an 8-hour course that teaches you how to identify, understand and respond to signs of mental illnesses and substance use disorders. The training gives you the skills you need to reach out and provide initial help and support to someone who may be developing a mental health or substance use problem or experiencing a crisis.

Classes are available in both English and Spanish. The trainings are offered by Mental Health America. To find a training, visit: [www.MHASD.org/first-aid-programs](http://www.MHASD.org/first-aid-programs)

**Who:** Families of individuals experiencing a mental illness, teachers, employers, law enforcement, educators, human resource professionals

**Where:** Various locations or prearranged at your location

**Cost:** Free

Sign up today!

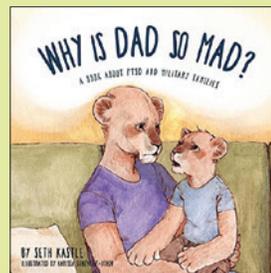
## Growing Up: Raising Drug-Free Kids

Kids who learn about the risks of drugs from their parents are significantly less likely to use drugs. The Partnership for Drug-Free Kids offers tools for parents to use when talking to their kids about drugs and ten practical steps to take if a child is using drugs. In addition, the website provides a comprehensive list of signs to look for, including behavioral clues, changes in personal habits, health issues and problems at school. For more information and resources, visit [www.DrugFree.org](http://www.DrugFree.org) or call the Helpline at (855) 378-4373.

Information courtesy of: [www.DrugFree.org](http://www.DrugFree.org)

### Helping Kids Understand PTSD

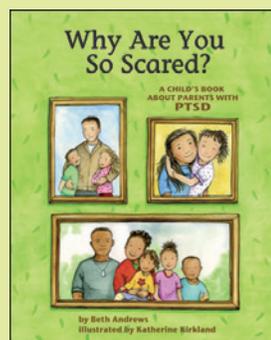
Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) can affect anyone who has experienced a traumatic and life-changing event including military combat, sexual assault, a physical attack or a natural disaster. Individuals with PTSD often relive their trauma through flashbacks and nightmares or disturbing thoughts, sometimes feeling detached, numb, irritable or aggressive. Understanding a family member with PTSD can be especially difficult for children. Here are two books that can help begin the conversation.



Authored by Seth Kastle

*Why Is Dad So Mad?* is a children's book about a military family whose father battles with combat-related PTSD. The moral of the story is that even though Dad gets angry and yells, he still loves his family more than anything.

Check your local library or search online.



Authored by Beth Andrews

*Why Are You So Scared?* is a children's book that explains PTSD in a kid-friendly way, and has exercises that kids and parents can work through together.

Check your local library or search online.

## Link Up: Stay Connected and Expand Your Social Circle

Every person needs social connections to thrive, but when older adults experience loneliness and social isolation, they may suffer negative health consequences including depression, anxiety, dementia, a weakened immune system and admission to nursing homes. It is essential to stay connected!

- Schedule a time every day to call a friend or visit someone.
- Schedule an activity for different days of the week and invite others to join you: Movie Monday, Taco Tuesday, Walking Wednesday, Tango Thursday and Facebook Friday are just some ideas.
- Take a class to learn something new or revisit an old hobby.
- Volunteer for a good cause.
- Join or start up a book club.
- Learn how to use social media and other technologies, for example at [www.aarptek.aarp.org](http://www.aarptek.aarp.org).

For additional ideas, visit [www.Connect2Affect.org](http://www.Connect2Affect.org), a website with free videos, games and tips to help older adults build social connections.



## Liven Up Your Health: Get Active on the Job

Regular exercise can improve your mood, help with long-term depression, reduce your blood pressure and even extend your life. But the benefits gained from going to the gym, taking a bike ride or going for a run may not fully combat the effects of the workday if you spend it seated. The key to good health is to stay active throughout the day. Here are a few tips to get you moving at work:

- Instead of emailing a co-worker in your building, head down the hall to see them. (Bonus points if they are on another floor and you take the stairs!)
- Stand up while talking on the phone. For even more activity, you can add occasional leg raises or toe stands.
- Set a timer and take hourly stretch breaks. This will improve your productivity, in addition to helping you feel refreshed.

## 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](http://www.facebook.com/up2sd)



YouTube: [www.youtube.com/user/up2sd](http://www.youtube.com/user/up2sd)

## Prefer Paperless?

To view this campaign bulletin online or download as a PDF, visit: <http://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.

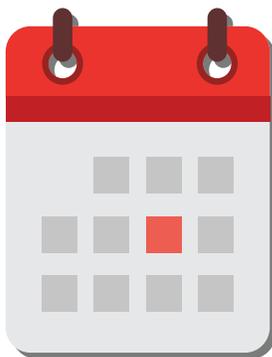
### Warning Signs

- ▶ 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](http://www.spcsandiego.org) and click on "Trainings," or contact Community Health Improvement Partners (CHIP) at [lcayanan@sdchip.org](mailto: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: [www.OptumHealthSanDiego.com](http://www.OptumHealthSanDiego.com) or <http://Up2SD.org>

COMMUNITY RESOURCES  
DIAL 2-1-1

