

# **BERGEN COUNTY PROUD TO BE STIGMA-FREE**

## **THE STIGMA FREE ZONE NEWS OF NJ**

**Bringing the Mental Health Conversation to New Jersey**

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CLIFTON SFZ's MICHAEL ALLORA EXPANDS MHFA TRAINING- SOMERSET COUNTY HAS A SFZ- CAREPLUS GALA HONORS GWB CRISIS TEAM- NETFLIX SERIES ON YOUTH SUICIDE- MHA ESSEX & MORRIS MERGE- SUNRISE ROTARY YOGA - NEW MILFORD MENTAL HEALTH EVENT- QUICKLINKS TO NEWS

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### **Thanks to Paramus SFZ For Funding The SFZ News of NJ !**

The SFZ News has been funded for 18 months by the Paramus Stigma Free Zone members. Costs have been rising as our readership surpasses 1500 people, including our legislators and local elected officials, Bergen's health departments, local and state mental health, homeless & addiction agencies, hospitals and healthcare providers and of course, volunteers from the many SFZ all over the state of NJ.

We are reaching your core audience and we never charge to advertise upcoming events!

Please continue to email us your Stigma Free Zone stories, events, opinions and news for publication.

Thank you !

[Email Us your Submission](#)



**PARAMUS  
NEW JERSEY  
PROUD TO BE  
STIGMA-FREE**

Visit Paramus SFZ website

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**Michael Allora, Clifton's  
SFZ Ambassador expands  
MHFA for EMTs and  
Firefighters Nationwide**

Clifton, NJ had the first NJ SFZ in a Firehouse, thanks to Deputy Chief, Michael Allora.

After Michael became the first firefighter in NJ to take CIT (Crisis Intervention Training) which covers mental health issues over a 40 hour training, he realized how important this would be to his colleagues; who are involved in and witness all kinds of trauma on an almost daily basis.

There is a widespread problem worldwide with firefighter suicide, PTSD, and other mental health issues stemming from this dangerous work. These heroes have to know how to work with fire victims who may also be experiencing trauma.

"People call us on their worst day" said Michael. In terms of first responders; getting strong men to talk about a stigmatized condition isn't easy. "This training gets a conversation started," said Michael, "It's nice to see". Clifton F.D. has buried two retired men in recent years who died by suicide.

Michael wanted the entire Clifton F.D. to take CIT, but the course length and expense was excessive. He talked to Joanne Green, Mental Health Association, Passaic Chapter who turned him on to Mental Health First Aid Training; (MHFA) an affordable 8 hour mental health course.

"We had to get a bit creative to pay for it," said Michael, "But I know the 5 step MHFA action plan works." Since Clifton firefighters also serve as the town's ambulance corp (EMTs), MHFA was approved to fill 8 hours of continuing education NJ EMTs must take to remain certified. This wasn't easy; Michael had to ask the NJ Office of Emergency Medical Services to revamp the MHFA curriculum to make a module appropriate for this group. But he persevered, and now the entire Clifton F.D. is trained! Well done, Michael !

Michael is now working with The National Council, a large organization in Washington, to make this specialty MHFA module available nationwide. It may be available for pilot tests by January, 2018. He teaches MHFA across the country.

MHFA is available with tailored modules for law enforcement, corrections officers, higher education, veterans, seniors and children under 18. Check



out their website for details.

[Clifton Local FMBA](#)

[More About Michael](#)

[Mental Health First Aid Website](#)

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## Series "13 Reasons Why" Brings Suicide Discussion to Millions, NJ Youth Suicide Prevention Council Responds



### Let's Talk.

Let's be real - nothing has ever swept audiences up in discussions on mental health the way Netflix's **13 Reasons Why** has.

***Please read and share....kindly take anextra effort to get this information into the hands of parents, teachers,coaches and beyond.***

*(Letter has been abbreviated to fit our space)*

On March 31st Netflix released a seriescalled "13 Reasons Why".

This series has become an instantattraction to young people. Across the country, youth are binge watchingthis series and are reacting to it with friends and on social media. "13Reasons Why" is a series about a young high school girl, Hannah, who takes herown life and sends out 13 tapes to those she blames for herdeath. While fictional, the series is extremely graphic and raises significant concernsabout the emotional safety of those watching – especially for youthwho may have had experience with mental health issues, suicidal thoughtsor behaviors.

We,at New Jersey's Youth Suicide PreventionAdvisory Council, want you to be aware of this series and how to providesome safety for youth around the show's content and any feelings the show maybe bringing up for them. In order to address these issues with teenagerswe need to remember to ask about what they are feeling and seeing and we needto listen.

While there are some very disturbing and graphic scenes andideas, there are

some strengths in the series that provide excellent opportunities to have a conversation about suicide prevention and how to protect yourself and your friends. We encourage parents to watch the series with their children and have these conversations openly rather than simply criticizing.

We have provided a handout from the National Association of School Psychologists [below] which provides excellent guidelines for discussion.

We encourage you to share these points...with anyone who has contact with youth; teachers, counselors, parents etc. We understand this material can be difficult and if you do not feel comfortable or if you are interested in further education on how to become a partner in youth suicide prevention, how to get additional suicide prevention education or training, or if you are in need of mental health support for yourself or others, we encourage you to reach out to the resources [below].

Sincerely,

Michelle Scott, Ph.D., M.S.W.  
Chair, New Jersey's Youth Suicide Prevention Advisory Council

***Mental Health Resources:***

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline:	1-800-273- TALK
NJ Hopeline -	1-855-NJ-HOPELINE (654-6735)
2nd Floor Youth Helpline -	888-222-2228 (call or text)

***Training and Education Resources:***

Traumatic Loss Coalitions for Youth	(732) 235-2810
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(<http://ubhc.rutgers.edu/tlc/>)

You may contact the SFZ News for a copy of this letter in document form.  
[cynchazen@gmail.com](mailto:cynchazen@gmail.com)

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## 13 Reasons Why Netflix Series: Considerations for Educators

Schools have an important role in preventing youth suicide, and being aware of potential risk factors in students' lives is vital to this responsibility. The trending Netflix series *13 Reasons Why*, based on a young adult novel of the same name, is raising such concerns. The series revolves around 17-year-old Hannah Baker, who takes her own life and leaves behind audio recordings for 13 people who she says in some way were part of why she killed herself. Each tape recounts painful events in which one or more of the 13 individuals played a role.

Producers for the show say they hope the series can help those who may be struggling with thoughts of suicide. However, the series, which many teenagers are binge watching without adult guidance and support, is raising concerns from suicide prevention experts about the potential risks posed by the sensationalized treatment of youth suicide. The series graphically depicts a suicide death and addresses in wrenching detail a number of difficult topics, such as bullying, rape, drunk driving, and slut shaming. The series also highlights the consequences of teenagers witnessing assaults and bullying (i.e., bystanders) and not taking action to address the situation (e.g., not speaking out against the incident, not telling an adult about the incident).

### CAUTIONS

We do not recommend that vulnerable youth, especially those who have any degree of suicidal ideation, watch this series. Its powerful storytelling may lead impressionable viewers to romanticize the choices made by the characters and/or develop revenge fantasies. They may easily identify with the experiences portrayed and recognize both the intentional and unintentional effects on the central character. Unfortunately, adult characters in the show, including the second school counselor who inadequately addresses Hannah's pleas for help, do not inspire a sense of trust or ability to help. Hannah's parents are also unaware of the events that lead her suicide death.

While many youth are resilient and capable of differentiating between a TV drama and real life, engaging in thoughtful conversations with them about the show is vital. Doing so presents an opportunity to help them process the issues addressed, consider the consequences of certain choices, and reinforce the message that **suicide is not a solution to problems** and that help is available. **This is particularly important for adolescents who are isolated, struggling, or vulnerable to suggestive images and storylines.** Research shows that exposure to another person's suicide, or to graphic or sensationalized accounts of death, can be one of the many risk factors that youth struggling with mental health conditions cite as a reason they contemplate or attempt suicide.

What the series does accurately convey is that there is no single cause of suicide. Indeed, there are likely as many different pathways to suicide as there are suicide deaths. However, the series does not emphasize that common among most suicide deaths is the presence of treatable mental illnesses. Suicide is **not** the simple consequence of stressors or coping challenges, but rather, it is most typically a combined result of treatable mental illnesses and overwhelming or intolerable stressors.

School psychologists and other school-employed mental health professionals can assist stakeholders (e.g., school administrators, parents, and teachers) to engage in supportive conversations with students as well as provide resources and offer expertise in preventing harmful behaviors.

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THE 19TH ANNUAL

# Courage Awards Gala

— WEDNESDAY, MAY 10, 2017 —

WWW.CAREPLUSNJ.ORG/2017GALA



## Please Join Us in Celebration of Building CommunityConnections

The CarePlusFoundation will hold its 19th Annual Courage Awards Gala on Wednesday, May 10, 2017at the Venetian in Garfield, benefiting the clients and programs ofCarePlus NJ.

This year's Courage Award recipients include law enforcement,legislators and celebrity guests.The Gala celebrates those who tirelesslyadvocate for the mental health community. Proceeds fundeducational scholarships, housing and medication assistance, substanceabuse services, outpatient treatment and therapy for children and adultswho are enrolled in CarePlus services, as well as advocacy and communityeducation.

### The esteemed honorees this year include:

**Carmen Carrera**for her fearless leadership with HIV and LGBTQ advocacy, and for hereducation on transgender experience, tolerance and understanding.

**Prosecutor GurbirGrewal** for his instrumental role in bringing CIT training toBergen County and for his leadership in takingaction to #StopTheODs.

**AssemblywomanValerie Vainieri-Huttle (D37)** for her legislativemotion to establish oversight of the funding transition for the community mental health system.

**Assemblywoman HollySchepisi (R39)** for her support of the advocacy effortsregarding the funding transition for the community mental health system.

**The Port AuthorityPolice Department** for their collaboration in suicideprevention on the George Washington Bridge and involvement with the CrisisIntervention Team.

### ONLYTWO DAYS LEFT TO BUY YOUR TICKETS !

Registrationincludes a cocktail hour, dinner, 50/50 raffle, live & silent auctions.

Contact the Foundation Office [Foundation@CarePlusNJ.org](mailto:Foundation@CarePlusNJ.org). or go to the [CarePlus Website](http://www.CarePlusNJ.org) to buy tickets.

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### BERGEN REGIONAL MEDICAL CENTER GOES STIGMA FREE !

Thanks to our friends at HRG Media for recording the ceremony and posting this video for those who were unable to attend!



## **OPINION ON STIGMA**

**Regarding [Article in The Record]**

### **“ Prince Harry Shares Emotional Struggles After Diana’s Death”**

**After returning from the flag raising ceremony at Bergen Regional Medical Center which has made its facility the first to be recognized as a Stigma Free Zone... I read an article explaining Prince Harry’s numerous “near mental breakdowns” after... Princess Diana’s car crash and death. He describes the “mental turmoil he suffered in public at the age of twelve” and “shutting down his emotions for nearly 20 years, while seeking professional counseling to cope with stress and pressures”.**

**When someone experiences profound loss, grief, turmoil or other intense, acute emotions and do not have external resources or inner skillset to deal, process and respond appropriately, the result can be devastating. Even for a Prince (who one might assume has all the financial resources to locate and utilize the best psychiatric care possible). Stigma surrounding mental illness [preventing] seeking out care for... crisis and/or drug and alcohol addiction needs to be abandoned. One would NEVER be afraid to seek out the necessary help if diagnosed with... any other type of illness. However, when the issue of our “mental state” comes into question, people are quick to judge... just when they need [to give] help the most.**

**Paramus was the first town in Bergen County to become stigma free.....momentum is growing, but we need to REALLY get people’s attention about the danger of silence. Children committing suicide, overdosing, shooting up schools.....these are the end results of what happens when people are afraid and ashamed of having a mental issue or disease, and the current state of our healthcare system, especially in Bergen County, with funding cuts on the horizon... will not make things any better.**

**Please join a pot luck community dinner at Paramus High School on May 21 at 3 pm with your neighbors, friends, kids and professionals so we can brainstorm ideas on how to destigmatize mental illness.**

**It happens to everyone at some point in their lives....even Princes.**

**Lisa Lanzalotto**

**Member, Paramus SFZ**

**Paramus, NJ**

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## Quicklinks to News

[NJ SpotLight: Helping First Responders Fight Addiction](#)

[SAMSHA: Free Webinar 5/ 12 on Early Psychosis Programs](#)

[NJ Spotlight: 2017 NJ Governor's Awards Ambassador Awards](#)

[ScatterGood Foundation: Important Papers Available for Free Download](#)

[NYC Jed Foundation Gala June 5](#)

[Goodwill Presents "Going Mental;Stopping Stigma",  
5/20 at Queens, Flushing Theater](#)

[West Bergen Tennis Grand Slam June 7 Register Here](#)

[CHCC Offers Group Therapy Classes](#)

[Oradell Stigma Free Community FaceBook Page Up](#)

[SFZ News of NJ Now Online at CSP NJ Website](#)

[BuzzFeed: Computerized Brain Training for Schizophrenia](#)

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**MENTAL HEALTH  
WORKSHOP FROM  
THE NEW MILFORD  
STIGMA FREE ZONE  
FEATURING**

**Ms.Jill A Pantaleo LCSW**

**New Milford Public Library  
200 Dahlia Drive, NewMilford,  
New Jersey 07646  
Tuesday, May 16, 2017  
7:00 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.  
Admission Is Free**



For further information please contact: [kod.stigmafreenm@gmail.com](mailto:kod.stigmafreenm@gmail.com)

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# FAIR LAWN SUNRISE ROTARY

*Presents*

## ~Yoga in the Streets~

**A feel good, fundraiser for Mental Health Awareness**

Proceeds will be used to support the *Fair Lawn Stigma Free Committee/Fair Lawn Alliance for Substance Abuse Prevention* which works to build a community that supports training, education, and dialogue about mental illness.



**What:** An hour yoga class taught by a certified instructor, an event t-shirt, a key note speaker, mental and nutritional health vendors, a post yoga class snack

**Where:** Plaza Road North, Between Fair Lawn Ave. and High St. (in front of clock tower building)

**When:** Sunday, June 4th from 9am to noon

Day of registration and shirt pick up begins at 9am to 9:30. Yoga begins at 9:30.

**Cost:** \$20 per person

**BYOM:** Bring Your Own Mat (or towel)

**\*NOTE RAIN LOCATION AND TIME\*** Sunday, June 4th at the Fair Lawn Community Center from 2pm-4pm  
Day of registration and t-shirt pick up begins at 1:30.

For ticket sales and information go to <https://tinyurl.com/yogainthestreets>  
or contact event chair, Nicole Mattina, at [nmattina816@gmail.com](mailto:nmattina816@gmail.com)

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## North Plainfield First Town in Somerset County to Become a SFZ

Bridgeway Rehab CEO, Cory Storch and Mark Williams, a member of the Bridgeway Rehab Board of Trustees have created a new N. Plainfield SFZ (See the video, below). Their Steering Committee's challenge was to design a SFZ campaign sensitive to the needs of their culturally diverse (40% African-American and 40% Latino) local population.

Mark is also working on a new SFZ in S. Plainfield. Additionally, Plainfield passed its SFZ resolution on March 3, 2017. "I always envisioned it to expand to a county-wide project", Mark told the SFZ News. In Somerset County, Mental Health Administrator, Pam Mastro is also hard at work making Somerset County a SFZ and she is available to help interested county volunteers pass resolutions in their towns and set up task forces to fulfill the SFZ Mission to "do something about mental illness".

Congratulations on joining the Stigma Free Zone and well done!

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# North Plainfield

## PROUD TO BE

# Mental Health STIGMA-FREE

For more information please email: [RNRE610@gmail.com](mailto:RNRE610@gmail.com)

**WATCH THE STIGMA FREE PROCEEDINGS HERE:**



**Read More About it.**

**[MyCentralNJ: Bridgeway Supports Supportive Housing](#)**

**[TapIntoNet: North Plainfield Stigma Free Zone](#)**

## LETTER TO THE EDITOR

**Great [April] issue. Enjoyed your interviews. So nice to continue seeing so much progress in the Stigma Free arena.**

**Susan Buckley,  
Paramus SFZ Volunteer**

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### **HOW AND WHY DID AMERICA'S STATE PSYCHIATRIC HOSPITALS CLOSE UNDER REAGAN ?**

This long read from the pages of SALON from September 2013 edition provides excellent insight into the history of mental healthcare in America since major changes were legislated in the Reagan era. Worth a read for more insight into the state of behavioral healthcare and politics today .

[Salon: Reagan's Shameful Legacy](#)

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### **SFZ FlashBack 2016 ! Hackensack National Night Out**

Hackensack Health Officer  
and SFZ Task Force Member,  
Susan McVeigh work the SFZ Table.



# Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT: Steve Ryan  
Senior Director of Development  
Mental Health Association of Essex County  
973-509-9777 / 862-202-6966 (cell)  
sryan@mhaessex.org

## Area Mental Health Agencies to Merge

**Montclair, N.J.** — The Mental Health Association of Essex County, Inc. (MHAEC), a Montclair-based not-for-profit mental health agency, and the Mental Health Association of Morris County, which is headquartered in Mountain Lakes, have announced formal plans to merge into a single healthcare provider serving both counties. The new organization, which is expected to be officially launched on August 1, 2017, will operate as the Mental Health Association of Essex and Morris, Inc.

According to MHAEC Executive Director Robert N. Davison, who will continue as President and CEO of the new association, “This merger is something that makes absolute sense for all parties involved in that it takes two strong, viable, community-based agencies and unites them into a single entity with even greater capacity to serve individuals and families in our communities whose lives are affected by mental illness.

“The mental health provider community in New Jersey is undergoing seismic shifts as we move into a ‘fee-for-service’ environment and, by joining forces and combining resources, this new, cross-county association will represent a ‘whole’ that is truly greater than the sum of its parts,” Davison said.

Louis A. Schwarcz, outgoing Morris President and CEO who began the merger discussions, identified ‘the best interests of all concerned’ as his reason for initiating the transition into a single agency.

“I truly believe that Morris and Essex becoming one dynamic service provider for much of the northern New Jersey region will provide the greatest benefit to the consumers and families we serve which, at the end of the day, is what matters most.

“The Mental Health Association of Essex and Morris will represent strength, stability, and greater collective capacity for our staff, our volunteers and our supporters to advance our shared mission well into the foreseeable future,” said Schwarcz.

more -

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## SAVE THE DATE!

*Saturday, May 20, 2017*

Mercer County Park, East Picnic Area

8:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

*Attitudes In Reverse® is a non-profit starting conversations about good mental health and how dogs improve our lives!*

*People Saving Dogs! Dogs Saving People!™*

THE 2016 EVENT DREW MORE THAN 1000 PEOPLE. THE DAY IS FILLED WITH DOGS, MUSIC, & EXERCISE – ALL GOOD DE-STRESSING COPING MECHANISMS.

We look forward to seeing you!

To register as a vendor, exhibitor or volunteer:

Email: [info@AttitudesInReverse.org](mailto:info@AttitudesInReverse.org)

For information: [WalkForAIR.org](http://WalkForAIR.org)



ALL OF OUR LINKS ARE LIVE !

STAY CONNECTED

