

FAMILIES ACT!

ADVOCATING FOR THE DUALY DIAGNOSED

EDUCATION • SUPPORT • ADVOCACY



*Break the Deadly Cycle ...
Criminalization is NOT the Answer!*

Break the Deadly Cycle ...

In the last decade, U.S. jails and prisons have become de facto mental institutions. This is a result of the closing of mental hospitals, the escalating numbers of Americans with emotional and mental disorders and their tendency to self-medicate, the wide availability of drugs and pharmaceuticals, the passage of tough drug laws and the lack of adequate community-based residential detox and treatment centers.



... Treatment, Not Jail!

Many people suffer from mood and thought disorders that drive them to self-medicate. Too many of these people with mental health issues and co-occurring substance abuse problems end up in jail instead of in treatment. They cycle in and out of jail and prison, in and out of psychiatric facilities for brief 72-hour "holds", in and out of sober living homes or short-term detox facilities, often ending up homeless or dead. They suffer, their families suffer and we all pay a heavy price.

Families ACT! is dedicated to developing a comprehensive continuum of care and better treatment options for people with mental illness and co-occurring chemical dependence. Together, we are working to find compassionate and effective solutions that serve both public safety and individual recovery.

Offering Compassion ...

Individuals with co-occurring mental health and substance use disorders and with intensely self-destructive behaviors are often coming from a place of shame and fear. We strive to overcome the stigma, shame, and fear associated with mental illness, addiction, incarceration and suicide.

Families ACT! brings together concerned individuals, families, and people struggling with mental health and substance abuse issues for mutual support and empowerment.



**Need someone to talk to?
Families ACT! Hotline:
805-637-1339**

... and Services for Families

Families ACT! offers a variety of support services for individuals and families including:

- Referrals to local resources
- Help navigating the mental health and criminal justice systems
- Informational clinics and monthly support groups meetings
- Families ACT! on-line Resource Library
- An opportunity to tell your story in our video, at town hall meetings and public policy hearings

**Check our website for more facts,
videos and useful resources:
www.FamiliesACT.org**

Seeking Alternatives ...

The dually diagnosed need a comprehensive continuum of care rather than punitive measures. We support the recovery of the individual and the family as well as the reform of our systems of care. Our experiences are not isolated ones. Thousands of American families are experiencing the tragic consequences of current policies: neglect, pain, and sometimes death. We need to provide alternatives!



... and Taking Action!

Families ACT! is a grassroots organization empowering family advocates and the dually diagnosed themselves to sit at the table with criminal justice and mental health officials to address this very complex public policy issue.

In July 2008, Families ACT! convened the Santa Barbara Task Force on Co-Occurring Disorders to address the critical need for a comprehensive continuum of care for the dually diagnosed in Santa Barbara County including residential treatment and medically supervised detox facilities as alternatives to incarceration.

*We Need Your Help and Support ...
Please Donate Now!
Join Us - Become a Volunteer
Find out how you can help, call or write today!*

Education

Support

Advocacy

Facts



*Do you know someone who is depressed or bipolar?
Do you know someone who is abusing drugs?
Do you know someone who has been sent to jail?*

Did you know that 1 in 31 American adults are behind bars, on probation or on parole?

Our Families are Hurting ...

FACT: One in 4 Americans has a family member who is struggling with addiction - 70% of these family members may be dually diagnosed.

FACT: One in 99 adult Americans is behind bars. For black males (20-34 years old) the figure is 1 in 9! Over 330,000 of the 2.3 million incarcerated Americans are mentally ill.

FACT: The U.S. now has more non-violent offenders in prison than our entire prison population in 1980. Most of these non-violent offenders have been charged with drug-related offenses. We spend over \$11 billion/year to keep drug law violators in prison.

FACT: While 20% of prisoners are incarcerated for a drug offense, over 80% of inmates have a substance abuse problem. Our prison system has capacity to provide treatment to only about 5%.

Our Loved Ones are Dying!

FACT: The rate of suicide in our prisons is twice that of the general population. In our jails, the rate is nine times higher!

FACT: 20,000 people died of drug overdoses in 2004 - 66% more than in 1999.

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P.O. Box 2152
Santa Barbara, CA 93120

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