



NAMI SD & Children Youth & Family Liaison's Circle Of Support

Do you love a child, youth or TAY (Transitional Age Youth under age 25) who lives with a mental health diagnosis or behavioral health condition? Parenting or caregiving within this landscape can be a stressful, daunting task in which many caregivers feel isolated and overwhelmed. Even the interchangeable terms “behavioral health” and “mental health” can be



The terms “mental health” and “behavioral health” are often used interchangeably. Behavioral health includes ways of promoting well-being by addressing mental illness such as depression or anxiety and substance abuse or other addictions.

confusing. If this speaks to you, the Children, Youth and Family Liaison is here to tell San Diego parents *YOU ARE NOT ALONE*. The Liaison Team is here, among hundreds of parents, grandparents, foster parents, aunts, uncles, siblings and champions who walk the path of supporting children and youth with specific mental or behavioral health challenges.

At quarterly Family Voice Meetings, parents, caregivers and family members build a community with each other while learning important self-care skills and coping methods. Families express their authentic experiences in a safe, supportive environment while (cont. on page 3)

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Our Voices Matter

Featuring a Family Youth Partner

Laura Nava has been a face and voice of the La Mesa Spring Valley School District for many years, as an Extended Schools Services leader. But in 2010 her profession took a turn when she agreed to be part of the Prevention Early Intervention (PEI) program with San Diego Youth Services. Ms. Nava's community expertise has helped to make the program what it is today...successful!



The PEI Program is a school based program using the "Incredible Years Curriculum" to empower youth and parents to be their best. Working alongside Mental Health Specialists, the program provides parenting support groups, small after school children's groups, & classroom lessons for behavior management among other supportive activities.

Ms. Nava states her biggest accomplishment has been to empower the families from her community through encouraging them to join the Parent Teacher Association and the English Learners Advisory Committee as well as encouraging them to apply for school district jobs, such as playground attendants.

What is a "Promotora" one might ask, a Promotora is a member of the Hispanic/Latino community who helps provide resources to community members for basic health needs. They are instrumental in breaking the stigma of Mental Health concerns for seeking help and so much more. Traditionally, Hispanic women, but now spread throughout many cultures here in the United States, as Parent & Youth Partners.

Do you know a CYF Partner who is making a difference in their community? Nominations are open for a possible feature in a future edition of Our Voices Matter, a column promoting Caring People in the CYFL Newsletter. Send your nomination via email to CYFLiaison@nmaisd.org

One of her favorite success stories is about a military family that was experiencing domestic violence while the father was away on deployment. Events escalated to the point where the abusive language and threats became physical and the involved child was injured. With the guidance of Ms. Nava, the mom reported the abusive family member to Child Welfare Services and today, the mother, child, and husband are not only intact, supported and safe because of the courage of the mother and the guidance of Ms. Nava, but the mother is now employed as a playground attendant with La Mesa Spring Valley School District. This is the power of peer support.

One of Ms. Nava's greatest challenges working with families is finding adequate resources when she needs them. Her experience is when one family receives the help from a beneficial program, the next she reaches out to connect with the same program, it has been closed due to budget cuts. Keeping up on available programs, new resources and supportive systems is challenging.

Time and again, Ms. Nava has witnessed the families she encourages and support become a new line of help for other families facing similar predicaments. She reminds us the Family Partners are the voice and face of the community, and do the day to day work as they establish trust and engage families, break stigmas, and help children, youth and families find the behavioral support they so desperately need. **(continued on back page)**

NOVEMBER REMINDERS

- **No Family Voice Meeting or FYP Coaching Meeting in November due to the Thanksgiving Holiday**

We wish you and your family a healthy and happy Thanksgiving Holiday and look forward to seeing you Dec 30 at the Coaching meeting or at the Family Voice Meeting in January, 2017.

- **NAMI SD Support Services**

Holidays can be a special time for families and friends, but they can also lead to stress. Know where you can seek out support groups in your community and educate yourself about your symptoms and diagnosis. Social support and knowledge can be valuable tools for coping. Here at NAMI San Diego, you can find a variety of support services. Visit our website for a calendar of support group meetings here: <http://bit.ly/2dwcbT9>

The NAMI San Diego CYFL Team is comprised of:

CEO: Shannon Jaccard, MBA

COO: Sue Skube

Community Development Director: Renee Cookson

CYFL Program Manager: Suzette Southfox

CYFL Program Coordinator: Valerie Hebert

CYFL Program Trainers: Kelly Hutton, Linda Ketterer, Carolina Moxley

CYFL Curriculum Developer: LaVone Bradley

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NAMI SD & CYFL's Circle Of Support

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together we address their challenges and concerns. Let the Liaison Team help you understand what an IEP (Independent Education Plan) is, or what a diagnosis does and does not mean. Learn about the options for treatment, therapy, recovery and support. Families can sign up to receive a free monthly newsletter and are warmly invited to attend our quarterly Family Voice Meeting, the next of which will be an all family pizza and salad conversation in the South Bay on January 26, 2017 from 6:30pm to 8pm. Children and Youth welcome. RSVP 858-987-2980 or CYFLiaison@namisd.org.



NAMI San Diego is pleased to announce a free, on-line 20-hour Peer & Family Support Specialists and Family Youth Partner Training for parents and caregivers who wish to increase their knowledge around mental health. Peer & Family Support Specialists are people with "lived experience" of mental illness either personally or as a family member. Family Youth Partners are individuals with lived experience who work in the field of behavioral health both as paid and unpaid support staff, advocates, and allies.

The very foundation of the Children, Youth and Family Liaison is one that holds the family voice of lived experience as powerful, supportive and meaningful to other families with similar situations.

This course is an opportunity to strengthen your knowledge base and consider a paid or volunteer career in the Behavioral Health Field. The curriculum covers: Working with Families and Peers, Effective Verbal & Written Communication Skills, Problem Solving Techniques, Compassion Fatigue for Peer/Family Specialists & Family Youth Partners, Triggers, Transference, Counter-Transference, HIPAA, ETHICS, and Professional Boundaries and Accessing Resources. For additional details and to apply, please email careerpathways@namisd.org.

Family Support Meetings

FAMILY VOICE MEETING - **Save The Date!**
Jan 26, 2017

We wish you and your family a Happy Holiday season and look forward to seeing you in January, 2017 at the next Family Voice Meeting - South Bay location

Is your family currently engaged in the Children, Youth & Family Behavioral Health Services System of Care (CYFBHSSOC)? If so, we want to hear your voice! Please join the NAMI SD CYFL team for our quarterly **Family Voice Meeting**. *Children & Youth are welcome. Pizza, Salad & Drinks provided!* We also want to hear from families who are not receiving services but would like to, as we would love to connect you with the resources you need to support your family. Families who were historically engaged in the CYFBHSSOC are also encouraged to join our meetings. Your experience and wisdom are highly valued by our team, and we would love to create a larger network of Family Youth Partners.



For more information on Family & Family Youth Partner Groups, and/or to RSVP, please email CYFLiaison@namisd.org or call (858) 987-2980

FAMILY/YOUTH SECTOR MEETING

ONLINE, Dec 29, 2016, 2:00 - 3:30 pm

Our **Family Youth Sector Meetings** are for parents, providers, Family Youth Partners, and anyone who supports families engaged in the Children Youth Families Behavioral Health Services System of Care (CYFBHSSOC). These meetings are dedicated to discussing best practices in the current system of care and how we can continue to improve or develop services to help our families thrive. We want to hear about emerging practices, programs, and policies. Providers are encouraged to bring literature and program updates to share with other providers and Family Youth Partners. These meetings are held quarterly and alternate between in person and online. **Our next meeting will be online. Please register by emailing us at CYFLiaison@namisd.org**

CYFL Education

NEW TRAINING AVAILABLE

For New and Existing
Behavioral Health Volunteers
Peer/Family Support Specialists
and
Family Youth Partners

NAMI San Diego is excited to offer a Free Training Course & Career Planning Assistance

Would you like to use your personal “lived experience” with yourself or a family member who lives with mental illness to help others? Are you working as a Peer/Family Specialist or Family Youth Partner and want to enhance your knowledge and learn special skills for your position?

Attend a Live Webinar Orientation on becoming a Peer/Family Support Specialist and Youth Family Partner. This two hour orientation will explore roles, provide an overview of the training program and potential placement locations for Peer/Family Support Specialists and Youth Family Partners within the Behavioral Health Field. This course is an opportunity to start augmenting your paid or volunteer career in the Behavioral Health field.

NAMI San Diego offers further instruction in a 20 hour online course which will cover the following topics:

- Working with Families and Peers
- Effective Verbal Communication Skills
- Effective Written Communication Skills
- Problem Solving Techniques
- Compassion Fatigue for Family and Peer Specialists
- Triggers, Transference, Counter Transference
- Ethics, HIPPA, Boundaries
- Accessing Resources

Core Trainings and Advanced Trainings are Free and held online on Tuesday evenings from 6:00 - 8:30 PM.

For additional details and to apply, please email careerpathways@namisd.org

“Here’s to the nights that turned into mornings with the friends who turned into family.” - Anonymous

The Children, Youth & Family Liaison team celebrates diversity in families, including “chosen families,” friends and loved who are not blood related but those we surround ourselves by choice. Chosen families are particularly prevalent in, but not limited to, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, questioning, intersex, pansexual, polyamorous, and asexual (LGBTQIPA) communities due to rejection from families of origin, place of worship, work place, health care providers, to name a few.



Every year the holiday season is challenging for many LGBTQIPAs because there is still a paucity of safe, affirming places to simply be themselves. For example, homeless youth, 40% of whom identify as LGBTQIPA, and have been rejected by their families, putting

them on the streets, which can be detrimental to mental and behavioral health. Because of stigmas surrounding mental health, sexual orientation, and gender identities and expression, these communities are more at risk for suicide, untreated mental illnesses, substance abuse, and to violent assaults. NAMI offers resources from partner organizations and more information on LGBTQIPAs and mental illness here: <http://www.nami.org/Find-Support/LGBTQ>. The National Resource center on LGBT Aging is also a great resource. Learn more here: <http://bit.ly/2dNEHyT>

The good news is that LGBTQIPA people of all ages are very resilient. Harvey Milk used to say, “You GOTTA give ‘em HOPE!” And hope is exactly what the Children Youth and Family team and all of NAMI San Diego have to offer year-round. If you are finding it challenging on the onset of the holiday season, it is okay to not feel “okay.” We are here for you, your families, and so are several organizations and communities in San Diego County.

There are local organizations that offer FREE or low-cost welcoming, supportive, and sober holiday gatherings:

- The Hillcrest Youth Center, for youth ages 14-18. November 18, “Friendsgiving” gathering with free Thanksgiving meals and welcoming community. Time to be determined. Contact: Courtney Ware cware@thecentersd.org (619) 497-2820
- The North County Resource Center, FREE holiday gathering & food. For more info, contact Max Disposti, Director: maxrome@cox.net

If you or someone you know is in crisis, contact the 24-hour Access and Crisis Line: 1-888-724-7240. You may also contact the 24-hour Trevor Project National Youth Crisis Hotline at: 866-488-7386.

Carolina Moxley on Mindful Self Compassion

One day in the winter of 2014, I was leafing through a magazine and happened upon an article about Self-Compassion which forever changed my life. As a new mother wading through the wreckage of an acrimonious divorce, I was instantly drawn to the word “Self-Compassion.” I had declared the year of 2014 as my year of healing, and exploring the concept of self-compassion sounded like the perfect place to begin. Learning about and practicing Mindful Self-Compassion turned out to be one of the greatest blessings in my life. In fact, after practicing it regularly, many of the greatest difficulties in my life began to feel more manageable, my anxieties began to soften, and I found myself being kinder and more patient with myself and my loved ones as well.



A note about the Author: Carolina Moxley is a CYFL Trainer with Lived Experience, a former language instructor and mom to a spunky four and a half year old.

If you ever find yourself feeling overwhelmed, anxious, stressed, or a bit sorrowful, (and who doesn't?), you are likely to find great comfort in the practice of self-compassion. Being self-compassionate will not only help you better cope with life's inevitable stressors, but will also nurture a greater sense of peace and joy in your everyday life. And parents who practice self-compassion will find that their children benefit as well. When parents practice self-compassion, they serve as models for their children on how to befriend themselves. This in turn can lower anxiety levels, aid in emotional regulation, and minimize the need for validation from others, and, therefore, serve as a buffer against peer pressure.



Mindful Self-Compassion was first scientifically researched in the late 90s by Dr. Kristin Neff, an associate professor of human development at the University of Texas at Austin. Since then Dr. Neff and many mental health researchers have conducted numerous studies on the benefits of practicing self-compassion. Findings indicate people who practice self-compassion are “less depressed, anxious, stressed, perfectionistic and afraid of failure, while being more happy, resilient, optimistic, self-confident and motivated to make productive changes in their lives” (Roser, n.d., para. 27).

(Article continued on page 6)

What exactly is Self-Compassion?

Most of us are familiar with the concept of being compassionate with others, so let's begin there. Compassion can be explained in a series of stages: To be compassionate we must first notice another person's suffering. Then we must open our hearts to the feelings that arise when we witness their pain, which in turn inspires a desire to alleviate this person's suffering. Finally, we take some type of action to reduce their discomfort. One can then think of self-compassion as treating ourselves just like we would treat another person for whom we feel compassion.

To read more about Self-Compassion as well as a detailed explanation of Mindfulness, Common Humanity, and Self-Kindness, please see the full length version of this article on our blog at <http://cyfliaison.namisandiego.org/blog/>

Works Cited: Roser, Mary Ann. (n.d.). “UT researcher, author says being kind to yourself is a path to happier life.” Retrieved August 15, 2015, from <http://atxne>.

Issue Resolution



The NAMI San Diego Children Youth & Family Liaison (CYFL) Team serves as the Mental Health Service Act (MHSA) Resolution Point-of-Contact for issues within the Child Youth & Family Behavioral Health Services System of Care (CYFBHS-SOC). We serve the community by facilitating dialogue between families, Family Youth Partners, and providers. Families can attend our Family Voice Meetings to talk about what is working well for them and where they need additional support within the CYFBHSSOC. If families feel they are not receiving proper care from their providers, have an issue, or if they are struggling to find the services they need, the CYFL Team provides a safe, trauma informed, judgment free space for families to discuss and resolve these concerns. The CYFL also provides Behavioral Health Services with feedback from our families so as to assist in improving the current system of care.

By creating a welcoming environment where families can express themselves and share their experiences, we honor the truth that they are indeed the experts of their own lives. The CYFL team believes that the more opportunities we create for dialogue, the better we will understand the needs of our families. With this increased understanding, we can better serve and empower all of the families engaged in the Children, Youth, and Family Behavioral Health Services System of Care.

**FOR ISSUE RESOLUTION ASSISTANCE:
(858) 987-2980**

CYFL News

• CYF Liaison Welcomes:



LaVone Bradley has joined the NAMI San Diego's Children, Youth and Family Liaison Team as the Curriculum Developer. At a young age, LaVone knew her "calling" was to work with children. She has a Bachelor's Degree in Behavioral Science minoring in Early Childhood Education and a 23 year background working as a Training and Curriculum

Specialist for military child and youth programs. LaVone qualifies as a Family Partner with her lived experience helping to support a sibling with a severe mental illness. As a professional, LaVone designs parent workshops, provider training, and curriculum which enhances inclusive environments and social/emotional development of children birth to 18 years of age. She serves as an advocate for children in the San Diego Unified School District. As a mother of three, and a person living with a mental illness, she shares her personal journeys with others who needs an encouraging word and support. She believes that families who have a child or youth with a behavioral health issue are not alone. She dedicates herself to each child, youth and their families and care providers with breaking the barriers and stigmas of mental illness and becoming empowered individuals within the world around us.

Job Postings

- Tech Cafe Wellness Coordinator
- Tech Cafe Program Assistant
- Family Support Specialist - Next Steps Program
- Peer Specialist - Next Steps Program
- Administrative Support Associate - NAMI San Diego Peer Assisted Transitions Program
- Family Support Specialist - NAMI San Diego Peer Assisted Transitions Program
- Peer Specialist - IHOT (Part Time)

To apply for one of these job positions, visit the NAMI San Diego Job Postings web page at www.namisandiego.org/category/jobs. Check back often as NAMI San Diego is growing and we are adding new job postings regularly.



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5095 Murphy Canyon Road, Suite 320
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**NAMI SD CYF Liaison
Presents Interactive
Online FORUMS**

Coming soon to our website will be interactive message boards on topics you can use. Three message boards will be available for you to take part in:

- Family Members
- Family Youth Partners
- Providers

In order to participate, you will need to Register on our website, Create a private user name, and visit the Forum you identify with. Each forum will be moderated by CYFL staff in an effort to keep topics relevant. We invite you to add this new interactive tool to your resource list as a way to connect with others who might be navigating a similar set of circumstances. Visit our Forum Board at www.cyfliaison.namisd.org/forums

Return Service Requested



NAMI San Diego oscER App

Your guide to navigating a psychiatric crisis situation in San Diego County

- Find clear content on what to do Before, During and After a psychiatric crisis
- Get helpful resources such as psychiatric clinics phone numbers and hours
- Find help with housing & legal aid
- Get education for yourself and your family
- Find walk-in centers, emergency departments and psychiatric hospitals in San Diego
- Use with your i-phone, android or computer
- FREE



SCAN THIS QR CODE WITH YOUR MOBILE DEVICE FOR MORE INFORMATION

www.namisaniego.org/oscer

CYFL: Our Voices Matter
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The work that Ms. Nava and others do as Promotora's and Family Youth Partners makes a huge positive difference in the lives of our community families. If you are a Family Youth Partner, or interested in becoming one, you are warmly invited to the monthly Children, Youth & Family Liaison Team sponsored Family Youth Partner Coaching which takes place the last Friday of the month from 1pm to 3pm at NAMI San Diego's headquarters 5095 Murphy Canyon Road, San Diego CA, 92123. For more information, call 858-987-2789.