New Project to Address Mental Health Stigma and Awareness

The National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) of Southern Arizona received funding from the David & Lura Lovell Foundation to advance a statewide school-based mental illness stigma reduction initiative. NAMI of Southern Arizona is partnering with SIROW and others in the community to conduct initial work to engage leaders in education, behavioral and physical health, government, business, the judicial system and the faith community to discuss and develop a plan to address the inclusion of mental health education in Arizona schools.

With 50% of all lifetime cases of mental illness beginning by age 14 and 75% by age 24, NAMI’s goal is to reach young people when they are first experiencing symptoms of mental illness. Messages that let youth know that they are not alone, that it is okay to talk about mental health, and that help for mental illness is available and beneficial are important to early identification and treatment. NAMI of Southern Arizona already has an effective stigma reduction program, Ending the Silence, for middle and high school students that is being implemented in some schools through local affiliates of NAMI and can be expanded to schools throughout the state.

The result of the planning grant received from the David & Lura Lovell Foundation will be an assessment and recommendations for the best course of action to pursue in providing effective school-based mental health education in Arizona.

Employee Spotlight, Katie Haverly
Assistant Research Social Scientist

Q: What are your favorite things about working for SIROW?

“I love the work that we do and the issues we are contributing to. We are directly supporting our community (and others) in important ways and that is very rewarding. I love working on campus and the powerful, intelligent women that I get to learn from and work with every day!”

Katie has been a public health practitioner in the public and academic sectors for over ten years. Here at SIROW, her main focus is on substance abuse treatment but she is also involved in a number of projects that support the LGBT community, women and children, and vulnerable populations needing services and support.

When she is not at work, Katie is often performing with her band, Katie Haverly and the Aviary at venues across the Southwest and Mexico. She plays guitar, keyboard, sings, and writes all of the music, which is a blend of jazz, folk, blues, rock, and soul.
Goals

- Engage in collaborative feminist research on topics pertinent to the lives of girls, women, and families;
- Develop and conduct outreach, education, service, research, and trainings with regard to mental and physical health, sexuality, legal matters, education, workforce, equity, diversity, and other issues;
- Address social inequalities and group-based disparities;
- Examine and support women’s contribution to literature, the arts, and Southwest heritage;
- Advocate for women and families by linking researchers with community organizations and policy makers;
- Identify, illuminate, and disseminate research on girls, women, families, and gender differences.

SIROW Teams Up to Adapt Mujer Saludable Curriculum for U.S.-Mexico Border

U.S.-Mexico border communities face unique health disparities in the areas of reproductive health and access to reproductive health care, including high rates of teen pregnancy. In response to the critical need for evidence-based sexual education programs in Nogales, Sonora, Mexico, researchers from El COLEF (El Colegio de la Frontera Norte), researchers from SIROW, and promotoras (community health workers) in Nogales, Sonora are partnering to address the issue of teen pregnancy. These partners have met with the mayor of Nogales, Sonora, local politicians, and Mexican federal maternal and child health agencies to work together to address the issue of teen pregnancy. The University of California, Berkeley’s Programa de Investigación sobre Migración y Salud funds this project, titled “Mujer Saludable en la Frontera.”

Using community-based participatory research (CBPR) and Community Health Worker (CHW) models, this project aims to 1) collect qualitative data to assess reproductive health needs and access to reproductive health care among women living in low-resource communities in Nogales; and 2) utilize the data collected and a promotor model of the SIROW-designed, pre-existing evidence-based Mujer Saludable curriculum to emphasize the mother-daughter relationship in improving women’s reproductive health outcomes in the community.

One of the major goals of this project is to adapt and expand SIROW-designed Mujer Saludable curriculum into Mujer Saludable-Promotora to reflect the needs of the community. The project partners formed a Community Advisory Board (CAB) consisting of academic partners, state-employed promotoras, and local women to provide oversight and directly contribute to the adaptation and expansion of the curriculum. COLEF also interviewed 11 individuals, including teen mothers, promotoras, and reproductive health care providers to explore the reproductive health care needs of the community. These interviews will be critical to the adaptation of the curriculum.

In the next phase of the project, the CAB will be directly involved in the delivery of the adapted intervention to the local community, and the dissemination of the manualized Mujer Saludable-Promotora to local stakeholders. For more information, contact Rosi Andrade at rosia@email.arizona.edu.

A Mujer Saludable en la Frontera participant illustrates during a session activity about the reproductive system and women’s health risks.