

## Mental Illness: Assumptions and Realities

**ASSUMPTION:** Children do not get mental illness.  
**REALITY:** 12 million children and adolescents do suffer diagnosable mental disorders including depression, attention deficit disorder and bipolar disorder.

**ASSUMPTION:** Most mentally ill persons are dangerous.

**REALITY:** People who have been or are being treated for mental illnesses are usually anxious, timid and passive. They are, however, unfairly portrayed in dramatic presentations on television, and in movies, magazines and novels. This is a major reason why people with mental illnesses

continue to be unjustly feared as dangerous.

**ASSUMPTION:** Mental illness does not affect the average person.

**REALITY:** No one is immune to mental illness. The National Institute of Mental Health's statistics show 35 million Americans have some form of mental illness in any given 6 months.

**ASSUMPTION:** Most people who struggle with mental illness live on the streets or are in mental hospitals.

**REALITY:** About 2/3 of Americans with a mental illness live in the community, either with their family or in various types of community living settings.

**ASSUMPTION:** A person can recover from a mental illness by turning his or her thoughts positively and with prayer.

**REALITY:** Recovery is possible when the person receives necessary treatment and services.

**ASSUMPTION:** If people with other handicaps can cope on their own, people with a mental illness should be able to do so too.

**REALITY:** Most people who've been through a disabling illness need help to return to normal functioning. Physical therapy fills this role after physical illness. Similarly, after mental illness, social rehabilitation is needed.



### Another Mi Animo Match revved up

Tom Vigil has been matched with Jeffrey Shay. Both guys enjoy being gear heads which means that the upcoming summer activities around cars is just their Chevrolet front seat ticket.

## Coalition Minutes

**T**ime: 7:30 AM  
**Date:** Tuesday, May 18, 2004  
**Present:** LeAnn Garcia, Clarissa Woodworth, Priscilla Ortega, Nelda Curtiss, Rick Esquibel, Tom Vigil, Noah Atencio, Henry Herrera, Carla Garcia, Cdedar Stagner, Kathy Van Gieson, Marylou Rodriguez, Ian Fetyko, Delrae Mondragon, Bill Brooks, Carol Mehesy, Richard Simmons, Cathy Morin, Wendi Wiedeman, Peg from Wal-Mart

**Facilitators:** Priscilla Ortega, Program Leader and Clarissa Woodworth, Program Coordinator

#### MEMBER ANNOUNCEMENTS

**Priscilla**—Newsletters to look for: Que Pasa and others for SSAVE coalition, Si Se Puede and May is Mental Health in process.

**Clarissa**—Drug Free Community's grant, continuing with \$100,000 matching grant; Bert Singleton to conduct a parenting class (which is research based) this Friday May 21 here at the Mental Health Center. We still have a few openings if anyone would like to attend.

**LeAnn**—continuing work with youth, providing Yellow Ribbon trainings and getting good re-

sponses from those attending.

**Kathy Van Gieson**—continuing work with SEADS and SSAVE.

**Marylou**—continuing to educate with presentation at OMS; relay challenge hopefully will raise \$300 which is good for the Valley youth groups; presentation to Mrs. Goddard went well but her responses were negative.

**Wendi**—as school counselor at Evans continues to wrap up the school year. Continues to nominate students for Mi Animo Program.

**Peg with WalMart**—Wal-mart committed to sell tobacco from only one register in the store.

**Henry**—working for safe schools, prom as a safe place without alcohol, after prom event as alternative to alcohol event; graduation is less than 2 weeks away; preparing for next year.

**Cedar Stagner**—as social worker, continues to work with youth—requested input for youth in making long term goals and motivational ideas.

**Bill Brooks**—school counselor; hopes to spend time this summer with his son; plans a couple of ASIST trainings as well

**Ian**—works with prevention programs for Boys & Girls Club and continues to monitor prevention programs in Alamosa, Monte Vista,

La Jara.

**Priscilla**—announced a school breakfast/lunch program through YEA.

**Carla Garcia**—Tobacco cessation program (NOT) to be renewed for AHS; SEADS received \$300 as part of our Safe Schools grant.

**Cathy**—farmer's market and working with Alamosa Head Start in getting children to earn coupon's for the Farmer's Market; grant is important to promote physical activity to combat obesity and diabetes in children.

**Noah**—preparing for the start of the Intel Computer Clubhouse; announced that some video making capabilities would be available; mentioned media subcommittee.

**Carol**—from The Colorado Foundation for Families and Children, housed in Kavley's, is working on capacity building and resources for Casa Start (a model prevention program) targeting violence, substance abuse and building bonds. Emphasis on mentoring, after-school programs, case management, police resources, incentives, juvenile justice, and parent engagement.

**Tom**—working on summer activities revolving around R.A.C.E module (Reaching All Children Equally). Drug Free Communities numbers have exceeded enrollment requirement. Trips have included car shows in Colorado Springs, Alamosa, South-Fork and Canyon City, so far.

**Delrae**—Cinco de Mayo at OMS, Builder's club at OMS.

**Richard**—Recreation Center has a lot of summer programs for adults; Jeffrey's race is planned for June 1 to build a scholarship in Jeffrey Zaragoza's honor.

**Priscilla**—working hard providing activities; made dolls to support Colorado Children's Campaign; horse safety training and need helmets for that activity; trip to Denver included Denver Museum of Natural Science and a Rockies game; a Community Service activity is road clean up this weekend. A scavenger hunt and lunch in the park are planned.

**Old Business:** Liz Tabela-Garcia asked that we hold off discussing the commercial.

**Addiction Speakers:** LeAnn Garcia and Rick Esquibel are available to speak to schools. Just call the Center.

**Next Meeting:** 7:30 AM, Tuesday, June 22, 2004, SLV Mental Health Center.

**Adjourned:** The meeting ended at approximately 9 AM.