



MONTEREY, SAN BENITO AND SANTA CRUZ COUNTIES

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2013

Janie's Story



This Spring we received a request from one of our South County middle schools for support around their first openly transgender student, Janie. Our staff met with the schoolteachers and administrators to provide education on the topic. Together we helped craft a plan to keep the student physically and emotionally safe while at school. The plan includes a Triangle Speakers panel and implementation of a Gay Straight Alliance. Janie has since expressed that she feels much safer at school and really appreciates that school staff are treating her more appropriately. Her academic performance has also improved markedly. This success story is important for the many other students struggling with LGBT issues at her school who now have access to more resources.

For More Information

Monterey

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Suicide Crisis Line

1-877-663-5433
1-831-458-5300

- suicidepreventionservice.org
- suicideispreventable.org
- elsuicidiosprevenible.org
- reachout.com
- buscaapoyo.com
- dignityandrecoverycenter.org
- eachmindmatters.org
- walkinourshoes.org

Transforming Mental Health Care

Community-Based Prevention and Early Intervention Programs are Underway in our Region

Monterey, San Benito and Santa Cruz Counties are on the forefront of promoting culturally sensitive and relevant mental health services. Our Counties have partnered with a broad range of community organizations to provide new services that are shaping the future of mental health in the region.

As part of a statewide effort to deliver mental health services as early as possible before serious problems occur, our counties help individuals of all ages get the support they need to live healthy lives. Programs are provided that meet the unique needs of our culturally and ethnically diverse community members, including Latinos, African Americans, and lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender individuals. These residents may face barriers in getting mental health services because of language or cultural needs.

These new services are at the heart of California's efforts to transform its mental health system from the ground up. With Proposition 63—the Mental Health Services Act enacted in 2004—voters elected to build an effective community-based mental health system. State and local governments are working together to provide prevention and early intervention programs that keep people healthy, inform them of risks and warning signs, and empower them to get help early if they have mental health challenges. In addition to services delivered locally in counties across the state, the California Mental Health Services Authority (CaMHSA) helps counties learn about new and successful practices.

By providing help early, the counties are reducing the negative effects caused by leaving mental health challenges untreated, such as dropping out of school, breaking the law or serving prison time, being placed in a foster home that doesn't work out, being hospitalized, or losing a job or the support of family and friends.

Kay's Story



Kay first received services through Monterey County's crisis team when she was referred to a local women's shelter. There, Kay was connected to the alcohol and drug treatment, housing, and mental health services that she needed. As Kay's recovery progressed, she got involved in peer-led programs and soon became an advocate for her peers. Kay started a speakers' bureau that helps mental health consumers share their stories and empower others to get help. She has moved out of supportive housing and is living independently. Kay is now an employee of a mental health organization where she received services, and continues to be a strong consumer advocate.



PREVENTION AND EARLY INTERVENTION PROGRAMS
delivering on the promise

Proven Programs for Unique Communities

Monterey, San Benito, and Santa Cruz Counties serve a culturally diverse population of over 732,000 residents, nearly half of whom are Latino. Our counties are working to improve awareness of mental health issues and increase access to services. By working with community organizations and family members, county staff develop strategies to meet the unique needs of our residents in need. Programs include services and education for people with mental health challenges and their families that address depression, anxiety, suicide, and overcoming difficult life events. Services are provided in accessible places by peers who have similar experiences and understand local and regional cultures and ethnic backgrounds.

Partnerships Make It Happen!

Key partners and supporters in the region include community organizations and groups representing diverse cultures, including Latinos, Asian and Pacific Islanders, African Americans, Native Americans, and lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender individuals; consumer advocacy groups; rural organizations; educational institutions; local government and elected officials; law enforcement agencies; alcohol and drug programs; the media; faith-based organizations; neighborhood organizations; career and employment organizations; veterans services; community health clinics and local mental health campaigns.

“Cara y Corazón helped me connect with my son. Now we can open up our hearts to communicate and connect.”

– *Mother of Cara y Corazón participant*

Goals



Monterey, San Benito, and Santa Cruz Counties’ prevention and early intervention programs will:

-  Improve access to mental health services among underserved cultural populations
-  Develop new support programs for individuals of all ages, especially young children and young people under 25 years
-  Provide mental health services that address cultural and language needs
-  Prevent mental health disorders or address them at the earliest stage possible
-  Increase residents’ ability to adjust to change or stress, and build confidence, social skills and positive family relationships
-  Train individuals to identify the signs of mental illness

Some of the Counties’ prevention and early intervention programs are described at right:

Preventing Suicide and Supporting Survivors



Suicide Prevention Service, a program of Family Service Agency of the Central Coast provides a 24-hour multilingual Suicide Crisis Line. Local and toll-free phone numbers make the service accessible to all residents of Monterey, Santa Cruz, and San Benito Counties. The agency also conducts educational presentations and trainings for high risk groups (such as youth) and gatekeepers and conducts grief support groups for survivors of suicide. **In just one year, the program provided suicide prevention education to more than 7,000 youth and grief support to more than 40 surviving friends and family members.**

Providing Peer Support for Adults



The *OMNI Resource Center* is an adult wellness center that reaches Monterey County residents who would not normally seek mental health services. The Center conducts outreach and services for both Spanish- and English-speaking adults, serving everyone in a culturally-relevant manner. Weekly programs are developed based on input from participants. Through peer support groups and education, OMNI ends isolation, promotes mental health and empowers participants. Services are delivered by paid and volunteer consumer staff. **In 2011-12, over 1,500 were served.**

Culturally Specific Education and Support



Rooted in Latino culture, Santa Cruz’s *Cara y Corazón* (Living with Face and Heart) engages the whole family to decrease the risk of youth violence and suicide, and address negative effects of difficult life events. The program is focused on families that need to build parenting skills, are affected by substance abuse, or are exposed to violence, abuse or neglect. The program provides education, early treatment before problems become more serious, and referrals to other services. **Over 200 parents, 80 girls and 80 boys have been served by the programs.**

School-Based Prevention & Early Intervention Programs



The Santa Cruz County Office of Education coordinates a range of services with community providers including NAMI, the Diversity Center, Youth Services and the Live Oak Family Resource Center. Interventions include NAMI’s “Parents and Teachers as Allies” curriculum, enhancing the Queer youth scene at schools via the Gay Straight Alliances, LGBTQ support groups, and the Triangle Speakers. The *Prevention Intervention Program* also provides parent education services, suicide prevention, and other direct supports to students. **During the 2010-11 school year, a total of 27 schools in 7 school districts, 5 private schools and 3 charter schools received PEI services and 487 students received direct services to support their success and adjustment at school.**