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## THE STIGMA FREE ZONE NEWS OF NJ May Is Mental Health Month

Bringing the Mental Health Conversation to New Jersey

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**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 and related issues. Anyone can form a local SFZ Task Force to educate, no permission required. Just pledge to "do something about mental illness."**

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### Oradell SFZ Plans Statewide Mental Health Night at Red Bulls Stadium

By Cynthia Chazen

The Oradell Stigma Free Zone Task Force and the Red Bulls are partnering for a Mental Health Awareness Match at the Harrison soccer arena on June 1st, 2019 at 7 p.m. A portion of each ticket purchase will go towards the charitable efforts of the Stigma Free. All NJ Stigma Fighters and mental health organizations are encouraged to attend the event.

Red Bull Membership Sales Specialists Brett Lubben and Mike Morabito were key in making the event a reality. Brett, who belongs to the Oradell SFZ group, worked with Oradell Ambassador, Julia

Orlando, to organize the evening, which will include a pre-game "Bullevard" street fair where organizations can rent a table, and fans and advocates can learn more about the organizations or getting involved with mental health advocacy. A fantastic mental health-themed halftime program and fireworks are also planned for the evening! Come and wear your lime green!!

Brett and Mike have both lost family to suicide, and Brett found the members of his community SFZ very kind and supportive when they reached out to him following the tragedy. "The reason I wanted to do this Mental Health Awareness night is to educate a new audience ... and help people understand that it is okay to not be okay. I think educating people at a sporting event with some of their favorite athletes behind them is the perfect setting," explained Brett. He added that "Everyone in the Red Bull's organization has been very supportive of our efforts to make this night possible" and "At the end of the day, this night will be about education, support, and love."

The SFZ News of NJ wishes to thank Brett and Mike for personally sponsoring our May issue so we can also continue to educate about mental health!

Mental health groups who wish to sell group tickets & participate on the Bullevard may contact:

Brett Lubben  
Membership Sales Specialist  
New York Red Bulls  
600 Cape May Street • Harrison, NJ 07029  
T: 973.776.8486 • M: 201.290.9554

[BUY TICKETS HERE](#)

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### [State of NJ Website: Murphy Signs Law Ensuring Parity for Mental Health Insurance Coverage](#)

04/11/2019

Governor Phil Murphy today signed legislation that will enhance enforcement of mental health parity laws by improving transparency and accountability related to the insurance coverage of mental health and substance use disorder treatment services for New Jersey residents.

[READ ENTIRE ARTICLE HERE](#)

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# First Aid for Mental Health

*A Symposium for Interfaith Leaders*

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Come learn ways to support members of your congregation who may be struggling with mental health challenges.

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**Leaders of all faiths are invited to attend.**

Community organization representatives will be in attendance, including the Bergen County Division of Mental Health.

**Wednesday, May 29<sup>th</sup> | 6 pm to 8 pm**

840 Soldier Hill Road  
Emerson, NJ 07630

The interfaith tree used in this flyer is the visual mark of the Tri-City Interfaith Council of Fremont, California. Designed by Alan Lee, used with permission.

**Keynote Speaker:**

Dr. Sidney H. Hankerson, Assistant Professor  
Clinical Psychiatry, Columbia University

THE CHURCH OF  
**JESUS CHRIST**  
OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS



## West Bergen Mental HealthCare Pet Therapy

By Cynthia Chazen

A pet therapy program at West Bergen Mental HealthCare in Ridgewood is bringing joy and



non-judgmental healing to Partial Care Program clientele. Pet therapy is offered thanks to Leigh Ann Albanese and volunteer pet owners who are sharing their trained animals with people who are benefiting in so many special ways. 5 dogs and a cat, Samson, have joined the program to date.

Sweet Tea the Greyhound was rescued from a Florida racetrack and she's demonstrating how to overcome anxiety. She's doing beautifully socializing now after her own program of recovery after existing caged for years under what Leigh Ann described as "deplorable conditions."

Wilbur the Border Collie suffers from PTSD from a puppyhood trauma inflicted by a lawnmower, so he teaches by example on how adhering to a program of meds can lead to greater healing and confidence. The consumers find the dogs' stories help them reintegrate and address their own diagnoses.

The recipients of this therapy have responded so well. One patient was able to overcome a chronic stutter working with the animals. Others with limited mobility have gained more movement and some have replaced limiting self-soothing behaviors with more socially-accepted alternatives.

Meatball the Pitbull is a real crowd favorite, and hands down wins the prize for NJ's drooliest stigma fighter! This sweetheart models how to live with dignity despite stigma and being constantly misunderstood: something many psychiatric patients unfortunately can relate to.

WestBergen's Fran Picone, PC Director, said "Our consumers have really grown in their treatment goals as a result of this program."

If you or anyone you know has a certified therapy animal and want to join this wonderful community please contact Leigh Ann Albanese at 201-444-3550 ext. 7140.

[VISIT WEST BERGEN WEBSITE](#)



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**GOOD NEWS FROM STIGMA FREE TWITTER**



**Mental Health Editor** @cynchazen · 1/29/17

Supporting mental health organizations is very wise ❤️

#MentalHealthMatters @NAMICommunicate  
@burrowingbolt @Active\_Minds @jedfoundation

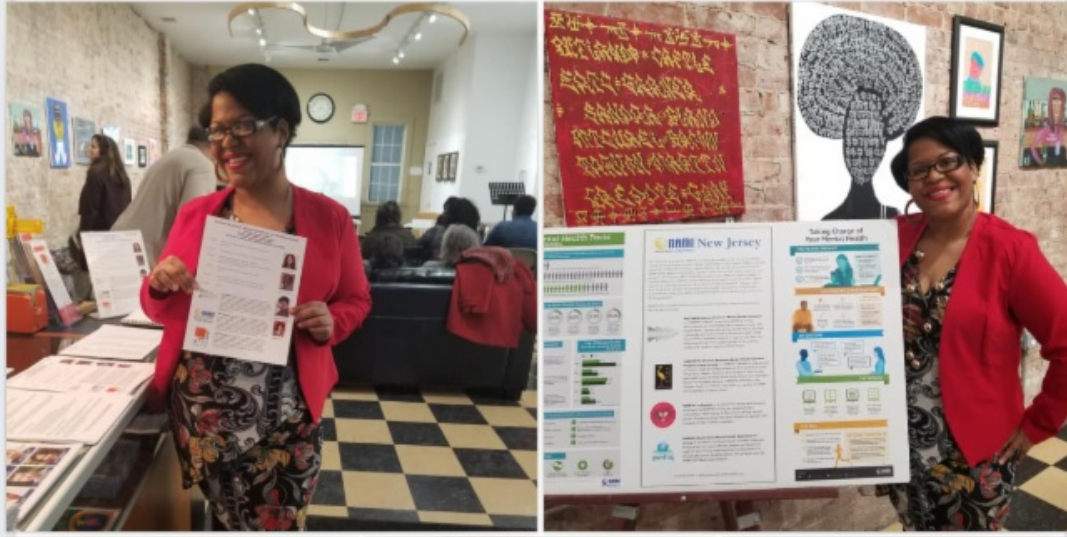


**NJHCQI** @NJHCQI · 5h

Way to go Chatham #NJ for focusing community health and wellness programming on **mental health** and suicide prevention. Cheers to Mayor Bruce and Mayor Selen's team for earning Chatham the title of a 2018 #MWCHealthyTown: [bit.ly/2XOKXMX](http://bit.ly/2XOKXMX) #NJHCQI #MayorsWellnessCampaign



**NAMI AACT-NOW is an advisory board of NAMI NJ with the mission of making a positive impact on the African-American community in the field of mental health advocacy. We host events, partner with other organizations, and are actively seeking to start a support group in the northern region of the state. If any of this interests you, please don't hesitate to visit [naminj.org](http://naminj.org) for more information and ask for Lisa Powell!**



↳ WWP Counseling Retweeted



**R. McLelland-Crawley** @Bec\_Chirps · 4/6/19

Thank you @TaylorEdLead for hosting today's #njseledcamp! We enjoyed having conversations about #SEL #MentalHealthAwareness and #Mindfulness. @nuyu\_team @heal\_sts @WWPCounseling #njed



Scott Rocco, Ed.D. and 9 others





**AFSP New Jersey @afspnewjersey · 3/14/19**

**#AFSPNJ** sponsored the first Society for the Prevention of Teen Suicide Morris County Youth Wellness Summit.

The Summit's focus was on **#mentalhealth** and overall wellness to empower teens with preventative measures and coping skills.



**The Stigma Free Church @StigmaFreeUMC · 4/6/19**

Last night at Mtn. Lakes HS, HEART put on an amazing benefit concert for suicide prevention. And then, at Boonton HS today, there was a great resourcing opportunity centered around those with disabilities and special needs. Let's keep up the great stigma free work in our schools!



## **QUICKLINKS: MENTAL HEALTH MONTH EVENTS**

[Finding Resilience, Life After Suicide May 15: Neptune](#)

[NAMI NJ Open House May 18: New Brunswick](#)

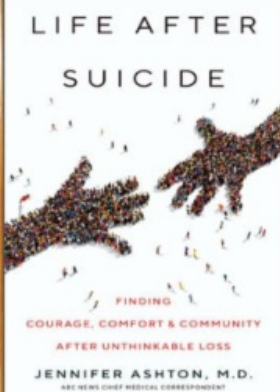
[Heroin & Opioids Art Exhibition May 16-18: Newark](#)

[Stigma Free Mayor's Mental Health Night May 19: Westwood](#)

[Carrier Clinic Webinar May 18:  
"Where to Go When You Think You Need Help"](#)

[The Chris Herren Story on Addiction May 30: Butler](#)

[NY Red Bulls Stigma-Free Mental Health Night  
June 1: Harrison, NJ Stadium](#)



**LIFE AFTER SUICIDE**

MAY 15

**Finding Resilience in the Face of Mental Health Challenges**

by Talk with Authors and Hackensack Meridian Health / Carrier Clinic

FINDING COURAGE, COMFORT & COMMUNITY AFTER UNTHINKABLE LOSS

JENNIFER ASHTON, M.D.  
ABC NEWS CHIEF MEDICAL CORRESPONDENT

\$25



Bergen County

**SAVE the DATE**

FOR THE BERGEN COUNTY CRISIS INTERVENTION TEAM (CIT)

**UNITY in the COMMUNITY**

E V E N T

*Law Enforcement, Mental Health Services and YOU...Working Together!*

**SUN | JUNE 30**  
**11AM - 4PM**  
OVERPECK COUNTY PARK

Self Defense Music Food Yoga ...and more!  
Inflatables Face Painting Wellness Activities

RAIN OR SHINE

Help us fill a truck with items for our community food banks. Bring your donations to help others!

For more info contact  
Amie Del Sordo, Bergen County CIT Mental Health Coordinator at [amied@careplusnj.org](mailto:amied@careplusnj.org)

To learn more about Bergen County CIT visit our Facebook page: [facebook.com/CITBergenCountyNJ/](https://facebook.com/CITBergenCountyNJ/)

## First Responders Plan Mental Health Field Day UK's Stigma Free Ambassador Will Attend

By Cynthia Chazen

Amie del Sordo, VP Hospital & Community Services at CarePlus NJ, created the event to show the successful collaboration between law enforcement (and other First Responders) and mental health providers in NJ. "We want to educate about CIT (Crisis Intervention Teams) and the process behind them to help [First Responders] who may be experiencing a mental health crisis" she told The SFZ News. CIT is an innovative national police model that incorporates collaboration between the community's law enforcement system and mental health system to respond to the needs of those in psychiatric crisis.

Amie and her committee foresee a day of huge fun and serious mental health education at beautiful



Overpeck Park. Food trucks, yoga and wellness activities, children's booths, music, and informative speakers are all planned. Booths are still available for organization wishing to attend and emergency workers, call center personnel, police, firefighters, and EMTs are all welcomed as are vendors, lawyers, and other local businesses wishing to support the CIT.

Additionally, Dan Forman, the SFZ Ambassador from the UK who came to Bergen County last August to learn about the Stigma Free and wrote about us as a "best practice in community mental health" in his report to UK Parliament, will return. Dan has worked intimately with the Royal Family on mental health in First Responder communities through his EMT organization, [Our Blue Light](#). He speaks openly about his experience of PTSD and the challenges of recovery within a helper role. He will be speaking in some capacity at the event and will also host a booth.

Amie said, "I want First Responders to know that we know their jobs are not easy and we very much appreciate all they do.... Just like the individuals they help, help is available for First Responders, too.... Bergen County CIT is more than just training and education, we are also here to help and provide support for any of our graduates and their colleagues. If we don't take care of ourselves, how can we take care of others?"

Register by May 17. To sign up as an event vendor or sponsor, please email [amied@careplusnj.org](mailto:amied@careplusnj.org) or call 201-967-4000, X 3772.



**Nearly half of American adults who experienced a substance use disorder in 2017 also had a co-occurring mental illness.**

Statistic Source: 2017 National Survey on Drug Use and Health (NSDUH) Annual Report. SAMHSA



May is Mental Health Awareness Month. The Woodland Park Stigma Free Task Force would like residents to know that help and resources are available to them 24/7.

Millions of Americans suffer from mental health disorders. But help is available. Anxiety disorders are the most common mental illness in America. More than 19 million are affected by each year. Major depression affects 9.9 million in any given year, and bipolar disorder, or manic depression, affects about 2.3 million. In addition, millions suffer from post-traumatic stress disorder and schizophrenia.

Taking a screening test is one of the quickest and easiest ways to determine whether you are experiencing symptoms of a mental health condition. To take an online screening visit [www.mentalhealthamerica.net/mental-health-screening-tools?ref=MHAPassaic](http://www.mentalhealthamerica.net/mental-health-screening-tools?ref=MHAPassaic).

In you need help, 24 hour emergency services are available from the St Joseph's Hospital mobile psychiatric emergency screening unit (703 Main St., Paterson) at 973-754-2230. A number of hotlines are available for adults and youth.

- Info Line – 211
- Passaic County Women's Center (24 hours) - 973-881-1450
- Contact Morris-Passaic - 973-831-1870
- Strengthen Our Sisters (women's shelter) - 973-728-0007
- Child Abuse Hotline (DYFS) - 1-800-792-8610
- Parent 24 Hour Stress Line - 1-800-843-5437
- Post-Partum Depression Hotline - 1-800-328-3838
- NJ Veterans Helpline-Mental Health Services - 1-866-838-7654
- Youth Hotline (24 hours) - 1-888-222-2228

If you need more information or referral for services, contact the Mental Health Association in Passaic County at 973-478-4444. Visit [www.mhapassaic.org](http://www.mhapassaic.org) for a full list of available resources and services.

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Presents

Wellness Walk  
and Fun Day

Walk with us and raise awareness for  
Mental Health & Autism

Sunday, June 2<sup>nd</sup>

Rain Or Shine

9:30 a.m Registration  
10:00 a.m Walk Begins

Olsen Park  
162 W. Main Street Bogota, NJ

**To Pre-Register** Please call Kathy English at  
(201) 488-2121 ext 357 or  
Email: [kenglish@njfriendshiphouse.org](mailto:kenglish@njfriendshiphouse.org)

Enjoy a light breakfast and lunch

\$5 Donation appreciated

Music • Games • Raffle Prizes • and Much More

ALL OF OUR LINKS ARE LIVE

STAY CONNECTED

