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# UPDATE

July 15, 2011

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*Prepared by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services,  
National Institutes of Health, National Institute of Mental Health,  
Office of Constituency Relations and Public Liaison*

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## SCIENCE AND SERVICE NEWS UPDATES

### THINKING GLOBALLY TO IMPROVE MENTAL HEALTH

Mental health experts call for a greater world focus on improving access to care and treatment for mental, neurological, and substance use disorders (MNS), as well as increasing discoveries in research that will enable this goal to be met. The Grand Challenges in Global Mental Health Initiative, led by the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and the Global Alliance for Chronic Diseases, has identified the top 40 barriers to better mental health around the world. Similar to past grand challenges, which focused on infectious diseases and chronic, noncommunicable diseases, this initiative seeks to build a community of funders dedicated to supporting research that will significantly improve the lives of people living with MNS disorders within the next 10 years. Twenty-five of the specific challenges and the process used to derive them are described in an article published on July 7, 2011, in the journal *Nature*.

**Press Release:** <http://www.nimh.nih.gov/science-news/2011/thinking-globally-to-improve-mental-health.shtml>

### BALANCE TIPS TOWARD ENVIRONMENT AS HERITABILITY EBBS IN AUTISM: NON-INHERITED GENETIC FACTORS ALSO IN THE MIX

The largest and most rigorous twin study of its kind to date, has found that shared environment influences susceptibility to autism more than previously thought. The NIH-supported study found that shared environmental factors — experiences and exposures common to both twin individuals — accounted for 55 percent of strict autism and 58 percent of more broadly defined autism spectrum disorders (ASD). Genetic heritability accounted for 37 percent of autism and 38 percent of ASD. Random environmental factors not shared among twins play a much smaller role. Earlier twin studies had estimated the genetic heritability of autism to be as high as 90 percent, due to much lower estimates of concordance — both members of a twin pair having the disorder — in fraternal twins. The new study found such concordance to be four to five times higher. The findings of the California Autism Twins Study are reported in the July 2011 issue of the *Archives of General Psychiatry*.

**Press Release:** <http://www.nimh.nih.gov/science-news/2011/balance-tips-toward-environment-as-heritability-ebbs-in-autism.shtml>

## **NIH-FUNDED RESEARCH NETWORK TO EXPLORE OIL SPILL HEALTH EFFECTS: PROGRAM TO FOCUS ON COMMUNITY HEALTH AND RESILIENCY IN GULF REGION**

An NIH-funded network of researchers will evaluate potential harmful effects of the Deepwater Horizon disaster on reproduction and birth outcomes, the cardiorespiratory system, and behavior and mental health. The network of community and university partnerships, under the leadership of NIH's National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences (NIEHS), will conduct research to evaluate the level of potentially harmful contaminants in air, water, and seafood, and assess their relationship to health outcomes. In contrast to NIEHS' Gulf Long-term Follow-up Study, known as the GuLF Study, which is focused on the oil spill cleanup workers and volunteers, this new research will concentrate on the range of acute and long-term health effects to the general public.

**Press Release:** <http://www.niehs.nih.gov/news/releases/2011/effects/>

## **NIH INVESTIGATORS DISCOVER NEW MECHANISM THAT MAY BE IMPORTANT FOR LEARNING AND MEMORY**

New findings in mice suggest that the timing when the neurotransmitter acetylcholine is released in the brain's hippocampus may play a key role in regulating the strength of nerve cell connections, called synapses. Understanding the complex nature of neuronal signaling at synapses could lead to better understanding of learning and memory, and novel treatments for relevant disorders, such as Alzheimer's disease and schizophrenia. NIEHS researchers report on the results of the study online July 13 in the journal *Neuron*.

**Press Release:** <http://www.niehs.nih.gov/news/releases/2011/memory/>

## **RECEPTOR LIMITS THE REWARDING EFFECTS OF FOOD AND COCAINE: NIH SCIENTISTS HELP SHOW MOLECULE'S CRUCIAL ROLE IN DOPAMINE REGULATION**

In a new study conducted on animals, National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA) researchers found that a specific dopamine receptor, called D2, controls an organism's activity level and contributes to motivation for reward-seeking. Researchers have long known that dopamine, a brain chemical that plays important roles in the control of normal movement, and in pleasure, reward, and motivation, also plays a central role in substance abuse and addiction. In a new study conducted in animals, scientists found that a specific dopamine receptor, called D2, on dopamine-containing neurons controls an organism's activity level and contributes to motivation for reward-seeking as well as the rewarding effects of cocaine.

**Press Release:**  
[http://www.niaaa.nih.gov/NewsEvents/NewsReleases/Pages/receptor\\_limits\\_rewarding\\_effects.aspx](http://www.niaaa.nih.gov/NewsEvents/NewsReleases/Pages/receptor_limits_rewarding_effects.aspx)

## **ONDCP RELEASES BLUEPRINT TO REDUCE DRUG USE AND ITS CONSEQUENCES**

The Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP) released the *2011 National Drug Control Strategy* which coordinates a government-wide public health and safety approach to reduce drug use and its consequences in the United States. The new *Strategy* continues to expand upon a balanced approach to drug control that emphasizes community-based drug prevention, integration of drug treatment into the mainstream health care system, innovations in the criminal justice system to break the cycle of drug use and crime, and international partnerships to disrupt transnational drug trafficking organizations.

**Press Release:** <http://www.whitehousedrugpolicy.gov/news/press11/071111.html>

**Full Report:** <http://www.whitehousedrugpolicy.gov/strategy/2011ndcs.html>

## **FDA SAFETY ALERT: VALPROATE PRODUCTS--RISK OF IMPAIRED COGNITIVE DEVELOPMENT IN CHILDREN EXPOSED IN UTERO**

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) notified healthcare professionals that children born to mothers who take the anti-seizure medication valproate sodium or related products during pregnancy have an increased risk of lower cognitive test scores than children exposed to other anti-seizure medications during pregnancy. This conclusion is based on the results of epidemiologic studies that show that children born to mothers who took valproate sodium or related products throughout their pregnancy tend to score lower on cognitive tests than children born to mothers who took other anti-seizure medications during pregnancy.

**FDA Safety Alert:**

<http://www.fda.gov/Safety/MedWatch/SafetyInformation/SafetyAlertsforHumanMedicalProducts/ucm261610.htm>

## **HUD, VA TO PROVIDE PERMANENT HOUSING AND SUPPORT HOMELESS VETS**

The U.S. Departments of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and Veterans Affairs (VA) announced that HUD will provide \$46.2 million to public housing agencies in all 50 states and the District of Columbia to supply permanent housing and case management for 6,790 homeless veterans in America.

**Press Release:** <http://www.va.gov/opa/pressrel/pressrelease.cfm?id=2131>

## **IN PURPLE HEART MEDAL, RESEARCHERS SEEK CLUES TO COMBAT STRESS RESILIENCE AND LONGER LIFE**

A VA-led study found that aging Veterans who earned the Purple Heart show decreased mortality compared with those who had not earned the medal. Additionally, those war-wounded Veterans who survive into later life—especially those who do not develop posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD)—may provide valuable clues as to the factors that lead to resilience to combat stress.

**Press Release:** <http://www.va.gov/opa/pressrel/pressrelease.cfm?id=2130>

## FEDERAL REPORT SHOWS DROP IN ADOLESCENT BIRTH RATE; ANNUAL STATISTICS COMPILATION NOTES INCREASES IN 8TH GRADE DRUG USE, CHILD POVERTY

The adolescent birth rate declined for the second consecutive year, preterm births declined for the third consecutive year, adolescent injury deaths declined, and fewer 12th graders binge drank, according to the federal government's annual statistical report on the well-being of the nation's children and youth. However, a higher proportion of 8th graders used illicit drugs, more children were likely to live in poverty, and fewer children were likely to live with at least one parent working year round, full time, according to the report, *America's Children: Key National Indicators of Well-Being 2011*.

**Press Release:** [http://childstats.gov/americaschildren/press\\_release.asp](http://childstats.gov/americaschildren/press_release.asp)

**Full Report:** <http://childstats.gov/americaschildren/index.asp>

### RESOURCES: PUBLICATIONS, TOOLKITS, OTHER RESOURCES

#### NEW ON NIMH WEBSITE

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##### DIRECTOR'S BLOG: MENTAL HEALTH: THINK GLOBALLY, ACT LOCALLY

NIMH Director Thomas Insel discusses the opportunities to learn from the experiences in other countries or among other cultures to help improve mental health care in the U.S. Using the wisdom of global shared experience, along with varied perspectives, might help psychiatry as a field to find reasonable and rational solutions to reduce the burden of mental illness. At the same time, a coordinated, global response to the major problems facing people with mental illness could speed progress toward solutions.

<http://www.nimh.nih.gov/about/director/2011/mental-health-think-globally-act-locally.shtml>

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##### VIDEO: MENTAL HEALTH CHALLENGES FOR RETURNING MILITARY VETERANS

NIMH Director Thomas Insel and Sergeant Todd Bowers of the organization Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America discuss the unique mental health challenges that some veterans experience when they return home. <http://www.nimh.nih.gov/media/video/insel-bowers-veterans.shtml>

## SAMHSA RESOURCES

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### SOURCES OF PAYMENT FOR MENTAL HEALTH TREATMENT FOR ADULTS

This National Survey on Drug Use and Health report focuses on how individuals from 2005 to 2009 who received mental health services in the past year paid for services. One-third of individuals who received outpatient mental health services in the past year indicated that most of the cost for those services was paid by private health insurance; 43.7 percent of those who received inpatient mental health services indicated that most of the costs were paid for by public insurance (Medicaid and Medicare). "Self or family member" was the main source of payment for 26.2 percent of adults receiving outpatient mental health services and 18.8 percent of those receiving inpatient mental health services.

[http://oas.samhsa.gov/2k11/025/WEB\\_SR\\_025.htm](http://oas.samhsa.gov/2k11/025/WEB_SR_025.htm)

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### ARCHIVED WEBCAST: HEALTH REFORM: WHAT IT MEANS FOR PEOPLE WITH SUBSTANCE USE AND MENTAL DISORDERS

This archived webcast explains the changes that will take effect as a result of health reform and how they may affect treatment and recovery for people with mental illness and substance abuse disorders and suggests ways for consumers to stay informed. <http://store.samhsa.gov/product/Health-Reform-What-It-Means-for-People-With-Substance-Use-and-Mental-Disorders-Audio-/SMA11-4623CD>

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### POSTER TO SUPPORT RECOVERY MONTH ACTIVITIES

This poster stresses that recovery is possible for people with a substance use or mental disorder, and emphasizes and celebrates the gains made by those in recovery from these conditions.

<http://store.samhsa.gov/product/Join-the-Voices-for-Recovery-Recovery-Benefits-Everyone-/SMA11-4649P>

## RESOURCES FROM SAMHSA'S NATIONAL CHILD TRAUMATIC STRESS NETWORK

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### LATEST ISSUE OF NETWORK'S QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

The Summer 2011 issue of *IMPACT* showcases the progress the National Child Traumatic Stress Network (NCTSN) has made in the field of child trauma in the last 10 years; the impact the *Caring for Children Who Have Experienced Trauma: A Workshop for Resource Parents* curriculum has had on parents; the use of trauma narratives with clients; how to define trauma-informed systems; managing secondary traumatic stress; how to implement cultural competence; and ways to help facilitate staff resilience.

[http://www.nctsn.org/sites/default/files/assets/pdfs/newsletters/impact\\_summer\\_2011.pdf](http://www.nctsn.org/sites/default/files/assets/pdfs/newsletters/impact_summer_2011.pdf)

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## CARING FOR CHILDREN WHO HAVE EXPERIENCED TRAUMA: A WORKSHOP FOR RESOURCE PARENTS TIPS--FROM EXPERIENCED TRAINERS

In this document, NCTSN trainers offer advice on how to use the *Resource Parent Curriculum* training to help parents understand the link between trauma and their children's often baffling behavior, feelings, and attitudes. It gives parents practical tools to help their children move forward from their traumatic pasts, to recognize and reduce the impact of their children's traumas on themselves, and to seek useful support from others. [http://nctsn.org/sites/default/files/assets/pdfs/nctsn\\_resource\\_parent\\_curriculum\\_faqs.pdf](http://nctsn.org/sites/default/files/assets/pdfs/nctsn_resource_parent_curriculum_faqs.pdf)

## NEW ARTICLES FROM REAL WARRIORS CAMPAIGN

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### PHYSICAL FITNESS TRAINING YEAR-ROUND BOOSTS RESILIENCE

Military physical fitness involves the ability to physically handle all aspects of a demanding mission, while remaining healthy and uninjured. This type of training not only improves performance on the job, it improves psychological wellness as well. Year-round exercise can help build and maintain psychological health and resilience, and some studies have shown that it may improve mood and attitude.

<http://www.realwarriors.net/active/treatment/physicalfitness.php>

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### BEHAVIORAL FITNESS: COPING SKILLS BUILD RESILIENCE

The demanding military environment often causes stress, whether it's experienced during a difficult deployment or readjusting to daily life at home. Being "behaviorally fit" means controlling one's actions to the benefit of their health. One can navigate through tough times, and build resilience at the same time, by managing stress in healthy ways, like through exercise or spiritual activities, and reaching out for support.

<http://www.realwarriors.net/active/treatment/behavioralfitness.php>

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### MAINTAINING RELATIONSHIPS WITH LOVED ONES DURING DEPLOYMENT

Starting with open communication and a willingness to work together, couples can boost their resilience to manage the strains associated with deployments. This article offers tips on how significant others can persevere through the tough times, lower the stress of separation, and maintain a strong relationship throughout the deployment cycle. <http://www.realwarriors.net/family/change/relationships.php>

## COMPARATIVE EFFECTIVENESS OF THERAPIES FOR CHILDREN WITH AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDERS

The Agency for Health Care Research and Quality (AHRQ) released the consumer and clinician guides for the comparative effectiveness review, *Children with Autism Spectrum Disorders*. CME activities and slide talks are also now available. <http://www.effectivehealthcare.ahrq.gov/index.cfm/search-for-guides-reviews-and-reports/?pageaction=displayproduct&productid=651&ECem=110630>

## CDC RESOURCES

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### FREE ONLINE VIOLENCE PREVENTION COURSE THAT INCLUDES SUICIDE PREVENTION

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) developed *Principles of Prevention* to provide grantees and partners with access to training and tools that focus on the primary prevention of violence. Suicide prevention is one of five modules in the course and continuing education credits are provided. The portal also includes program planning resources and an online application for the creation of success stories. <http://www.vetoviolence.org/pop/prevention-intro.html>

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### DRUG OVERDOSE DEATHS IN FLORIDA, 2003-2009

To characterize recent trends in drug overdose death rates in Florida, CDC analyzed data from the Florida Medical Examiners Commission. This report summarizes the results of that analysis, which found that, from 2003 to 2009, the number of annual deaths in which medical examiner testing showed lethal concentrations of one or more drugs increased 61.0 percent, from 1,804 to 2,905, and the death rate increased 47.5 percent, from 10.6 to 15.7 per 100,000 people. During 2003-2009, death rates increased for all substances except cocaine and heroin. The death rate for prescription drugs increased 84.2 percent, from 7.3 to 13.4 per 100,000 people. The greatest increase was observed in the death rate from oxycodone, followed by alprazolam and methadone. By 2009, the number of deaths involving prescription drugs was four times the number involving illicit drugs.

[http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm6026a1.htm?s\\_cid=mm6026a1\\_w](http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm6026a1.htm?s_cid=mm6026a1_w)

## REPORTS FROM THE GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY OFFICE

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### DOMESTIC VIOLENCE, SEXUAL ASSAULT, DATING VIOLENCE, AND STALKING: NATIONAL DATA COLLECTION EFFORTS UNDERWAY TO ADDRESS SOME INFORMATION GAPS

This Government Accountability Office (GAO) testimony discusses issues related to the reauthorization of the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA). It discusses the extent to which (1) national data collection efforts report on the prevalence of men, women, youth, and children who are victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, dating violence, and stalking, and (2) the federal government has collected data to track the types of services provided to these categories of victims and any challenges federal departments report that they and their grant recipients face in collecting and reporting demographic characteristics of victims receiving such services. <http://www.gao.gov/mobile/products/GAO-11-833T>

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### CHILD MALTREATMENT: STRENGTHENING NATIONAL DATA ON CHILD FATALITIES COULD AID IN PREVENTION

Children's deaths from maltreatment are especially distressing because they involve a failure on the part of adults who were responsible for protecting them. Questions have been raised as to whether the federal National Child Abuse and Neglect Data System (NCANDS), which is based on voluntary state reports to the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), fully captures the number or circumstances of child fatalities from maltreatment. GAO was asked to examine (1) the extent to which HHS collects and reports comprehensive information on child fatalities from maltreatment, (2) the challenges states face in collecting and reporting this information to HHS, and (3) the assistance HHS provides to states in collecting and reporting data on child maltreatment fatalities. GAO analyzed 2009 NCANDS data; conducted a nationwide web-based survey of state child welfare administrators; visited three states; interviewed HHS and other officials; and reviewed research and relevant federal laws and regulations.

**Report:** <http://www.gao.gov/products/GAO-11-599>

**Testimony based on the report:** <http://www.gao.gov/products/GAO-11-811T>

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

### ONLINE TRAINING: SUBSTANCE MISUSE AND THE OLDER ADULT

JULY 21, 2011, 1:00-2:30 PM CT

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Participants in this online training sponsored by SAMHSA's Addiction Technology Transfer Center will learn about the cause of substance misuse in the senior population and why it can be more of a problem for older adults than for their younger counterparts. The role of caregivers and primary care physicians in early detection and intervention will be explored, as will issues relating to confidentiality, treatment protocols, and evidence-based practices. <http://www.attcnetwork.org/learn/education/webinarseries.asp>

### WEBINAR: REINTEGRATIVE MEDICINE--FOCUSING ON FAMILY AND CLINICAL PERSPECTIVE, AND ADAPTATION FOLLOWING INCIDENT

JULY 28, 2011, 1:00-2:30PM ET

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This webinar is part of the Defense Centers of Excellence (DCoE) monthly webinar series, which provides information and facilitates discussion on a variety of topics related to psychological health and traumatic brain injury (TBI). <http://www.dcoe.health.mil/Training/MonthlyWebinars.aspx>

### TELECONFERENCE: SAMHSA 10X10 WELLNESS CAMPAIGN TRAINING: JOINING TOGETHER FOR WELLNESS & RECOVERY

JULY 28, 2011, 3:00-4:30 PM ET

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During this *SAMHSA 10x10 Wellness Campaign* training teleconference, peer leaders, advocates, and people in recovery will share personal experiences about incorporating the Eight Dimensions of Wellness into their recovery, work, and lives. These dimensions include: physical, emotional, financial, social, spiritual, occupational, intellectual, and environmental. <http://www.esi-bethesda.com/10x10teleconference/>

## **ACTION SUMMIT FOR SUICIDE PREVENTION AND THE 2ND ANNUAL METHAMPHETAMINE AND SUICIDE PREVENTION INITIATIVE CONFERENCE**

AUGUST 1-4, 2011, SCOTTSDALE, ARIZONA

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The 2011 Action Summit for Suicide Prevention is an opportunity to hear from, and interact with, nationally-recognized speakers, behavioral health providers, tribal leaders, health care providers, law enforcement, first responders, and school personnel committed to addressing emergent suicide and substance abuse prevention issues in Indian Country. This free event, sponsored by the Indian Health Service, will provide the most up-to-date research, best practices, and promising practices to address suicide and substance abuse prevention, intervention, and aftercare in Indian Country. <http://www.ihs.gov/suicidepreventionsummit>

## **CHILD PHYSICAL ABUSE SPEAKER SERIES: ASSESSMENT OF CHILD PHYSICAL ABUSE: CLINICAL AND FORENSIC PERSPECTIVES**

AUGUST 4, 2011, 1:00 PM EDT

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This National Center for Traumatic Stress Network online course will cover the clinical and forensic perspectives of assessing child physical abuse. <http://learn.nctsn.org/course/category.php?id=3>

## **NIDA'S ADDICTION PERFORMANCE PROJECT COMES TO NIH AND APA**

AUGUST 5, 2011, BETHESDA, MARYLAND AND AUGUST 6, 2011, WASHINGTON, DC

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The *Addiction Performance Project* is designed to help break down the stigma associated with addiction, as well as to promote a healthy dialogue that fosters compassion and understanding for patients living with this disease. The Project, a Continuing Medical Education and Continuing Education program, is part of the National Institute on Drug Abuse's outreach to practicing and in-training health professionals. Sessions will be held on the NIH Campus, as well as at a session at the American Psychological Association (APA) Convention in Washington, D.C. <http://www.nida.nih.gov/nidamed/APP/>

## **OFFICE OF SAFE AND DRUG FREE SCHOOLS NATIONAL CONFERENCE**

AUGUST 8-10, 2011, NATIONAL HARBOR, MARYLAND

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The theme of this year's Office of Safe and Drug-Free Schools conference is *Making the Connection: Creating and Maintaining Conditions for Learning*. The conference will address issues related to: alcohol, drug, and violence prevention; health, mental health, and physical education; special populations; emerging issues; and other areas of drug and violence prevention. <http://osdfs.dgimeetings.com>

## **2011 NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON HEALTH COMMUNICATION, MARKETING, AND MEDIA**

AUGUST 9-11, 2011, ATLANTA, GEORGIA

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This CDC conference brings together individuals representing academia, public health researchers, and practitioners from federal and state government and the private sector, and provides a forum for collegial dialogue within and across these disciplines. The conference is an opportunity to meet with colleagues and shape the future of health communication, marketing, and media practice. <http://www.cdc.gov/NCHCMM/>

## **LEADERSHIP ACADEMY TO ADDRESS DISPARITIES IN MENTAL HEALTH CARE**

AUGUST 22-25, 2011, SANTA FE, NEW MEXICO

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Georgetown University, in collaboration with SAMHSA's Center for Mental Health Services and AFYA, Inc., is convening a *Leadership Academy to Address Disparities in Mental Health Care*. The Academy is designed for individuals who are actively engaged in mental health care policy, practice, research, and advocacy throughout the life cycle and who are invested in developing their leadership role to address disparities in mental health care. It is an intensive course of study comprised of three months of preparatory activities and a four-day residential learning experience.

<http://www.attcnetwork.org/documents/gusavedateLA.pdf>

## **DCOE MONTHLY WEBINAR: POST-TRAUMATIC STRESS DISORDER AND NATURAL DISASTERS**

AUGUST 25, 2011, 1:00-2:30PM ET

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This webinar is part of the DCoE monthly webinar series, which provides information and facilitates discussion on a variety of topics related to psychological health and TBI.

<http://www.dcoe.health.mil/Training/MonthlyWebinars.aspx>

## **FAMILY SYSTEMS SPEAKER SERIES: EVALUATING FAMILIES IMPACTED BY TRAUMA**

AUGUST 26, 2011, 1:00 PM EDT

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This NCTSN webinar will cover multi-generational trauma within families, unique assessment and treatment planning considerations, and describe family and trauma-informed resources and decision-making strategies to guide family assessment and informed family treatment planning.

<http://learn.nctsn.org/course/category.php?id=3>

## HEALTH OBSERVANCE: NATIONAL RECOVERY MONTH

SEPTEMBER 2011

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The 2011 Recovery Month theme is *Join the Voices for Recovery: Recovery Benefits Everyone*. SAMHSA has developed materials to help communities plan and host Recovery Month events, and activities to help address the treatment needs of those dealing with behavioral health problems.

<http://www.samhsa.gov/newsroom/advisories/1106280601.aspx>

## CONFERENCE FOR CHILDREN'S JUSTICE AND SAFETY: UNITE, BUILD, LEAD

OCTOBER 12–14, 2011, WASHINGTON, DC

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The Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention's 2011 conference will address key issues and best practices in juvenile justice, delinquency prevention, and victimization. Conference workshops, plenaries, and keynote sessions include the following topics: crimes against children, anti-gang strategies, children's exposure to violence, disproportionate minority contact, girls' delinquency, tribal youth programs, emergency planning for juvenile justice, faith-based and community involvement, mentoring, truancy and bullying, and substance abuse. Conference planners are accepting submissions for poster and media presentations through August 5, 2011. <http://ojjdp.gov/2011conference/index.html>

## CALLS FOR PUBLIC INPUT

### AFFORDABLE CARE ACT TO IMPROVE DATA COLLECTION, REDUCE HEALTH DISPARITIES

HHS announced new draft standards for collecting and reporting data on race, ethnicity, sex, primary language, and disability status, and announced the Administration's plans to begin collecting health data on lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) populations. Both efforts aim to help researchers, policy makers, health providers, and advocates to identify and address health disparities afflicting these communities. In anticipation of these efforts, HHS over the past year has consulted with federal agencies, requested recommendations from the HHS Data Council, and held listening sessions with relevant community stakeholders. The public may submit comments for the draft minority data collection standards at [www.regulations.gov](http://www.regulations.gov) under docket number HHS-OMH-2011-0013. Public comments will be accepted until August 1. <http://www.hhs.gov/news/press/2011pres/06/20110629a.html>

## **REQUEST FOR INFORMATION TO SOLICIT INPUT ON THE FEASIBILITY, SCOPE, AND DESIGN OF A STATE HEALTH POLICY DATABASE**

The NIH Common Fund's Health Economics Program is seeking input about developing a State Health Policy Database (SHPD) to support scientific research on key research questions in health economics and to facilitate applied health economics research on issues relating to health care reform. The SHPD is envisioned as a research tool that will document state-level policies in a manner that facilitates valid comparisons across states and over time. This Request for Information seeks to identify specific policy areas for inclusion in the SHPD by identifying key research questions that could be addressed using policy information in particular areas, viable research designs that will allow those questions to be answered, and additional data that are required to implement those research designs. In addition, the Health Economics Program seeks input on general issues relating to the feasibility, scope, and design of such a SHPD. Responses will be accepted through August 26, 2011. <http://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/notice-files/NOT-RM-11-019.html>

## **WHITE HOUSE OFFICE OF PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT LAUNCHES THE NATIVE AMERICAN YOUTH CHALLENGE PROGRAM**

In a video message, President Obama called for young American Indian and Alaska Native leaders to submit their stories of leadership and service in their communities. Young leaders who have sought to improve their communities are encouraged to submit their stories of service on a variety of projects, including those to prevent suicide. Submissions are due September 30, 2011.

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/nativeamericans/take-native-american-youth-challenge>

## **FUNDING INFORMATION**

NIH: BLUEPRINT FOR NEUROSCIENCE RESEARCH GRAND CHALLENGE ON THE TRANSITION FROM ACUTE TO CHRONIC NEUROPATHIC PAIN (R01) (RFA-DE-12-008)

<http://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/rfa-files/RFA-DE-12-008.html>

NIH: SPECIALIZED CENTERS OF RESEARCH (SCOR) ON SEX DIFFERENCES (P50) (RFA-OD-11-003)

<http://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/rfa-files/RFA-OD-11-003.html>



The **Outreach Partnership Program** is a nationwide outreach initiative of the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) that enlists state and national organizations in a partnership to help close the gap between mental health research and clinical practice, inform the public about mental illnesses, and reduce the stigma and discrimination associated with mental illness. For more information about the program please visit: <http://www.nimh.nih.gov/outreach/partners>. To subscribe to receive the **Update** every two weeks, go to: <http://www.nimh.nih.gov/outreach/partnership-program/subscribe-to-the-update.shtml>

The information provided in the **Update** is intended for use by NIMH Outreach Partners, National Partners and their associates for the express purpose of exchanging information that may be useful in the development of state and local mental health outreach, information, education and partnership programs.