



If you or someone you know is struggling with substance abuse or addiction. Call us now: (888) 708-2602.

THE STIGMA FREE ZONE NEWS OF NJ

Bringing the Mental Health Conversation to New Jersey

We report on a volunteer initiative of organizations, nonprofits, schools, libraries, hospitals, First Responders, and houses of worship working independently or with local government to make NJ free from the stigma of mental illness. Anyone can form a SFZ Task Force to educate locally, no permission required. Just pledge to "do something about mental illness."



Star of ViceLand's Dopesick Nation

Learns from NJ Stigma Free Leaders

By Cynthia Chazen

Englewood, NJ - born Allie Severino has been through a lot of trauma and drama in her short 28 years. She's been homeless. Uninsured. She's done drugs. Been addicted. Dealt drugs. And at age 17 she was facing a 120 year sentence when a Judges' compassion turned her life around. With her sentence reduced to 6 years of probation, Allie has since become a media star and a local luminary in South Florida's rehab community. Despite being featured in a hit show and an award-winning documentary film, her feet remain firmly planted on the ground. For Allie, it's not about Hollywood. It's about saving lives.

ViceLand director Spike Jonze's #1 hit reality show, "Dopesick Nation," features Allie and her coworkers reaching out to locate people in crisis and bring them, physically, if needed, into rehab. Finding affordable housing for this population is their biggest challenge, even beyond the challenges of getting them in and through detox, according to Severino, who fights tooth and nail every day for improvements in Florida's vastly under-funded mental healthcare system.

Allie and DayLight Detox & Recovery Center colleague, Jason Tuszynski, met with NJ advocates and leaders from the Paramus Stigma Free in November 2018 around SFZ Founder MaryAnn Uzzi's kitchen table. Allie and Jason came to learn about our grassroots model in order to bring the Florida rehab community together to fight stigma and breach the divide between mental healthcare and addiction services. Allie explained to me that fighting for clients and resources seriously divides Florida mental health and addiction providers, and struggling provider organizations don't band together to fight for causes beyond their own needs due to overall burnout and a lack of funding.

It is her hope, she said, after listening to folks from SFZ libraries, law firms, New Bridge Medical Center and the NJ Division of Mental Health speak about their success in spreading the Stigma Free Mission, to emulate our methods. She acknowledges they have a long way to go, setting up funding and working out a way to get mental health and addiction advocates to band together. Allie stated to The SFZ News of NJ that she firmly believes in a link between mental illness and addiction, especially in youth, and the two silos in healthcare must be joined. It was a fun and productive meeting that ended with hugs all around.

In just 2 months, she has already trained Florida mental health colleagues, police and government representatives in Mental Health First Aid after being sent through subsidized training here in NJ by the Paramus SFZ Task Force. She has also already successfully lobbied West Palm Beach to establish themselves as Florida's first Stigma Free municipality using the SFZ model. Wow! Not bad for 3 months work!

I can't say enough about the love, passion, and sincerity that radiates from this girl's sweet heart. Her path of service is a testament to the power of compassion in the justice system and the magic of a second chance. We here in NJ are proud to count such a leading light among our Stigma Free Zone Ambassadors. Thank you, Allie!



Now 22, in recovery, and an occupational therapy student at Columbia University, Annelise is still processing the struggle she felt experiencing severe OCD in high school. She never missed school, and was hospitalized for only a short time, but the self-induced pressure to keep up with grades and sports and homecoming Queen nominations (which she won) brought about a lot of additional anxiety. She still struggles with what to reveal, and what might be less than helpful to her cause.

Even stigma fighters, it seems, are expected to put up a brave and beautiful front.

I asked Annelise about the pressures of being "out" and in the public eye with a mental illness. She agreed that it isn't the right choice for everyone but, "for me, its been therapeutic." Losing future work or opportunities does cross her mind, but she said, "I'm confident in my recovery and my abilities." Annelise plans to be a stigma fighter for the rest of her life. Here at The SFZ News, we think *that's* truly beautiful.



Mental Health Editor @cynchazen · 12/17/18

The Human body is 90% water so we're basically just cucumbers with anxiety 🥒

End Stigma. #MentalHealthMatters



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Stigma?

By Didymus McHugh

There is a movement currently about stigma and mental illness. In emergency services, if we admit to a challenge, we do not want our brothers and sisters looking at us in a different light.

Why? Are we not human? Who among us are perfect?

Part of the Stigma Free movement should be understanding your challenges, as well as other people's challenges. Sources indicate that "one-in-five Americans live with a mental health condition." Think about that for a minute: one-in-five. If you have five responders on a truck, one of them may have a mental health issue. Twenty percent of your department may have an issue. Are you or a member of your family or department one that is living with it, but did not seek any help? Are we judging others that have the courage to admit that they need some help?

**[READ MORE ON DIDYMUS McHUGH:
A STIGMA-FREE SITE FOR FIRST RESPONDERS](#)**

QUICKLINKS TO EVENTS & NEWS

[CAREPLUS NJ: March 7 Conference on Childhood ACES](#)

[NJ SPOTLIGHT: NJ Comes Closer to Approving Mental Health Parity](#)

**[Bridgewater Courier News: NJ's Growing Caregiving Community
Need More Awareness and Better Access to Services](#)**

[Tap Into Fairlawn : Miss Bergen County Visits NBMC](#)

Eighth Annual
Todd Ouida Children's Foundation Conference
Creating Safety For and Within Infants and Children

Thursday, May 9, 2019

8:30 am – 4:00 pm

Montclair State University - University Hall Conference Center

Honoring Mary Ann Uzzi and Cynthia Chazen of the Stigma Free Initiative with the Todd Ouida Children's Hero Award

Joy Osofsky, Ph.D.

Paul J Ramsay Chair and Professor of Pediatrics and Psychiatry, Louisiana State University Health Sciences Center, Former President, ZERO TO THREE

The Effects of Trauma on Young Children: Promoting Safety and Resilience



Sheila M. Marcus, MD

University of Michigan Center for Human Growth and Development, Director, Women's and Perinatal Depression Program, Department of Psychiatry
Promoting Safety and Growth for Traumatized Children and Caregivers: Telepsychiatry for Rural Youth in Michigan



Kaitlin Mulcahy, MA, LPC.

Montclair State University Center for Autism and Early Childhood Mental Health Associate Director, Past President, NJAIMH
The Experience of "Felt Safety" and the Intergenerational Transmission of Safety as Essential in Human Development

David Armstrong

NJ Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems Collaborative Improvement and Innovation Network (ECCS CoLIN), ICHC Member
A Grandfather's Passion to Transform Early Childhood Systems: Helping Children Be Safe



Special Presentation by Advocates for Children of New Jersey on Census 2020!
#CountAllKids

General registration fee - \$50.00 (\$55 at the door)

Includes breakfast, lunch, parking and take-home resources

For more information, please call 973-655-6685 or email caecmh@montclair.edu

Attendees eligible for Social Work CEUs in accordance with #N.J.A.C. 13:44G-6.4(b)4 & professional development hours for NJ teachers

To register, click on:

<https://8thtofcconference.eventbrite.com>

Co-sponsored by:

Children's Aid and Family Services - Interdisciplinary Council on Development and Learning
New Jersey Association for Infant Mental Health - Northeast Regional Terrorism and Disaster Coalition
West Bergen Mental Healthcare - Youth Consultation Service



**MAJOR RETAILER
SUPPORTS NAMI**

Last month, Lord & Taylor Charity Days benefited NAMI - The National Alliance on Mental Illness - and the work of many NAMI affiliates across the nation.

Mary Giliberti, NAMI National CEO, joined Mr. Weiss, store manager at Tysons Corner at Lord & Taylor, for Charity Days benefiting NAMI.



Daniel Fishbein @RWDSupt · 1d
Ridgewood Public Schools are proud to be part of Bergen County Stigma Free.



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THANKS TO THE SUPPORTERS OF THE 2019 SFZ NEWS!

Social media is free, but our publication costs \$50/month to create & send, and with so many new subscribers, that amount is rising. Please, help keep us in the inbox and on social media every month, educating, inspiring and advocating, around the world! Constant Contact charges The SFZ News per email, and we are at capacity! We need your help to add new subscribers and grow via a new website in 2019!

Thank You for Donating !

[SUPPORT THE MH COUVERSAATION HERE](#)



NJ COUNCIL ON COMPULSIVE GAMBLING FREE TRAINING ON DISORDERED GAMBLING

Training for MH and Addiction professionals wishing to develop Gambling Counselor Competence through International Certified Gambling Counselor Certification (IGCCB). Also satisfy CPS, LPC, LMFT AND LAC RE Certification.

COURSE SCHEDULE:

Feb. 27, 2019 Gambling Basics I

*Mar. 6, 2019 Gambling Basics II
Case Management and Treatment Planning
Gambling and the Law*

Mar. 13, 2019 Group Counseling and Gambling

Mar. 20, 2019 Individual Counseling and Gambling

Mar. 27, 2019 Gambling and the Family

** Attendees MUST attend the full 9-4 day of
training in order to receive a certificate of completion.*

*Held at Bergen's Promise
3 University Plaza Drive, 3rd Floor,
Hackensack, NJ 07601*

TO REGISTER, CONTACT SUE@800GAMBLER.ORG

SUE WURTZ (609) 588-5515 Ext. 14

SPACE FOR THIS TRAINING IS LIMITED.

Registration Deadline is Wednesday, February 20th and
be processed on a first-come, first-served basis. Don't delay!



The Dangers of Vaping

Tuesday March 26 at 7:00 PM

River Dell Middle School Library
230 Woodland Ave, River Edge, NJ 07661

Presented by the River Edge, Oradell and
River Dell Schools Stigma Free initiatives.

Join us to learn the truth about e-cigarettes including what
they are, how they're used, the risks of use, and the
frightening trend in use among teens and young adults.

Discussion lead by Rowan Pragdat, Valley Health System
Parents of middle school students, and 5th and 6th graders

are encouraged to attend.

ALL OF OUR LINKS ARE LIVE !

STAY CONNECTED



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