Behavioral Health News

A newsletter relating activities of the Kings County Behavioral Health Agency .

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SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- Mental Health First Aid
- Tackling Truancy
- MGM Fitness
- Links to Resources
- Valor Training

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Kings County Behavioral Health has been offering **Mental Health First Aid** training since January, 2011. In October, 2010, four members of the Behavioral Health staff became certified instructors and began offering the training every 2-3 months. The original training was a 12 hour training that took 2 days to complete. The training is now an 8 hour curriculum and can be completed in one day.

Mental Health First Aid is a training to assist individuals in recognizing the signs and symptoms of an emerging mental health disorder, and/or to offer assistance to someone experiencing a crisis. The topics addressed in the training are depression, anxiety, psychotic disorders, substance use disorder, suicidal thoughts and behaviors, and non-suicidal self injury. Throughout the training, the action plan, ALGEE, is utilized and demonstrated to help participants become more confident in assisting someone with a mental health disorder or who is experiencing a crisis.

Although trainings had been provided to individuals in many different career paths, on November 15, 2013, something out of the ordinary happened. Behavioral Health had been contacted by Gail Lucas, **Kings County Library** Branch Manager in Hanford, who sought assistance for a growing challenge at the library. Due to an increase in the homeless and transient populations using the library for shelter and warmth, confrontations were beginning to escalate. Many library staff members were feeling uncomfortable and uncertain, as some of the confrontations were being directed at them. Additionally, a homeless man, who had been at the library for three weeks sleeping in the bushes and coming inside for water and shelter, committed suicide. This added to the difficulty the staff faced each day, and caused them to wonder if there was anything more they could have done or noticed to prevent this from happening.

The **Mental Health First Aid** training was offered and, although it would not be the answer to the growing number of homeless within our city and county, it would provide some tools and understanding of the disorders and provide an action plan in how to address the individuals they were coming into contact with on a daily basis. Gail Lucas presented the information to the **Kings County Library** Director, Natalie Rencher, who accepted the offer. On November 5th, a request was taken before the Kings County Board of Supervisors to have all library branches within the county close on November 15th, so that all employees could attend the training. The Board approved this request.

On November 15th , Minerva Coltra and Cela Nichols presented the 8 hour training, the first use of the shorter curriculum, and the training was located off site from Behavioral Health. The training was conducted at the county's Administration Building, Multi-Purpose Room, to 23 attendees. It was a day well spent and hopefully it was beneficial to all of those who attended.

KINGS COUNTY behavioral health

Save a Life, Keep a Kid in School!

That line was coined by the **DA** at the Annual Regional Truancy Summit last May. That line is now the name of the special publication that was released on December 12, 2013. **Behavioral Health**, in collaboration with **Tulare County Office of Education, Kings County Office of Education, and the Kings County District Attorney's Office,** will launch a new collaborative Truancy prevention and education effort. Over 23,970 copies of a full color, 12-page (6 pages in English and same 6 pages in Spanish) special advertising supplement were included into the Hanford Sentinel and the Visalia Times-Delta on December 12th. In addition, another 26,000 copies will be provided to schools, Probation Departments, and local Student Attendance Review Boards (SARB) to be shared with parents.

A PDF version of this publication has also be distributed via email to all County Agencies in Kings County, as well as Kings County Office of Education, Kings County Schools, Tulare County Office of Education, Central California Truancy Taskforce, the California Association of Supervisors of Child Welfare (CASCWA), the California Department of Justice, as well as the State SARB who have shared with its local SARBs throughout the State. The publication is also on the Region VII (Student Mental Health Initiative), Behavioral Health, CASCWA, and Office of Education's websites at this time!

The **State Attorney General** issued a report that was released in September 2013 entitled, California's Elementary School Truancy and Absenteeism "a Crisis"! The report showed that truancy rates among elementary school students in Kings County were 21%. In neighboring Tulare County, the rate was at 16.4%. Additionally, the report found that after 5 absences, when a child attends a low income school, their chance of graduating drops by 7% for each day missed! The fact that 82% of the U.S. prison populations are high school dropouts, and a host of other data, were catalysts in driving the local effort to tackle truancy. There is a link in the publication to a summary of the Attorney General's report.

In Kings County, the issues of truancy and chronic absenteeism are seen as symptoms of other issues in the home. Thus, the partners sought to reduce and eliminate truancy/chronic absenteeism by addressing the issues that are causing the truancy. Those issues range from language barriers and cultural differences, to issues such as substance use, domestic violence, abuse, neglect, bullying, hunger and a slew of other variables.

In order to educate students, parents, each other and the community on issues related to truancy, as well as local efforts and available services to address those issues, the partners developed this publication (see the link at the end of the story).

One of the recommendations made by the **Attorney General's Truancy Report** was the need to design and implement a program to communicate that school attendance is important and it's the law. The local multi-county, multi-agency regional effort is doing just that, and was hatched before the release of the report.

This project has been part of an ongoing effort by our **Truancy Intervention and Prevention Program (TIPP)** and the Regional Student Mental Health Initiative (Region VII). This publication, which has been in the works since September of 2013, is one of many efforts by the collaborating agencies to address Truancy Prevention and Chronic Absenteeism in the region. **TIPP**, which was established 1 ½ years ago, uses **Mental Health Services Act (Prop 63)** funds to address those issues effecting students and their families.

The collaborative effort between the various local agencies is being hailed as a model for other counties by some State officials in Sacramento. The publication is a first-of-its-kind effort to address truancy prevention in the State. More so, it is another example of how counties and agencies can work together to address issues that have a tremendous impact on our communities.

We'd like to thank all our staff who assisted on this major project, as well as our partners at the **Kings County Office of Education, Tulare County Office of Education, the District Attorney's Office, and the Sacramento News & Review** who developed the publication.

You may share the publication with others. The links are below. If your agency would like some hard copies to share, please contact Abraham Valencia for assistance at 852-2416.

MentalHealth.gov Let's talk about it.

MYTH: Children don't experience mental health problems.

FACT: Even very young children may show early warning signs of mental health concerns. These mental health problems are often clinically diagnosable, and can be a product of the interaction of biological, psychological, and social factors.

Half of all mental health disorders show first signs before a person turns 14 years old, and three quarters of mental health disorders begin before age 24.

Unfortunately, less than 20% of children and adolescents with diagnosable mental health problems receive the treatment they need. Early mental health support can help a child before problems interfere with other developmental needs……...**Learn more about mental health issues and visit www.MentalHealth.Gov**

Valor Training: A way of thanking Veterans for their Service

Families and agencies who serve veterans are constantly being challenged on how to best serve Veterans who turn to them for assistance and support. Families of these Veterans must also try to come to grip with loved ones who have returned home changed in so many ways. The dilemma is how can professionals and loved ones learn to be supportive of behaviors that they can't begin to understand? Does one confront the Veteran's resistance to talk? Does one challenge his/her emotional outburst? What does one do when the Veteran is faced with triggers of war and will recluse themselves for days on end? What do you do when caring words are met with stony silence? And how does one deal with a spouse that feels left out of the family after returning from an overseas tour?

Above: Mario Lopez, left, presents Valor Training to the Board of Directors for Community College Disabled Students Program & Services.

These are all important concerns. **Kings County Behavioral Health** is addressing these questions and more through the "Another Kind of Valor" training. The 7 hour training is provided to a variety of agencies who work closely with Veterans. These agencies include the courts, law enforcement, college counselors, doctors, churches and mental health agencies, just to name a few. The training provides tools on how to reach Veterans by having actual Veterans speak about their experiences and directly letting us know what they need from all of us. Military spouses also speak out about their experiences of being married to a Veteran. Female Veterans discuss their experiences of serving in the military. Numerous videos are presented to exemplify the effects of war on our Veterans. Discussions on the availability of services in Kings County are also presented. The topic of what to say and not say, as well as what to ask and not ask Veterans is discussed. Finally, working with Veterans can be very taxing to family members and service providers; therefore, Vicarious Traumatization/Compassion Fatigue is thoroughly reviewed.

The Valor training is available to any agency or person that works or plans to work with Veterans. For additional information, please call Chris Prewitt at 559-852-2372 or Mario Lopez, LCSW at 559-852-2438.

Not a Panacea, but pretty close!

So you ask, what is this service that you have that's almost a panacea? Well, **Behavioral Health** has been offering **Parent Child Interactive Therapy (PCIT)** services to the community for over a year now. The agency's clinicians have not only completed the required training which took them a year, but successfully met the requirements to become trainers. At this time, **Behavioral Health** is training its new clinicians, as well as staff from its partner agency **Kings View Counseling Services**, in providing **PCIT** services.

PCIT is a evidence based, best practice model for addressing behavioral issues with children between 2 to 7 years of age. **PCIT** is a time intensive program which requires weekly participation by the child and their parent/guardian for 4-6 months (approximately 18 -25 weekly sessions). In those sessions, the parents receive coaching and develop skills necessary to address, redirect and modify their child's behaviors. During the session, they are given an opportunity to implement those new skills in the **PCIT** room, where they are coached by a clinician who is monitoring the interaction through a one-way mirror in another room, and provides feedback through an ear piece. Needless to say, this program uses some high tech equipment. Participating parents/guardians also have to participate in "homework" to develop the behavioral changes they seek on a consistent base. As it was noted, it is an intensive approach which has to be consistently applied in the home.

The program does have certain criteria that must be met to be eligible, but the program and services are offered at no cost to eligible participants. Now, you may think, if there is no cost, there must be an income requirement? There isn't! Organizations can refer potential participants to our PEI program for screening for **PCIT** services. Also, parents and families can make self referrals to our PEI program to be screened for the PCIT services. Some of the basic requirements are: participants reside in the home with the child; participant is a resident of Kings County, ability to participate in the 5 month program.

There are some additional factors that are determined through a screening and assessment process as well. PCIT is appropriate for children exhibiting chronic behaviors at home, school, preschool, or day care, which may include:

- Acting out and disruptive behavior in school settings
- Sassing back to parents on a regular basis
- Frequent temper tantrums
- Defiance
- Aggression toward parents, siblings or other children in the home
- Refusing to follow directions
- Swearing
- Oppositional behaviors

If, for some reason, participants aren't suited for PCIT, we are able to provide other clinical services (such as family or individual counseling and/or use of other interventions such as play therapy, etc.).

Behavioral Health is the only agency offering PCIT services in Kings County and the best part is that, at this time, PCIT is provided at no cost. We are currently in the process of training additional clinicians in PCIT and expanding our PCIT spaces to accommodate additional cases. So, if you are interested in PCIT or would like more information, please contact our **STAR Center at 852-2415**.

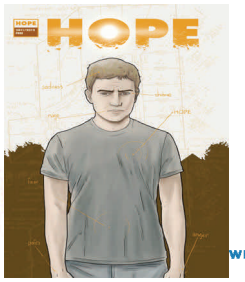
Like we said, PCIT is not a Panacea, but for families who participate fully, and consistently apply the techniques learned in the home, the results are visible.

Click any of the links below!

NATIONAL SUICIDE PREVENTION LIFELINE™ 1-800-273-TALK (8255) suicidepreventionlifeline.org

REACH OUT.COM

THE TREVOR PROJECT saving young lives



MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES ACT PROPOSITION 63 CALIFORNIA

WELLNESS • RECOVERY • RESILIENCE

EACH MIND MATTERS California's Mental Health Movement

Prevention and Early Intervention at Work

MGM Fitness and **Kings County Behavioral Health** have partnered together in working with Leo Rivera by enrolling him into the MGM Fitness INSPIRE Program. The INSPIRE program was developed by **Mark Grijalva of MGM Fitness** as a way to help teens who are dealing with some form of hardship and/or life challenges as they are maturing into adulthood. The program provides a safe, encouraging and positive environment where the participant learns how to live a healthy lifestyle. MGM Fitness uses physical fitness as a building block in teaching the participant life coping skills while they begin to live a healthier and active lifestyle. As part of the program, Leo has been provided his workout attire by MGM Fitness. Other Members and Businesses in the community have also sponsored Leo in participating in his first 5k run, **Color Me Rad**, which took place with a team from MGM Fitness.

Left: Leo, Right: Coach Mark

Team MGM Fitness during the 5k run.

Leo and Coach Mark sporting their sponsor provided workout gear

Grief Support Group - Starting January 2014

The upcoming Grief and Loss group will begin in January and is available to any adult residing in Kings County who may need additional support dealing with the loss of a loved one. Some topics that will be covered include the Stages of Grief, impact of the loss, healthy ways to cope and heal, as well as ways to celebrate anniversaries and remembering the loved one. Some benefits of attending this group include a safe and therapeutic environment to process thoughts and emotions related to the loss, as well as receive support from other individuals who have experienced a similar loss. Additionally, attendees will benefit from learning new coping skills to help adjust to the loss of their loved one. The 12-week group will begin January 27, 2014. If interested in participating, please contact Michelle Phillips, ACSW at (559) 852-2286.

Behavioral Health was honored to participate in this year's Veterans Festival on November 11th. Striving to serve the community by informing them of our valuable services, We welcome all invitations to community fairs and resource events. Please contact us at 852-2416.

Kings County Critical Incident Stress Management Team

Kings County Behavioral Health is working to establish and develop a Critical Incident Stress Management Team (CISM). The CISM is made up of first responders, mental health professionals, faith-based workers, school personnel and others who are learning to care for one another in the first waves following a crisis.

You may still ask, "What is CISM?" CISM is a comprehensive, integrative, multi-component crisis intervention system. CISM is considered comprehensive because it consists of multiple crisis intervention components, which functionally span the entire temporal spectrum of a crisis. CISM interventions range from the pre-crisis phase through the acute crisis phase, and into the post-crisis phase. CISM is also considered comprehensive in that it consists of interventions which may be applied to individuals, small functional groups, large groups, families, organizations, and even communities.

The team will consist of 15 individuals from a number of organizations and agencies in Kings County. Invitations were sent to a number of organizations, however, due to the limited number of team and training slots, not all organizations seeking to participate were able to join the team at this time. Behavioral Health will have seven staff members on the team, of which three are clinician, but others are case managers, outreach workers, etc. The team will also include members from the Probation Department, the Sheriff's Department, Hanford Police Department (sworn officer and dispatch), and Kings County Public Health.

The CISM team will respond after a crisis event. It could respond to a community event, such as a fire or accident (train derailment), or natural disasters. It can also respond to public health issues, like the TB scare last year. CISM can be mobilized for a variety of incidents including possible shootings or law enforcement incidents.

The CISM team's initial training will be a 3-day course entitled, Individual Crisis Intervention and Peer Support & Group Crisis Intervention. This 3-day course combines ALL of the content of the International Critical Incident Stress Foundation (ICISF's) Individual Crisis Intervention and Peer Support & Group Crisis Intervention courses. Crisis Intervention is NOT psychotherapy; rather, it is a specialized acute emergency mental health intervention which requires specialized training. As physical first aid is to surgery, crisis intervention is to psychotherapy. Thus, crisis intervention is sometimes called "emotional first aid." Designed to present the core elements of a comprehensive, systematic and multi-component crisis intervention curriculum, this course will prepare participants to understand a wide range of crisis intervention services for both the individual and for groups. Fundamentals of CISM will be outlined and our team will leave with the knowledge and tools to provide several group crisis interventions, specifically, Demobilizations, Defusing and Critical Incident Stress Debriefing (CISD).
If there is a need for additional services and/or referrals, members of the Behavioral Health team can assist with providing those services, or conduct the necessary linkages for those services.

The team is seeking to begin its training in February or March of 2014. Once the team is formed and trained, it is the intent of the CISM team to seek additional training in specialty areas, such as Advance Group Crisis Intervention, Law Enforcement Perspectives, and Managing School Crisis.

Find Us

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