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Children, Youth & Family LIAISON

Share your Voice and Opinion at an Upcoming Community Forum

We don't know about you, but we feel valued when the County of San Diego personally invites us to give input about important topics relevant to every member of our community impacted by school violence and threats, youth involvement with drugs and alcohol, and mental health services for those who experience brain disorders. Though time to register is growing short, we encourage you to mark your calendar and get involved at one of the dates/locations listed below. For those who cannot join a live forum, you can make your voice heard by participating in a survey at ListenToSanDiego.org. Get involved today!

The County of San Diego Wants to Hear From You!

Please join us at any of the events below to share your ideas about
Behavioral Health Services in San Diego!

We want your input on:

- * Drug and alcohol use among teens and young adults
- * School violence and threats
- * Services for people experiencing a mental health

Register at ListenToSanDiego.org

Special accommodations, including interpretation services, **must** be requested through your registration

Date: Monday, October 15, 2018 Time: 9am to 11am	Tubman Chavez Community Center 415 Euclid Avenue, San Diego, CA 92114
Date: Thursday, October 25, 2018 Time: 6pm to 8pm	Norman Park Senior Center 270 F Street, Chula Vista, CA 91910
Date: Wednesday, October 31, 2018 Time: 10am to 12pm	QLN Conference Center 1938 Avenida Del Oro, Oceanside, CA 92056
Date: Friday, November 9, 2018 Time: 1pm to 3pm	Park Ave Community Center 210 E. Park Avenue, Escondido, CA 92025

You can also join us to discuss **new approaches** to the topics listed below!

Topic: New approaches to addressing homelessness

Date: Monday, October 15, 2018 Time: 2pm to 4pm	Malcolm X Library 5148 Market Street, San Diego, CA 92114
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Topic: New approaches to co-occurring mental health disorders and developmental delays

Date: Wednesday, October 17, 2018 Time: 3pm to 5pm	San Diego Regional Center 2727 Hoover Ave #100, National City, CA 91950
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Refreshments will be provided. Community members will be eligible to receive a \$5 gift card for participating.



For questions or to register by phone, call 619-594-4409
Can't make an event? Give us your input through our
community survey at ListenToSanDiego.org



CONTACT US



L to R: Linda, Renee, Evan, Valerie, Micaela

1 (858) 634-6580

MHSA Issue Resolution:

1 (858) 987-2980

1 (800) 523-5933 Helpline

www.cyfliaison.namisaniego.org

CYFLiaison@namisd.org

www.namisaniego.org

The CYFL is funded by The County of San Diego Health & Human Services Agency through the Mental Health Services Act

Facebook Live: a Great Place to Meet

Our Family & Youth Focus Group Meetings are a place where you can connect with us simply by opening up Facebook on your smartphone or computer! This meeting is for parents, providers, Youth/Family Support Partners, youth, TAY (Transition Age Youth) and those who support families engaged or historically engaged in the Children, Youth and Families System of Care. 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 families thrive. We want to talk about emerging practices, programs, and policies. These meetings are held quarterly online via Facebook Live.

NEXT ONLINE FAMILY & YOUTH FOCUS GROUP:
Tuesday, December 11, 2019 starting at 2 PM*

Like the NAMI San Diego Facebook page by clicking [here](#) or visiting www.facebook.com/namisandiego to receive a notification when we are "Live." Visit NAMI SD's FB page to view previous tapings and topics.

*Our meeting is offerered quarterly, and sometimes we fit in additional meetings. Remember to check our Facebook page and turn on notifications.

Youth/Family Support Partner Coaching Meetings:

Coaching Meetings provide education and support for Youth/Family Support Partners (Y/FSP) and are held the 4th Friday of the month from 1-3pm at the NAMI San Diego main office, located at 5095 Murphy Canyon Rd, Ste 320, San Diego, 92123. A one-hour coaching presentation relevant to supporting families is followed by a group sharing session. Please RSVP.

- Oct 26 - 1:00 - 3:00 pm
- Nov 16 - 1:00 - 3:00 pm
- Dec 28 - 1:00 - 3:00 pm

Call / Text (858) 987-2980 for more information or email cyfliaison@namisd.org.

Please RSVP to the Youth/Family Support Partner Coaching Meeting. Click here: <http://bit.ly/FSPc2017>

The NAMI San Diego CYFL Team is comprised of:

CEO: Cathryn Nacario

COO: Sue Skube

Community Development Director: Renee Cookson

CYFL Program Manager: Valerie Hebert

CYFL Lead Trainer: Linda Ketterer

CYFL Community Development Specialist Trainer:

Micaela Cunningham

CYFL Community Development Specialist Trainer:

Evan Hodges

CYFL Technology Engineer:

The NAMI San Diego Children, Youth & Family Newsletter is a quarterly publication. CYFL is funded by The County of San Diego Health & Human Services Agency through the Mental Health Services Act.

Telephones: 1 (858) 987-2980 OR 1(858) 634-6580 1(800) 523-5933 (NAMISD Helpline)

Email: CYFLiaison@namisd.org

Website: www.cyfliaison.namisandiego.org



View the ACEs & Resiliency broadcast [here](#)

SUPPORT MEETINGS for Families

Find Resources! Learn! Share!



WHERE YOU FIND SUPPORT

Parents Empowering Parents support group



NAMI SD PEP Meeting Dates:

Meets 3rd Wednesday of the month from 6-8 pm. Quarterly 2018 meeting dates:

- Oct 17, 2018
- Nov 21, 2018
- Dec 19, 2018

Meeting location:
NAMI San Diego,
5095 Murphy Canyon Rd,
Ste 320, San Diego, 92123

PEP: Parents Empowering Parents - SUPPORT GROUP MEETING - #OURVOICESMATTER

NAMI SD's CYF Liaison offers San Diego parents and caregivers a FREE, open, monthly coaching and support group meeting for parents and caregivers of children and youth (through age 25) living with challenging behaviors, mental and behavioral health concerns. This peer-led meeting, called Parents Empowering Parents (PEP), is based on standard group guidelines and principles of support. Join other parents and caregivers to find resources, learn, share, give feedback, and develop support systems. Parents and Caregivers ONLY. Drop-ins welcome. RSVP: <http://bit.ly/PEP1819> or call/text 858-987-2980.

Family Voice Town Hall

**Meaningful Support. Useful Resources.
Issues Resolved.**

Is your family currently engaged in the Children, Youth and Families System of Care (CSOC)? If so, we want to hear your voice! Please join the NAMI SD CYFL team for our quarterly Family Voice Town Hall Meeting. We want to hear from families who are not receiving services, but would like to, as our mission is to connect you with the resources you need to support your family. Families who were historically engaged in the CSOC are also encouraged to join our meetings. Children & youth are welcome. Refreshments provided!

Opportunity drawings for families in attendance!

January 10, 2019 - 6-7:30 pm

Location: CENTRAL

NAMI San Diego Main Office
5095 Murphy Cyn Rd, Ste 320, SD 92123

Nov 15, 2018 - 10:30 am - 12:00 pm

Location: NORTH

North Inland Live Well Center
649 W. Mission Ave, Escondido, 92025

Dec 13, 2018 - 11:00 am - 12:30 pm

Location: SOUTH

South Region Live Well Center
401 Mile of Cars, National City, CA 91950

Nov 8, 2018 - 4:00 - 5:30 pm

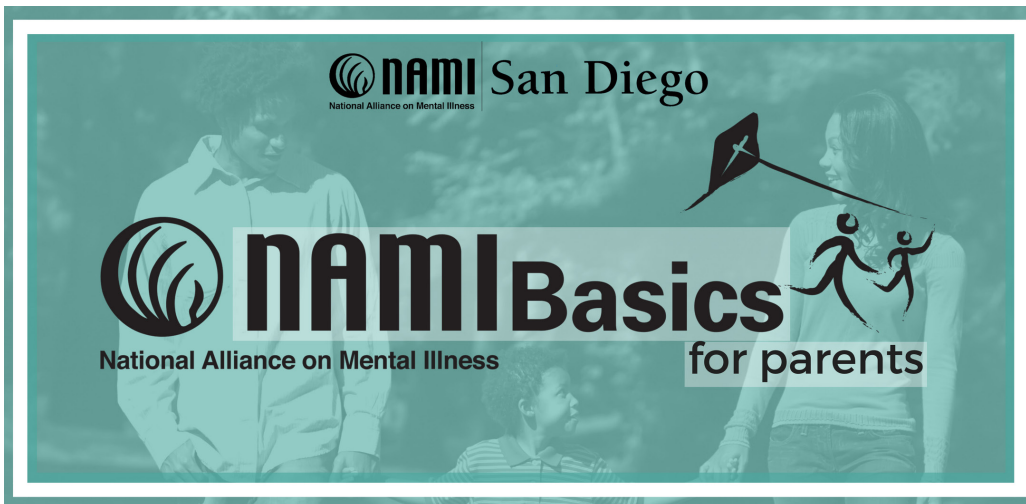
Location: EAST

Location To Be Announced

Please call/text 858-987-2980 for more info

For additional meeting dates, locations and times, or more information on Family Support Meetings, and/or to RSVP, please call/text 858-987-2980 or email CYFLiaison@namisd.org

CYF Liaison Community Corner



Need Support??

NAMI Basics for Parents and Caregivers is a free, six-session program designed for parents and other family caregivers of children and adolescents under the age of 18 with emotional and behavioral difficulties. NAMI Basics helps parents and other family caregivers of children to understand

the illnesses that are causing those behavioral difficulties, and the critical role families play in the treatment of those illnesses that are causing those behavioral difficulties, and the critical role families play in the treatment of those illnesses. The program is taught by trained teachers who are also the parents or family caregivers of individuals who experienced emotional or behavioral difficulties prior to age 13.

Limited Seats. Each guest needs to reserve a seat.

Two upcoming class start dates: *RSVP secures seat.*

- Tuesday evenings beginning Nov 6, 2018, 6:00 - 8:30 pm
RSVP: <http://bit.ly/BasicsNov2018>
- Saturday mornings beginning Jan 19, 2019 10 am - 12:30 pm
RSVP: <http://bit.ly/BasicsJan2019>

Class Location: NAMI Offices

5095 Murphy Canyon Rd, Ste 320, San Diego, CA 92123

- *Plenty of parking*
- *Accessible building*

CYFL COMMUNITY SUPPORT

Latino Support Group for Parents

San Diego Center for Children's WrapWorks is facilitating a support group for Latino parents in the National City area. To learn more and sign up for the next session, call: Sonia Curtis - 619-569-2169 or email: scurtis@centerforchildren.org

Volunteer Opportunities

NAMI San Diego is looking for Volunteers! Learn how to assist on the Helpline and more!



Volunteers and mentors are caring individuals who provide another person with support, advice, reinforcement, constructive role modeling and a friendly relationship. Mentors will work with a mentee with mental health challenges while they pursue job opportunities in collaboration with an employment specialist and job coach.

Volunteer & Mentor Checklist:

- Willing to provide support, advice, reinforcement, and a positive relationship
- At least 18 years of age
- Workforce experience
- Complete volunteer application
- Pass volunteer screening interview
- Complete a 30-60 minute in-person mentor orientation
- Pass background check

To start the Volunteer process, visit the NAMI San Diego website at <https://namisandiego.org>

Transitional Age Youth: TAY Corner

by Micaela Cunningham

Parents, imagine being able to sit inside your child's class for the day as an observer. You would see the basic necessities of a classroom - desks, chairs, and a whiteboard - but in the corner, there's something new you didn't have in classrooms growing up. A cart with an assortment of cords tangled together, attached to the latest technology. For me, a 19-year-old, this was first introduced as laptops before finally getting tablets as a senior in high school. Schools have begun to utilize technology, harnessing it to promote student engagement and education. It isn't unusual for schools to allow kids on their phones to read the textbook material or take notes, or even promoting a game-based platform to play class wide trivia and learning games.

This is a huge contrast to the media's popular view on video games in previous years. Common beliefs are violence in video games creates violent kids, and video games can be detrimental to a person's mental health with WHO (World Health Organization), going so far as to classify a pattern of behavior in the gaming world as a disorder; characterized by severe impairment in a person's personal, family, and social life. I believe we need to shift away from the concrete thinking video games are necessarily bad for a person's health and instead start to view them as a positive coping skill and educational tool.

The biggest positive takeaway from gaming can be the sense of community it gives a person. Recently, a tech company did a story on a game developer called Pixelberry Studios and their role-playing app game called *Choices: Stories You Play*, reminiscent of the Choose Your Own Adventure books many parents read to their children. The game was inspired by the CEO's own experience being bullied in school and promotes the players to think about their choices, how it can impact their lives, and the lives of the people around them. They don't take for granted their audience is mostly young girls. The studio reaches out and creates storylines about some big topics that concern today's youth, including but not limited to eating disorders and sexuality.

In the early stages of *Choices: Stories You Play*, a girl used the in-game support system to reach out about her plans to take her own life. Unsure on what to do, the CEO and COO reached out to a suicide prevention hotline who gave them tips on what to say and resources to give offer the girl. They persuaded her to reach out to a professional and within a week the studio got another message from the player confirming she received professional help and was still there because of her game. Pixelberry was acquired by a bigger publishing company who has donated thousands of dollars to the Cybersmile Foundation and they've teamed up with the National Eating Disorders Association in order to accurately portray the illness in their video games.

Curious about how they could portray eating disorders without romanticizing the illness, I downloaded the game myself and played a random storyline that had popped up about a girl who was trying to navigate her final year of high school while dealing with themes of addiction, recovery from the eating disorder, her parent's divorce, losing her best friend due to some drama, and bullying. The story navigates the twists and turns of adolescent life and gives you the option to rise above your bullies and options to get help or become a bully yourself. It also emphasized the importance of having a support system that wasn't just family, it could include friends and teachers as well.

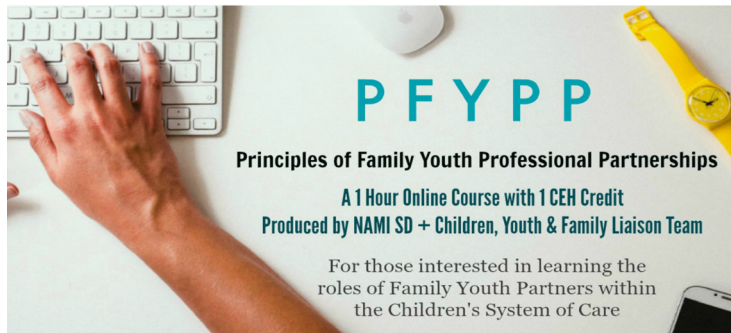
Video games can be a powerful tool in recovery and promoting mental wellness, but like most things in life they should be used in moderation. Video games can promote a sense of community and give teens a safe space to reach out. Let's remind them there's a real world out there with people in it who care about them too.

From My Point of View: Mental Health and the Media

What does it mean to be TAY? Take a moment to think about this time of your life, what you experienced being 16 to 25 years old. This period was probably a time of growth, change, and excitement coinciding with a heavy dose of transition, transformation, and all too often fear, depression, and anxiety. Frequently, this age group is left without supportive services and resources, falling between the gaps of two established systems: Children's System of Care and Adult System of Care. Because of this, NAMI San Diego is especially interested in supporting the TAY population. We are establishing inter-organization relationships across San Diego County, and have embarked on new programs built especially to support this sometimes vulnerable population. Stay connected to NAMI SD's CYF Liaison on Facebook, it's the perfect platform for TAY news & events.

CYFL Trainings Now Available!

SIGN UP NOW! PFYPP and Working Together Dates NOW OPEN!



Have you been waiting patiently while we revamp our two most popular trainings? **Principles of Family Youth Professional Partnerships (PFYPP)** is our online 1-hour introduction to the role of Peer Partners, otherwise known as Youth/Family Support Partners. **Working Together** is a live half-day training. These trainings help peer staff and those with lived experience gain knowledge of the Children's System of Care (CSOC), and learn tools to more effectively work together to support families and help them thrive. Offering CEH credit, these trainings fill up quickly. You will want to sign up right away! Learn more on the Meetings page on [our web-site](https://cyfliaison.namisaniego.org/meetings/), or copy and paste this link into your browser:

<https://cyfliaison.namisaniego.org/meetings/>.



Learn How To Share Your Voice Within The CSOC*

*CYFL Creates Informational Video To Assist With Understanding the *Children's System of Care Council and Subcommittees with Introductions by Subcommittee Members*



Introduction to the CYFBHSOCC and Sub-Committees video

Have you ever felt confused about the Children's System of Care and wondered how such a large Council effectively informs its Behavioral Health (BH) Director of the different subcommittee details? You are not alone! During the August CY-FBHSOC Council Member Orientation at the San Diego County Office of Education, a special informative session took place which included video interviews of each Council and Subcommittee within the CSOC (Children's System of Care). This orientation helps to ensure that all Sector representatives and alternates appointed by the BHS Director acquire the neces-

sary tools to become an informed and effective Council member. Many Subcommittees within the CSOC Council have welcomed new members to their meetings, thanks in part to the hard work members of these valuable Subcommittees do in an effort to spread the word that each voice matters. This is the San Diego community's way to listen to the voice of Lived Experience, and take these important messages back to the BH Director. To learn more and view the video and decide whether joining a Subcommittee is right for you, please visit the CYF Liaison's website page [here](https://cyfliaison.namisaniego.org/youtube/) (<https://cyfliaison.namisaniego.org/youtube/>). You are invited to join today, where your voice matters!

Our Voices Matter

Featuring a Family Youth Partner

By Linda Ketterer

Ingrid Alvarez Ron has found her calling in the world of mental wellness. She works in the NAMI San Diego Education Department as a Faith-Based Program Associate. "I am the one who reaches out to faith communities and behavioral health professionals to deliver presentations, [where] the focus [is] on faith, mental health, communities, education, and support. We talk about a mental health journey along with the strong message of hope and recovery."

For 17 months, Ingrid has been breaking stigmas associated with mental well-being in her community and many faith-based organizations. She states, "Stigma in faith-based communities is evident, people are afraid to approach professionals for fear of being judged. Many times, when they share their story with faith-based leaders, they are often told to 'pray more and God will help.' Or they do not have an answer, and so they go away feeling unheard."

As NAMI San Diego's Faith-Based Program Associate, Ingrid makes sure to deliver information about mental health in a way in which the community can relate. For instance, when they discuss depression, she encourages participants see what signs to look for and what can help, such as talking to someone or considering medication. But the unique aspect is they give permission that it is okay to speak to your faith leaders in addition to your provider. "We make sure it is not one or the other, it is both [together] that help us recover."

When asked what her most significant accomplishments working with families and churches has been, Ingrid's face formed a smile from ear to ear. "Being able to present in a Catholic church. Getting in was tough. Catholic [people] have their own mental health ministries. It was hard for them to open the door to new ways of seeking help because they have their own protocols to follow. I know about this because I was born and raised Catholic." Her smile broadens as she went on to explain, "Once we presented [our program], the [church] wanted us to come back. I am so happy to be included. We will be having a massive event in both English and Spanish in October."

“Sharing my faith and mental wellness is the best of both worlds!

- Ingrid Alvarez Ron

The faith community is not the only avenue where Ingrid helps break stigma. In the Hispanic culture, historical stigma is still keeping families from seeking the help they need. Ingrid continues, "We are getting there. When you have a person with lived experience such as myself, you can build rapport and trust [with others experiencing something similar]. At first, some audiences would not take me seriously but they would often start listening once they learned I am affiliated with NAMI SD. You can feel the rapport grow during the presentation. Afterwards, family members come with questions and ask for resources. They even ask me to come present at their churches! By being willing to share my story, the message of courage spreads."

Ingrid recounts, "It wasn't until I met people who were experiencing something similar, that I knew I was not alone. At first, I started seeking help because my loved one was living with mental illness, but in reality, it was me who needed help. I was living with depression. It was not enough to talk to my church, my mom, my trusted friends. I felt like I was going in circles. Finally, I joined a NAMI Family-to-Family [support] group, where I learned I was not alone, that what was going on in my household was happening in other people's households too. It was the support of strangers that helped me through my journey.

"From there I started telling my story. In my heart I knew it was time for my own journey to begin. I found out the NAMI [San Diego] support group needed a facilitator. I wasn't sure if I could do it because I knew it would be a commitment, but still, I raised my hand. And from that came this beautiful job. Being able to talk about my faith and about mental wellness is the best of both worlds! Meeting so many new people blessed me with growing my cultural humility. During this process, many strangers have asked me if they can pray for my needs. And although I still go to church, there was a time for me that was dark. Now, I see goodness everywhere."

Ingrid believes the support employers can provide to Youth/Family Support Partners is education. By this she means presentations, trainings, anything that opens a dialog about mental wellness and how to use lived experience as a tool for engagement. It is important to give space, to let people express their hope, their frustrations and their faith. Ingrid feels self-care should be embedded into every program. *Continued on page 8*



Ingrid Alvarez Ron
Family Youth Partner
of the Month

Family Youth Partners are members of the community who use their personal lived experience to reach out and help other families who are facing a challenging journey.

Our Voices Matter Feature

Y/FSP Feature, Ingrid Alvarez Ron, cont from page 7...

Being able to take time to care for one's self allows people to be their best and remain loyal to their job. It is important when employers value their employees as unique human beings. "Many people will not admit they have a mental illness for fear of losing their jobs. That fear paralyzes our growth. Most people spend a substantial percentage of their life at work; that time should not be spent paralyzed in fear, [or] stunting our personal growth."

One message for the families Ingrid would like to express is, "Don't give up, there will be challenges, but with every difficulty, there is an opportunity for growth. If we stay focused on our recovery and put God first, we have hope. Even when medication or our support system is not working, God will never let us down. My healing began when I stopped asking 'why' this is happening and started asking 'what' I can do to help!"

By using her hidden talent of public speaking, Ingrid continues to get her foot into formally closed doors. Ingrid's hope is that one day everyone will understand the meaning of social wellness, not only in the US, but around the world. She hopes one day everyone will recognize mental health disorders are real. "When we learn from and support each other, we can live in a better society. One where our children will not live in ignorance, but help break stigmas surrounding mental wellness." She hopes one day all people will treat each other with dignity, and that will be the best of both worlds!

Thank you, Ingrid, for your inspiring story and the valuable work you do in the community. We appreciate you!

We Are Here To Help!

The NAMI San Diego Children, Youth & Family Liaison (CYFL) serves as the Mental Health Services Act (MHSA) Resolution Point-of-Contact for issues within the Children, Youth & Families Behavioral Health System of Care (CYFBHSOC) as related to the MHSA plan. Issues surrounding the MHSA plan are investigated and feedback is given to Behavioral Health Services in order to assist in improving the current system of care. We also serve the community by facilitating dialogue between families, Youth/ Family Support 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 Children's System of Care. 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 CYF Liaison provides a safe, trauma-informed, judgment-free space for families to engage, and will help to find solutions to these concerns.

MHSA ISSUE RESOLUTION ASSISTANCE: Call (858) 987-2980
or Email CYFLiaison@namisd.org



NAMI SD Children, Youth & Family Liaison
Vol. III, Issue 4, Oct / Nov / Dec 2018
5095 Murphy Canyon Road, Suite 320
San Diego, CA 92123



Job Postings

- **CYFL Technology Engineer-** To apply visit www.namisan-diego.org/category/jobs
- **Peer Links Behavioral Health Clinician-** To apply visit www.namisan-diego.org/category/jobs
- **Peer Specialist - Next Steps Program** - To apply visit www.namisan-diego.org/category/jobs
- **Peer Specialist - Eligibility Specialist - Next Steps Program-** To apply visit www.namisan-diego.org/category/jobs
- **Training Specialist - Career Pathways** - Part Time. To apply visit www.namisan-diego.org/category/jobs
- **Youth/Family Support Partner, Peer Partner** positions- MHS Families Forward - Apply to <https://careers-mhsinc.icims.com/jobs/search?ss=1&hashed=-435746215>

Would you like us to advertise your Youth/Family Support Partner related job? We are happy to add your job listing to our next quarterly newsletter. Please direct your submissions to CYFLiaison@namisd.org. All submissions will be reviewed for appropriate content.

CYFL is funded by The County of San Diego Health & Human Services Agency through the Mental Health Services Act

