



# 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 Nineteen

## 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<sup>®</sup>**  
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: Not Just Back-to-School, but Well-to-School

With new teachers and classmates, new routines and more schoolwork, the beginning of a new school year can be an exciting and stressful time, whether you are entering first grade or your first semester at college. This time can be particularly overwhelming when facing major transitions such as moving to a new city or beginning a new school. Here are a few tips to ease the transition:

- Begin establishing a "back to school" routine at least one week prior to school starting.
- Visit a new school prior to the first day to locate classrooms, the cafeteria and the playground or to check out the parking situation. If you can't visit, take a virtual tour on the school's website.
- Make it a point to engage with at least one school activity to make a connection in the first few weeks. If you are a parent, try to volunteer once or twice to get to know your child's teachers and classmates.
- Anxiety and stress about starting school is normal and usually passes within the first few days or weeks. If anxiety or stress continues for a prolonged period of time, talk to someone and get help.

*Courtesy of Mental Health America*

## Liven Up Your Health: Help Your Way to Health

When you do something kind for someone such as a favor for a friend or help a stranger find an address, you are not only helping that person accomplish a specific task, you are also helping yourself keep a healthy outlook on life. Research suggests that helping others on a regular basis may help decrease feelings of depression and anxiety, reduce aches and pains, and boost overall mental and emotional wellbeing. Helping others helps you feel connected to others, takes your mind off your own worries for a while and adds a sense of purpose and meaning to your life.

### HINTS ON HELPING

Consider these tips for helping others, and yourself:

- Call a friend to see how she's doing.
- Serve your spouse breakfast in bed.
- Let a car in front of you on the highway.
- Smile at a stranger in the street.
- Hold the elevator door for your co-worker.



*Courtesy of Mental Health America (www.mentalhealthamerica.net/help-others)*

**Did You Know?** Suicide is one of the leading causes of death in San Diego County. Pain isn't always obvious. Know the signs. Find the words to offer help. Reach out to local resources. [www.suicideispreventable.org](http://www.suicideispreventable.org)

## Growing Up: Youth Empowerment Programs Promote Overall Wellness

Youth empowerment programs foster positive personal traits and meaningful community relationships. Research suggests that young people who engage in these types of programs and activities develop higher self-esteem and become more resilient and confident, all of which support mental wellness.



*Mira Mesa High School students won third place for their film *Lost and Found* and were recognized at NAMI San Diego's Directing Change film screening in April 2015.*

### THE FOLLOWING IS A LIST OF LOCAL YOUTH LEADERSHIP PROGRAMS:

#### FUTURE BOSS

Future Boss offers San Diego County high school seniors the opportunity to develop successful leadership skills during a week-long training and student competition organized by the California Foundation Fund.

[www.futureboss.org](http://www.futureboss.org)

#### YMCA YOUTH AND GOVERNMENT/YMCA OF SAN DIEGO COUNTY

The Youth and Government program allows youth to role-play leadership positions within the California State Legislature and state court system.

[www.ymca.org](http://www.ymca.org)

#### DIRECTING CHANGE PROGRAM AND FILM CONTEST

Open to high school students and youth up to age 25, this program encourages young people to create 60-second films about suicide prevention and mental health and use their films to raise awareness of these important issues.

[www.directingchange.org](http://www.directingchange.org)

## Get Up and Participate: Register, Walk and Get Trained for Suicide Prevention

It's Up to Us to help make a difference in the lives of our friends, family and community members who are experiencing mental illness or a loss from suicide. Offer support to those who have lost someone to suicide or participate in a workshop to learn how to recognize the warning signs of suicide.

#### REGISTER AND WALK

Out of the Darkness Community Walk (usually in October)  
<http://www.afsp.org/sandiego>

Save a Life San Diego Community Walk (usually in November)  
<http://savealifewalk.kintera.org>

National Alliance on Mental Illness San Diego 5K (usually in April)  
<http://www.namisaniego.org/nami-san-diego-county-walk/>

#### GET TRAINED: QPR

Question, Persuade and Refer (QPR) gatekeeper trainings for suicide prevention are available for FREE in San Diego County. QPR is designed to give members of the general public the basic skills necessary to help someone that may be contemplating suicide. As CPR is for the heart, QPR is for the mind. In a one-hour workshop, individuals learn to recognize warning signs, what questions to ask and how to offer hope and help. To sign up or to schedule a group workshop, email [lcayanan@sdchip.org](mailto:lcayanan@sdchip.org) or [www.spcsandiego.org](http://www.spcsandiego.org).



## Listen Up: Evelyn's Story

Struggling with hardships such as abuse, stigma and discrimination, homelessness or traumatic memories can be difficult. But life can get better. Connecting with the right people, finding inner strength and tapping into local programs can make all the difference. Visit [Up2SD.org](http://Up2SD.org) to view personal story movies created by San Diegans to inspire, offer hope and challenge stereotypes.

As far back as I can drift in my memory, I was the over-achiever, the star athlete, exceeding all obstacles that came my way. I was the strong one, the one everyone relied on. I was a 4.0 honor student and the captain of my varsity soccer team. But what were the reasons I'd break down crying when the wind would blow through my body? Why was I cutting and popping pills to cope? Why did I feel so alone and lost? I was lost, confused, wanting something: someone to love me. With a heart in too many pieces to recognize its true form, two women found a piece and took a chance to approach me—me, the one who fell through the cracks. These two women are the light behind my rain clouds. I owe these two women my life. Unconditional and healthy love is attainable. Find someone you trust...there is hope. – Evelyn



To view Evelyn's personal story video or for mental health information, visit [Up2SD.org](http://Up2SD.org)

## Shine a Light On...

### Bipolar Disorder

Bipolar disorder is a medical condition that causes a person to experience extreme highs (mania) as well as extreme lows (depression). It typically begins during late adolescence. During a manic episode, a person's mood is excessively high, irritable or aggressive, and he or she may engage in unusually risky or impulsive behavior. During a depressive episode, a person may feel sad, withdraw from friends and family and lose interest in previously enjoyable activities. While bipolar disorder may have genetic causes, symptoms may be triggered by extreme stress, sleep disruption or drug and alcohol use. In addition to counseling and medication, successful management of bipolar disorder includes a healthy lifestyle of exercise, sleep and good nutrition. Effective coping skills and a support network are also beneficial.

*Courtesy of ULifeline ([www.ulifeline.org](http://www.ulifeline.org)) and the Depression and Bipolar Support Alliance ([www.dbsalliance.org](http://www.dbsalliance.org))*

### 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)



Pinterest: [www.pinterest.com/up2sd](http://www.pinterest.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: [www.Up2SD.org/connect/bulletins](http://www.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: Speak Our Minds

This online resource provides a searchable database for locating speakers as well as tools to help public speakers incorporate stigma and discrimination-related information into their presentations. Some of the website's offerings include:

- A list of California-based mental health speakers
- Trainings and tips in several languages, including Cambodian, Lao, Arabic, Armenian, Chinese, English, Hmong, Khmer, Korean, Russian, Spanish, Vietnamese, Mien
- Materials to download and share: talking points, fact sheets, flyer templates and handouts
- Visual aids such as film clips and photos

For more information visit:  
[www.speakourminds.org](http://www.speakourminds.org)



## 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](http://optumhealthsandiego.com)  
or [Up2SD.org](http://Up2SD.org)

COMMUNITY RESOURCES  
DIAL 2-1-1

