

# Sonoma County

## MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES ACT

### Newsletter

SEPTEMBER 2022 | 50TH EDITION



## September is SUICIDE PREVENTION MONTH

### Thriving at All Ages

People of all ages benefit from some common tenets of wellness, but the specific ways that wellness and resilience are supported change through the life span. Building resiliency is important at all ages, and strategies can be tailored depending on what is enjoyable or accessible depending on your age. Throughout our communities many people are continuing to experience mental health challenges, trauma, burn-out and fatigue due to the prolonged impacts of the pandemic and natural disasters. To support Thriving At All Ages, Californians are encouraged to take action for suicide prevention by recognizing the importance of strengthening resiliency, protective factors, and physical and emotional wellness throughout the lifespan and at different life stages.

Effective strategies for suicide prevention must address the strengths, circumstances, and challenges of the different phases of life. Resiliency can be built at any age with attention to some common protective factors that promote wellness and are necessary to thrive:

- **Strong social support networks** where people can talk through their problems and feelings, ask for help and offer help and support to others.
- **Good physical health**, and when complications occur, finding the right health regimen to promote recovery and support wellness.
- **Access to primary care services** to promote health and catch problems early. Primary care is where many people go for wide variety of concerns and is a key setting for connecting people to appropriate services and supports.
- **Access to effective behavioral health care** reduces the risk and severity of illness and supports recovery. Counseling can help strengthen strategies for problem-solving and coping with stress.
- **Meaning and purpose** can be found in a variety of ways, but their sources often shift throughout life. Meaning and purpose can be found through work or hobbies, family life, learning and studying, and religion and spirituality. Meaning and purpose can also be found through helping others by volunteering and supporting important causes.
- **Self-care** is not a luxury; it is a necessity. Self-care is too often neglected, especially when other demands seem more pressing, or when changes limit access to what once worked for wellness. Many steps to self-care are simple, free, and can be done anywhere, even with only a few minutes of time.

"We need to find meaning and build a life worth living on a daily basis no matter what age we are."  
- Julie Phillips, Professor of Sociology, Rutgers University

### Take Action For Suicide Prevention

Know the Signs • Find the Words • Reach Out



Thriving At All Ages

[suicideispreventable.org](http://suicideispreventable.org)



- **Attitudes about aging** have a significant impact on wellness, especially in later years. It is possible for people of all ages to thrive. Viewing aging as a developmental stage, with its own unique opportunities for growth, allows room for adaptation to life's changes and reasons for hope.

We all have a role to play in suicide prevention. Take action to support yourself and those around you by visiting [www.takeaction4MH.com](http://www.takeaction4MH.com) for more information.

Learn about the signs for suicide, finding the words to check-in with someone we are concerned about, and reaching out to resources. Visit [www.suicideispreventable.org](http://www.suicideispreventable.org) for more information.

## Be a Part of Our Suicide Prevention Efforts!

## Sonoma County Warmly Welcomes New Director!

### Join Sonoma County's Suicide Prevention & Awareness Efforts!

Sonoma County Board of Supervisors adopted a gold resolution proclaiming the month of September 2022 as Suicide Prevention Month in Sonoma County. The following efforts to prevent suicide are scheduled for Suicide Prevention Month:

- **September 6th** 3:00pm - 4:30pm
  - **Buckelew's Virtual Community Resource Clinic** - Resource clinic via Zoom to help with understanding or assistance in accessing services for themselves or their loved one. Email [Nicolen@buckelew.org](mailto:Nicolen@buckelew.org) or call 707-494-0762 to participate.
- **September 14th** 8:30am - 5:00pm
  - **Assessing and Managing Suicide Risk (AMSR)** - a free workshop for behavioral health professionals on assessing suicide risk, planning treatment, and managing the ongoing care of the at-risk client. Clinicians can earn 6.5 CEs and this training meets the BBS suicide assessment training requirements. This is an in-person only event. Click [HERE](#) for flyer with registration information.
- **September 14th & 28th** 7:00 pm - 8:30 pm
  - **SOS: Allies For Hope by Buckelew** Survivors of Suicide Bereavement Support Group (Virtual) is a non-clinical peer-to-peer group to share strategies and skills for coping with loss of a loved one to suicide and transitioning to a place of greater understanding and compassion for ourselves, for those with similar experiences, and those we have lost. Email [SOSinfo@Buckelew.org](mailto:SOSinfo@Buckelew.org) or call: 415-492-0614 for more information.
- **September 21st** 12:30pm - 2:30pm
  - **Be Sensitive, Be Brave for Suicide Prevention Webinar** - infuses culture and diversity throughout a foundational workshop in suicide prevention. The workshop teaches community members to act as eyes and ears for suicidal distress and to help connect individuals with appropriate services. Click [HERE](#) to register.
- **September 29th** 4:00pm - 6:30pm, Finley Center
  - **"The S Word" Film Screening & Panel Discussion** - Join Sonoma County's Behavioral Health Division in partnership with Buckelew for a free in-person and virtual screening of "The S Word" documentary film. "THE S WORD" is a powerful feature documentary that puts a human face on suicide, a topic that has long been stigmatized and buried with the lives it has claimed. A panel discussion with resources will be available after the film. Click [HERE](#) for flyer.



children, youth, adults, and families across a broad spectrum of community-based behavioral health treatment settings.

Prior to joining DHS-BHD, Dr. Cobaleda-Kegler served as Mental Health Program Chief for Contra Costa County Adult and Older Adult Behavioral Health Services where she dedicated herself to promoting the recovery and wellness of vulnerable adults and their families and to implementing numerous system improvements in an effort to improve the quality of care provided to clients. She also served as Program Manager in Contra Costa Children's System of Care, where she distinguished herself by developing and implementing training for staff across the division in Evidence Based Practices in the treatment of trauma, depression, co-occurring disorders, eating disorders, animal assisted therapy, and anxiety.



### Peer Support Certification Scholarships Available!

Medi-Cal Peer Support Specialist certification is here! The Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) is offering scholarship opportunities, through CalMHSA, for peers who want to seek certification as Medi-Cal Peer Support Specialists. Sonoma County is now collecting names for local peers who want to apply for scholarships for certification. The scholarships cover the cost of the application, training, and exam. While individuals may apply on their own for certification, DHCS/CalMHSA scholarships are available only through this process.

To meet DHCS's definition of a peer, the individual must "self-identify as having experience with the process of recovery from mental illness or substance use disorder, either as a consumer of these services or as the parent, caregiver, or family member of a consumer" and must "be willing to share one's experience as a person with lived experience and recovery to help others." To meet certification requirements, the peer must also be at least 18 years old; have a high-school diploma, GED, or college degree; agree to adhere to the Medi-Cal Code of Ethics for Peer Support Specialists; and pass the state exam.

CalMHSA's Medi-Cal Peer Support Specialist Certification website has more background on California's work on peer certification and details about the scholarships.

If you live, work, or volunteer in Sonoma County and you want to apply for a certification scholarship, please contact Lisa Nosal at [lisa.nosal@sonoma-county.org](mailto:lisa.nosal@sonoma-county.org) for information. The deadline for applying for a scholarship is September 16, 2022, and peers who are awarded scholarships must register for the exam by November 30, 2022.



### New 988 - There is hope!

If you or someone you know is having thoughts of suicide or experiencing a mental health or substance use crisis, 988 provides **24/7 connection to confidential support.**

There is Hope. **Just call or text 988 or chat [988lifeline.org](http://988lifeline.org)**

There is hope.



**988** SUICIDE & CRISIS LIFELINE