

# Public Health Communications Awards

## APPLICATION: CAMPAIGN WITH THE MOST IMPACTFUL OUTCOMES

### CONTACT INFORMATION

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<b>Jurisdiction size (Please check one):</b> Large (Population exceeds 700,000)	

### ABOUT THE COMMUNICATIONS CAMPAIGN

<b>Name Of Communications Campaign</b>	Be the One
<b>Brief Campaign Overview (200 Words Or Less)</b>	One in four people have a mental health condition but less than half get the help they need largely because of the stigma surrounding mental health. The Be the One campaign breaks down stigma and encourage people to get help. The campaign seeks to promote dialogue about mental health conditions, how most likely someone you know has a mental health issue but you may not know because they are active, productive members of society. The campaign prominently features four people with mental health conditions with the tag line "Be the One to make a difference." Members of the public are encouraged to Be the One by signing a pledge to end stigma in San Mateo County, submit a photo of your pledge to end stigma, take free mental health trainings to learn more, and start the conversation – which can be as simple as asking "how are you doing?"

Be the One fosters a sense of shared responsibility to combat myths related to mental health and substance use conditions and show that mental health conditions are common and people can and do recover. Be the One becomes “One in four people have a mental health condition. Be the One to help.”

**Campaign Start Date**

May 4, 2015

**Campaign End Date**

Ongoing

## CAMPAIGN PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION

**What is the purpose of this campaign? Does it address an underlying community need? Please describe why the campaign was developed. You are encouraged to submit evidence of need (e.g., local news stories, internal reports, testimonials, data, and community health assessments) as an addendum to this form.**

The Be the One Campaign is an initiative by San Mateo County's Behavioral Health and Recovery Services to eliminate stigma and end the discrimination against people with mental health and substance use issues in San Mateo County. Mental health conditions are medical conditions and people can and do recover. The media often portrays people with mental health conditions as violent, unpredictable and unproductive, which can lead to stigma and discrimination.

Half of all chronic mental illness begins by age 14 and three-quarters by age 24, yet less than 20% of these youth receive the treatment they need. That means our youth are waiting 8 to 10 years before getting the help they need to recover and lead healthy, productive lives.

A new report from RAND Corporation demonstrates the strong value statewide stigma reduction efforts offered by the California Mental Health Services Authority (CalMHSA). By working jointly through CalMHSA, California counties are delivering effective social marketing campaigns that change the conversation around mental health stigma and delivering value for Californians and taxpayers. The study found that for every dollar invested in CalMHSA's stigma reduction programs, California could see a return of \$1,251 through increased productivity and employment, with \$36 returned to state coffers through increased tax revenues. This net societal benefit to California from CalMHSA's stigma reduction campaigns is \$1.5 billion. As a result of stigma reduction programs, an additional 120,000 Californians accessed mental health services.

The campaign encourages conversation – the more we talk about mental health and how to best help someone, the more likely someone will feel empowered to seek help and help others. Millions of people completely recover and lead happy, healthy, and productive lives. Medication, rehabilitation, therapy, and self-help can help people going through a mental health issue – but the support of family, friends, and the community is a crucial part in the recovery process. As more people Be the One to educate themselves, speak out when you see discrimination and encourage friends, family and colleagues to seek help, the healthier all can be.

**Does your campaign address an issue related to health equity? How?**

People with mental health and substance use conditions face greater health challenges. Stigma, or the misplaced fear and judgment around mental health challenges, disproportionately impacts people with mental health conditions and can discourage people from getting needed treatment and support from friends and family, the workplace, school and mental health professionals . People with mental health conditions on average die 25 years earlier than the general population.

Many marginalized communities, particularly communities of color, face stigma in their communities. Our Be the One campaign includes photo pledge cards and materials translated in Spanish, Chinese and Tagalog (threshold languages of San Mateo County) to encourage everyone to reduce stigma and discrimination around mental health in their communities.

**What population was this campaign targeted to reach? How did you plan to reach them?**

The San Mateo County Behavioral Health and Recovery Services (BHRS) launched the Be the One campaign in May 2015 during the National Mental Health Awareness Month. It continued to be a theme throughout BHRS' efforts at the Suicide Prevention Forum that gathered more than 100 people in September 2016 and October's Recovery Month. The recent May 2016 Mental Health Awareness month brought 150 people attended the kick-off event and also promoted the Be the One campaign with the event being called "Be the One to Stand up for Mental Wellness." Each year the San Mateo County Board of Supervisors helps raise awareness about mental health conditions by issuing a proclamation designating May as Mental Health Awareness month. The month features many events across San Mateo County, all free and open to the public. These include digital story screenings, movie screenings, speaker panels, community psychoeducation trainings, informative meetings, award ceremonies, artistic expression and community gatherings, as well as provider trainings.

By delivering the message through people with mental health conditions, we are already reducing stigma. The BHRS Lived Experience Academy gathers people with mental health conditions and trains them to present to staff, providers, and the public on a number of topics to reduce stigma, build awareness, and improve mental health and substance use treatment. By encouraging others to share their personal stories, they provide a face to a mental health condition and allow people to feel a sense of connection.

The campaign also utilized BHRS' Health Equity Initiatives that focus on health inequities in access and quality of care for those who are underserved, unserved, and inappropriately served. The African American, Chinese, Filipino, Latino, Native American, Pacific Islander, PRIDE and Spiritually initiatives provide a targeted conduit to engaging these specific communities around mental health issues and break down barriers.

The campaign launched the Be the One blog to create a public forum for discussing policies and issues related to mental health and substance use in San Mateo County. Teachers, parents, students, and community members are also encouraged to learn more about mental health conditions and get certified in a free mental health crisis trainings and Parent Project classes.

Promotional items such as water bottles and reusable bags have been distributed throughout the county. Most notably, 16,000 reusable bags were distributed to residents' doorsteps throughout the county with Be the One messaging as part of the County's Silver Dragon emergency preparedness exercise.

**Could this campaign be replicated or transferred to other jurisdictions? Please explain.**

Changing the conversation around mental health stigma has grown into a global movement. The study shows California’s counties, working through CalMHSA, are at the forefront in breaking down barriers so all Californians can thrive well. Other jurisdictions in California can take this campaign and use Prop 63 MHSA funding to help promote stigma reduction efforts.

**What partners did you work with in planning and implementing this campaign?**

The campaign was coordinated closely with the Lived Experience Academy, a program where people who have lived experience as a mental health client or family member of someone who is a client, to ensure messaging resonated with people with mental health and substance use conditions. Health Equity Initiative groups were also heavily involved. The Be the One campaign has also partnered with community organizations to host the Be the One campaign photo booth, such as at County School Wellness Alliance meetings, PRIDE, Housing Heroes awards, and many other events across the county that tie in mental health conditions to specific issues facing our community. Be incorporating the Be the One message within events focused on other topics, we are able to draw meaningful connections about the association between, for instance, mental health and housing and expand understanding and acceptance of mental health conditions as a reality for our community.

**To what extent does the campaign leverage existing resources without creating new costs?**

Stigma and discrimination reduction programs return more in savings than they cost because when people seek help before a costly crisis, hospitalization, job loss, school lapses and lost wages.

This campaign is run with very limited budget – only print costs and small stipends to cover participants’ expenses such as transportation. It’s an example of how jurisdictions can raise awareness of important issues with community involvement without accruing additional costs.

## OUTCOMES

**Did you test or evaluate your campaign? If so, how?**

We continue to collect feedback at Be the One events. At the most recent mental health awareness kick off on May 4, 2016, 93% of respondents said they strongly agree with. We ask for feedback at every event hosted by BHRS to ensure we are effectively communicating how people can help end stigma.

**What were the outcomes of this campaign? To what extent were your objectives achieved?**

In the last year, the public has submitted 432 pledges (47 online, 141 post card pledges, 244 photo pledges) to be the one to end stigma. We’ve distributed over 1,000 flyers and postcards with Be the One messaging for the public to take action. We’ve heard anecdotally that dialogues are happening in people’s homes, churches, schools, etc. especially after seeing the posters and photos.

Since the campaign launched, there have been 430 visits to the end stigma page, 1,813 visits to our community education page. Our BHRS blog has done incredibly well, with over 26,200 views.

**To what extent does the campaign shift thinking about health from individual medical care to community / public health / equity issues?**

By promoting a shared responsibility for helping others seek treatment and empowering those with mental health conditions, the campaign shifts thinking from an individual person to global and upstream movement to reduce stigma and help people with mental health conditions seek treatment and maintain recovery in a supportive San Mateo County. By reducing discrimination and building a sense of community, we are addressing the social determinants of health that help prevent diseases and give everyone equitable opportunities to live a long and healthy life.

**To what extent were earned media articles, letters to the editor, and op-eds published about this project?**

We've been featured in the San Mateo Daily Journal, San Jose Mercury News, and local Patch papers.

**To what extent does the campaign inform and lead to personal and collective action to improve population health?**

Be the One implies that there are many ways people can help others with a mental health condition. It also builds off the one in four statistics and that Be the One could mean that you could easily be the one with a mental health condition, and there is nothing wrong with that. We're all in this as a community, together.

**How have you used what you have learned from this experience? How will use what you have learned to improve your next communications campaign?**

It was essential that we engage the mental health community in the messaging development to ensure messages were constructed in a meaningful way and also to get early buy in to the campaign. Local stories make the campaign more effective because people can relate. When they see it's in their city, people feel more connected to what is happening.

## IMPACT

**Was baseline data collected for the target audience prior to campaign implementation?**

The campaign collected baseline state level data on the effects of outreach to decrease stigma or increased awareness. For instance, out of CalMHSA stigma reduction programs, including Each Mind Matters: California's Mental Health Movement boosted the number of adults seeking help for psychological distress by 22% among those exposed to campaigns. This spurred a local campaign to address issues in San Mateo County using real faces of residents who are impacted by mental health conditions.

**Were results among the target audience measured during the campaign?**

We've received a lot of feedback on our work and how Be the One is an easy way to talk about mental health conditions and the shared responsibility for helping others. A new report from RAND Corporation demonstrates the strong value statewide stigma reduction efforts offered by the California Mental Health Services Authority. By working jointly through CalMHSA, California counties are delivering effective social marketing campaigns that change the conversation around mental health stigma and delivering value for Californians and taxpayers. Although we do not have local data, the RAND survey shows over 120,000 adults with evidence of psychological distress received behavioral health services as a result of their exposure to CalMHSA's stigma and discrimination reduction efforts.

**How were youth, disadvantaged populations, and other groups at high risk included in the development and public voice of the campaign?**

Intentional efforts were made to include a diverse group of participants – across geographic, racial/ethnic, age – in the Be the One campaign. The Lived Experience Academy continues to be a strong guiding force in determining appropriate messaging for people with mental health conditions.

**Were social media, mobile phones, and other technology utilized in the campaign?**

We promote the #betheonesmc on Facebook and Twitter with over 14,000 followers, use our blog <https://smcbhrsblog.org>, and share Photovoice and digital stories on our [YouTube account](#).

**Can we share this application with other local health officials who are interested in communications best practices?**

Yes!

**Please email your completed application by Friday, May 27, 2016 to:**

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