



COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO NEWS RELEASE

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COMMUNITY INPUT NEEDED TO PLAN COUNTY'S MENTAL HEALTH PREVENTION AND EARLY INTERVENTION PROGRAMS *Next Forums Take Place Jan. 23 & 28*

The San Diego County HHS (Health and Human Services Agency) is conducting forums to gather community input to determine the type of mental health Prevention and Early Intervention (PEI) programs needed.

The first forum will focus on the **First Break of Mental Illness** and will take place **Wednesday, January 23, 2008 from 1:00- 5:00 p.m.** at the **Mission Valley Library—Community Room, 2123 Fenton Parkway**. For more info, contact **Karen Ventimiglia** at **(619) 584-3012** or via email at karen.ventimiglia@sdcounty.ca.gov.

This Forum is designed for parents/caregivers and service providers of Transitional Age Youth (TAY) and community members to provide input on PEI planning efforts focused on individuals experiencing onset of, or at risk of developing serious psychiatric illness. The goal is to reduce the severity of symptoms and assist people in quickly regaining productive lives.

The second forum will focus on **Early Childhood/Education-Based Services** and will take place on **Monday, January 28, 2008 from 2:00-6:00 p.m.** at the **Malcolm X Library, 5148 Market Street**. For more info, contact **Janice Lamb** at **(619) 563-2767** or via email at janice.lamb@sdcounty.ca.gov.

This forum is designed for parents/caregivers, service providers and community members to provide input on the PEI planning efforts for children and youth ages 0-18. The goal is to support at-risk children and their families and respond to early signs of emotional and behavioral health problems.

The new programs will be funded with a portion of the \$16 million the County will receive annually from the Mental Health Services Act (Prop. 63) Prevention and Early Intervention component, which was approved by California voters in 2004. MHSA imposes a 1 percent tax on personal income above \$1 million for the expansion of mental health programs statewide.

These PEI programs and services will serve individuals that have been exposed to trauma, are experiencing onset of serious psychiatric illness and children and youth living in stressed families, at risk of school failure and in danger of entering the juvenile justice system. The State's PEI guidelines require that a minimum of 51 percent of funding is to be spent on programs for individuals age 25 and younger.

Mental disorders disrupt an individual's ability to function at home, in school, at work, and/or in their community.

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