March Updates

* SIT has a new program administrator, Andi Hilinski! Andi has worked for eight years in SFUSD in many roles including School Social Worker, Mentor School Social Worker, and currently as a Program Administrator with the School Health Programs Office. Prior to SFUSD, Andi worked as a School Social Worker for Los Angeles Unified School District in elementary and high schools and provided home-based therapy to underserved pregnant and parenting teenagers. She brings her experience and passion for providing school-based mental health services to her role as Program Administrator of the Student Intervention Team.

* Help us spread the word...SIT has one remaining Information Session for interns interested in the 2014-15 school year. Here are the details:

Friday, March 14, 2014, 1:00-3:00PM and Monday, March 17, 2014, 9:00-11:00AM

School Health Programs, 1515 Quintara Street, San Francisco, CA

Appreciations

* A special THANK YOU goes out to Foster Youth Services and School Counseling for partnering with the Student Intervention Team to plan the Spring Institute for all our interns. We appreciate the collaboration!

* We also truly appreciate all of our current interns who have promoted the SIT Internship Program and are referring their friends and colleagues to our recent and upcoming Information Sessions.

Upcoming Trainings...

March 2014


* Spring Institute. Thursday, March 20th and Friday, March 21st, 8:30-12:30pm. Presenters: SIT, FYS, and School Counseling. Interns are required to attend one of these days.

April 2014

* Dialectical Behavioral Therapy (DBT), Monday, April 14, 2014, 2-4pm. Presenter: Shelly Richardson, MFT, Private Practice. Location: 1515 Quintara Street, Room 8

Mark your Calendar!

* March 31st-April 4th is Spring Break – Schools are Closed!
Healthy eating is good for our bodies and for our minds. According to the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI, 2014), carbohydrates, fats, proteins, vitamins and minerals are essential parts of any diet that provide specific benefits for the body. A lack of any of these nutritional components can lead to increased mental health problems and even change brain functioning. For people living with mental illness, eating well is especially important as it affects your daily life, mood and energy level.

Nutritional neuroscience is an emerging field of research explaining how nutritional factors are intertwined with human cognition, behavior, and emotions. Diets of patients suffering from mental disorders often show a severe deficiency in essential vitamins, minerals, and omega-3 fatty acids. Studies have indicated that daily supplements of vital nutrients are often effective in reducing patient’s symptoms. (Rao, et al., 2008). Research suggests they may even be appropriate for controlling and to some extent preventing depression, bipolar disorder, schizophrenia, eating and anxiety disorders, ADHD, autism, and addiction.

According to Low (2010), no matter what the underlying cause of a mood disorder, patients should be counseled about the relationship between food and mood. Plainly stated, “the way we eat affects the way we feel.” Clinicians should consider recommending a low-glycemic, modified Mediterranean diet rich in fruits, vegetables, whole grains and seafood and low in processed, refined foods for optimizing mental health.

As educators and clinicians, we should encourage our students and families to learn more about healthy eating. The affects of healthy eating on physical and mental health can be instrumental in maintaining overall health and well-being.

References
http://www.nami.org/
http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2738337

According to The Educator’s Newsletter Handbook created by Network for a Healthier California, “Health and Learning Success Go Hand-in-Hand”. Below you will find some statements from the Handbook as to how this is true.

- Increasing fruit and vegetable consumption tends to increase academic performance in undernourished children.
- Studies show a relationship between good nutrition and improved behavioral performance in the classroom.
- Children need at least 60 minutes of physical activity every day to stay fit both mentally and physically.
- Students’ attention, attendance, and test scores improve when they eat breakfast.
- Educator’s have a strong influence in shaping students’ eating habits...BE A ROLE MODEL!

March is Nutrition Awareness Month. See your site supervisor and www.healthiersf.org for information and resources.

“Eat Food. Not Too Much. Mostly Plants” -Michael Pollan

Intern Spotlight

Mansur Nurullah is currently attending Cal State East Bay-Hayward in the Counseling/MFT Program. He is completing his traineeship at Balboa High School providing one-on-one counseling to the students in the Wellness Center. Mansur worked as a taxi driver for several years and it is through this work experience that he became interested in social psychology. Initially, he was fascinated by the complexity of trust assessments that he found himself performing in the cab. Later on, he became interested in how the repeated exposure to other peoples’ stories, emotions, aggression, and actions were beginning to impact his life and those of his colleagues in the cab industry. He also worked briefly for the SFUSD as a teacher. He had such a positive experience, that when it came time to choose a traineeship, SFUSD was his first choice.

Next year, Mansur would like to continue working with adolescents and their families, while increasing his competence as a clinician.