

Director's Report

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DEPARTMENT AND COUNTY NEWS

Lompoc Staff Participate in Community Lecture Series: On May 22, several Lompoc Behavioral Wellness staff participated in the Lompoc Valley Medical Center Hospital District Foundation Lecture Series, along with other community agencies and community based organizational providers. Much thanks to **Dr. Ruby Agoha, Lompoc Children's Psychiatrist; Melana Serka, MFT, Practitioner; Michael Allen, West County Crisis and Mobile Crisis Services Supervisor and Michael Dixon, LCSW, Practitioner** for their participation in this event. The panel discussion was titled: Demystifying The Stigma of Mental Health – Who To Turn To. The event was well attended by other agencies and community members. A variety of topics were discussed related to information about services including crisis services, resources for children and teens, adult and senior service, and access to care. Thank you all!

North County Rape Crisis and Child Protection Center Celebrates 45 Years of Service: On June 8, the North County Rape Crisis and Child Protection Center will be celebrating 45 years of service with a celebration taking place in Buellton. The purpose of the North County Rape Crisis and Child Protection Center is to reduce the incidence of and vulnerability to sexual assault and child abuse by providing education and prevention skills to community children and adults to alleviate the trauma experiences by survivors of these crimes by providing direct service.

New Crisis Residential Treatment Service Providers: Behavioral Wellness thanks Anka Behavioral Health for their service since 2016, as the provider for our North and South County Crisis Residential Treatment programs. Through a collaborative process involving Anka and many others, Crisis Residential Treatment services have been successfully transitioned to two new providers. As a result of Anka's bankruptcy filing, on May 28, 2019, the Board of Supervisors approved contracts with Crestwood Behavioral Health for operation of the South County program and Telecare Corp for the operation of the North County program.

Policy Update and Upcoming Transition: No new policies passed in May.

After 7 years of dedicated service to the Department of Behavioral Wellness, Yaneris Muñiz will be transitioning her work to the Office of Emergency Management effective June 17. During an interim transition period, Maria Arteaga will be assuming oversight of Policy and Procedures. Discussion is currently in place regarding oversight of Cultural Competency and Ethnic Services.

June is PTSD Awareness Month: There are currently about 8 million people in the United States with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). Even though PTSD treatments work, most people who have PTSD do not get the help they need. Everyone experiencing the symptoms of PTSD whether they are our many first responders, Veterans of war, survivors of sexual assault, child abuse, serious accidents, natural disasters, or other traumatic events, needs to know that treatments are available. It is estimated that 30 percent of first responders develop behavioral health conditions including, but not limited to, depression and posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD), as compared with 20 percent in the general population (Abbot et al., 2015). In a study about suicidality, firefighters were reported to have higher attempt and ideation rates than the general population (Stanley et al., 2016). In law enforcement, the estimates suggest between 125 and 300 police officers commit suicide every year (Badge of Life, 2016).

In Santa Barbara County, we see the remarkable work of our First Responders in action all the time. We also know the emotional toll that this work takes and the impact it plays on teams. Behavioral Wellness works to support our First Responders following traumatic events through critical incident debriefings as often as possible. With other traumatic events which occur in our community, in schools or in families, Behavioral Wellness is available to provide immediate support through trauma crisis counseling and critical incident debriefings.

It has been a mere year and a half since our collective community and many Behavioral Wellness staff were uniquely impacted by the trauma of the Thomas Fire and 1/9 Debris Flow. Many in our community were left with a post-traumatic stress reaction. It is so very important to know that if you have experienced a traumatic event or the symptoms associated with post-traumatic stress, you are not alone. Going through a traumatic event is not rare. According to the National Center for PTSD, at least half of Americans have had a traumatic event in their lives. Of people who have had trauma, about 1 in 10 men and 2 in 10 women will develop PTSD. There are some things that make it more likely you'll develop PTSD — for example, having very intense or long-lasting trauma, getting hurt, or having a strong reaction to the event (like shaking, throwing up, or feeling distant from your surroundings). It's also more common to develop PTSD after certain types of trauma, but there's no way to know for sure who will develop PTSD.

While there are many symptoms which may be present in a person experiencing PTSD, there are four main areas which these symptoms fall under:

- Reliving the event
- Avoiding things that remind you of the event
- Having more negative thoughts and feelings than before
- Feeling on edge or feeling numb or detached from people or situations

Not only is treatment for PTSD available, but it works and can lead to a better quality of life. To know how to identify additional common signs of PTSD, click [here](#) or go to <https://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/topics/post-traumatic-stress-disorder-ptsd/index.shtml>.

The **Behavioral Wellness 24/7 Access Line** is available to help connect to resources by calling 1-888-868-1649.

June is Men's Health Month: June is Men's Health Month. In addition to raising the attention to men's health issues is the focus on men's mental health. The National Institute of Mental Health states that while many mental illnesses affect both men and women, men may be less likely to talk about their feelings and seek help. On average, men have a shorter lifespan than women by about five years due to high rates from the top 10 leading causes of death, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Numerous researchers have recently stated that there is a silent crisis in men's mental health. Men make up over 75 percent of deaths by suicide in the United States with one man killing himself every 20 minutes. In the current economy, many men are finding it difficult to find the work adequate to support their families, leaving them feeling a loss of power, pride, purpose and meaning in life. Substance abuse occurs at a higher rate (3:1) in men than women. Men are also reported to access needed mental health services at a lower rate than women. Ultimately, leaving men more likely to suffer in silence.

The National Institute of Mental Health shares that men and women experience many of the same mental disorders but their willingness to talk about their feelings may be very different. This is one of the reasons that their symptoms may be very different as well. For example, some men with depression or an anxiety disorder hide their emotions and may appear to be angry or aggressive while many women will express sadness. Some men may turn to drugs or alcohol to try to cope with their emotional issues. Sometimes mental health symptoms appear to be physical issues. For example, a racing heart, tightening chest, ongoing headaches, and digestive issues can be a sign of an emotional problem. Help in raising awareness of men's mental health needs. Treatment is available and can help in improving overall quality of life. The [Behavioral Wellness 24/7 Access Line](#) is available by calling 1-888-868-1649.

South Counties Regional Partnership Update:

Adult Regional Partnership meeting

The most recent meeting took place on May 20, 2019. Attendees included Behavioral Wellness Managers and Supervisors, CenCal Health, Public Health Department, Department of Rehabilitation, Family Service Agency, Housing Authority – County of Santa Barbara, United Way and the American Indian Clinic. With a focus on active collaboration to support seamless transitions of clients to appropriate levels of care, barriers and areas for improvement were discussed. With much discussion taking place, some of the key highlights of this meeting include: recognition of the Community Treatment Services (CTS) meeting becoming more streamlined and efficient in linking clients to care, the American Indian Health Clinic is opening a new dental practice in Carpinteria, announcement that Dr. Sam Tsemberis – author of Housing First – will be coming to Santa Barbara to present on June 10 from 9:30 am – 11:30 am followed by a training being offered on “Home for Good” from 1 pm – 4 pm the same day, and an announcement was made that the Housing Authority will be hosting a Senior Fair at Garden Court on May 23.

Children's Regional Partnership meeting

The recent meeting took place on May 16, 2019. Behavioral Wellness Children's Team Supervisor, Sara Bazan, shared of a study completed by Stanford University at the San Francisco school district which found that all students, regardless of race, benefited from taking an Ethnic Studies class. Benefits included increased civic engagement, increased grade point average, rates of college acceptance and decrease in truancy and drop-out rates. In November of 2018, Santa Barbara Unified School District passed a resolution to add a 5 unit Ethnic Studies class to the High School graduation requirements. Further discussion occurred during this collaborative meeting, on the profound impact that racism has on mental health in children and importance of this curriculum requirement.

Lompoc (West County) Regional Partnership Update: Lompoc’s West County Regional Partnership Meeting occurs every other month on the third Tuesday. The Lompoc regional partnership meetings are well attended and valued by community agencies. The Lompoc regional partnership meetings focus on sustaining and strengthening crucial community partnerships, such as those with the Department of Public Health, Department of Social Services, local law enforcement, Vandenberg Air force Base, Lompoc Valley Medical Center, and a variety of community-based organizations (CBOs) providing mental health and/or substance abuse treatment to promote cross-sector collaboration. The meeting has given the local community based organizations the opportunity to share available resources, and changes within their program. The next meeting is July 16th, 3:30-4:30 at 301 N. R Street.

North County Regional Partnership Update: The Santa Maria’s North County Regional Partnership Meetings are held monthly at the Santa Maria Adult Outpatient Clinic located at 500 W Foster Road in Santa Maria, CA (large conference room):

- Children’s Regional Partnership Meeting – 3rd Mondays @ 10:00 am – 11:00 am
- Adult Regional Partnership Meeting – 3rd Mondays @ 11:00 am – 12:00 pm

The Santa Maria regional partnership meetings focus on promoting the expansion of cross-sector collaboration through strengthening and sustaining key community partnerships, such as those with the county of Santa Barbara’s Department of Public Health, Department of Social Services, law enforcement, CenCal Health and a variety of community-based organizations (CBO) providing mental health and/or substance abuse treatment to children, transitional aged youth (TAY) and adults in the Santa Maria region. The partnership meetings in May focused on Coast Valley’s TAY substance abuse programming, the county’s implementation of the Interagency Placement Committee (IPC) Meeting, which includes CWS, probation and Behavioral Wellness, collaborating in a weekly meeting on Thursdays at 9-11 am to ensure foster youth are referred to and receive the appropriate level of care to meet their changing mental health needs. In addition, the adult system regional partners have begun discussing the initiative of developing an updated resource list for providers to improve accessibility to services offered in the community.

Cultural Competence and Diversity Action Team (CCDAT) Update: The Department issued a memo instituting **interpreter utilization documentation requirements** for all client encounters with standardized documentation codes. Utilization data, specifically for Language Line, is a requirement for the DHCS Network Adequacy Certification Tool (NACT) submission, due quarterly. In addition to documenting interpreter type (i.e., Language Line, contracted interpreter), staff must also document the reason Language Line was used instead of the service being provided directly by a bilingual staff, or with the assistance of a contracted interpreter. For more information on the interpreter utilization documentation codes, [please refer to the memo](#).

The CCDAT officially launched the **Cultural Competence Survey** on Wednesday, June 5th. This survey is the first phase in a comprehensive needs assessment of cultural competence within Santa Barbara County’s behavioral health system. Two surveys are available: one solely for clients/family & friends, and a separate survey for staff and providers, including CBOs, community stakeholders and partner agencies. Depending on the survey taker’s role (i.e., client, direct care staff, manager), the survey may take 5-20 minutes to complete. All answers are completely confidential and private, and the survey taker can choose not to answer any of the questions. **The survey will be active through Friday, June 14th.** Click on one of the following links to take the survey now: [Clients/Family & Friends](#) | [Staff and Providers](#)

Children’s System of Care (CSOC) Action Team Update: The CSOC Action Team Meetings are held monthly on the 4th Thursdays @ 10:30 am – 12:00 pm at the Buellton Recreation Center (301 2nd Street, Room A, Buellton, CA).

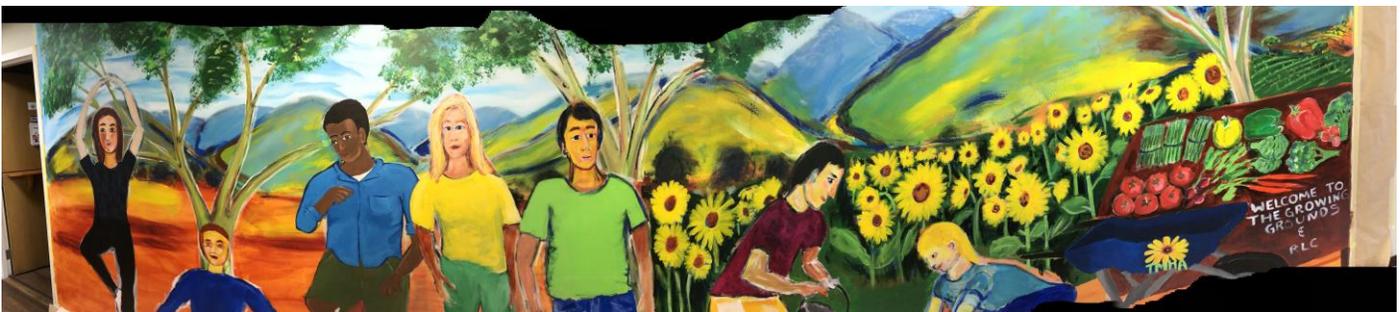
Crisis Action Team Update: Behavioral Wellness and the Santa Barbara Police Department have signed an agreement to move forward with a Co-Response Pilot program. The program plans to begin mid-June. This pilot program plans to begin by providing 4 ten hour shifts on Tuesday through Friday.

The grant funded Children’s Triage Program has been operating in North and West counties with much success. The Triage team includes **Arlene Altobelli, PhD** and **Rocio Bandera de Willard, Parent Partner**. Both have been very active in assisting youth in crisis in the Emergency Departments of both Marian Hospital and Lompoc Valley Medical Center. Between February and May the team has seen over 60 youth who were experiencing a mental health crisis and in need of either an involuntary psychiatric hold or safety planning to return to the community.

This month’s Crisis Action Team meeting which scheduled for June 13th will be **cancelled** as John Winckler will be out of town for a training. The meeting will resume in July on the 11th.

Client Family Member Advisory Committee (CFMAC)/Peer Action Team (PAT): Our new Peer Empowerment Manager, **Maria Arteaga**, has been busy this month visiting the Recovery Learning Centers, clinics and meeting with peers in our system. The CFMAC/PAC joined committees last year and is actively working on revitalizing the charter to reflect their role as an “action team.” This work effort will continue at the upcoming meeting. The committee will also be working on setting goals for the year. The committee is interested in expanding membership and encourages any client, peer or family member to attend and provide the department with input. The next meeting will be held at Pea Soup Anderson’s in Buellton on June 20th at 1pm.

Change Agents: No Change Agent meeting since the last report. However, an example of one of many change agent projects taking place throughout the department is the Santa Barbara Adult outpatient clinic who has been busy beautifying their clinic as one of their process improvement projects. **Juan Carlos Gutierrez** has worked as a case worker with Behavioral Wellness for more than 20 years. In addition to many other duties, he facilitates an advanced art group, yoga group, men’s group and provides outreach to our board and care client’s. Juan Carlos agreed to paint a mural depicting the community and serving to brighten up the clinic. His beautiful artwork can also be seen in our Psychiatric Hospital Facility. His talent is greatly appreciated by the department.



Housing Services (HEART) Action Team: The next Housing Services (HEART) Action Team will be taking place on June 12th from 1 pm – 2:30 pm. The meeting will include updates about developments of CCP funds for a Mental Health Rehabilitation Center (MHRC), Crisis Residential Treatment program vendors, and *No Place Like Home* projects in the South County.

Forensic Action Team Update: Hadisha Person, LMFT has been appointed Interim Team Supervisor for the RISE Project, a MHSIA Innovations grant funded program that provides outreach, engagement and treatment to children and transitional aged youth who are survivors of human trafficking. Hadisha is a seasoned clinician who comes to us from the Lompoc Children's Clinic, and we are very fortunate to have her lend her leadership to this important program.

Additionally, the **Forensic Action Team** meets every other month on the 4th Wednesday, from 2-3:30 p.m. The next meeting will be held on July 24, 2019 at the Behavioral Wellness Children's Mental Health Services building, room 119, at 429 N. San Antonio Rd. in Santa Barbara. Anyone wishing to join by videoconference may contact John Lewis in advance at 805-450-2545 to make arrangements.

NATIONAL AND STATE NEWS

Lady Gaga's Born This Way Foundation and California's Mental Health Services Oversight and Accountability Commission Release Results of California Youth Mental Wellness Survey: Last month, Lady Gaga's Born This Way Foundation and California's Mental Health Services Oversight & Accountability Commission (MHSOAC) released "California Youth Mental Health: Understanding Resource Availability and Preferences," a survey of more than 400 young people in California ages 13 to 24 exploring how they view their own mental wellness, their access to key mental health resources and what they want those resources to look like, and the mental health innovations they want to see in the state. Overall, the survey paints a portrait of youth who care about their mental wellness and recognize it as a priority, but who lack access to the resources they need to support and maintain it. Key findings of the survey include:

- **9-in-10 young people say mental health is a priority, but only 4-in-10 rate their own mental health highly.** Additionally, a majority (54%) say they have felt stressed frequently in the past month and approximately a third felt helpless or sad (35%) or fearful (30%).
- **Approximately 1-in-3 young people say they lack reliable access to resources to support their mental wellness or address a mental health issue** and are even less likely to say they have the resources to deal with many serious but common situations. For example, about half of youth say they would not have the resources needed if they felt suicidal (55%) or felt like harming themselves (54%).
- **Youth cite knowing where to go and cost as their key barriers to mental health resources.** Nearly half say that young people in their city "don't know where to go" (48%) or "can't afford the cost" (36%) of mental health resources.
- **While young people struggle to access mental health resources, they are open to using a wide variety of them and they want to learn skills to support their mental wellness.** Encouragingly, most (81%) say they are interested in learning coping skills and tools to deal with the stresses of everyday life and that they would be comfortable using a variety of resources such as classes that teach skills to support mental wellness (66%).

- **California youth see improving access to care as the top priority for the state’s mental health system.** More than a third (35%) say innovations that address this issue should be the biggest priority for the state’s system.

“This survey demonstrates that youth in California care about their mental health, that they see it as an important priority, and that they want to see the transformational innovation that is long overdue on this issue,” said **Cynthia Germanotta, Co-Founder and President of Born This Way Foundation**. “Born This Way Foundation looks forward to continuing to work with our partners like the MHSOAC and youth themselves to drive this change and to make sure that every young person has the tools, resources, and services they need to lead healthy, thriving lives.”

SYSTEMS CHANGE CALENDAR

- **Behavioral Wellness Commission:** The Behavioral Wellness Commission meets on the third Wednesday of every month from 3:00pm – 5:00pm. Video conferencing is available at the Santa Barbara Children’s Clinic large conference room and the Santa Maria Clinic Conference Room. Questions: Karen Campos, kcampos@co.santa-barbara.ca.us
- **Change Agent Meeting:** Change agents meet the fourth Wednesday of every month 9 – 11 am except during quarterly in-person meetings, which are 9 am – 12 noon. Video conferencing is available at the Santa Barbara Children’s Clinic, Small conference room; Lompoc Conference Room, ACT, upstairs, 401 E. Cypress and Large conference room, 500 West Foster Road, Santa Maria. Questions: Dalila Brown, dbrown@co.santa-barbara.ca.us
- **Lompoc Regional Partnership Meeting:** Meetings occur every other month on the third Tuesday at 301 N. R Street. Questions: Nicole Becker, nbecker@co.santa-barbara.ca.us
- **Santa Barbara Adult Regional Partnership:** meets every 3rd Monday of the month from 10:00 am – 11:00 am at the Santa Barbara Children’s Clinic, large conference room. Questions: Veronica Heinzelmann, vheinzelmann@co.santa-barbara.ca.us
- **Santa Barbara Children’s Regional Partnership:** 3th Thursday of the month from 2:00 pm – 3:00 pm at the Santa Barbara Children’s Clinic, large conference room. Questions: Veronica Heinzelmann, vheinzelmann@co.santa-barbara.ca.us.
- **Santa Maria Children’s Regional Partnership Meeting** is held every 3rd Monday of the month at 10 am in the large meeting room at the Foster Road Clinic. Questions: Shana Burns at sburns@co.santa-barbara.ca.us
- **Santa Maria Adult Regional Partnership** occurs every 3rd Monday of the month at 11 am in the large meeting room at the Foster Road Clinic. Questions: Elodie Patarias, epatari@co.santa-barbara.ca.us or Geoff Bernard, gbernard@co.santa-barbara.ca.us
- **The Housing, Empowerment, Action and Recovery Team (HEART)** meets the second Wednesday of every other month, 1:00-2:30 p.m. The next meeting is **June 12, 2019**. Locations: Behavioral Wellness Conference Room 261 and Santa Maria Annex via videoconference. Contact Laura Zeitz, lazeitz@sbcbswell.org

- **The Cultural Competency and Diversity Action Team (CCDAT)** meets the second Friday of each month, 9:30-11:00 am, Locations: Santa Barbara Children’s Clinic Large Conference Room 119, Santa Maria Annex and Lompoc B St. Contact Yaneris Muñiz at 805-681-5208 or ymuniz@co.santa-barbara.ca.us
- **The Peer Action Team** meets the second Thursday of the Month from 2 – 4:00 pm. Locations: Behavioral Wellness Santa Barbara Conference Room 261, Lompoc Children’s New Port Room the Santa Maria Annex Room via videoconference.
- **The Crisis Action Team** meets the second Thursday of the month, 2:30 – 4:00 pm, Santa Barbara Children’s large conference room 119. Contact John Winckler, jwinckler@sbcwell.org
- **The Children’s System of Care Action Team** meets the 4th Thursday of the month, 10:30 am - 12:00 noon. SELPA Conference Room, 240 E. Hwy. 246, Suite 200, Buellton CA 93127. Contact Shana Burns at sburns@co.santa-barbara.ca.us
- **Forensic Action Team** will be meeting every other month on the 4th Wednesday from 2:00 – 3:30. The meeting will be held at the Behavioral Wellness Children’s Mental Health Services building, room 119, located at 429 N. San Antonio Rd in Santa Barbara. Anyone wishing to join by videoconference or have questions may contact John Lewis in advance (805-450-2545) to make arrangements.