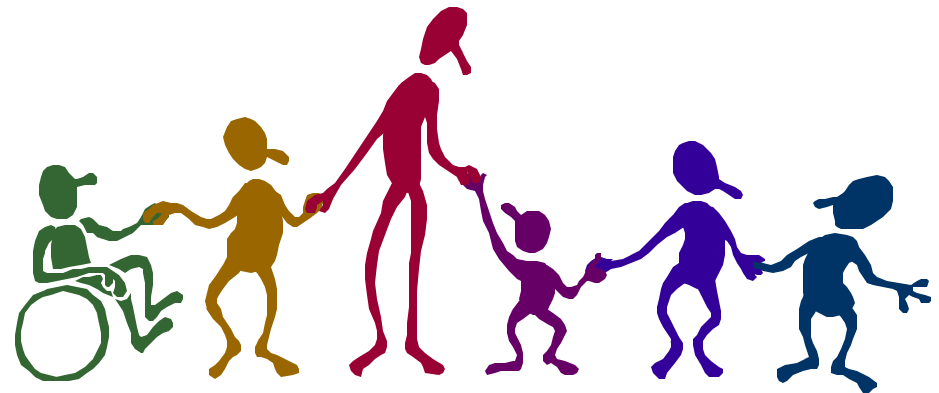




## FAMILY HANDBOOK

*for families and significant others  
about specialty mental health services*



*“families are forever”*

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**For access to mental health services, call:  
1-800-991-5272**

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**For access to mental health services, call:  
1-800-991-5272**

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## DIRECTORY OF SERVICES

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Welcome to the Kern County Mental Health Family Handbook. This is the 2<sup>nd</sup> edition of the work initiated by the Family Interface Subcommittee in 1997. Materials included in this edition represent current resources as of January 2003. Information was accurate at the time of publication: please excuse any omissions or changes occurring over the duration of the use of this edition.

The Family Handbook is a collaborative effort involving Kern County Mental Health and NAMI. It is intended as a guide but not an exhaustive resource. People and agencies outside of Kern County Mental Health are identified in the handbook, but Kern County Mental Health makes no claims or representations by including any agency, individual or organization in the handbook.

Copies of the Family Handbook are available by request by calling 868-6109 or in writing to Family Advocate, KCMH, P.O. Box 1000, Bakersfield, CA 93302. Copies of the Consumer Handbook are available by calling the Patient Rights Advocate's Office at 661-868-6640.

Thank you to the family members who contributed their time, talents, and experience to the revision within.

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*Crisis Stabilization Unit: 661- 868-8000  
Toll Free Crisis Hotline: 1-800-991-5272  
Children's Resolution Hotline: 1-800-439-9961*

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## CRISIS STABILIZATION UNIT

### Outreach & Crisis Services Administrator: Bill Walker

- CSU is a 23-hour, voluntary unit that provides crisis intervention and stabilization services.
- CSU offers an alternative to more restrictive care such as hospitalization.
- CSU is a voluntary unit that provides crisis intervention and stabilization services.
- CSU is open 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

## WHO CAN COME TO THE CSU?

- Adults and children who are in need of urgent mental health services, AND
- Receive Medi-Cal benefits, OR
- Are Kern County residents with limited or no resources to cover mental health care

**The goal of the CSU is to help people return to a safe level of functioning and teach them skills to stay safe and get help if they are in crisis in the future so that they will not require inpatient hospitalization.**

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## HOW CAN THE CSU HELP?

- With 24-hour-a-day crisis intervention to prevent hospitalization.
- With assessment services
- With support services to families and significant others
- With case management services and linkage to resources
- With Mental Health and Substance Abuse referrals
- With staff available 24 hours a day to go into the community when appropriate
- With a safe environment



## WHERE IS THE CSU?

M.K. Shell Mental Health Center  
2151 College Avenue  
Corner of Mt. Vernon & College Avenues  
Across the parking lot from KMC  
*Daytime – use main entrance*

*After hours and weekends – use entrance at rear of building*

*Crisis Stabilization Unit: 661- 868-8000  
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Children's Resolution Hotline: 1-800-439-9961*

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## THE ACCESS CENTER

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If your family member requires specialty mental health services, you must call the Access Center for a referral and preauthorization for services at a provider site nearest you. The Access Center may also be able to refer you to other resources if you don't have Medi-Cal benefits. For assistance call:

**Bakersfield:** 661-868-8111  
**Throughout Kern County:** 1-800-991-5272

### Medical Services

If your family member receives Medi-Cal benefits, his or her physical health care needs are the responsibility of a designated physical health care provider. If you need more information about your family member's health care plan, please call:

<u>PLAN NAME</u>	<u>TELEPHONE NUMBER</u>
Kern Family Health Care	1-800-391-2000
Blue Cross of California	1-800-227-3238



## MEDICATION HOTLINE

CALL THE 24-HOUR HOTLINE

A NURSE WILL TALK TO YOU ABOUT YOUR CONCERNS

**661-868-8111**

or

**1-800-991-5272**



*Crisis Stabilization Unit: 661- 868-8000  
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## CHILDREN'S MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

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Kern County's Children's Mental Health System of Care has built a network of community-based mental health services so children and families can more easily reach professionals to help them with mental health and substance abuse problems.

### *WHY REFER?*

To help children who are experiencing significant difficulties affecting their mental health.

### *WHAT ARE THE SERVICES?*

- Individual, family and group counseling
- Social skills groups
- Medication for psychological problems
- Information and referral for support services

### *WHERE ARE THE SERVICES?*

Services are provided right in your community at schools, clinics and homes

### *WHO IS ELIGIBLE?*

County mental health services are provided to children and adolescents who:

- Are seriously emotionally disturbed and
- Have or are eligible for Medi-Cal or Healthy Families Insurance coverage.

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Children's Resolution Hotline: 1-800-439-9961*

# CHILDREN'S SYSTEM OF CARE

Administrator: Deanna Cloud 661-868-6707

If you live in:	Your provider is:	Telephone:
Delano, McFarland	Child Guidance Clinic	661-725-1042
Shafter, Lost Hills, Buttonwillow, Wasco, Semitropic	Kern County Mental Health	661-758-7300
Taft	Kern County Mental Health	661-765-4853
West Bakersfield	Child Guidance Clinic	661-327-0933
North Bakersfield	Kern County Mental Health	661-868-6750
Lake Isabella/Kern Mountain	College Community Services	760-379-3412
Ridgecrest	College Community Services	760-499-7406
California City	College Community Services	760-373-2979
Tehachapi	College Community Services	661-822-8223
Rosamond	College Community Services	661-256-7208
Arvin, Lamont, Frazier Park	Clinica Sierra Vista	661-845-5100
Central Bakersfield	Child Guidance Clinic	661-322-1021
East Bakersfield	Kern County Mental Health	661-868-6750

## Additional Children's Programs

**AB2726** - Mental health, case management and social skills training for special education students.

**Children's Specialty Services** – Serves children and teens who have been sexually abused as well as juvenile sex offenders.

**MIST**- A multi-agency collaborative team that works to stabilize families with home, school and placement interventions to help strengthen and preserve the family.

**TBS** – Therapeutic Behavioral Health services are 24/7 services provided on a short-term basis to eligible minors.

**Wraparound** – Individual, one-on-one, family-centered and crisis response services available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week

*For additional information regarding Children's programs, please call:  
661-868-6721*

*Crisis Stabilization Unit: 661- 868-8000  
Toll Free Crisis Hotline: 1-800-991-5272  
Children's Resolution Hotline: 1-800-439-9961*

# OTHER NUMBERS YOU MIGHT NEED

## PARENTS FOR CHILDREN

Support/educational group for parents of children diagnosed with ADHD, Childhood Schizophrenia, Bi-Polar Disorder, OCD, and other brain disorders  
Susie Middleton-Baker, Kern County Parent Partner 661-868-8339  
Chris and Jerry Conrad 661-873-1828

## CHILD ABUSE (CPS)

To report suspected child abuse 661-631-6011

## DMH OBUDESMAN OFFICE

1-800-896-4042

## HELPLINE

For information and referrals

661-336-5200 or 1-800-273-2275

## STATE MEDI-CAL FAIR HEARING

1-800-952-5253  
TDD 1-800-952-8349

## PROTECTION & ADVOCACY, INC.

For legal advice and assistance

1-800-776-5746

## TEEN PREGNANCY/PARENTING

Clinica Sierra Vista Adolescent Family Life/  
Cal Learn

661-324-0293

## VIOLENCE

Alliance Against Family Violence &  
Sexual Assault

327-1091 or 1-800-273-7713



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Children's Resolution Hotline: 1-800-439-9961*

## OUTPATIENT SERVICES

The Kern County Mental Health System of Care has four levels of care. Each level corresponds to a degree of need, a typical pattern of care, and an authorization process. The Adult and Children’s systems are divided into Geographical Service Areas throughout Kern County. Access to all specialty mental health services is based upon “medical necessity.” For further information regarding levels of care, please refer to the Appendix.

Specialty mental health services may include assessment, case management, medication support, individual and group therapy, collateral, family therapy, treatment planning, and substance abuse treatment to improve mental health status. The first step in admission is to contact the Access Center for a referral. **Contact the Access Center at 661-868-8111 or 1-800-991-5272.** You may also go directly to the Access Center located at 2151 College Avenue at the Mary K. Shell Mental Health Center.

## ADULT SYSTEM OF CARE

**Servings individuals living outside of metro Bakersfield**

**Administrator: Jim Waterman 661-868-6100**

<b>If you live in:</b>	<b>Your provider is:</b>	<b>Telephone:</b>
Delano, McFarland	Clinica Sierra Vista	661-725-2788
Taft	Kern County Mental Health	661-765-4853
Lake Isabella/Kern Mountain	College Community Services	760-379-3412
Ridgecrest	College Community Services	760-499-7406
California City	College Community Services	760-373-2979
Tehachapi	College Community Services	661-822-8223
Rosamond	College Community Services	661-256-7208
Arvin, Lamont, Frazier Park	Clinica Sierra Vista	661-845-3717
Arvin, Lamont	Community Services Organization	661-845-3753

*Crisis Stabilization Unit: 661- 868-8000  
Toll Free Crisis Hotline: 1-800-991-5272  
Children’s Resolution Hotline: 1-800-439-9961*

## ADULT OUTPATIENT SERVICES\*

**Administrator: Brad Cloud 661-868-6600**

<b>Program &amp; Contact</b>	<b>Address</b>	<b>Phone</b>
Rehab I – Ken Pratt	2151 College Avenue Bakersfield 93305	661-868-8032
Rehab II – Rebecca Kavanaugh	1111 Columbus Avenue Bakersfield 93305	661-868-8207
Rehab III – Cheryl Williams	3715 Columbus Avenue Bakersfield 93306	661-868-7154
Rehab IV – Carolyn Buck	2525 North Chester Bakersfield 93308	661-868-1807
Rehab V – Dawn Milton	1721 Westwind Drive Bakersfield 93301	661-868-8269
Rehab VI – Steve DeVore	1400 S. Union, Ste. 100 Bakersfield 93307	661-635-4009
West Kern Team – Yolanda Rosas	930 F Street Wasco 93280	661-758-7300

\*Individuals living in metro Bakersfield and the West Kern area who are eligible for services are usually referred to teams closest to their homes.

## KERN LINKAGE

**Administrator: Bill Drakos 661-868-1840**

<b>Program &amp; Contact</b>	<b>Address</b>	<b>Phone</b>
Homeless – Elizabeth Hawley	2525 North Chester Bakersfield 3308	661-868-1847
Adult Dual Diagnosis – Lamar Kerley	2525 North Chester Bakersfield 93308	661-868-1870
Green Gardens – Felicia Skaggs-Justice	2300 S. Union Ave Bakersfield 93307	661-868-6175
Help Plus – Carolyn Wade	3300 Truxtun Ave., 3 <sup>rd</sup> Floor Bakersfield 93301	661-868-6809
Homeless AB2034 – Dutch Kooren	2525 North Chester Bakersfield 93308	661-868-1855

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Toll Free Crisis Hotline: 1-800-991-5272  
Children’s Resolution Hotline: 1-800-439-9961*

## JUDICIAL SERVICES

Administrator: Jim Waterman 661-868-6100

Program & CSR	Description	Telephone:
Forensic Services/ConRep Lisa Gavin Cruse/Dr. Akira Suzuki	Court-ordered treatment; conservatorship evaluations	661-868-8381
Judicial Services (JAiLink; Rural Recovery) Rick Erickson	A full range of services for individuals who have been convicted of a crime	661-868-6100
Correctional Mental Health Jana Swearingin	Psychiatric services for inmates	661-391-7948
Turning Point (PAR) Darrell Parent	Transitional program for persons recently released from jail	661-631-1483

## INPATIENT AND OTHER INTENSIVE PROGRAMS



### Contracted Psychiatric Inpatient Hospitals

Kern Medical Center, Ward 3-B, **Involuntary only** 661-326-2715  
 Good Samaritan Hospital, **voluntary** (Adults) 661-399-4461  
 Memorial Center, **voluntary** (Adults, Children & Adolescents) 661-398-1800



### Non-Contract\* Partial or Day Treatment Programs

Good Samaritan Mental Health Center 661-873-2010  
 Delano Regional 661-721-5339  
 Memorial Center 661-398-1800

*\*call for information regarding private financial arrangements, not county-funded*



### Contracted Intensive Outpatient Programs

Anne Sippi Riverside Ranch 661-871-9697



### Mental Health Rehabilitation Centers

Crestwood Behavioral Health Center 661-363-8127



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 Toll Free Crisis Hotline: 1-800-991-5272  
 Children's Resolution Hotline: 1-800-439-9961*

## SUBSTANCE ABUSE SYSTEM OF CARE

Administrator: Lily Alvarez 661-868-6600

### Providers of Substance Abuse & Mental Health Services for Adults

Community	Service Provider	Phone
Delano/McFarland	Clinica Sierra Vista	661-723-2788
West Kern	KCMH West Kern Team	661-758-7300
Taft	KCMH Taft Center	661-765-4853
Bakersfield	KCMH MK Shell Mini Clinic	661-868-8080
	KCMH No. Chester Mini Clinic	661-868-1840
	KCMH Rehab Team 1	661-868-8060
	KCMH Rehab Team 2	661-868-8200
	KCMH Rehab Team 3	661-868-7154
	KCMH Rehab Team 4	661-868-1800
	KCMH Rehab Team 5	661-868-8381
North Bakersfield	KCMH Kern Linkage	661-868-1840
	KCMH Rehab Team 6	661-635-1400
	KCMH Green Gardens***	661-868-6175
North Bakersfield	KCMH Rehab Team 4	661-868-1800
Kern Valley	College Community Services	760-379-3412
Ridgecrest	College Community Services	760-499-7406
Tehachapi	College Community Services	661-822-8223
Rosamond	College Community Services	661-256-7208
California City	College Community Services	760-373-2979
Arvin/Lamont	Clinica Sierra Vista*	661-845-3717
Arvin/Lamont	Community Service Organization**	661-845-3753
Frazier Park	Clinica Sierra Vista	661-245-0250
Bakersfield	Turning Point/PAR	661-631-1483

*\*mental health services only*

*\*\*substance abuse and dual diagnosis services*

*\*\*\*residential program*

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 Toll Free Crisis Hotline: 1-800-991-5272  
 Children's Resolution Hotline: 1-800-439-9961*

## Providers of Substance Abuse & Mental Health Services for Children

Community	Service Provider	Phone
Delano/McFarland	Child Guidance Clinic	661-725-1042
West Kern	Kern County Mental Health	661-758-7300
Taft	Kern County Mental Health	661-765-4853
Metro/West Bakersfield	Child Guidance Clinic	661-327-0933
North Bakersfield, Glennville & Woody	Kern County Mental Health	661-868-8300
Kern Valley	College Community Services	760-379-3412
Ridgecrest	College Community Services	760-499-7406
Tehachapi	College Community Services	661-822-8223
Rosamond	College Community Services	661-356-7208
California City	College Community Services	760-373-2979
Arvin/Lamont	Clinica Sierra Vista	661-845-5100
Frazier Park	Clinica Sierra Vista	661-243-0250
Central/Southeast Bakersfield	Child Guidance Clinic	661-322-1021



*Crisis Stabilization Unit: 661- 868-8000*  
*Toll Free Crisis Hotline: 1-800-991-5272*  
*Children's Resolution Hotline: 1-800-439-9961*

## Additional Children & Adult System Resources

<b>CalWORKs – Bobbi Emel</b> 1721 Westwind	661-868-8364
<b>Children's Outpatient – Alexis Woods</b> 2621 Oswell Street	661-868-6750
<b>Children's Specialty Services – Marsha Greenstein</b> 1111 Columbus	661-868-8300
<b>Correctional Mental Health – Jana Swearingin</b> ☞ Downtown Jail ☞ Lerdo Facility, 17635 Industrial Farm Road	661-868-6895 661-391-7948
<b>Crisis Services – Bill Walker</b> 2151 College Avenue ☞ CCMO, DeAn Drakos ☞ MET, Mike Frederick	661-868-8000 661-868-8129 661-868-8182
<b>HIV Services – Alice Kendrick</b> 3550 Q Street, Suite #304	661-324-3262
<b>Mini Clinics – Carolyn Buck &amp; Ross Kremsdorf</b> ☞ Northside Clinic, 2525 No. Chester, <b>Carolyn Buck</b> ☞ Mary K. Shell, 2151 College Avenue, <b>Ross Kremsdorf</b>	661-868-1800 661-868-8080
<b>Prevention/FNL – Adrienne Buckle</b> 1111 Columbus Street	661-868-8306
<b>S.A.R.T. – Marti Rodriguez</b> 1401 L Street	661-868-6100
<b>Vocational Services – Dennis Farrell</b> 1721 Westwind All Aboard/ISSP	661-868-8381

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## **SUBSTANCE ABUSE RESOURCES**

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### **ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS**

930 Truxtun Avenue, Suite 110  
Bakersfield, CA 93301  
Phone: 661-322-4025 Fax: 661-322-4026  
Contact Person: Nancy Machado  
Fees: None  
Services Provided: Information to anyone seeking help for the problem of alcoholism.

### **AL-ANON/ALATEEN**

Post Office Box 894  
Phone: 661-322-1102  
Fees: None  
Services Provided: Family support groups

### **NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS**

4909 Stockdale Highway, Suite 343  
Bakersfield, CA 93309  
Phone: 661-869-3356  
Fees: None  
Services Provided: Information for anyone seeking help for the problem of chemical dependency.

### **KERN COUNTY MENTAL HEALTH SUBSTANCE ABUSE RESOURCE TEAM (S.A.R.T.)**

1401 L Street  
Bakersfield, CA 93301  
Phone: 661-868-6100 Fax: 661-868-6111  
Contact Person: Marti Rodriguez  
Fees: Sliding fee scale/Medi-Cal; prices vary according to program  
Services Provided: Outpatient substance abuse treatment; parenting; dependency monitoring program; juvenile drug diversion; drug court program; PC 1000 drug diversion program; perinatal and women's services program; court-ordered services

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## **SUBSTANCE ABUSE PROVIDER PROBATION REFERRALS**

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### **ALTA VISTA SUBSTANCE ABUSE PROGRAM**

5201 White Lane  
Bakersfield, CA 93309  
Phone: 661-398-1800

### **ASI COUNSELING & PROFESSIONAL SERVICES**

1814 Brundage Lane  
Bakersfield, CA 93304  
Phone: 661-327-1345

### **COMMUNITY SERVICE ORGANIZATION**

715 Lake Street  
Bakersfield, CA 93305  
Phone: 661-327-9376

### **EBONY COUNSELING**

1309 California Avenue  
Bakersfield, CA 93304  
Phone: 661-324-4756

### **TURNING POINT- PAR/ KENNEMER CENTER**

1100 Union Avenue  
Bakersfield, CA 93307  
Phone: 861-6111

### **KERN COUNTY MENTAL HEALTH – WEST KERN**

930 F Street  
Wasco, CA 93280  
Phone: 661-758-9378

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## KCMH System of Care Terms & Definitions

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*from Kern County Mental Health, printed with permission of Brad Cloud, Ph.D., Administrator of Adult Outpatient Services*

**MET** – The Mobile Evaluation Team (MET) responds to law enforcement regarding mental health crises in the field

**CCMO** – The Crisis Case Management Team (CCMO) provides crisis response to both adults and minors. Services are provided primarily in the greater Bakersfield area.

**KLP** – The Kern Linkage Program (KLP) is a division of the Kern County Mental Health Department that provides supportive housing and outreach services to persons who are mentally ill and homeless.

**CSU** – The Crisis Stabilization Unit (CSU) is a 23-hour voluntary urgent care unit for mental health services. Assessment and immediate interventions are provided to address problems and symptoms which, if not treated, present an imminent threat to the individual's or public's safety or which substantially increase the risk of the individual becoming gravely disabled.

**KMC-ED** – Kern Medical Center provides a fully staffed Emergency Department (ED) for medical emergencies. The Emergency Psychiatric Assessment Unit is part of the ED and provides 5150 evaluations for adults and minors.

**KMC-3B** - is the County-designated facility for involuntary hospitalization services for adults.

**REHABILITATION TEAMS** – Seven multi-disciplinary teams located throughout the greater Bakersfield area provide a full range of voluntary treatment and recovery services to adults with severe and persistent mental illness including intensive case management, psychiatric medications, counseling, support groups and dual diagnosis counseling.

**GEOGRAPHIC PROVIDERS** – Privately operated multi-disciplinary teams located throughout Kern County offering a full range of voluntary treatment and recovery services to seriously and persistently mentally ill adults and children through contracts with Kern County Mental Health.

**VOCATIONAL SERVICES** – All Aboard and On Track teams partner with the California Department of Rehabilitation and other agencies to provide vocational services to Kern County Mental Health consumers and/or Medi-Cal beneficiaries.

**GOERS** – The Group of Enthusiastic Recovery Supporters (GOERS) is a self-help group for persons with mental illness engaged in recovery activities.

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## SOME HELPFUL COMMUNITY RESOURCES

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### **ALLIANCE AGAINST FAMILY VIOLENCE**

1921 19<sup>th</sup> Street  
Bakersfield, CA 93303  
Phone: 661-322-0931 Fax: 661-322-2916  
Contact Person: Alonzo A. Flores, Outreach Service Director  
Services Provided: Domestic violence prevention & intervention; family counseling  
Fees: \$840 for court-ordered individuals only; volunteers no fee; victims, no fee or \$5.00 donation.

### **INDEPENDENT LIVING CENTER**

1631 30<sup>th</sup> Street  
Bakersfield, CA 93301  
Phone: 661-325-1063 Fax: 661-325-6702  
Fees: Other  
Services Provided: Outpatient substance abuse; peer support for persons with physical and/or mental disabilities to learn to live independently through life style changes and values.

### **PARENTS & FRIENDS OF LESBIANS AND GAYS (PFLAG)**

1<sup>st</sup> Congregational Church, 5 Real Road, Bakersfield  
Services Provided: Support and informational programs  
Meetings: 1<sup>st</sup> Thursday of every month in Fireside Room at 7:00 p.m.  
E-Mail: [pflag.bkd@cox.net](mailto:pflag.bkd@cox.net)

### **SCHIZOPHRENICS ANONYMOUS**

A support group for all consumers, irrespective of diagnosis, that meets every Wednesday. For further information, call 661-868-7178

### **UNITED CEREBRAL PALSY OF CENTRAL CALIFORNIA**

1712 19<sup>th</sup> Street  
Bakersfield, CA 93301  
Contact: Micky Hennen, Family Advocate  
Phone: 661-861-6040, Ext. 14  
Fax: 661-861-6018 E-Mail: [mickyh@ccup.org](mailto:mickyh@ccup.org)

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## ADVOCACY SERVICES

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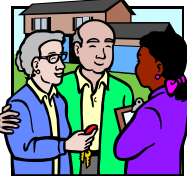
### Patient Rights Advocate

*The Patient Rights Advocates are on staff at Kern County Mental Health but perform their jobs as advocates independently of the System of Care. The Patient Rights Advocates Office represents both adults and children.*

- \* Patient Rights Advocates represent consumers receiving mental health services in Kern County.
- \* Patient Rights Advocates emphasize that the individual and the family and support persons or network have an active role in treatment decisions that agree with specific goals.
- \* Patient Rights Advocates stand for the individual's expressed wishes in the mental health services delivered in both a hospital and outpatient setting.
- \* Patient Rights Advocates provide regulatory oversight of mental health facilities.

Kern County Patient Rights Advocate  
Day Altair, MA  
3300 Truxtun Avenue, Suite 102  
Bakersfield, CA 93302  
(661) 868-6640

*Remember, the Patient Rights Advocate is an advocate for all consumers receiving mental health services in Kern County and works independently from all providers to ensure consumers' rights are upheld.*



**Crisis Stabilization Unit: 661- 868-8000**  
**Toll Free Crisis Hotline: 1-800-991-5272**  
**Children's Resolution Hotline: 1-800-439-9961**

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## ADVOCACY SERVICES

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### Family Advocate

*The Family Advocate is a unique position currently functioning in 12 California counties. The Family Advocate is a dedicated staff member who helps families participate in the mental health care and treatment of their loved one, whether adults or children.*

- \* The Family Advocate supports and facilitates timely and informative interactions between family members and the Mental Health System of Care
- \* The Family Advocate will listen and provide confidential support, encouragement and resource referral, including information on NAMI meetings. When you need assistance with problem solving, improving communications and understanding available services, the Family Advocate can work with you.
- \* The Family Advocate can provide you with the following written materials: Family Handbook, Medication issues literature, community resources brochures, Conservatorship Handbook and other literature regarding serious mental illness.

Kern County Family Advocate  
Luann Baldwin, L.C.S.W.  
1401 L Street  
Bakersfield, CA 93301  
(661) 868-6109



**Crisis Stabilization Unit: 661- 868-8000**  
**Toll Free Crisis Hotline: 1-800-991-5272**  
**Children's Resolution Hotline: 1-800-439-9961**

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## CHILDREN'S ADVOCACY SERVICES

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### H.E.A.R.T.S. CONNECTION

Family Resource Center  
3101 N. Sillect Ave., Ste. 115  
Bakersfield, CA 93308  
Phone: 661-328-9055 or 1-800-210-7633  
Fax: 661-328-9940

### UNITED CEREBRAL PALSY ASSOCIATION OF CENTRAL CALIFORNIA

3200 N. Sillect Avenue  
Bakersfield, CA 93308  
Phone: 661-864-1717

### KERN REGIONAL CENTER

Donnalee Huffman, Office of Client's Rights  
3200 N. Sillect Avenue  
Bakersfield, CA 93308  
Phone: 661-327-8531, Ext. 313

### BAKERSFIELD CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT — GRADES K-8

SELPA Search and Serve  
Cindy Hurley, Advocate  
Phone: 661-631-5863

### BAKERSFIELD HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT – GRADES 9-12

SELPA Search and Serve  
Butch Souza, Advocate  
Phone: 661-827-3105

### OUTLYING SCHOOL DISTRICTS OF KERN COUNTY

SELPA Search and Serve  
Darlene Jensen, Advocate  
Phone: 661-636-4801

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## YOUR RIGHTS WHEN YOUR FAMILY MEMBER IS HOSPITALIZED

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### STATEMENT OF POLICY

Families of clients in psychiatric hospitals are encouraged to participate in the assessment, treatment, and aftercare planning process for each client, consistent with the best interests and wishes of the client. **All rights listed below need to be given with written consent by the consumer.**

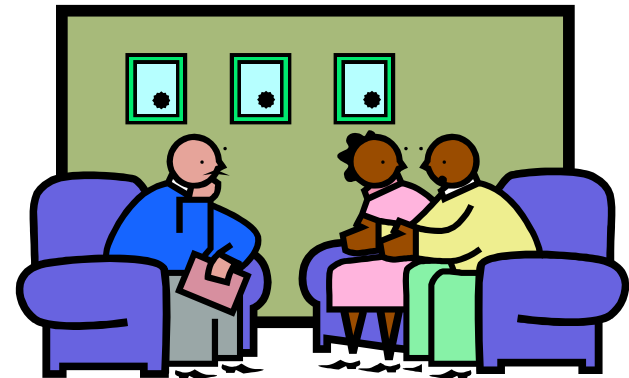
### RIGHTS OF FAMILY MEMBERS

- ☞ The right (of a spouse, parent, child or sibling) to be given notification of the consumer's presence in a 24-hour facility, unless the client requests that this information not be provided. [Cal. Welf. & Inst. Code § 5328.1]
- ☞ The right to be given information regarding the diagnosis, prognosis, prescribed medication and side effects, and progress of the consumer. If the consumer is initially unable to authorize the release of this information, daily efforts shall be made to secure the consumer's consent or refusal of authorization. [Cal. Welf. & Inst. Code § 5328.1(a)]
- ☞ The right to have the facility make reasonable attempts to notify the immediate family of the consumer's admission, release, transfer, serious illness, injury or death; the consumer must request that this information be provided. [Cal. Welf. & Inst. Code §§ 5328.1(b)]
- ☞ The right to see and receive copies of information and records regarding the consumer, with the consumer's consent and the approval of the treating physician, psychologist or Master's degree social worker. [Cal. Welf. & Inst. Code § 5328(b)]
- ☞ The right to a copy of the written aftercare plan when the consumer is discharged from an inpatient psychiatric facility, with the consent of the consumer. [AB 482 amending Cal. Welf. & Inst. Code §§ 5622, 5768.5]
- ☞ The right for the clinician not to reveal from the consumer's record any information provided in confidence by the family, prior to release of records to an authorized person or entity. [Cal. Welf. & Inst. Code §§ 5328(b) (d) (j) (k), 5543]

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- ☞ The right of the consumer to assign a relative or guardian to be given required information concerning the consent and explanation about administration of convulsive treatment or psychosurgery, if authorized by the client. [Cal. Welf. & Inst. Code §§ 5326.6(b), 5323.7(c)]
- ☞ The right to receive copies of public information, including licensing and other reports. [Cal. Gov't. Code §§ 6250 *et seq.*]
- ☞ The right to visit the consumer every day, with the consent of the consumer. [Cal. Welf. & Inst. Code § 5325(c)]
- ☞ The right to have confidential telephone calls with the consumer and to mail and receive unopened correspondence. [Cal. Welf. & Inst. Code § 5325(d), (e)]
- ☞ The right to provide clothing, personal possessions, and a reasonable sum of money for the consumer to use in the facility. [Cal. Welf. & Inst. Code § 5325(a)]
- ☞ The right to participate in the treatment and rehabilitation planning of the consumer as a source of information and support. Included in the participation is assisting the consumer in returning to the most constructive and satisfying lifestyle of their own definition and choice in the least restrictive environment, preferably in their own community. [Cal. Welf. & Inst. Code §§ 5600.2(a)(2), 5600.4(c)]
- ☞ The right for a person designated by the consumer to be advised of the time and place of certification hearings, judicial review, conservatorship proceedings and other due process proceedings, unless the consumer requests that this information not be provided (under the advisement that the consumer has the right to request this information not be provided). [Cal. Welf. & Inst. Code §§ 5256.4(c), 5276, 5350.2]
- ☞ The right to be appointed conservator or to nominate a conservator subject to the priorities and preferences in the Probate Code. [Cal. Probate Code §§ 1810-1813]
- ☞ The right to have as the first priority for conservatee placement a facility as close as possible to the conservatee's home or home of a relative. [Cal. Welf. & Inst. Code §§ 5358(c)]

- ☞ The right to submit a complaint regarding abuse, unreasonable denial or punitive withholding of rights concerning a resident in a licensed health or community care facility to a Patient Rights Advocate for investigation. [Cal. Welf. & Inst. Code § 5520(a)]
- ☞ The right (unless found not to be acting in good faith) to be immune from civil or criminal liability, penalty, sanction or restriction for participating in the filing of a complaint or providing information to the Patient Rights Advocate. [Cal. Welf. & Inst. Code § 5550(a)]
- ☞ The right to be informed by the facility of the telephone number of where to file complaints with the Department of Health Services, Licensing and Certification Program (Cal. Health & Safety Code § 1288.4). Professional licensing boards and other regulatory and enforcement agencies may also be contacted to register complaints about the facility or personnel.
- ☞ The right to not have the consumer discriminated or retaliated against for the family member's participation in any advocacy activity. [Cal. Welf. & Inst. Code § 5550(c)]



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## RIGHTS OF FAMILIES: OUTPATIENT SERVICES

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If your family member is receiving outpatient services, here are a few things you should know:

**YOU HAVE THE RIGHT** to participate in treatment decisions if your loved one has given permission by signing an authorization or release of information form.

**YOU HAVE THE RIGHT** to provide information and support to the mental health service providers *even in the absence of a release of information.*

**YOU HAVE THE RIGHT** to know what services are available and to receive guidance on how best to help your loved one on his or her path to recovery.

**YOU HAVE THE RIGHT** to be treated courteously and with honesty and respect even if the service provider cannot legally involve you in your loved one's treatment.



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## FAMILY SUPPORT RESOURCES

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*The following represents only a partial list of what is available throughout Kern County. For other resources, refer to the Yellow Pages, your local newspaper, the Access Center, or the Helpline.*

*There are many free self-help groups offered throughout the County.*

### **KEYS TO UNDERSTANDING: A FAMILY-TO-FAMILY EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM** sponsored by NAMI and NAMI California

*A 12-week curriculum for family members that promotes understanding of serious mental illness, for family members and taught by family members, at no charge.*

*For information contact:*

Cynthia Martel – 661-589-6783

Colleen Peters – 661-334-2161

### **NAMI – KERN COUNTY** “The Family’s Voice on Mental Illness”

P.O. Box 9144

Bakersfield, CA 93389

Phone: 661-831-8489

Website: [www.NAMICalifornia.com](http://www.NAMICalifornia.com)

### **NAMI – MONTHLY MEETINGS**

*A joint meeting of consumers, family members, and providers to interact and share information*

6:00 pm – Business Meeting

6:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. – Share and Care

7:30 p.m. – 8:30 p.m. – Program

Third Monday of every month except July

3715 Columbus Avenue (next to Green Frog Market)

Phone: 661-868-7176

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## CONSUMER/FAMILY/PROVIDER NETWORK COALITION

Good Samaritan Hospital

901 Olive Drive, Bakersfield, CA 93308

Contact: kCAN, at 661-868-7178

Please RSVP to Cheryl Carter at 661-215-7572

*A partnership that addresses issues related to psychiatric disabilities. This innovative group brings together consumers, family members, and providers of mental health services into one dynamic network.*

Meets on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday of the month in the main cafeteria from 11:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

## FAMILY SUPPORT AT THE STATEWIDE LEVEL

NAMI (National Alliance for the Mentally Ill) California

*“The State’s Voice on Mental Illness”*

1111 Howe Avenue, Suite 475

Sacramento, CA 95814

916-567-0163

California Department of Mental Health

Anne Tracy, Contract Liaison

1600 9<sup>th</sup> Street

Sacramento, CA 95814

916-722-6618

## NATIONAL RESOURCES for MENTAL HEALTH

NAMI (National Alliance for the Mentally Ill)

*The Nation’s Voice on Mental Illness”*

200 N. Glebe Road, Suite 105

Arlington, VA 22203-3754

American Psychiatric Association

1400 K Street NW

Washington, DC 20005

202-682-6262

American Psychological Association

750 1<sup>st</sup> Street NE

Washington, DC 20002-4242

202-336-5500

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## WHAT IS FAMILY INVOLVEMENT?

**Participation:** Family involvement means creating a partnership between family members, consumers, and care providers. This partnership includes **your** participation, as authorized by your family member. You can begin your involvement by getting to know the mental health staff serving your ill family member.

**Confidentiality:** In order for family members to become involved in mental health care and treatment, a release of information is required for the oral and written exchange of information between clinicians and involved persons. While consumers are asked about a release upon admission and annually, asking for a release can be initiated by the family.

**Education:** To be an effective participant, family members should educate themselves about mental illness. The library, case manager, the Internet, or various support groups in the community are some resources available to address your questions about the nature and treatment of mental illness.

**Medication:** Know what medications your family member is taking and the possible side effects and interactions. Call your pharmacist or the medication hotline to discuss these medications.

**Crisis Planning:** Work with your family member to create a crisis plan. Know ahead of time what you are going to do if there is a crisis. For example, a list of telephone number to call and a list of friends and additional family members who can give YOU support can be posted next to your telephone at home.

**Intervention:** When you notice a relapse is beginning, take action early by encouraging your family member to call their care provider or nurse immediately.

**Team Work:** Get to know your family member’s case manager and ask the case manager what you can do to assist him or her in caring for your family member. Utilize resources such as NAMI and Consumer Service Representatives to help you negotiate difficult times.

**Self Care:** Remember that you are engaged in a difficult, often exhausting, role. Take care to avoid neglecting the foundation upon whom support depends – YOU.

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## KERN CONSUMER ACTION NETWORK

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### KERN CONSUMER ACTION NETWORK

**kCAN is a self help group of mental health consumers who meet to provide support and information to their fellow mental health consumers in a variety of educational and social activities.**

### kCAN Meetings

#### **kCAN Adult Meeting (Self Help Consumer Group)**

1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of each month

Information Contact: Carmelita Cooke at 868-7178/868-7181

#### **kCAN Socialization Group (Self Help Social Group for Consumers)**

2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday of each month

Information Contact: Debby Denny at 868-7178/868-7181

#### **kCAN Bi-polar Support Group**

1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday of each month

Information Contact: Carolyn Burns at 868-7178/868-7181

#### **kCAN/NAMI/Good Samaritan/Consumer, Family, Provider Network Luncheon**

2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday of each month

Information Contact: kCAN at 868-7178/868-7181

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION ABOUT KCAN, CALL**

**661-868-7178**

**661-868-7181**

*Crisis Stabilization Unit: 661- 868-8000  
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## WHAT IS CONFIDENTIALITY?

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The Mental Health System of Care is required by law to protect a consumer's right to confidentiality, although certain exceptions to confidentiality rules are recognized in dealing with courts, law enforcement, emergency assessment or referral, and immediate treatment. *Your family member must sign a Release of Information form giving consent to have you involved in their treatment.* Every provider will have a release form available.

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## WHAT IS A CONSERVATOR?

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A conservator is a person appointed by the court with legal authority to make decisions about their appointed consumer's property and treatment. A conservator is assigned when individuals cannot care for themselves due to a mental illness. A conservator is a court-appointed protector, guardian, or custodian. A conservatorship is temporary and renewable. An LPS Conservatorship is different from a probate conservatorship in that the LPS conservatorship allows the conservator to initiate involuntary psychiatric treatment. For more information call the Public Conservator's Office at 868-1008.



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## KERN COUNTY AGING & ADULT SERVICES

661-868-1000 or 800-510-2020

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**Senior Citizens Information & Referral** helps seniors identify programs and services to meet their specific needs. This service is free.

**Health Insurance Counseling & Advocacy Program** provides free assistance with Medicare problems and other health insurance issues for seniors and disabled adults.

**Senior Nutrition Program** provides a nutritious lunch in a group setting at locations throughout Kern County.

- ♦ **Home Delivered Meals** are available to those with medical conditions that do not allow them to visit a group meal site.
- ♦ **Brown Bag Program** provides surplus fruits, vegetables and other food products to eligible seniors.

**Legal Services** are available to seniors, providing free civil and legal counseling and guidance.

**Special Circumstance Program** provides housing repairs, replacement of essential household furnishings and supplies to elderly and disabled persons who are in urgent need.

**Multi-purpose Senior Services Program** offers eligible, frail elderly Medi-Cal recipients necessary services so they can remain at home.

**In-Home Supportive Services** is a program for low-income elderly, blind, and disabled individuals who need certain domestic and/or non-medical personal care to remain safely at home.

**Adult Protective Services** responds 24 hours a day to reports of suspected abuse, such as financial, physical, abandonment, isolation, neglect, and self-neglect of seniors and disabled individuals. Emergency services provided include emergency shelter, in-home care, meals and provision of basic necessities. The APS Crisis hot line phone numbers are: (800) 277-7866 or (661) 868-1006.

**Probate Conservatorship** is protective care available to individuals unable to resist undue influences, exploitation, and/or are unable to provide for their basic needs. The court appoints the Conservator to act as the representative decision maker for medical, financial, and special needs of clients.

**LPS Conservatorship (Lanterman Petris Short)** is protective care available for individuals determined to be gravely disabled due to a mental illness. The Conservator is court appointed for the person and/or estate for a period of one year to secure mandated mental health treatment and to act as decision maker in matters of medical, financial and special needs.

**Long Term Care Ombudsman** investigates and attempts to resolve complaints made by or on behalf of people living in long term care facilities, such as nursing homes, board and care, assisted living, etc.

**Senior Outreach Assessment Response** provides outreach and assessment services to older adults in their homes to determine competency and to develop a plan for improving quality of life.

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## CONFIDENTIALITY

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### **California Welfare and Institutions Code §5328.1:**

***Release of information to family member; Notification of next of kin of patient's admission; Immunity from liability***

#### Out-Patient

(a) Upon request of a member of the family of a patient, or other person designated by the patient, a public or private treatment facility shall give the family member or the designee notification of the patient's diagnosis, the prognosis, the medications prescribed, the side effects of medications prescribed, if any, and the progress of the patient, if, after notification of the patient that this information is requested, the patient authorizes its disclosure. If, when initially informed of the request for notification, the patient is unable to authorize the release of such information, notation of the attempt shall be made into the patient's treatment record, and daily efforts shall be made to secure the patient's consent or refusal of authorization. However, if a request for information is made by the spouse, parent, child, or sibling of the patient and the patient is unable to authorize the release of such information, the requester shall be given notification of the patient's presence in the facility, except to the extent prohibited by law.

#### In-Patient

(b) Upon the admission of any mental health patient to a 24-hour public or private health facility licensed pursuant to Section 1250 of the Health and Safety Code, the facility shall make reasonable attempts to notify the patient's next of kin or any other person designated by the patient, of the patient's admission, unless the patient requests that this information not be provided. The facility shall make reasonable attempts to notify the patient's next of kin or any other person designated by the patient, of the patient's release, transfer, serious illness, injury, or death only upon request of the family member, unless the patient requests that this information not be provided. The patient shall be advised by the facility that he or she has the right to request that this information not be provided.

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## MENTAL HEALTH-RELATED WEB SITES

<u>Mental Health Web Sites</u>
<b>NAMI National</b>
<a href="http://nami.org">nami.org</a>
<b>NAMI California</b>
<a href="http://namicalifornia.org">namicalifornia.org</a>
<b>Medication Compliance System</b>
<a href="http://www.epill.com">www.epill.com</a>
<b>Children's Mental Health Web Site</b>
<a href="http://www.kidsmentalhealth.org">www.kidsmentalhealth.org</a>
<b>National Institute of Mental Health</b>
<a href="http://www.nimh.nih.gov">www.nimh.nih.gov</a>
<b>National Mental Health Association</b>
<a href="http://www.nmha.org">www.nmha.org</a>
<b>National Depressive and Manic Depressive Association</b>
<a href="http://www.ndmda.org">www.ndmda.org</a>
<b>The OC Foundation (for Obsessive- Compulsive Disorders)</b>
<a href="http://www.ocfoundation.org">http://www.ocfoundation.org</a>
<b>Anxiety Disorders Association of America</b>
<a href="http://www.adaa.org">http://www.adaa.org</a>
<i>If you don't have your own personal computer, the public libraries have computers available to the public for free and support staff to help you.</i>

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## NATIONAL RESOURCES FOR SPECIFIC MENTAL ILLNESSES

<u>More Help For Specific Disorders</u>
<b><u>Schizophrenia</u></b>
➤ American Schizophrenia Association
900 North Federal Highway, Suite 330
Boca Raton, FL 33432
➤ The National Alliance for Research on Schizophrenia & Depression
60 Cutter Mill Road, Suite 404
Great Neck, NY 11021
1-800-829-8289
<b><u>Depression</u></b>
➤ Depression & Related Affective Disorders Association
Meyer 3-181
600 N. Wolfe Street
Baltimore, MD 21287
(410) 955-4647
<b><u>Bipolar Disorder</u></b>
Stanley Center for the Innovative Treatment of Bipolar Disorder
3811 O'Hara Street, Suite 279
Chicago, IL 60610-3632
1-800-826-3632
<i>If you don't have your own personal computer, the public libraries have computers available to the public for free and support staff to help you.</i>

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## CONSUMER SUPPORTS

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### **KCMH Consumer Action Network**

For more information about kCAN activities  
call 661-868-7178/661-868-7181



### **Schizophrenics Anonymous**

Meets every other Monday at the kCAN Office  
3715 Columbus Avenue (next to the Green Frog Market)  
call 661-868-7178



### **Consumer, Family, Provider Lunch**

2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday of each month  
901 Olive Drive, 11:30 a.m.  
No charge for lunch  
RSVP at 661-399-4461



### **Recovery Inc. Support Group**

Call Jim at 661-872-1152 for more information



### **Social Support Group**

For individuals receiving services through Mental Health who are open to a full service rehabilitation team. Referrals must be made through the assigned case manager

Call Ocie Easter at 868-8098 for more information



### **Depression Support Group**

For individuals receiving services through Mental Health who are open to a full service rehabilitation team. Referrals must be made through the assigned case manager

Call Arnie Garcia at 868-1821 for more information

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## FAMILY SUPPORTS

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### **Parent Support Groups**

Child Guidance Clinic  
3628 Stockdale Highway  
5:30 p.m. – 6:30 p.m. every Thursday  
661-322-1021



### **Grandparents Raising Grandchildren**

Child Guidance Clinic  
3628 Stockdale Highway  
10:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m. every Thursday  
661-322-1021  
No charge/No eligibility requirements



### **CHADD**

San Joaquin Valley Chapter  
Residence of Gary and Cindy Chapman, Coordinators  
6404 Patton Way, Bakersfield  
7:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m. every 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday of the month  
661-393-7918



### **ADD/Learning Disabilities**

Stockdale Learning Center  
Contact Andrew Barling  
661-326-8084



### **Learning Disability Association of Kern County**

Andrew Barling at [slc@galaxy.net](mailto:slc@galaxy.net) or fax to 661-327-4752  
Daniel Marble at [marbilini@aol.com](mailto:marbilini@aol.com)

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## SERVICE DEFINITIONS

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<b>Access</b>	➤ Screening for eligibility for services with Kern County Mental Health for a mental illness as defined in managed care eligibility criteria.
<b>Assessment</b>	➤ An in-person appointment with staff qualified to evaluate mental illness.
<b>Customer Service Representative</b>	➤ Person assigned to solve problems and help with complaints of individuals and their families. A written release of information is required to permit direct involvement of families and other supporters.
<b>Family Advocate</b>	➤ Staff assigned as a liaison for families to assist them with services, complaints and education about mental health issues and available services. The Family Advocate can provide referral for access to: KCMH services; crisis services access; SSI materials and resources; NAMI support groups; Probable Cause Hearing information; AB 1424 materials and consultation; and the Family Handbook.
<b>Hospitalization</b>	➤ Voluntary or involuntary admission to a facility providing psychiatric care for the mentally ill when community functioning is impaired.
<b>Levels of Care</b>	➤ Classification of the amount and kind of treatment support needed to help individuals remain in the community at the lowest, safe level of care.
<b>Medication Management</b>	➤ Appointments with Mental Health staff including evaluation for effects of medications taken and follow up education
<b>Patient Rights Advocate</b>	➤ Staff assigned to solve problems of individuals needing help with expressed requests for mental health services.
<b>Plan of Care</b>	➤ Setting goals that have clear definitions, assigning responsible persons to carry out tasks, and placing time limits on accomplishing these activities.

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<b>Psychiatrist</b>	➤ Medical doctor specializing in psychiatric care. Mental Health doctors work as team members with the individual, family, and mental health staff.
<b>Reassessment</b>	➤ Annual (at least) evaluation of an individual's progress towards agreed-upon goals.
<b>Recovery Specialist</b>	➤ Mental Health staff assigned to help individuals work toward recovery. Services may consist of monitoring, placement in residential facility, money management and counseling.
<b>Transfer</b>	➤ Assignment to a different level of care or to a different team.
<b>Release of Information</b>	➤ A legal document that must be signed by the individual receiving services before Mental Health staff can disclose treatment information about that individual..
<b>UMDAP</b>	➤ A method of determining annual financial liability for Kern County Mental Health services. Medi-Cal beneficiaries usually have full coverage for services unless benefits are reduced or discontinued.
<b>Unit Supervisor</b>	➤ Manager of a team serving mentally ill individuals.



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## SSI AND SSDI APPLICATION

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If you have been encouraged to apply for Social Security benefits, here are some factors that will be important in the application process. According to Social Security Act Section 223(d) “disability” is defined as:

“The inability to engage in any substantial gainful activity by reason of any medically determinable physical or mental impairment which can be expected to result in death or which has lasted or can be expected to last for a continuous period of not less than 12 months.

An individual shall be determined to be under a disability only if his physical or mental impairment(s) are of such severity that he is not only unable to do his previous work but cannot, considering his age, education, and work experience, engage in any other kind of substantial gainful work which exists in the national economy, regardless of whether such work exists in the immediate area in which he lives, or whether a specific job vacancy exists for him, or whether he would be hired if he applied for work.”

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## THE APPLICATION PROCESS

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There are two programs administered by the Social Security Administration (SSA). Your family member may be eligible for either or both of the Social Security Income (SSI) and Social Security Disability (SDI) programs. Call the Social Security office at 1-800-772-1213, or contact the website at [www.ssa.gov](http://www.ssa.gov) to request an application packet. Fill out the application as completely as possible. You may request assistance from your local Social Security office if needed. Once submitted, you can expect a letter acknowledging receipt of your application from the Department of Social Services Disability Determination Services.

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## EVALUATION CRITERIA

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These conditions will be considered in determining disability:

- Is the individual working at a substantial gainful activity level?
- Is this individual’s *medically determinable impairment* severe?
- If it is severe, does it meet or medically equal the severity of a listing in the SSA’s listing of impairments?
- If severe, but does not meet or equal the severity listing, can the person return to this work in the near future?
- If past work is not possible, does the person have the ability to perform other types of work?

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## IMPORTANT INFORMATION

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### **A disability...**

- must be documented by medical records;
- must last longer than 12 months or be determined to result in death;
- the applicant must not be working at the time of application or not be earning more than the current amount of substantial gainful activity (“sga”) For example, the sga may amount to \$740.00/month);
- non-medical evidence can be reported by supervisors, neighbors, teachers, social workers or case workers highlighting the disability’s interference with the individual’s ability to work;

### **You must...**

comply with the time frames set by Social Security Administration!

### **If denied...**

you can appeal. You may want to seek help from an attorney specializing in Social Security law. (See your local phone directory for referrals.)

*Crisis Stabilization Unit: 661- 868-8000*  
*Toll Free Crisis Hotline: 1-800-991-5272*  
*Children’s Resolution Hotline: 1-800-439-9961*

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## PRINCIPLES TO REMEMBER WHEN DEALING WITH CRITICAL PERIODS IN MENTAL ILLNESS\*

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1. In dealing with critical periods, it is essential to set limits on psychotic behavior and to have a plan for enforcing your ultimatum. You need to decide on specific consequences, and you need to be prepared to back them up.
2. You must get help. No one can handle these devastating crises alone. Your plan should always involve other family members, public authorities, crisis workers, and professional assistance – notified ahead of time, if possible.
3. You must trust your instincts. If you are worried about violence or suicide, you can bet something is building up and that events are becoming overwhelming for your relative.
4. You can't keep your head in the sand about violence and suicide. You have to speak these fears directly and openly to your relative. You must show your reaction to these dangers: Tell him his behavior is making you feel afraid; ask point blank if he is contemplating suicide. In crisis, candor is essential. It reduces tension, “detoxifies” secret plans, and lets a lot of air into a sealed off, turbulent mind.
5. Even though your relative is scaring you to death or making you angry, you need to approach him with respect. All good crisis intervention is calm, purposeful and respectful.
6. Acting to protect our relatives with mental illness is the highest form of caring for them, even if it involves force or involuntary commitment. This is a difficult paradox to deal with. To keep them safe, we must let them go, even if they hate us for “locking them up,” even if they break off with us, we move decisively to ensure their well being. We cannot hang back because we think they will no longer love us. Mental illness can put people in mortal danger. In this situation, love acts!
7. Acting to keep ourselves clear of danger is the highest form of self-care. We are really saying we have no intention of letting mental illness rob us of our life, and if that danger looms, we are ready to separate ourselves from this threat. In a much less dramatic form, this is what we learn to do, over time, to survive this illness in others.

Joyce Burland, Ph.D.

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## APPENDIX

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### LEVELS OF CARE

*Levels of care measure an individual's ability to function within the community and are defined below. Note that the higher numbers indicate the individual's ability to function is decreasing as his or her symptoms and/or behaviors are increasing in severity. Individuals who qualify for specialty mental health services usually have an acuity rating of 3 or 4. Specialty mental health services refer to a range of services such as counseling, group therapy, psychiatric evaluation, medication, and case management services.*

**Level 0:** These individuals are functioning well and have no current mental health service requirements.

**Level 1:** People at Level 1 have symptoms and behaviors consistent with a mental illness and which are causing minor impairment in their relationships with friends, family or work, but do not require specialty mental health services. Often the family doctor or primary care physician can help.

**Level 2:** At Level 2, people are moderately impaired by a mental illness but are stable and functioning well within the community, requiring some ongoing treatment and medical management to avoid situations that might threaten stability, progress, and functioning.

**Level 3:** Individuals at Level 3 are severely affected by the symptoms and behaviors of their mental illness that interfere with key areas of life and relationships such as friends, family, workplace, school, and housing. These individuals can perform essential tasks of daily life in the community but need more assistance to maintain and to develop or access resources. Services may include counseling, medication, group therapy and sometimes crisis services.

**Level 4:** At this level of care, individuals are extremely affected by mental illness and require very high levels of assistance and support in order to maintain basic functioning and to benefit from treatment. Level 4 individuals may require facility placement and intensive treatment interventions.

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