

Recovery is Possible!

PROSUMER—A PERSON WHO IS PROACTIVE IN HIS OR HER RECOVERY AND WHO GIVES BACK TO THE COMMUNITY A Prosumer is not who you are, it is what you do!



PROSUMER NEWS

www.ProsumersInternational.org, Facebook—Prosumers & Prosumer Action Center, Twitter—ProsumersInt
Phone: 210-399-8734 Toll free number: 1-877-334-2717 (Please only use this if needed)

December 2010 Janet Paleo—Editor Volume 8, Issue 12



Prosumer meetings in Texas:

San Antonio the 2nd Friday (12-3) and 3rd Tuesday (6-9) of the month
Houston—The 2nd Saturday (12-3) of the month except March '11 – 1st Sat
Ft Worth—Coming in January.

Now RSVP online at our website


The 2nd Friday of the Month
12 Noon to 3 PM
UTHSC School of Nursing
Meet in the Lobby and you will be escorted to the room!
All Welcome!
7703 Floyd Curl
Enter at the Louis Pasteur entrance near Babcock. Bring your parking ticket for validation. Buses 91, 92

San Antonio Prosumer Evening Meeting
The 3rd Tuesday of the Month
6 PM to 9 PM
La Paz Community Health Center
530 San Pedro (just south of SAC)
No December Meeting
Members requested to not have the meeting as they would be getting ready for the holidays. Happy Holidays to all of you. May all your dreams come true!

Huge Apology to anyone trying to get in touch with us. Our phone systems were down. We have a new number 210-399-8734. Please accept our apologies for all the trouble you have had.

December 10, 2010 Meeting
Come Celebrate the holidays with us! This is a **Potluck** so bring a side or dessert. We will provide a main course. Also, as you are able, bring an unwrapped toy for us to give to the kids at Fairweather Lodge. During the meeting, we will explore volunteer opportunities that we want to pursue in the next year, recap what has been accomplished this year and highlight opportunities in the up coming year. Most of all, it is a time for us to enjoy each other. If you don't come to any other meeting, come to this one. See you there!!

Houston Prosumer Meeting
The 2nd Saturday of the Month
12 PM to 3 PM
MHMRA of Harris County
Southwest Conference Center
7033 SW Freeway
Houston, TX 77074
December 11, 2010 Meeting


What is in your stocking this year? What would you like? If recovery, a full life and joy is what you would like, come join us at the Prosumers. You can attend the Prosumer meetings or come to the Prosumer Action Center. Either way, you can begin to live the life you want. That is our Holiday Gift to you.

It is that time of year to celebrate each other and the end of the year. This year has proven to be full of great opportunities for the Prosumers of Houston. Next year promises to be even better. We will take the time to look ahead to the New Year and what we want to achieve for 2011. This meeting is a Potluck. We will provide the main course, the MHMRA will provide the drinks. You bring a side or dessert.

January 14, 2011 Meeting
Prosumers have requested that this month we look at making and achieving goals. Many people make a To Do List for the New year of things they want to accomplish. Then before the week is out, they have forgotten or disregarded the list. Why is that? What can we do to really accomplish what we want to accomplish in the coming year? How can we keep that conversation alive? Come find out at the January Prosumer meeting. It is going to be awesome and inspiring. You will come away with a whole new sense of how to make your dreams come true.

We are going to have an **EVIL SANTA GIFT EXCHANGE**. So bring a **wrapped gift, no more than \$5.00**. Make it something that you would enjoy having. We will explain how the exchange works when you get here.

As Prosumers are about being active in the community, let's look at volunteer activities we can do as a group in the following year. Bring ideas and thoughts about what you would want to do.

Come Join Us! Be a part of this exciting new group. As always, we will have fun, be inspired and come away with new ideas of how to live a life on our own terms.

RSVP online at
www.ProsumersInternational.org or to
Michelle Mata toll-free at 1-877-334-2717.

If you would like meetings to be interpreted in American Sign Language or Spanish, please notify us 5 working days prior to the meeting. **Prosumer meetings start with food, so please remember to RSVP to 210-399-8734 or online so that we have enough food to feed everyone. Thanks!**
Future Meeting Room Schedule
Fri Dec 10, 2010 Room 1.222 Nursing School

WE ARE THE ONES WE HAVE BEEN WAITING FOR!

We All Wish You the Very Best during the Holidays and the Happiest of New Years!!

**So You Don't Like the
System
Or How to be an Advocate
By Janet Paleo**

I recently had a call that was a complaint about a mental health provider. They wondered why I wasn't printing what was happening at their provider's office and the horrible treatment they received. I realized we have not talked about how to be an advocate for yourself in a long time .

Yes there are changes happening all over the State of Texas and the world. Budget cuts and tightening of money is everywhere. There is patient dumping, shorter times with doctors, increased wait times, changing of medications, discontinuation of certain services, and so much more. How can you have a voice in what is happening?

Learn how to be an advocate for yourself and others. Here are some basics in advocacy.

First, turn that red hot anger into a cool anger so you can be heard. When we are red hot angry, not only are we ignored but often it can land us some place we don't want to be. Don't get rid of the anger, but temper it so that you keep the passion and the sincerity of the issue, but you can say it in a way that people can hear you.

Second, it is good to follow the chain of command. If you are not happy with your doctor for instance, first you would speak with him. If the problem is not resolved, then speak to his supervisor. You continue up the chain of command making people aware of the issue. When you reach the top and still are not satisfied, you find out when the Board is meeting and make your issue known to them. In the public system you also have a Clients Rights Officer that you can issue a complaint to if you feel your rights have been violated. If you do not feel it is properly addressed, then you talk to Advocacy Inc. (Disability Rights Texas) which is the federally mandated protection and advocacy organization for people with disabilities. If all else fails, talk to your Representative and Senator in the area which you live. Sometimes to correct a problem, there needs to be new legislation.

Third, remember the old adage, "If you are not part of the solution, you are part of the problem". When you come with your issue, have some possible solutions for that issue. Chances are if you can't figure out a better way of doing it, neither can they. Give them some options that would have prevented this issue in the first place.

Fourth, keep involved. Know what laws are being passed. Know what Medicaid and Medicare are doing. Sit in on Board meetings. Attend groups and talk to people. Chances are if you are having this problem, others are too. It is powerful when one person stands up to speak, but it is more powerful when that person carries the voice of many. Join advisory committees, state committees and other organizations. The more involved you are, the further your voice will carry.

Fifth, keep yourself healthy, mentally and physically. It is hard to be effective if you are run down. There may be times when the fight is more than you are able to do. Stop, reorganize and ask yourself if it is worth it. I know I gave up on a fight and after a few years, not only was the issue resolved, but I became a sought after voice within that organization. If it is worth it, give yourself some time to represent the issue properly, and bring others with you. There is power in numbers.

Lastly, if you have done all these things, you have an issue that is important to you and to the world. Consider that the passion you have used within this process has moved you further in your recovery. Ironic isn't it that fighting the injustice of a mental health system can move you ahead in your recovery. When we become passionate, we become goal oriented and start putting ourselves into action. Our focus becomes the goal of righting the wrong and not on ourselves. This is how recovery starts, focusing outside of ourselves to something that is bigger than we are. This is what living life is all about. Stay connected with others and let your voice be heard.

Have patience with all things, but chiefly have patience with yourself. Do not lose courage in considering your own imperfections, but instantly set about remedying them — every day begin the task anew. — *Saint Francis de Sales*

Benzodiazepines

Benzodiazepines (known as benzos) are a family of psychotherapeutic drugs. Although over 2000 types have been developed, only 15 are currently FDA-approved. Though proven assets in the treatment of diseases like panic disorders, alcoholism, convulsions, insomnia, anxiety and others – benzodiazepines are highly addictive if not used responsibly and in line with the instructions of your prescribing physician.

Two of the most popular benzodiazepines are diazepam (commonly known as Valium), and Alprazolam (commonly known as Xanax). The functions of these drugs are to calm the patient down and induce chemically provided relaxation to offset nervous disorders and the side effects of other diseases that cause anxiety, mental unrest, and sleep deprivation. Benzodiazepines (benzos) are a much higher threat to patients in psychotherapy and with pre-existing addictions, making monitored prescription for addiction withdrawal symptoms absolutely necessary.

Effects of Addiction to Benzodiazepines (Benzos)

A patient who has grown dependent on benzodiazepines can expect to experience both physical and mental repercussions. The symptoms of addiction include, but are not limited to:

- Diarrhea
- Slurred Speech
- Loss of motor skills
- Impaired concentration and coordination
- Drowsiness
- Loss of appetite
- Muscle cramps

Benzodiazepines can last in your system for up to eight days, making withdrawal and detoxification especially difficult and often mandating extended hospitalization.

Treatment for Addiction to Benzodiazepines (Benzos)

Outside of a crucial and necessary medically managed detoxification regimen, there exists no specific set of rules or guidelines for recovery from addiction to benzodiazepines. The most successful programs follow the philosophy of other types of treatment programs: clinical psychotherapy, after-treatment coping methods, etc. Because of their many benefits in the world of legitimate medicine, the patient is likely to encounter benzodiazepines more readily than other illicit drugs. The best programs realize this and will work to prepare the patient for the road after rehab.

The National Alcohol and Substance Abuse Information Center (NASAIC) maintains a continuously updated national database of benzodiazepine treatment programs in your local area, as well as the leading recommended benzodiazepine treatment programs in the United States and around the world.

Contact the National Alcohol and Substance Abuse Information Center anytime toll-free at (800)-784-6776 or through our online form, and we will recommend the best benzodiazepine (benzos) treatment program for you or your loved one.

If our vocabulary did not contain the words trouble, adversity, calamity and grief, it could not contain the words, bravery, patience and self-sacrifice. Those who face no calamity will need no courage. Mysterious though it is, the human characteristics we admire most grow in a soil with a strong mixture of trouble.— *Dale Turner*

You Can Avoid Becoming a Victim of Fraud

S.A.L.S.A.

San Antonio League of Self-Advocates

*An organization of people with
intellectual disabilities,
speaking up
for their human and civil rights*

All are welcome at
our meetings.

We meet on the 1st
Tuesday of the month.

Meeting Dates Are:

December 7, 2010

January 4, 2011

February 1, 2011

Time of Meetings

6:00-7:30 p.m.

Meetings are held at
Brighton, the Center for
Inclusive Communities

14207 Higgins
(One-half mile west of
Nacogdoches, between
Thousand Oaks and
O'Connor)

For More Information call
Judith Laufer, Advisor
210-828-7125

**Are you on Medicare and/or
Medicaid and you need to
sign up for an Advantage
Plan and don't know where to
start?** Do you know the differ-
ences between Medicare Part A
& B? What is Part D? Do I need
Part C? All these choices could
be very confusing and over-
whelming. At the Prosumer Ac-
tion Center we have a volunteer
that can help you understand
what all this means. If you
would like more information or
to make an appointment please
call the Prosumer Action Center
at 210-399-8734 and ask for
Michelle.

Mental Health Support Group Meets at

**St. George Episcopal Church
located at 6904 West Avenue
in Conference Room.**

**Every 2nd Wednesday at 7
pm.**

Call 342-4261 for more info

Warning Signs

Sounds too good to be true

Pressures you to act "right away"

Guarantees success

Promises unusually high returns

Requires an upfront investment—even for a "free" prize

Buyers want to overpay you for an item and have you send them the difference

Doesn't have the look of a real business

Something just doesn't feel right

Play It Safe

Never click on a link inside an e-mail to visit a website. Type the address into your browser instead.

It's easy for a business to look legitimate online. If you have any doubts, verify the company with the Better Business Bureau.

Only 2% of reported identity theft occurs through the mail. Report online fraud to the Federal Trade Commission at ftc.gov/complaint.

Retain your receipts, statements, and packing slips. Review them for accuracy.

Shred confidential documents instead of simply discarding them in the trash.

Fraud Facts

Your bank will never e-mail or call you for your account number.

Don't wire money to people you don't know

Be cautious of work-at-home job offers

Check out the company with the Better Business Bureau.

There are no legitimate jobs that involve reshipping items or financial instruments from your home.

Check your monthly bank statements for charges you don't recognize.

Order a copy of your credit report from each of the three national credit bureaus once a year from annualcreditreport.com

Get Involved

It's never too early to become an informed consumer. Point out "too good to be true" offers to your kids, and teach them to be skeptical.

Take an active interest in the financial activities of your aging parents.

Share information about scams with friends and family. Use social networking to help keep them safe.

We're Out to Stop FraudAnd You Can Help

If you've received a suspected fraud through the U.S. Mail, or if the mail was used in the furtherance of a crime that began on the internet, telephone, or in person, report it to the U.S. Postal Inspection Service.

U.S. Postal Inspection Services
Criminal Investigations Service Centr
ATTN: Mail Fraud
222 S. Riverside Plaza, Suite 1250
Chicago, IL 60606-6100

Postalinspectors.uspis.gov
1-877-876-8455

The Federal Trade Commission, the nation's consumer protection agency, works to prevent fraud and to provide information to help consumers spot, stop and avoid it. To file a complaint or get fee information on consumer issues, visit ftc.gov or call toll-free, 1-877-FTC-HELP. Watch a new video, How to File a Complaint, at ftc.gov/video to learn more.

SOURCE: United State Postal Service

Editor's Note: Another tip is to ask your bank what protections they have against identity theft.

2010 December 2010

	MON	TUE	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT
28	November 29 Laughing Qigong 2:00-3:00 @ Action Center DBSA 7 pm @8026 Floyd Curl	November 30 Recovery Inc 10-12 (see next page) Skill Building 1 - 2 @ Action Center	December 1 Social Event 1-3 @ Action Center Recovery Inc 7 pm	December 2 Arts and Crafts 11-12 @ Action Center DBSA #2 7-9 pm	December 3 Journaling 10:30-11:30 @ AC	12/4 DBSA-BC 2-4 @ St. Benedict's Church "the Nest"
5	December 6 Laughing Qigong 2:00-3:00 @ Action Center DBSA 7 pm @8026 Floyd Curl	December 7 Recovery Inc 10-12 Prosumer Action Center closed for Focus for Life Training NAMI Meeting 7 pm @ 510 Belknap	December 8 Prosumer Action Center closed for Focus for Life Training Recovery Inc 7 pm	December 9 Prosumer Action Center closed for Focus for Life Training DBSA #2 7-9 p.m.	December 10 Prosumer Action Center (AC) closed for all to attend the Prosumer Meeting 12-3 @ School of Nursing Meet in Lobby to be escorted to room.	12/11 Prosumer Meeting in Houston 12-3 DBSA-BC 2-4 @ St. Benedict's Church "the Nest"
12	December 13 Laughing Qigong 2:00-3:00 @ Action Center DBSA 7 pm @8026 Floyd Curl	December 14 Recovery Inc 10-12 Skill Building 1:00-2:00 @ Action Center Prosumer Evening Meeting 6-9 LA PAZ 530 San Pedro	December 15 Social Event 1-3 @ Action Center— Game Day Mental Health Support Grp 7 pm St. George Episcopal Church, 342-4261 Recovery Inc 7 pm	December 16 DBSA #2 7-9 p.m.	December 17 Journaling 10:30-11:30 @ Action Center	12/18 DBSA-BC 2-4 @ St. Benedict's Church "the Nest"
19	December 20 Laughing Qigong 2:00-3:00 @ Action Center DBSA 7 pm @8026 Floyd Curl	December 21 Recovery Inc 10-12 Skill Building 1- 2 @ Action Center	December 22 Social Event 1-3 @ Action Center— Holiday Party Recovery Inc 7 pm	December 23 DBSA #2 7-9 p.m.	December 24 CHCS and Prosumer Action Center Closed	12/25 DBSA-BC 2-4 @ St. Benedict's Church "the Nest"
26	December 27 Prosumer Action Center closed for IPS Training DBSA 7 pm @8026 Floyd Curl	December 28 Prosumer Action Center closed for IPS Training	December 29 Prosumer Action Center closed for IPS Training Mental Health Support Grp 7 pm St. George Episcopal Church, 342-4261 Recovery Inc 7 pm	December 30 Prosumer Action Center closed for IPS Training DBSA #2 7-9 p.m.	December 31 Prosumer Action Center closed for IPS Training	January 1, 2011 Happy New Year

PLEASE CALL AND VERIFY time and place prior to going to any of the meetings. Most Numbers are on the next page.

Prosumer Numbers

Nov 12 SA Prosumer Day Meeting 37 in attendance
Nov 16 SA Prosumer Evening Meeting 8 in attendance
Nov 6 HOU Prosumer Meeting 20 in attendance
Prosumer Newsletter circulation 2,000
Prosumer Facebook Fans 54
People following ProsumersInt on Twitter - 13

Prosumer Action Center October Numbers for FY'11

Eight volunteers provided
639.25 hours of service
Held public education on & increased awareness to 15+ people
Outreach occurred to @ 147 consumers and families
Referred 19 people to services in the community

59 people attended groups at the Action Center
16 unduplicated people served at the Action Center this month
A total of 127 services were provided
Members of Prosumer Action Center Facebook— 81

Focus for Life Training FY'10

117 people have completed full curriculum
87 people attended who completed a partial training
Trainings scheduled:
December 7-9, 2010 San Antonio

Intentional Peer Support Training FY'10
December 27-31, 2010

USPRA Texas
Windows to Wellness & Peer Learning Community II.,
January 12-15, 2011,
Omni Austin South Park Hotel,
Featuring USPRA National Chair
www.uspratexas.org

THE NEXT STEP TO SUSTAINABILITY:
Expanding Your Family/Consumer Run Organization's Impact by Offering Programs through a Managed Care Organization Network
Tuesday, January 11, 2011
Omni Austin South Park Hotel 4140 Governors Row Austin, TX
Register now at pjrig@aol.com or (512) 791-4701
Registration is FREE but size is limited.

11th Central Texas African American Family Support Conference (CTAAFSC)
Resources to Empower Consumers, Youth and Families
Thursday, Feb. 3 – Friday, Feb. 4
Hyatt Regency Austin 208 Barton Springs Rd. .
www.ctaafsc.org

CALENDAR NAMES, ADDRESSES and PHONE NUMBERS

Prosumer Action Center (AC) – located at 1921 Burnet, Office Manager, Michelle Mata 210-399-8734 FAX 210-653-7372
www.ProsumersInternational.org , Mailing Address: PO Box 120394, San Antonio, TX 78212 Alternate Phone number 210-653-5267 to RSVP
Toll free number is 1-877-334-2717

Day Meeting School of Nursing at the University Health Science Center from **12-3**
Evening Meeting at La Paz on 3rd Tuesday of the Month, 530 San Pedro from **6-9**

24/7 Crisis Clinic—Address is 527 N. Leona 2nd Floor (the Brady Green). 210-225-5481.

Crisis Hotline for people feeling suicidal, homicidal or people not doing well mentally 210-223-7233 or 1-800-316-9241.

CHCS – Center for Health Care Services address is 3031 IH 10 West (Central Office) 210-731-1300

BHPNAC—Behavioral Health Planning & Networking Advisory Committee
 for individuals with mental health and/or substance abuse issues

These committees are open to the public and will receive public comment. If you are interested in serving on one of these committees, contact: Evelyn Sanchez at 210-731-1300 ext 269

CHCS Adult Mental Health Intake—210-223-4061

Children's Clinic —Address is 711 E. Josephine 210-299-8139

Children's Clinic for Eligibility/Enrollment—Address is 1200 Broadway 210-223-4061

Burnet Clinic – Address is 1920 Burnet 210-227-3401

Palo Alto Clinic—Address is 2711 Palo Alto Road 210-533-2577

North West Clinic—Address is 9502 Computer Dr # 101 210-615-5700

Zarzamora Clinic - Address is 806 S. Zarzamora 210-434-7001

Advocacy Inc. - Address is 6800 First Park Ten Blvd. 210-737-0499 www.advocacyinc.org

DARS (Formerly TRC) Help individuals with disabilities obtain and maintain employment. For services call 1-800-628-5115

DBSA --Depressive Bipolar Support Alliance meets at 8026 Floyd Curl 210-945-0689

DBSA #2— Thursday nights, 7-9 p.m., Good News Lutheran Church, 11020 Old Corpus Christi Road (corner of Hwy 181 and IH-37 S); contact number, Wanda, 210-779-6479

DBSA Bexar County—Depressive Bipolar Support Alliance meets at 4623 Lord Road, call 210-262-2596 or email larryforbrich@yahoo.com,

DBSA Texas Phone: (512) 407-6676, Toll-free: 1 (866) 327-2839, Fax: (281) 480-4333, P.O. Box 591342, Houston, TX 77259-1342

Fair Housing Council of Greater San Antonio— Address 4414 Centerview Drive, Suite# 229 210-733-3247 Office

Mental Health Support Group — St. George Episcopal Church 6904 West Avenue 210- 342-4261 for more information

NAMI SA – National Alliance on Mentally Illness of San Antonio 210-734-3349

Recovery Inc.—Recovery International, the Power to Change—an Abraham Low Self Help System

Tuesdays, 10-12 Incarnate Word Retirement Center (The Garden Room); 4707 Broadway 830-216-4264

Wednesdays, 7:00 PM Ecumenical Center for Religion and Health; 8902 Ewing Hallsell Call Patricia (210) 655-6875

Peer-to-Peer and Family Support Group -San Juan de los Lagos Church at 3231 El Paso St. Call 210-734-3349 for more information

SAILS – San Antonio Independent Living Services address is 1028 S. Alamo Drive 210-281-1878

Support Alliance for Mental Health (of South Texas) www.samentalhealth.org Send info about all peer support groups and other events to normansbrother@rocketmail.com.

VIA Metro Center — Address is 1021 San Pedro 210-362-2020 Monday - Friday 7:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m. Call for help with bus schedules



Our Elected Officials

SENATOR LETICIA VAN DE PUTTE,
 SENATE DIST 26
 700 N. Saint Mary's St., Suite 1725-A, SA, TX 78205
 (210) 733-6604 Closest Bus Route: 30

REPRESENTATIVE TREY MARTINEZ FISCHER,
 HOUSE DIST116
 1910 Fredericksburg Road, SA, TX 78201
 (210) 737-7200 Closest Bus Route: 92, 91

REPRESENTATIVE JOE STRAUS,
 HOUSE DIST 121
 7373 Broadway Suite 202A SA, TX 78209
 (210) 828-4411 Closest Bus Route: 9, 10, 505, 647

REPRESENTATIVE, JOE FARIAS
 HOUSE DIST 118
 601 S. Seguin Road Converse TX 78109
 210-659-9071 Closest Bus Route: 21, 639

SENATOR JUDITH ZAFFIRINI, SENATE DIST 21
 12702 Topperwein, Rd. Suite 214, SA, TX 78233
 (210) 657-0095 Bus Route 640 stops 1 1/2 miles
 away from Zaffirini's Office

SENATOR CARLOS I. URESTI, SENATE DIST 19
 2530 SW Military Drive, Suite 103, SA, TX 78221
 (210) 932-2568 Closest Bus Route: 551, 550, 520

REPRESENTATIVE ROLAND GUTIERREZ
 HOUSE DIST 119
 3319 Sidney Brooks Bldg. 510 Suite 2 SA, TX 78235
 (210) 532-2758 Closest Bus Route: 34, 20

REPRESENTATIVE FRANK J. CORTE,
 HOUSE DISTRICT 122
 2040 Babcock Rd., Ste. 402, SA, TX 78229
 (210) 349-0320 Closest Bus Route: 91, 92 522, 532

REPRESENTATIVE RUTH JONES MCCLENDON,
 HOUSE DIST120
 403 South WW White Road, Suite 210, SA, TX 78219
 (210) 225-2107 Closest Bus Route: 25, 550

SENATOR JEFF WENTWORTH,
 SENATE DIST 25
 1250 N.E. Loop 410, Suite 925 SA, TX 78209
 (210) 826-7800 Closest Bus Route: 10

REPRESENTATIVE DAVID LEIBOWITZ,
 HOUSE DIST 117
 9107 Marbach Road Suite 111, SA, TX 78245
 (210) 645-4400 Closest Bus Route: 613, 615

REPRESENTATIVE JOAQUIN CASTRO,
 HOUSE DIST 125
 6100 Bandera. Ste. 130, SA, TX 78238
 (210) 684-6896 Closest Bus Route: 88

REPRESENTATIVE MIKE VILLARREAL,
 HOUSE DIST123
 1114 S. Saint Mary's Suite 110 SA, TX 78210
 (210) 734-8937 Closest Bus Route: 34,36,42

REPRESENTATIVE JOSE MENENDEZ,
 HOUSE DIST 124
 7121 US Hwy. 90 West, Suite 240, SA, TX 78227
 (210) 673-3579 Bus Route: 616

Editor in Chief—Janet Paleo PRO International P.O. Box 120394 San Antonio TX 78212
 Phone: 210-653-5267 FAX: 210-653-7372 Email: jpaleo@satx.rr.com www.ProsumersInternational.org

The views expressed in this newsletter do not necessarily reflect the views of the editor or any of its sponsors.

Useful Websites and Links

An Online Wellness Tool

www.ProsumersLightaCandle.org

Disability.gov Connecting the Disability Community to Information and Opportunities

www.Disability.Gov

The Prosumer website

www.ProsumersInternational.org

PRO International for Empowermentware

www.TheProInternational.com

National Consumer/Survivor Coalition

www.ncmhco.org

The Center for Health Care Services

www.CHCSBC.org

A website for all TX government departments

www.texas.gov

National Empowerment Center a consumer

technical Assistance Center www.Power2u.org

Depression and Bipolar Support Alliance

(DBSA) www.dbsalliance.org

Mental Health America of Texas

www.mhatexas.org

Texas Legislature Online

<http://www.capitol.state.tx.us>

Texas Administrative Code where you find the

laws pertaining to the running of MHMR Centers

<http://www.sos.state.tx.us/tac/>

The Texas Election Division to find voter information, and candidates

<http://www.sos.state.tx.us/tac/>

Substance Abuse Mental Health Services Administration

www.SAMHSA.gov

Mental Health Self Help Clearinghouse

<http://mhselfhelp.org/>

Website for Medications, Assistance Programs, Discount programs

www.needymeds.com

TX Department of Housing and Community Affairs

<http://www.tdhca.state.tx.us>

Patient Assistance with Medications

<http://www.phrma.org/>

Free Online Computer Classes through Global

Community Foundation www.gcflearnfree.org/

For more information specific to their current situation and the transition to Medicare Rx

www.texasmedicarerx.org

Blog for discussion of mental illness in veterans by Dr. Maria Felix-Ortiz www.bexarinmind.org

Assistance with household goods for people with chronic mental illness. Home Comforts

www.bexarhomecomforts.com

NAMI a Organization for the families of people with mental illness www.nami.org

Via Hope, a collaboration of Mental Health Advocacy groups to help with the transformation of services in Texas. www.viahope.org

Prosumer Action Center

We have a new phone number for you. It is 210-399-8734. We apologize for anyone trying to get in touch with us. Our phone system went down and it is in the process of being fixed.

This month Prosumer Journeymen have been working hard at the Action Center. We had so many clothes that we have moved the clothes closet to a bigger room. We have been working on Holiday Cards with personal notes in them for the people who have to spend the holidays at SASH and Haven for Hope. We have also been collecting unwrapped toys and gifts for the families at Fairweather Lodge, busy with training and preparing for volunteer activities for the new year.

We are busy planning two new groups, Recovery 101 and a 6 week "How Do I Do Money?" a new financial course we will be starting soon.


We will be having a Focus for Life Class on December 7-9, 2010 and Intentional Peer Support December 27-31 at the Prosumer Action Center. There is a fee of \$645 but there are scholarships available from PRO International and Prosumers. Contact Michelle Mata for scholarship information. Enroll and fill out the scholarship online at www.ProsumersInternational.org

Focus for Life, a \$400 per person training, is being sponsored by Prosumers and PRO International, so the training is free for you.

Prosumers presented at the NAMI SA meeting as well as the Faith Based Mental Ministry. One of our apprentices told people about the Prosumer Program at an event called Stamp Out Stigma and handed out information.

Nick Holstein has agreed to begin teaching classes at the Action Center. We are in discussion about Resume classes and Drama Classes. He is the Executive Director of the A.R.T.S Project. His group is performing at Fiesta Texas in November and December. Check them out if you are in the area.

This month we celebrated volunteers at our annual Volunteer Event to commend everyone who has volunteered at the Action Center since we opened. It is great to recognize all the great people who have made such a difference in our community.



Prosumers Go Bowling!!!

To raise funds for the Prosumer Program, we do a lot of fundraising. It is time for our annual Bowl-A-Thon!!

When: December 12, 2010

Time: 5 pm until we finish

Why: To raise money for conferences and other events

How Can I Participate?

Call the Prosumer Action Center at 210-399-8734 and sign up. You will be given a sheet to collect donations. Then bring your sheet and any money you have collected so far to the Brunswick Thousand Oaks Bowl at Thousand Oaks Blvd. on Sunday, Dec 12 at 5 pm. You will bowl three games, (or we can get a substitute for you) and your games will be recorded. You then pick up other sponsored money and give them a thank you card with your bowling scores. If you raise \$200 your shoes are free, otherwise you will need to pay for your shoes

You don't have to be a Prosumer to help! If you want to support our program, you can sponsor someone or get your own sheet and come bowl. We have lots of fun! Come help us raise money!! The more the merrier!

How Does the Prosumer Program Work?



Often at meetings, I stand before the group and declare that we are not a support group, but an empowerment group. Support happens at the Prosumer meeting, but the purpose of the group is to help you realize your power as a person, focus on wellness and self worth, as well as learning about resources in the community. That sounds really good, but what does that mean and how do we know it works. We know it works because our members say it works. For those scientific types that want to know the ins and outs, the theory and studies, I offer this article.

We worked in collaboration with the School of Nursing, Health Science Center in San Antonio Research Scholar Program for about a year. They identified the model we use which is called “Salutogenesis”. This is a fancy term for focusing on wellness using three distinctive areas.

The first area is realizing that you have control over your life, which you get by realizing that you have choices in all things. Having choices takes us from a victim of life or illness to a survivor of life or illness. To have choices means we have to recognize that when we blame or get angry, we are giving the person or situation the power over us. Since “they made us...” or “it is their fault that...” leaves us at their mercy because we are relying on “it” or “them” to change so we can feel better. Once we take back our power and realize that we are in control, it is only then that we can choose choices that empower us to have a full and happy life.

The second area is realizing that you have resources. I am not talking about a lot of money, but knowing who to contact or where to go for information for things that we need. Family is a great resource. If your car breaks down and your family is in town, you can call for help. Friends are a great resource for a lot of things. Many times consumers of mental health services do not have family or friends which leaves them lacking in resources. At a Prosumer meeting, everyone is family. You can find out anything from what dentist uses a sliding scale fee to where to buy used clothing in large sizes. If you are going into the doctor or hospital, we have one member who can tell you everything that is going to happen, how it is going happen and what to expect.

The third area is doing something meaningful in life. Doing something that makes a difference in someone else’s life, gives you a sense of well being. We encourage this in the Prosumer Program. By volunteering, you will find your life recovering from what ails it. It is like when you get a paper cut. If you are busy, you don’t notice it until maybe when you start for bed. You look down and see it and it starts hurting again. If you are not busy, it can hurt and worry you all day long. Mental illness works the same way. If you are continually focusing inward, your pain will feel worse, maybe even magnified. It is through focusing outward, that life becomes exciting, happy and rewarding, no matter what pain you may have.

Prosumers are a group of people who have been labeled in life. They meet at a monthly meeting to learn how to gain power over their life. They become a Prosumer by being proactive in their recovery and giving back to the community. It is by being in action that you are a Prosumer. A Prosumer is what you do, not who you are. Prosumers take responsibility for their lives. They don’t sit and wait for something to happen. They look to make the world better in some way. And after becoming a Prosumer, many times the next step is a job or school. These are the main reasons people stop coming to the meetings. Many of our members know that Recovery is Possible, because they are out there living their dreams. Be in action around your dreams. Be a Prosumer because **RECOVERY IS POSSIBLE!!!!**

Sometimes risk taking may involve the most simple of acts. Yet we often whip up a bag full of excuses to avoid taking action. For goodness sake (literally), let's step beyond our security bubbles and start reaching out to those who cross our path.

— Chelle Thompson, Editor of Inspiration Line

Prosumer T-Shirts



Many of you have asked how to get your own Prosumer T-Shirt. They are available now! This year they are a Heather Gray Tee with Black Ink Screen Printing. On the front is the Prosumer Logo and on the back, Recovery is Possible! Show your support for the Prosumer Program and order your shirt today. All shirts hand silk screened by Prosumers. Supplies limited so order yours today!



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