



General Meeting

Our next general meeting will be held on Tuesday Sept. 27th at 7:00 PM. A team of local NAMI members will present experiences at the NAMI California Conference this summer. The meeting will be at St. Stephen's Episcopal Church at the corner of Pismo and Nipomo Streets. Enter from the parking lot off Pismo St. There will be a facilitated, family support group before the meeting as well as a Hearts and Minds meeting. Both start at 5:30. (See page 4)

California Statement by National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) on the Kelly Thomas Tragedy in Fullerton,

Aug. 5, 2011

The National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) today released a joint statement on behalf of NAMI Orange County, NAMI California and the national organization. The statement calls on the City of Fullerton and its Police Department to undertake a comprehensive review of the training of police, looking to the most effective models, to govern interaction with individuals exhibiting symptoms of serious mental illness. The review should include direct participation by individuals and families who live with mental illness and medical experts and should extend to the city's overall continuum of mental health care.

The president of NAMI Orange County is Steve Pitman and NAMI California is Dorothy Hendrickson. The executive director of the national organization is Michael J. Fitzpatrick.

The full text of the statement follows:

NAMI's heart goes out to Mr. Ron Thomas and his family in the tragic death of his son, Kelly Thomas. Our members throughout the nation know firsthand the challenges faced by both individuals and families affected by serious mental illness. We extend our sympathy and offer our support to the family.

All persons whose lives have been affected by mental illness know that such a tragedy could happen to any one of us or our loved ones. Mental illness and homelessness can strike anyone at any time. What happened in Fullerton could happen to any American in any community around our country.

No one really knows at this time—other than the police officers themselves—what went on during the horrible beating and use of tasers on Kelly Thomas. They may not have fully realized that he was living with a serious mental illness. Too often, however, language and stereotypes in our culture serve to dehumanize people. Police frequently come into contact with persons living with the symptoms of serious mental illness. It is important that law enforcement officers understand how to interact with a person with mental illness when they may be exhibiting symptoms. Many communities around the country have implemented specific programs that teach first responders effective techniques to de-escalate encounters in the field with people in psychiatric distress. Crisis Intervention Team

Annual NAMI SLOCO Beautiful Minds Walk

Saturday October 1st 9:45 AM

Start & Finish at Laguna Lake Park

Madonna Road San Luis Obispo, CA

Year at a Glance

January thru June: General Mtg, 4th Tuesday of the month

May: Walkathon May 21, Forum May 26th, No Gen. Meeting

July: Annual Picnic, no General Meeting

August: Summer Vacation: no meeting, newsletter or support group

September: General Meeting 4th Tuesday of the month

October: BMW Walk Oct. 1st. Mental Illness Awareness Event: 4th Tuesday

November: General Meeting 4th Tuesday of the month

December: Holiday Party: no Gen. Mtg.

(CIT) programs have reduced incidents of violence between persons with serious mental illness and local law enforcement officers.

When violence occurs, something has gone terribly wrong. It is important to review all the facts in any tragedy and try to learn from mistakes so that such a tragedy might not ever happen again. NAMI encourages the City of Fullerton and its

Police Department to undertake a comprehensive review of the training of its officers, looking to the most effective models, to govern interaction with individuals exhibiting symptoms of serious mental illness. The review should include direct participation by individuals and families who live with mental illness and medical experts.

CIT programs involve more than just training. They are community partnerships that not only reduce violence, but get people the help they need. Pre-booking and post-booking diversion programs and mental health courts help direct people into a comprehensive continuum of care involving many different elements. That continuum should also be the City of Fullerton's review.

NAMI Orange County, NAMI California and NAMI's national organization stand ready to assist the City of Fullerton in any way to achieve community best practices.

NAMI is the nation's largest grassroots mental health organization engaged in support, education, and advocacy dedicated to the mission of building better lives for the millions

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of Americans affected by serious mental illness. We stand for lives of dignity and respect for all persons.

Fear and The Stigma Of Taking Antidepressants

People with depression may not reveal symptoms to their doctor

From NAMI California Website News and Views Section

People suffering from depression may not bring it up with their doctor for a number of reasons, a study finds. The most common one? They're afraid of getting a recommendation for antidepressants.

Those findings are featured in a study released Monday in the journal *Annals of Family Medicine*. In it, researchers surveyed 1,054 adults about why they wouldn't tell their primary care physician about depression symptoms, as well as their beliefs about the mental disorder. Depression symptoms, the study authors note, are underreported.

Among the participants, 43% reported one or more reasons why they wouldn't discuss symptoms with a doctor. The most common obstacles to not reporting symptoms were the prospect of being put on medication, the belief that it's not the doctor's job to handle emotional issues, and worries over medical record privacy. At least 10% of the participants said that fear of being referred to a counselor or psychiatrist and being branded a psychiatric patient were stumbling blocks.

Those who had more barriers to talking to their doctors about depression had some things in common: They were likely to be female, Hispanic, with less education and lower income. Other factors included the severity of depression symptoms, having no family history of depression, thinking depression is stigmatizing, and believing that people should be able to control their depression.

"Ironically," the authors wrote, "those who most subscribed to potential reasons for not talking to a primary care physician about their depression tended to be those who had the greatest potential to benefit from such conversations--individuals with moderate to severe depressive symptoms."

Gene Link To PTSD Found In Students After Shootings

Researchers say the results could someday lead to new treatments for PTSD

From NAMI California Website News and Views Section

A study of college students' reactions to shootings on their Illinois campus gives fresh insight into how genes may influence the psychological impact of traumatic events.

The researchers found that symptoms similar to post-traumatic stress disorder were more common in Northern Illinois University students who had certain variations in a gene that regulates levels of serotonin, a brain chemical linked with mood that is the target of popular antidepressants.

The researchers say the results could someday lead to new treat-

Many Thanks to all those who helped with the Picnic in July, Particularly Nancy Griffin.

ments for PTSD, and also could help predict who will develop the condition, which could be useful for soldiers involved in combat.

Other variations in the same gene and in other genes have been linked with PTSD in previous research. But the new research was unique because it involved 204 undergraduate women who by coincidence were taking part in a campus study that measured stress before the shootings on Feb. 14, 2008 — so before-and-after information was available.

The shootings occurred in a crowded lecture hall on the NIU campus in DeKalb, about 65 miles west of Chicago. A former NIU student opened fire, killing five and wounding more than a dozen others before killing himself. Most study participants were on campus at the time.

Overall symptoms similar to PTSD were found in almost half the women in the weeks after the shootings, and in nearly all the participants who were in the hall. These symptoms included flashbacks, nightmares and extreme jumpiness.

Information on stress symptoms in the women that had been gathered before the shootings helped the researchers better assess what role their genetic makeup might have played in how they reacted to the violence, said Dr. Kerry Ressler, an

Emory University researcher and the study's senior author.

The study was released Monday in the September edition of *Archives of General Psychiatry*.

"This kind of research is extremely important" and could eventually "provide clues to novel treatment," said Dr. John

Krystal, psychiatry chairman at Yale University's medical school and director of clinical neurosciences at the Veterans Affairs National Center for PTSD. Krystal was not involved in the study.

The researchers analyzed genetic material in saliva samples women submitted after the shootings. The women also filled out questionnaires commonly used to assess PTSD and related symptoms, at two times after the shootings — two to four weeks afterward, and then an average of eight months afterward. By definition, PTSD persists for more than a month, but similar symptoms can develop soon after traumatic events.

The variations in the serotonin gene were found in 25 percent of the women studied. Overall, 52 percent of women with those variations developed early or later PTSD symptoms, versus 43 percent of women without the variations.

Among women who weren't in the lecture hall during the shootings, 42 percent had early symptoms and 8 percent had lingering symptoms months later. Only a handful of women studied were in the hall; far more of them had early and persistent symptoms.

San Luis Obispo Behavioral Health Series

Starting Thursday September 15

6:30 PM to 8:00 PM

at SLO County Library

995 Palm Street, SLO

Series developed by Douglas P Murphy, M.D.

The NAMI SLOCO executive board meets from 11:30 - 1:30 on the second Friday of the month at The Boysdon Room, Saint Stephen's Episcopal Church, SLO.

It may be time to renew your NAMISLOCO Membership. Check the date on the newsletter mailing label. Please fill out the form on page three and send it in with your dues. Your funds support NAMISLOCO activities. Thank you for your past support.

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Holly Orcutt, an NIU psychology professor who took part in the research, did a separate analysis of about 20 students who'd been in the lecture hall during the shootings. She found PTSD symptoms in 84 percent shortly after the shootings. By September 2010, only 11 percent still had symptoms, a decline that "speaks to the resilience" of the students, Orcutt said. That analysis doesn't appear in Archives.

The university set up special counseling services after the shootings that are still available since many students on campus in 2008 remain enrolled at NIU, she said.

The hall where the shootings took place is being remodeled, and a memorial sculpture to the slain students has been set up nearby.

NAMI's News Desk: People Watching

By Bob Carolla, NAMI Director of Media Relations

Running NAMI's news desk is a challenge, but a satisfying one. I get to monitor where and how NAMI is making a difference, especially at the grassroots level. It provides reminders of why we are here.

NAMI's bottom line is its mission: helping people affected by serious mental illness. Every day, we're proud of the work NAMI members are doing in every state and in hundreds of communities nationwide and proud when it is recognized in local or national media.

Here are two examples.

New York City's 24-hour news channel, NY1, recently aired a story about NAMI's NYC Metro affiliate and its back-to-school launch of

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 Carole Wallace, NAMI Basics Coordinator
 Lisa Kelley, NAMI Basics Coordinator 788-0869

NAMI Basics classes for parents of children and adolescents experiencing mental illness.

The story profiles the family of Erin Mercado, now 17, who has lived with depression since age 12. NAMI Basics helped Erin's parents develop knowledge and skills needed to problem-solve, listen and communicate in helping their daughter.

It also was satisfying to read the article "Schizophrenia Tactics: How to Stay Out of the Hospital" on Health Central's www.schizophreniaconnection.com website, which recommends NAMI's Peer-to-Peer education program for people living with mental illness as an important means of learning to manage their conditions and identify triggers before relapses occur. Like NAMI Basics, Peer-to-Peer is one of many education and support programs NAMI offers.

The author of the Health Central story is Christina Bruni, who herself lives with schizophrenia. She once dropped by the press room at one of NAMI's national conventions as part of her research. I remember her. She is one of the many people I've been privileged to meet in my work.

Inside or outside NAMI, we're all part of a common cause. It's all about our mission. It's all about people. And that includes you.

NAMI 2011 Membership (membership in NAMI SLO CO also includes membership in NAMI Cal. & NAMI Nat'l.)

National Alliance on Mental Illness
 San Luis Obispo County



NAMI SLO CO is a charitable, non-profit, tax-exempt organization affiliated with the NAMI California and NAMI National.

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- New
- \$35 Family
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**SLO Co. Mental Illness Referrals, Contacts, Locations – NAMI & T-MHA Programs:
Programs for the mentally ill and their families, education for the public**

1. EDUCATIONAL, SUPPORT, WELLNESS AND RECOVERY PROGRAMS FOR PEOPLE LIVING WITH MENTAL ILLNESSES

NAMI Hearts and Minds – A Roadmap to Wellness for Individuals Living with Mental Illness: Meets on 4th Tuesday every month (except Jul. Aug. Dec), 5:30-6:45 PM at St. Stephen's Episcopal Church (Pismo and Nipomo streets, SLO) Call Lisa @ 788-0869 or lisakelley2929@gmail.com.

NAMI Peer-to-Peer Education Class (9 week education class for people living with mental illnesses). Call Betty McGraw, T-MHA @ 540-6578 or bmcgraw@t-mha.org

Dual Recovery Anonymous: 452 Higuera St., SLO, 2:30-3:30 Friday. 8600 Atascadero Ave. Atascadero, 2:30-3:30 Thursday 203 ½ Bridge St. Arroyo Grande, 2:30-3:30 pm, Tuesday

WRAP - Group Wellness and Recovery Action Plan: T-MHA, 784 High Street, SLO, call 540-6578 for dates/times

Women's Support Group: There are no classes/meetings now.

Peer Support: Call Betty McGraw, T-MHA @ 540-6578 or bmcgraw@t-mha.org; 5395 El Camino Real B, Atascadero, Fri. 9:30-11:00 AM, 452 Higuera St. SLO, 12:30-2:00 PM, Wednesday

Mental Health Advocates: Call John Byers, T-MHA @ 440-5026 (c), 540-6580 or jbyers@t-mha.org. Or call Betty McGraw, T-MHA @ 440-9118 (c), 540-6578 or bmcgraw@t-mha.org

PEP Drop-In Center: 8-4 ,M-F, 5395 El Camino Real B, Atascadero, Call Karen Cusworth, T-MHA @ 464-0512, 540-6583 or kcusworth@t-mha.org

Peer Advisory & Advocacy Team: Call Jessica Vieira, T-MHA, 540-6579 or jvieira@t-mha.org

2. EDUCATIONAL & SUPPORT PROGRAMS FOR FAMILIES AND FRIENDS OF PEOPLE LIVING WITH MENTAL ILLNESSES

NAMI SLOCO, MEETINGS/PROGRAMS: 4th Tuesday every month (except Jul. Aug. Dec); Program: 7:00 PM in the multi-purpose room at St. Stephen's Episcopal Church (Pismo and Nipomo streets, San Luis Obispo, CA.) Follow signs from parking lot off Pismo Street

NAMI SLOCO, Family Support Groups: (A) 3rd Monday of every month, 6:30-8:00 PM, at the T-MHA MHSA Support Center, 5395 "B" El Camino Real, Atascadero. Call James or Diane @ 461-1286 for more information. (B) 4th Tuesday every month (except Jul. Aug. Dec), 5:30-6:45 PM in the multi-purpose room at St. Stephen's Episcopal Church (Pismo and Nipomo streets, SLO) Call Joe or Madeleine @ 544-2086 for more information.

T-MHA Family Services: Assists anyone who has someone in their life that they know or suspect has a mental illness. Janice Holmes, Program Manager, 540-6571.

T-MHA Family Orientation Class: Thursdays 12:00-1:00 pm, followed by one hour support group 1-2pm. 784 High Street, SLO. Please call (805) 540-6571 for more information.

T-MHA Family Support Group: Tuesdays 12:00-3:00 pm, 784 High Street, SLO. Please call (805) 540-6571 for more information.

T-MHA Family Support Group in Spanish (Grupo de Apoyo Familiar): Para Familias y seres queridos que tienen personas con problemas mentales; visite el grupo sin hacer cita – no hay costo y no es necesario llamar para asistir. Para más información llame a Enrique (Henry) Herrera, Asesoría Familiar @ 540-6573.

T-MHA Youth Family Partners, Parent Project and Active Parenting Classes: Multiple groups meet weekly throughout the county. Call Youth Family Partners: Jackie Garza (458-6388), Patty Ramirez (458-2596) or Linda Quesenberry (503-0009) for more information.

NAMI Family-to-Family Education Class (12-week education class for families and friends of people living with mental illnesses): Call John Klimala @ 550-3889 for time and place of next 12 week education class.

NAMI Basics Class (6-week education class for families and caregivers of children and youth living with mental illnesses): Connect Lisa Kelly at 788-0869

3. AWARENESS & RECOVERY PRESENTATIONS FOR THE PUBLIC

NAMI "In Our Own Voice" Program (2 hour public mental illness awareness and recovery presentation): Call Jessica Vieira, Transitions-Mental Health Association @ 540-6576 jvieira@t-mha.org.

"The Shaken Tree" Film/Presentation: Call Janice Holmes, Program Manager at 540-6571 or jholmes@t-mha.org

4. EDUCATIONAL PRESENTATION FOR PROFESSIONAL EDUCATORS

NAMI Parents and Teachers as Allies (2 hour mental illness education presentation for professional educators): Call Lisa @ 788-0869

5. WHERE CAN YOU GET HELP IN SLO COUNTY?

Mental Health Department	1-800-838-1381
24-Hr. MHD Crisis Service	781-4700
Behavioral Health Admin.	781-4719
Arroyo Grande Clinic	473-7060
Atascadero Clinic	461-6060
San Luis Obispo Outpatient Clinic	781-4700
Inpatient Service	781-4711
Youth Services (Vicente Dr.)	781-4179
Forensic MH Services (CON REP)	781-4190
SLO Hotline 24-hour mental health support	1-800-549-4499
Grievance Coordinator	781-4738
T-MHA Family Services Program	
Adult Services	540-6571, 540-6572,
Youth Services	458-6388, 458-2596, 503-0009

San Luis Obispo County Behavioral Health Dept. web site:

< <http://www.slocounty.ca.gov/health/mentalhealthservices.htm> >

Transitions-Mental Health Association: (P. O. Box 15408), 784 High Street, San Luis Obispo, CA 93406, (Corner of High and Santa Barbara Streets); Ph. 805-540-6500; FAX: 805-540-6501; Email: info@t-mha.org; web site www.t-mha.org/

NAMI San Luis Obispo County; P. O. Box 3158, San Luis Obispo, CA 93403; Messages: 805-546-4040; web site: <http://www.namisol.org>

Next Meeting
Sept. 27th

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