

## Examples of county social service programs masquerading as mental illness programs<sup>1</sup>

In 2004, California passed Proposition 63, the Mental Health Services Act (MHSA) to provide services to people with the most serious mental illnesses. In 2013, the State Auditor reported that the Oversight Commissioners—most of whom are employed by organizations that receive MHSA funds, failed to provide oversight and therefore the state could not know if the funds were spent effectively or not. Simultaneously, Mental Illness Policy Org. issued a report called “MHSA: California’s 10-year, \$10 billion Bait and Switch. The full report is available at [http://mentalillnesspolicy.org/states/california/mhsa/mhsa\\_prop63\\_bait&switchsummary.html](http://mentalillnesspolicy.org/states/california/mhsa/mhsa_prop63_bait&switchsummary.html). Following is the section on examples of county by county misspending.

Many of the county programs below that came to our attention are admirable, worthy and even important social service programs. But they are not mental illness programs. They are therefore ineligible for MHSA funding. Diverting MHSA funds to these programs is not what voters intended, and leaves those with serious mental illness living untreated at home or homeless, living under lice infected clothing and eating out of dumpsters, while funds intended to help go elsewhere.

- **Butte County** uses MHSA funds for
  - A "Therapeutic Wilderness Experience".<sup>2</sup>
  - Hmong Gardens.<sup>3</sup> This is a good example of a failed stakeholder process. Butte did a study of the need for housing for people of Hmong ancestry.<sup>4</sup> Eight people participated. We do not know if any had serious mental illness or if any housing was ever built. But this focus group found that two important services for this housing that is not limited to people with mental illness are “gardens” and a “community room”. The researchers aggregated the two to conclude that if they built housing, 58% wanted “community room and garden” and therefore a garden was a service that prevents mental illness from becoming severe and disabling.
  - African American Cultural Center.<sup>5</sup>
  - PR brochures that positioned the county behavioral health director as an effective steward of MHSA funds. They include no financial data on how the money is spent.<sup>6</sup>
- **Contra Costa County** is using MHSA funding
  - To teach parenting skills to parents(\$360,000)<sup>7</sup>
  - for a hip-hop carwash, family activity nights and a homework club.<sup>8</sup>
  - to help the elderly with or without mental illness.<sup>9</sup>
  - “New Leaf Collaborative.”<sup>10</sup> This works to improve grades.
  - Native American Health Center<sup>11</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> These are only the ones we have become aware of, and do not represent a complete list. We did not evaluate every county MHSA plan, only programs that came to our attention.

<sup>2</sup> We are not aware of any information that shows a Therapeutic Wilderness Experience will prevent mental illness from becoming severe and disabling [http://www.mhsoac.ca.gov/Innovation/docs/InnovationPlans/Butte\\_INN\\_Approval\\_Summary.pdf](http://www.mhsoac.ca.gov/Innovation/docs/InnovationPlans/Butte_INN_Approval_Summary.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.fresnobee.com/2012/07/30/2929985/fresno-hmong-garden-praised.html#storylink=cpy>

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.buttecounty.net/Behavioral%20Health/Mental%20Health%20Services%20Act%20-%20Old/~media/County%20Files/Behavioral%20Health/Public%20Internet/MHSA/Housing/HmongFocusGroupDataResults.aspx>

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.buttecounty.net/Behavioral%20Health/~media/County%20Files/Behavioral%20Health/Public%20Internet/MHSA/Public%20Announcements/12-13%20Annual%20Update%20Narrative%20DRAFT%201.aspx>

and  
<http://www.buttecounty.net/Behavioral%20Health/~media/County%20Files/Behavioral%20Health/Public%20Internet/MHSA/Public%20Announcements/BH1213MHSAPlanUpdateplan.aspx>

<http://www.buttecounty.net/Behavioral%20Health/~media/County%20Files/Behavioral%20Health/Public%20Internet/MHSA/Public%20Announcements/MHSA%20Benefits%20to%20Butte%20County.aspx>

[http://64.166.146.155/agenda\\_publish.cfm?mt=ALL&get\\_month=10&get\\_year=2012&dsp=agm&seq=12398&rev=0&ag=238&ln=23705&nseq=12400&nrev=0&pseq=&prev=#ReturnTo23705](http://64.166.146.155/agenda_publish.cfm?mt=ALL&get_month=10&get_year=2012&dsp=agm&seq=12398&rev=0&ag=238&ln=23705&nseq=12400&nrev=0&pseq=&prev=#ReturnTo23705)

<sup>8</sup> The “purpose” of the hip-hop car was to help at-risk children learn life skills that will make them productive citizens, by promoting educational and vocational opportunities any by providing training, support and other tools they need to overcome challenging circumstances.” That may be worthy, but is outside the purpose and intent of MHSA which is to help people with serious mental illness. [http://66.39.42.45/services/mental\\_health/prop63/pdf/pei\\_agencies\\_descriptions.pdf](http://66.39.42.45/services/mental_health/prop63/pdf/pei_agencies_descriptions.pdf) and [http://www.contracostatimes.com/top-stories/ci\\_18356480](http://www.contracostatimes.com/top-stories/ci_18356480)

<sup>9</sup> [http://www.mhsoac.ca.gov/MHSAOC\\_Publications/docs/PressReleases/2011/PEITrendsReport\\_05-11-11.pdf](http://www.mhsoac.ca.gov/MHSAOC_Publications/docs/PressReleases/2011/PEITrendsReport_05-11-11.pdf)

<sup>10</sup> To “prove” it works the county notes, “Fifty-two students were enrolled in New Leaf last year. Of these, 71% of students improved their attendance; 78% earned the necessary academic credits at or above grade level; and 77% achieved at least 4 out of 6 individual goals.” That is likely true. But improving school attendance, helping people get through high school are not the purpose of MHSA. [http://library.constantcontact.com/download/get/file/1109615552347-349/CalMHSA\\_Contra\\_Costa\\_FINAL.pdf](http://library.constantcontact.com/download/get/file/1109615552347-349/CalMHSA_Contra_Costa_FINAL.pdf)

- Lesbian, Gay and Transgender programs. Being lesbian gay or transgender are no longer considered mental illness. There is no evidence that being lesbian gay or transgender makes someone more likely to develop a serious mental illness like schizophrenia and bipolar.<sup>12</sup>
- **Fresno County** used MHSA funds for
  - What stakeholders wanted, even when inconsistent with the legislation and it prevents programs for seriously mentally ill from being funded.<sup>13</sup>
  - To expand outpatient services for children who are not seriously emotionally disturbed (\$750,000).
  - Community Garden (\$40,000)<sup>14</sup>
- **Imperial County** used MHSA funds
  - For people experiencing trauma, child or domestic abuse, chronic neglect, enduring deprivation and poverty, homelessness, violence (personal or witnessed), racism and discrimination, intergenerational or historical trauma, the experience of refugees fleeing war and violence, loss of loved ones, and natural and human disasters.<sup>15</sup>
- **King County** spends MHSA funds
  - on children in “stressed families”.<sup>16</sup>
  - on youth reading below grade level.<sup>17</sup>
  - RESTATE. This is an \$800,000 program operated jointly with Tulare County and alternatively describe as a stigma and discrimination reduction program or a suicide prevention program.<sup>18</sup> It is basically an arts project that lets kids create a PSA. It is based on “Mental Health First Aid, a non-evidence based highly criticized approach.”<sup>19</sup>
- **Los Angeles** (Also see “The Failed Stakeholder Process: LA County as Case Study”<sup>20</sup>) Los Angeles is using MHSA funds for
  - Triple P Parenting Skills<sup>21</sup> is being funded on Los Angeles, Shasta, and other counties. It is designed to

---

<sup>11</sup> This is a social service program designed “to reverse the impact of discrimination, strengthen families and build community.” But the purpose of MHSA is to help people with mental illness. [http://library.constantcontact.com/download/get/file/1109615552347-349/CalMHSA\\_Contra\\_Costa\\_FINAL.pdf](http://library.constantcontact.com/download/get/file/1109615552347-349/CalMHSA_Contra_Costa_FINAL.pdf)

<sup>12</sup> It would, perhaps, arguably, be appropriate to have specialized (rather than mainstreamed) mental illness services for members of the LGBTG community, but there is no indication the services being provided by the county are for those with mental illness.

<sup>13</sup> (Behavioral Health Director) “Thornton said he would like more of the Mental Health Services Act money to treat people with severe mental illness. With county budgets tight, he said, the priorities should be “crisis first, treatment and then early intervention, prevention. Evans said the county plan isn’t perfect, but it is a compromise between what the community wants and what the staff sees as gaps in the system “It’s all a compromise,” she said. The quote appeared in the January 6, 2013 Fresno Bee formerly available at <http://www.fresnobee.com/2013/01/06/3124110/fresno-county-mental-health-projects.html> (accessed 1/7/13)

<sup>14</sup> “The county would add a seventh community garden to six already in operation at a cost of about \$40,000.” The quote is believed to be from the January 6, 2013 Fresno Bee formerly available at <http://www.fresnobee.com/2013/01/06/3124110/fresno-county-mental-health-projects.html> (accessed 1/7/13) What is especially disturbing is that funding gardens in lieu of services for people with mental illness, had already come under public scrutiny at this time. However the commissioner was not worried about being audited. “Taylor said she wouldn’t be concerned if the state audited the gardens. But that is unlikely to happen, because the state selected three counties to review, and Sacramento County was chosen in the Central Valley, she said.

<sup>15</sup> “Trauma” is common. Everyone loses a loved one. Funds may not be spent to ‘reduce trauma’ however, they may be spent to treat PTSD if that occurs.

[http://www.mhsoac.ca.gov/MHsoac\\_Publications/docs/PressReleases/2011/PEITrendsReport\\_05-11-11.pdf](http://www.mhsoac.ca.gov/MHsoac_Publications/docs/PressReleases/2011/PEITrendsReport_05-11-11.pdf)

<sup>16</sup> [http://www.co.kern.ca.us/artman2/kcmh/uploads/1/1MHSA\\_Update\\_Cover\\_12-13post3.pdf](http://www.co.kern.ca.us/artman2/kcmh/uploads/1/1MHSA_Update_Cover_12-13post3.pdf)

<sup>17</sup> This was funded with Innovative funds. Innovative Services funds must have a nexus to the overall intent of MHSA to help people with serious mental illness. Few who are reading below grade level will develop a “serious mental illness”. Improving reading does not “prevent mental illness from becoming severe and disabling.” It is a classic example of a worthy social service program masquerading as a mental illness program in order to access funds not intended for them.

[http://mhsoac.ca.gov/Counties/Innovation/docs/InnovationPlans/INN\\_Kings\\_020911.pdf](http://mhsoac.ca.gov/Counties/Innovation/docs/InnovationPlans/INN_Kings_020911.pdf)

<sup>18</sup> <http://www.sptf.org/english/index.cfm/programs/restate/> and [http://www.hanfordsentinel.com/news/local/programs-target-teen-suicide-mental-health/article\\_bd82bf6e-63f4-11e2-9d10-001a4bcf887a.html](http://www.hanfordsentinel.com/news/local/programs-target-teen-suicide-mental-health/article_bd82bf6e-63f4-11e2-9d10-001a4bcf887a.html)

<sup>19</sup> We have seen no evidence it helps persons with serious mental illness, although no doubt the kids enjoy creating the PSAs and the arts departments of the participating schools appreciate the additional funding. The website alludes to the fact that this is part of the Mental Health First Aid USA, a commercially available program distributed by various non-profits. Mental Health First Aid is non-evidence based. Thirty six of the 55 peer reviewed articles on Mental Health First Aid were authored or co-authored by the vendors of the approach. A 2005 study of Mental Health First Aid found “There has not yet been an evaluation of the effects on those who are the recipients of the first aid” and acknowledged, “Perhaps the most important unanswered question is the benefits of being a recipient of MHFA” Mental Health First Aid does not appear on SAMHSA’s National Registry of Evidence Based Practices.

<sup>20</sup> In other budget documents, LA County claims to have spent \$80 million on housing for seriously mentally ill. We would be interested in, but did not have time to determine, if any of the promised housing was built or- to ascertain the diagnosis of those provided housing. See <http://www.hacla.org/en/cms/7931/>

<sup>21</sup> <http://www.redding.com/news/2012/nov/08/shasta-county-child-abuse-rate-climbs-twice-state/>

reduce child abuse. In addition to not being a mental illness program, extensive research has been published showing Triple P is ineffective.<sup>22</sup>

- "emotional recovery" centers, "stigma" campaigns, tuition reimbursement programs, market research, employment offices<sup>23</sup>
  - Student 'well-being' massage chairs, Zumba classes, a meditation room and a biofeedback lab (\$230,000)<sup>24</sup>
  - Populations that may or may not have mental illness such as Children/youth at risk for school failure and children/youth at risk of or experiencing juvenile justice involvement<sup>25</sup>
  - Free Your Mind Radio Show<sup>26</sup>
  - Unsuccessful employment training programs<sup>27</sup>
- **Marin County** is using MHPSA funds for
    - Teen Screen.<sup>28</sup> Teen screen has proven to be ineffective at reducing teen suicide.<sup>29</sup>
    - Triple P Parenting.<sup>30</sup> See discussion under Los Angeles County for lack of evidence program is effective.
  - **Merced County** is using MHPSA funds for
    - To host a Halloween event at Yosemite Lake, a Multicultural Celebration, Thanksgiving Lunch, Winter Celebration, Cinco de Mayo Celebration, Black History Month, the Hmong Harvest Celebration and... Mental Health Month Picnic at the Lake.<sup>31</sup>
    - Caring Kids.<sup>32</sup> It teaches skills to parents of children 0 – 5 years old. Funding the program with mental health dollars is almost offensive because it suggests parents cause mental illness and that by teaching parents skills they will not cause the mental illness.<sup>33</sup>

**Case Study: Laura's Law a Good Program Being Funded with PEI Funds in Los Angeles.** While this appendix lists inappropriate spending, we do note that Los Angeles has a tiny pseudo-Laura's Law program being very appropriately funded with MHPSA funds. LA should expand this program by cutting the misspending identified above. Using their version of Laura's Law, Los Angeles reduced incarceration of people with the most serious mental illnesses 78%; reduced hospitalization 86%; and reduced hospitalization 77% even after discharge from Laura's Law. (<http://lauras-law.org/states/california/lauraslawlosangelesstudy>).

<sup>22</sup> Thirty two of the thirty three studies purporting to show it works were by the same people who created the program. A meta study "found no convincing evidence that Triple P interventions work across the whole population or that any benefits are long-term. The 'evidence' for it turned out to lack validity. See "Triple P-Positive Parenting programs: the folly of basing social policy on underpowered flawed studies" published in BMC. Available via NIMH at <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/23324495>. Also see "How evidence-based is an 'evidence-based parenting program'? A PRISMA systematic review and meta-analysis of Triple P." available via NIMH at <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/23121760>. See meta-study at <http://www.biomedcentral.com/content/pdf/1741-7015-10-130.pdf>

<sup>23</sup> These arguably benefit the least "severely" ill but inarguably don't benefit the most "severely" ill  
[http://ceo.lacounty.gov/ccp/mhpa\\_pei.htm#GI!](http://ceo.lacounty.gov/ccp/mhpa_pei.htm#GI!) And

<http://lacdmh.lacounty.gov/News/Publications/Enews/Documents/APR1411ENEWS.html>

<sup>24</sup> [http://blogs.laweekly.com/informer/2012/07/california\\_tax\\_for\\_mentally\\_ill\\_massage\\_chairs\\_zumba\\_social.php](http://blogs.laweekly.com/informer/2012/07/california_tax_for_mentally_ill_massage_chairs_zumba_social.php) and

[http://www.namicalifornia.org/uploads/eng/mhpa\\_full\\_report.pdf](http://www.namicalifornia.org/uploads/eng/mhpa_full_report.pdf)

<sup>25</sup> <http://www.freeyourmindprojects.com/static-pages/about-us/#.UDTo044Zy70>

<sup>26</sup> It allows recipients of MHPSA funding to go on radio to say how important their work is. In the promo materials, they readily admit this is for the 'one in four' who have mental health issues, rather than the 5-9% with serious mental illness identified as being a priority population in MHPSA legislation (who would be hard to reach by radio shows).

<sup>27</sup> At an MHPSOAC board meeting a Los Angeles FSP Program Manager admitted the L.A. job training program had only increased employment days 4.2 percent and that was mainly due to government creating jobs versus any private sector jobs being created. See <http://lacdmh.lacounty.gov/News/Publications/Enews/Documents/APR1411ENEWS.html> and

[http://www.mhsoac.ca.gov/meetings/docs/PriorMeetingMinutes/2011/MinutesApproved\\_Sept2011.pdf](http://www.mhsoac.ca.gov/meetings/docs/PriorMeetingMinutes/2011/MinutesApproved_Sept2011.pdf)

<sup>28</sup>

<http://www.co.marin.ca.us/depts/HH/main/mh/mhpa/MHPSA%20PEI%20fund%20shift%20to%20Prudent%20Reserve%20June%202012.pdf>

<sup>29</sup> "On 15 November, TeenScreen, a program to detect depression in young people, announced on its website: "The National Center will be winding down its program at the end of this year. The center did not give a reason for the closure of its multimillion dollar project, nor did anyone from TeenScreen respond to inquiries by the BMJ. Critics of the program said that the test had not been proven to reduce suicides and that an analysis by its inventor, David Shaffer, showed that the computer based screening test had a positive predictive value of only 16%. Direct and indirect ties between the drug industry and TeenScreen fueled the concerns of critics that the program would inevitably cause more children, including preschoolers, to be treated with antidepressant drugs."

<http://www.bmj.com/content/345/bmj.e8100>

<sup>30</sup>

<http://www.co.marin.ca.us/depts/HH/main/mh/mhpa/MHPSA%20PEI%20fund%20shift%20to%20Prudent%20Reserve%20June%202012.pdf>

<sup>31</sup> [http://www.co.merced.ca.us/pdfs/mentalhealth/mhpa/mhpa\\_annual\\_update\\_2012\\_2013.pdf](http://www.co.merced.ca.us/pdfs/mentalhealth/mhpa/mhpa_annual_update_2012_2013.pdf)

<sup>32</sup> <http://blogs.webmd.com/childrens-health/2012/08/study-links>

<sup>33</sup> The program claims to have made the following positive impacts, not having to do with preventing serious mental illness. "Parents, Child Care Providers, and Teachers have learned new ways to manage children's behavior. Our support groups have helped parents learn new parenting skills. Parents have learned about how children grow. Parents have learned better ways to discipline their children. Parents have learned to share experiences and feelings with other parents. Parents have learned about information on community resources and services. Parents have learned to take better care of themselves. Parents have learned better ways to handle stress.

- **Nevada County** uses MHSA funds for

**Case Study: Laura's Law: A good program in Nevada County** By using MHSA funds to allow individuals under court orders access to existing programs Nevada County served the most seriously mentally ill and decreased number of Psychiatric Hospital Days 46.7%; number of Incarceration Days 65.1%, number of Homeless Days 61.9%; number of Emergency Interventions 44.1%. Laura's Law implementation saved \$1.81-\$2.52 for every dollar spent and "receiving services under Laura's Law caused a reduction in *actual* hospital costs of \$213,300 and a reduction in *actual* incarceration costs of \$75,600 (<http://lauras-law.org/states/california/lresultsin2counties.html>)

- **Orange County** is using MHSA funds
  - Wellness Centers specifically for those "who have achieved a high level of recovery," Groups to improve "personalized socialization," relationship building, and exploring educational opportunities.<sup>34</sup>
  - Teen Screen, an ineffective teen suicide program. See Marin County for a discussion of Teen Screen.
  - High end annual report with no data on where the money went.<sup>35</sup>
- **Placer County** received numerous critical comments about their use of MHSA funds for social services masquerading as mental illness programs. They did not address them.<sup>36</sup> MHSA uses MHSA funds for
  - "Youth Council: What is Success Video Project"<sup>37</sup>.
  - "Ready for Success: Incredible Years", and "Parent Project."<sup>38</sup> These programs allegedly strengthen parenting competencies but are not related to mental illness. It is now well established that having bad parents does not cause serious mental illnesses like schizophrenia and bipolar disorder.
  - "Positive Indian Parenting"<sup>39</sup>
  - "Native Youth Development Program"
  - To "prevent mental illness".<sup>40</sup> No one knows how to do that.
  - Native Culture Camps
  - "Life Skills Training", a substance abuse prevention program<sup>41</sup>. Substance abuse programs (except for those with mental illness) were specifically excluded from the MHSA Legislation.<sup>42</sup>
  - "Teaching Pro Social Skills" teaches kids about teasing, embarrassment, and expressing feelings.<sup>43</sup>
  - Adventure Risk Challenge (ARC) a literacy program.<sup>44</sup>
  - "What is Success" Video Project "to send the message to Middle and High School students that everyone has the ability to choose what success means to them and that it is never too late to start working towards your own goals."<sup>45</sup>
- **Riverside County** is using MHSA funds for
  - Parenting Program for Latina mothers (\$2,958,317).<sup>46</sup>

Child Care Providers have learned new ways to promote attachment and bonding."

<sup>34</sup> <http://ochealthinfo.com/docs/newsletters/recoveryconnection/2008-2010-RecoveryConnection.pdf>

<sup>35</sup> [http://ochealthinfo.com/docs/behavioral/mhsa/Resources/Reports/MHSA\\_5\\_Year\\_Booklet\\_WEB.pdf](http://ochealthinfo.com/docs/behavioral/mhsa/Resources/Reports/MHSA_5_Year_Booklet_WEB.pdf)

<sup>36</sup> Ex. Dr. Frank Lozano asked for "hard data" for number of individuals seen/program and the results of their time spent under the guidance of Placer Mental Health". He also noted several programs were social services programs. Gayle Smullen of NAMI Placer County reported on the lack of programs for people with serious mental illness, and the preponderance of social service programs for non mentally ill being funded with Placer County MHSA funds. He did not receive an adequate response. Sharen Neal of Placer County NAMI noted that Placer county focused its PEI resources on children, when serious mental illness does not manifest itself until teens and twenties. Focusing on children left those most likely to develop mental illness least likely to be served. The response of Placer County authorities was inadequate, avoided the issue, and frequently blamed the Oversight Commission for the problems by saying they were due to their direction. See last pages of comments at <http://www.campaignforcommunitywellness.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/12/MHSA12-13AnnualUpdateFINALtoBOS.pdf>

<sup>37</sup> Page 11 at <http://www.campaignforcommunitywellness.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/12/MHSA12-13AnnualUpdateFINALtoBOS.pdf>

<sup>38</sup> Page 7 at <http://www.campaignforcommunitywellness.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/12/MHSA12-13AnnualUpdateFINALtoBOS.pdf> .

Note that a large percentage of parents dropped out of the program.

<sup>39</sup> Page 8 at <http://www.campaignforcommunitywellness.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/12/MHSA12-13AnnualUpdateFINALtoBOS.pdf>

<sup>40</sup> <http://www.sierrasun.com/article/20120625/COMMUNITY/120629945/1066&ParentProfile=1051>

<sup>41</sup> <http://www.campaignforcommunitywellness.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/12/MHSA12-13AnnualUpdateFINALtoBOS.pdf>

<sup>42</sup> September 22, 2012 MHSOAC Board Minutes, MHSOAC "Commissioner Horn commented that ...the reason co-occurring disorders were not mentioned in the MHSA was because during the Proposition 63 focus groups they were informed that using that language would lead to the defeat of the proposition" He then went on to express the importance of doing it anyway. This program is the result of that thought process. Minutes of MHSOAC Board Meeting September 22, 2011. Available at [http://www.mhsoac.ca.gov/meetings/docs/PriorMeetingMinutes/2011/MinutesApproved\\_Sept2011.pdf](http://www.mhsoac.ca.gov/meetings/docs/PriorMeetingMinutes/2011/MinutesApproved_Sept2011.pdf) Accessed 6/24/12

<sup>43</sup> Page 10 at <http://www.campaignforcommunitywellness.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/12/MHSA12-13AnnualUpdateFINALtoBOS.pdf>

<sup>44</sup> <http://www.namicalifornia.org/uploads/eng/mhsa%20full%20report.pdf>

<sup>45</sup> <http://www.campaignforcommunitywellness.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/12/MHSA12-13AnnualUpdateFINALtoBOS.pdf>



- **Sacramento** is using MHSA Innovation Funds to
  - Provide "culturally sensitive help to all generations" (United Lu-Mien)<sup>47</sup>. Not a mental illness program.<sup>48</sup>
  - Reduce Bullying<sup>49</sup>
  - Reduce Violence<sup>50</sup>
  - Increase Social Connectedness<sup>51</sup>
  - Help 12-26 year olds "to gain positive, proactive, successful life skills"<sup>52</sup>
  - "To improve the well being of caregivers" (Del Oro Caregiver Resource Center<sup>53</sup>). The caregivers being helped are caregivers for persons with dementia, not mental illness
  - Reduce stigma and promote mental health in population not identified by MHSA<sup>54</sup>
  - Capital Adoptive Families<sup>55</sup>. This organization supports adoptive parents and does not have the tight nexus to helping people with serious mental illness.
  - "Strengthening Families Project". Within this program are "Quality Child Care Collaborative", "HEARTS for Kids", "Bullying Prevention Education and Training", "Early Violence Intervention Begins With Education" and "Independent Living Program 2.0". When presented at the May Mental Health Board meeting a participant correctly noted these were social services programs and ineligible for MHSA funding. They were told, "when the public hearing were held on these programs, the community wanted them"<sup>56</sup>
  
- **San Bernardino County** is using MHSA Funds to
  - Reduce teen prostitution \$895,000.<sup>57</sup>
  - Acupuncture and acupressure, teach art classes, equine therapy, tai-chi and zumba to the general public; and an LGBT prom.<sup>58</sup>
  - Interagency Youth Resiliency Team.<sup>59</sup> It "employs former foster and probation youth to serve as mentors to "system involved" youth ages 13 - 21."<sup>60</sup>
  
- **San Diego** is using MHSA funds<sup>61</sup>
  - To reduce gang violence
  - Triple P Parenting Program, a program proven unsuccessful at reducing child abuse
  - "Reaching Out", a program for those with Alzheimer's
  
- **San Francisco** is using MHSA funds
  - for yoga, line dancing and drumming.<sup>62</sup>

---

<sup>46</sup> While a worthy program, there is no evidence that serious mental illness is caused by parents (other than possibly genetically). Attaching the word 'mood' or "mental" to a program does not turn a program that helps people with mental illness.

[http://blogs.laweekly.com/informer/2012/07/california\\_tax\\_for\\_mentally\\_ill\\_message\\_chairs\\_zumba\\_social.php](http://blogs.laweekly.com/informer/2012/07/california_tax_for_mentally_ill_message_chairs_zumba_social.php)

<sup>47</sup> <http://www.sacbee.com/2012/11/30/5021702/grants-aid-four-sacramento-county.html>

<sup>48</sup> We could not find the term "mentally" or "mental" used once. This suggests to us the funds will not be used for mentally ill.

<sup>49</sup> Page 23 at <http://www.dhhs.saccounty.net/BHS/Documents/Reports--Workplans/MHSA-Reports-and-Workplans/RT-2013-14-MHSA-Annual-Update--Sacramento-County.pdf>

<sup>50</sup> Page 27 at <http://www.dhhs.saccounty.net/BHS/Documents/Reports--Workplans/MHSA-Reports-and-Workplans/RT-2013-14-MHSA-Annual-Update--Sacramento-County.pdf>

<sup>51</sup> Page 24 at <http://www.dhhs.saccounty.net/BHS/Documents/Reports--Workplans/MHSA-Reports-and-Workplans/RT-2013-14-MHSA-Annual-Update--Sacramento-County.pdf>

<sup>52</sup> Page 27 at <http://www.dhhs.saccounty.net/BHS/Documents/Reports--Workplans/MHSA-Reports-and-Workplans/RT-2013-14-MHSA-Annual-Update--Sacramento-County.pdf>

<sup>53</sup> <http://www.sacbee.com/2012/11/30/5021702/grants-aid-four-sacramento-county.html>

<sup>54</sup> Page 28 has a 'mental health promotion' project that features a web site <http://www.stopstigmiasacramento.org>. Note that the site addresses the 1 in four with mental health issues. But MHSA has specific language saying it is not for one in four (25%) of population, it is only for the 9% with the most serious mental illnesses. It also includes info designed to minimize and confuse the public about the incidence of violence. <http://www.dhhs.saccounty.net/BHS/Documents/Reports--Workplans/MHSA-Reports-and-Workplans/RT-2013-14-MHSA-Annual-Update--Sacramento-County.pdf>

<sup>55</sup> <http://www.sacbee.com/2012/11/30/5021702/grants-aid-four-sacramento-county.html>

<sup>56</sup> Reported to us by an attendee who requested anonymity.

<sup>57</sup> <http://www.sbcounty.gov/dbh/Announcements/2010/Innovation%20Plan%20Final%208-10.pdf>

<sup>58</sup> [http://blogs.laweekly.com/informer/2012/07/california\\_tax\\_for\\_mentally\\_ill\\_message\\_chairs\\_zumba\\_social.php](http://blogs.laweekly.com/informer/2012/07/california_tax_for_mentally_ill_message_chairs_zumba_social.php)

<sup>59</sup> <http://www.marketwatch.com/story/foster-youth-prepares-for-adulthood-with-help-from-new-mentor-program-from-emq-familiesfirst-2012-11-18>

<sup>60</sup> That is a worthy social service program, but it is not a program that reduces the duration of untreated mental illness or prevents mental illness from becoming severe and disabling. The PR announcement for it does not mention mental illness or mental health (except to state MHSA funds are being used for it) A PowerPoint explaining who IYRT serves is at [http://emqff.org/about/docs/FY12\\_agency-wide\\_report\\_pp\\_final.pdf](http://emqff.org/about/docs/FY12_agency-wide_report_pp_final.pdf). Page 8, shows that only 2% of the population they serve have psychotic disorders (serious mental illness)

<sup>61</sup> <http://sandiego.camhsa.org/files/PEI-Prg-Serv-Summ-Current.pdf>

<sup>62</sup> [http://www.sfdph.org/dph/comupg/oservices/mentalHlth/MHSA/FY11\\_12AnnualPlanUpdate\\_03012011.pdf](http://www.sfdph.org/dph/comupg/oservices/mentalHlth/MHSA/FY11_12AnnualPlanUpdate_03012011.pdf)

- 90 minute movie about mental health (not mental illness).<sup>63</sup> It was shown at a community center and funded by MHA/SF, a large recipient of MHSA funds. MHA/SF Exec. Dir. Is on the Oversight Commission. While videos and movies are fun to make it is hard to see how making these movies should trump delivering services to people with mental illness.
- **San Luis Obispo County** uses MHSA funds for
  - employment programs<sup>64</sup>
  - To help “Tens of thousands” rather than people with serious mental illness.<sup>65</sup>
- **Shasta County** is using MHSA funds for
  - A Gatekeeper program to improve services for the elderly.<sup>66</sup>
  - Triple P Parenting program. See “Los Angeles” County above for information showing Triple P has no scientific basis and is unproven. Shasta is a good example of how the stakeholder process was used to gain funding for this program in spite of its lack of efficacy.<sup>67</sup>
  - Reducing “Adverse Childhood Experiences”<sup>68</sup>
- **Stanislaus County** is using MHSA funds for
  - “Arts for Freedom”<sup>69</sup> an art show for people who want to display their art.
  - Stanislaus considered a good program, but we don’t know if they ever followed through on it. *“Stanislaus County officials are talking with local hospitals about forming crisis teams to stabilize patients who are considering suicide or having psychotic symptoms. The units with staff able to prescribe medication would choose people with the best chances of being stabilized, so they can return home and not be admitted to Doctors Behavioral Health Center on Claus Road.”*<sup>70</sup>
- **Tehama County is using MHSA funds for**
  - Teen Screen, an ineffective program designed to reduce teen suicide<sup>71</sup>
  - Drumming Circles<sup>72</sup>
- **Tulare County** used MHSA funds for
  - farming webinar for dairy farmers who, due to the current economic state, are experiencing a downturn in milk prices.<sup>73</sup>
  - RESTATE. This is an \$800,000 program operated jointly with King County and alternatively describe as a stigma and discrimination reduction program or a suicide prevention program. See discussion under King County on this being an ineffective non-evidenced based program that seems to move MHSA funds from helping persons with mental illness to funding school art departments.

Prepared by Mental Illness Policy Org (<http://mentalillnesspolicy.org>) 8/13x

<sup>63</sup> <http://www.mentalhealthsf.org/programs/solve/>

<sup>64</sup> They are not for people who have mental illness, but are for “Transitional Age Youths” (TAYs) The County justifies the expenditures by claiming the groups are underserved in the County; they are likely to have experienced numerous traumatic events and be vulnerable to developing mental illness, substance abuse, *domestic violence, homelessness, criminal activity, and unemployment*. Trauma (losing a loved one, seeing something untoward) happens to many people and rarely ever results in a mental illness.

[http://www.mhsoac.ca.gov/MHSAOC\\_Publications/docs/PressReleases/2011/PEITrendsReport\\_05-11-11.pdf](http://www.mhsoac.ca.gov/MHSAOC_Publications/docs/PressReleases/2011/PEITrendsReport_05-11-11.pdf)

<sup>65</sup> The director of Behavioral Health in SLO claims MHSA is helping tens of thousands in her county.

<http://www.sanluisobispo.com/2011/07/12/1680175/viewpoint-our-mentally-ill-deserve.html>

<sup>66</sup> <http://www.redding.com/news/2012/nov/07/senior-living-gatekeeper-program-keeps-eye-out/>

<sup>67</sup> Shasta County claims that Triple P got on the list of funded programs because “During MHSA’s stakeholder input process, community members ranked children and youth in stressed families as the #1 population to work with in preventing mental illness”. It is true that reducing stress in families of people with mental illness can improve the course of outcome. However, there is no science that says stress causes mental illness, or reducing stress in families of people without mental illness lowers the incidence of mental illness. This is a worthy social service program masquerading as a mental health program to access MHSA

funds. [http://media.redding.com/media/static/Annual\\_Report\\_7th\\_FINAL.pdf](http://media.redding.com/media/static/Annual_Report_7th_FINAL.pdf). See description of Triple P under LA County.

<sup>68</sup> <http://www.mhsoac.ca.gov/Counties/PEI/docs/PEIplans/ShastaPEIPlan.pdf> and

[http://media.redding.com/media/static/Annual\\_Report\\_7th\\_FINAL.pdf](http://media.redding.com/media/static/Annual_Report_7th_FINAL.pdf)

<sup>69</sup> [http://www.stanislausmhsa.com/pdf/public/INN%20Project%20Brief%20Descriptions%20Posted\\_8.25.11.pdf](http://www.stanislausmhsa.com/pdf/public/INN%20Project%20Brief%20Descriptions%20Posted_8.25.11.pdf) and

<http://www.modbee.com/2012/04/25/2173965/county-promotes-mental-health.html>

<sup>70</sup> <http://www.modbee.com/2012/11/11/2451993/stanislaus-county-mental-health.html> We don’t know if this was ever implemented or if merely exists in press release form.

<sup>71</sup> [http://www.mhsoac.ca.gov/Counties/PEI/docs/PEIplans/PEI\\_Tehama\\_Final\\_2-1-10.pdf](http://www.mhsoac.ca.gov/Counties/PEI/docs/PEIplans/PEI_Tehama_Final_2-1-10.pdf). See Marin County for Teen Screen discussion.

<sup>72</sup> <http://www.namicalifornia.org/uploads/eng/mhsa%20full%20report.pdf>

<sup>73</sup> [http://www.mhsoac.ca.gov/MHSAOC\\_Publications/docs/PressReleases/2011/PEITrendsReport\\_05-11-11.pdf](http://www.mhsoac.ca.gov/MHSAOC_Publications/docs/PressReleases/2011/PEITrendsReport_05-11-11.pdf) (Page 14)