



Felton Institute Newsletter

The *Sept 2020* Issue

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FEATURED ARTICLE 06

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September is Suicide Prevention Month



TRANSFORMING LIVES
& INNOVATING SINCE 1889

SPOTLIGHT

Dr. Tato Torres

Early Psychosis Bilingual Therapist



Dr. Tato Torres, an Early Psychosis Bilingual Therapist for Felton Institute, has a warm demeanor and eyes that twinkle when he smiles. In celebration of Hispanic/Latino Heritage Month, Tato shares his memories of growing up in Puerto Rico, and the values his parents instilled within him. He notes that, in addition to traditional song, meals and dance, he expresses his contribution through pro-bono trauma work and his mentoring of Latino clinicians.

“We cannot forget commemorating groups that traditionally have been marginalized, as is the case with the array of Indigenous people with their rich cultures and traditions throughout the Caribbean, Mexico, Central America and South America,” Tato says.

Tato grew up in the town of Yauco, which is famous for its coffee. His parents and, especially his paternal grandmother, reared him with an early love for music, dancing and storytelling.

“My father and grandmother always told me that we are storytellers (“cuentistas”) and that I would be voicing my own stories, ‘everyone has something to tell’. I learned from my parents very early the value of making relationships work, respecting everyone and working with anyone’s best side. I learned the value of being a generator, appropriate effort and human collaboration. All great things that we generate are expressions of and a statement of human collaboration. Being personally resourceful is great and being a team member is awesome. We can learn from anyone, and we must, as learning and change can come from any direction.”

“**All great things that we generate are expressions of and a statement of human collaboration.**”

- Dr. Tato Torres

Tato fondly remembers his first eight years of education in the countryside, with family, community, and church playing a significant role during those formative years. It helped him learn how to relate to others and manage himself in school and later, in work. “I was interested in philosophy and from the very beginning, my main subject was ‘the day of the Other’. This was an exploration of “otherness” through philosophy and political philosophy. I was fascinated by suddenly finding out that living together wasn’t perceived as an intrinsic value or good in itself in most philosophies, and that through history, the attributes we assign to people were not extended to many other human beings. Many people throughout history were excluded and treated as “property” or “pawns.” That was my existential search period, my socio-political period exploring the experience of politics. Now at Felton, I am in the business of exploring with clients the politics of their own personal experience.”

After acknowledging and treating his own depression and some early trauma, Dr. Torres considered therapy as a career. He says a “crazy suggestion” from his therapist led him to visit and then move to the Bay Area. His first stop was at a fair in San Francisco’s Golden Gate Park where they invited him to visit a Latino residential program entitled La Amistad (Friendship). He joined the Progress Foundation, where he oversaw 11 programs, four of them crisis programs and one, an urgent care unit. Tato also worked as Director of La Posada Residential Crisis program before coming to Felton in January of this year.

“After getting to know Felton’s core mission through Bruce Adams, (Early Psychosis Associate Director), I found its value congruent with my commitment to work in organizations that have a value-driven mission and treat clients with a sense of respect and dignity.

“I think Felton’s history and commitment are amazing, so I see Felton first as a social action critical project addressing real present and historical social needs and social dysfunction. I also see Felton as a clinical action critical project with a mission and commitment to activate hope in action in the lives of people emerging with psychosis and bipolar conditions. On both projects, Felton consistently sees the human being first in the people we serve.

“Fundamentally people are valuable, and they get challenged with mental health conditions. They can be included in a concerted partnership with a Felton clinical team that addresses the diversity of their needs. Along the way, the client learns to ask for help and consult in an effective manner. They learn core Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) skills to manage their condition and make more informed choices, where they get to a point that they [understand] that they are really valuable and can bring value into their own lives and the lives of others, making a difference.

“So, Felton in many ways, through the therapists, the psychiatric Nurse Practitioner providing informed CBT and trauma-informed medication support, the Peer Counselor, the School and Work Support Specialist, and the Family Support Specialist, provides an array of services to maximize the opportunity for recovery of any of the clients we serve. Definitely, the team makes all the difference. I am proud of being given the chance to be a member of the San Mateo Clinical Team, and I am now also supporting our Marin Felton Program.”

Tato lives a full life, and he enjoys dancing to his music playlists in different languages and genres, including top jazz, African, Flamenco, Indigenous Latin American and United States music. He collects small videos of comedians and enjoys making tried and true Puerto Rican recipes to complement his wife’s Italian cooking. But he also spends his spare time teaching and counseling at San Francisco State University. He provides consultation and coaching with individuals and organizations, but his main effort has been in developing an institute to treat people that have experienced disappearance, captivity and torture in Latin America and supporting the parents of the disappeared throughout Latin America.

“This mission belongs to my commitment dealing with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) induced by the terror of groups or the state/government. This work moved during the last 10 years to dealing with induced polarization, exclusion, and demonization of the Other, be it an indigenous person, a black man, or any person excluded and demonized because of his or her ethnicity, political or religious views, lifestyle, or sexual orientation,” Dr. Torres shares.

“ I also see Felton as a clinical action critical project with a mission and commitment to activate hope in action in the lives of people emerging with psychosis and bipolar conditions. On both projects, Felton consistently sees the human being first in the people we serve.

He is also a mentor to blind clinicians. “My mentoring of blind clinicians has been a blessing in disguise, as now I am supporting my own sister, as she is gradually losing her eyesight. [I observe the] paradoxical nature of giving and receiving; one of the clinicians I just finished mentoring is now conversing with my sister about his own experience of losing his vision many years ago. This experience has anchored how he supports clients dealing with both radical acceptance and change. He is an expert in Mindfulness, a John Hopkins graduate, and as much I have supported his professional career, he also has been a great teacher for me in many ways, including in my redefinition of what it is hope. Teamwork always achieves best results.”

Dr. Torres collects sayings from all over the world. Two of his favorite sayings are, one from his paternal grandmother: “The key that opens the door is the same key that opens the door, choose carefully and you will be opening many doors.”

And a second is a composite: “Learn from all, learning will come to you from anyone and in any direction ...not knowing is ok, as then you can keep listening and learning and above all, keep dancing... there is no path walker... you make your path as you walk; your hope is activated in this small step you are taking right now, one step at a time, here and now, all in the dance.” 🎶

For more information about Felton’s Early Psychosis Program, please visit feltonearlypsychosis.org or call 415-474-7310.

Town Halls and Graduations: What's New with Felton's Early Psychosis Division

A series of virtual town hall events hosted by the Early Psychosis Division have been praised as a success!



Thanks for all you do in support of one another, our program participants, and their families.

**We stand apart
AND
we are ALL in this
TOGETHER.**

Adriana Furuzawa, LMFT
Division Director

Image: Sample Slide from past Town Halls, focusing self-care and how to stay connected in the time of COVID-19

Held this year on from April through September on Zoom, the eight town halls shared self-care resources for the teams, compiled community resources for distribution, as well as developed COVID-19 safety protocols for all sites. The department also presented an overview of the final quarter of the fiscal year in numbers.

Felton Early Psychosis staff, clients and family members celebrated the milestones of young adults, ages 14 through 35, graduating from (re)MIND® and BEAM (Bipolar Disorder Early Assessment and Management)

with graduation ceremonies for 11 graduates at the San Mateo site and 14 graduates from the Alameda site.

All Felton Institute (re)MIND® and BEAM program participants receive a thorough diagnostic assessment and specialized individual therapy. They have access to medication management, case management, occupational and educational support, peer support, and family support, as desired, for up to two years. The goal is to achieve lasting recovery and to foster skills to manage potential residual symptoms. ■

Felton Hosts Dr. Heinssen for Early Psychosis Mental Health Town Hall

Felton Institute's Early Psychosis Division Director Adriana Furuzawa hosted a town hall meeting welcoming Dr. Robert Heinssen from the National Institute for Mental Health to a special meeting with members of the Early Psychosis Division in 2019.

Felton Institute President and CEO Al Gilbert greeted everyone at the luncheon meeting at Felton's 1005 Atlantic Avenue site in Alameda. We hope you enjoy these highlights from the event!



Felton's Early Psychosis Programs

Felton's Early Psychosis Programs provide services in five Northern and Central California Counties: Alameda, San Francisco, San Mateo, Marin, and Monterey. It is a rigorous, data-driven program using five evidence-based practices in synergy.

Felton's Early Psychosis Program's comprehensive treatment approach includes:

1. Case management
2. Cognitive Behavioral Therapy for Psychosis (CBTp) algorithm-guided medication management
3. Individual therapy
4. Family group therapy
5. Educational and vocational counseling to help clients and their families manage the disease over the course of a lifetime



Felton's Early Psychosis Programs have won awards and through (re)MIND®, BEAM, and BEAM UP® - and serve approximately 350 individuals across five counties.

Felton Early Psychosis Program is the most comprehensive treatment program for early psychosis west of the Eastern seaboard.

COMPLETE LIST OF FELTON INSTITUTE'S EARLY PSYCHOSIS PROGRAMS



(re)MIND®

With early diagnosis and a comprehensive roster of evidence-based practices, (re)MIND® follows a model considered a breakthrough in the treatment of psychosis.

The Felton (re)MIND® program treats youth and young adults, ages of 15-24, who are experiencing the recent onset of psychosis. The program focuses on prevention and recovery.

The (re)MIND® program is committed to transforming the treatment and perception of early psychosis by intervening early with evidence-based, culturally competent assessment, diagnosis and interventions, so that young people can learn skills to manage the ups and downs of the recent onset of psychosis.

(re)MIND® SERVICES INCLUDE:

- Rigorous, Research-Validated Diagnostic Assessment
- Individual Psychotherapy with Cognitive Behavioral Therapy for Psychosis (CBTp)
- Strengths-Based Case Management
- Employment and Education Support
- Algorithm-Based Medication Support
- Multi-Family Groups
- Peer and Family Support
- Integrated Substance Use Treatment
- Community Outreach and Education

WHO FELTON (re)MIND® PROGRAMS SERVE:

- First Episode Psychosis (FEP) clients
- People with psychosis and additional issues, like major depression and substance abuse, and special populations, including refugees and Native Americans.
- Primarily English, Spanish, Cantonese, and Mandarin speakers, with capacity to serve clients in any language

COMPLETE LIST OF FELTON INSTITUTE'S EARLY PSYCHOSIS PROGRAMS



BEAM

Bipolar Disorder Early Assessment and Management (BEAM) is an innovative, evidence-based program developed by Felton Institute to diagnose and treat bipolar disorder I. BEAM provides treatment to adolescents and young adults, so they can learn to manage their condition and move towards remission and recovery. Currently, BEAM is available in San Francisco and San Mateo Counties, with plans to expand to all five program sites.

BEAM is comprehensive and focuses on early intervention. The program is based on a two-year plan that is designed to put individuals and their families back on track. We encourage teens, young adults and their families to learn more about BEAM at <http://feltonearlypsychosis.org>.

TO BE ELIGIBLE FOR THE BEAM PROGRAM, PARTICIPANTS MUST:

- Have a diagnosis of Bipolar I or II Disorder
- Have experienced no more than three manic episodes
- Be 15-24 years of age
- Have any health insurance, Medi-Cal or be Medi-Cal eligible.

ALL OF OUR BEAM PROGRAM SITES:

- Serve clients ages 14-34 who have had between 1-3 bipolar episodes
- Accept all insurance
- Accept uninsured clients

COMPLETE LIST OF FELTON INSTITUTE'S EARLY PSYCHOSIS PROGRAMS



BEAM UP®

BEAM UP® is a coordinated specialty care model designed to enable youth and young adults to navigate their transition to independence and prevent the potential impact that mental illness can have on it.

The BEAM UP® program applies an array of services to support these individuals and their families in realizing their full potential.

BEAM UP® SERVICES INCLUDE:

- Rigorous, Research-Validated Diagnostic Assessment
- Individual Psychotherapy with Cognitive Behavioral Therapy for Psychosis (CBTp)
- Strengths-Based Case Management
- Employment and Education Support
- Algorithm-Based Medication Support
- Multi-Family Groups
- Peer and Family Support
- Integrated Substance Use Treatment
- Community Outreach and Education

TO BE ELIGIBLE FOR THE BEAM UP® PROGRAM, PARTICIPANTS MUST:

- Be a San Francisco County resident (regardless of insurance status)
- Be experiencing recent trouble with perception, thoughts, mood, or functioning
- Be 14-25 years old

Key program partners include UCSF, East Bay Community Recovery Project, Sojourner Truth Foster Family Agency, the Mental Health Association of Alameda, and the behavioral health services departments of the five California counties with Felton Early Psychosis Programs. The Mental Health Association of San Francisco was also a founding partner.

Early Psychosis Division's Remobilization Ensure Continuity of Services

Felton's Early Psychosis Emergency Operations Centers quickly pivoted its services to ensure that program participants would receive continuous behavioral health support.

People living with psychiatric disorders, such as schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, or depression, are at a higher risk from severe COVID-19. According to scientists at UCSF, it's common for people with severe mental illnesses to refuse to go to the hospital and even delay seeking treatment when they have symptoms. When it comes to COVID-19, a delay in treatment can be a matter of life or death. Ensuring the continuity of mental health care supports their physical well-being as well.

Addressing these concerns and under state and county Shelter-in-Place orders, Felton's Early Psychosis Emergency Operations Centers quickly pivoted its services to ensure that program participants would receive continuous behavioral health support. 100% of participants receive services via tele-health sessions, instead of in-person visits. In this time of COVID-19 crisis, stress is generating in all populations. Fear and anxiety about a new disease can be overwhelming and induce strong emotions and anxiety.

Experts say the country's mental health care system could be headed into a crisis as state psychiatric hospitals and local clinics gear up for an influx of people with COVID-19. Mental health issues often coincide with a unique set of challenges that make it difficult for people to access even the most basic necessities, such as food, medications, stable housing, and healthcare. Human beings have an incredible ability to adapt and survive, with the right mental health support and programs. Felton Institute is part of the solution.

EARLY PSYCHOSIS DIVISION SITE REMOBILIZATION

(re)MIND® | BEAM Alameda

1005 Atlantic Avenue, Alameda, CA, 94501

Remobilization status: Open | Effective: June 22, 2020
Days and Hours of Operation: Monday through Friday, 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

(re)MIND® Marin

361 Third Street, Suite B, San Rafael, CA, 94901

Remobilization status: Open. | Effective: June 29, 2020
Days and Hours of Operation: Monday through Friday, 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

(re)MIND® Monterey

11 Quail Run Circle, Suite 202, Salinas, CA, 93907

Remobilization status: Open | Effective: June 8, 2020
Days and Hours of Operation: Monday through Friday, 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

(re)MIND® | BEAM | BEAM UP® San Francisco

6221 Geary Street, 2nd Floor, SF, CA, 94121

Remobilization status: Open | Effective: June 15, 2020
Days and Hours of Operation: Monday and Wednesday, 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

(re)MIND® | BEAM San Mateo

1108 S. El Camino Real, San Mateo, CA, 94402

Remobilization status: Open | Effective: June 15, 2020
Days and Hours of Operation: Tuesday, Thursday and Friday, 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.



Early Psychosis
Division

(re)MIND* | BEAM | BEAM UP*

COVID-19 Shelter-in-Place Order
March 16 - June 30, 2020



CLIENTS SERVED
211



FACE-TO-FACE VISITS
169



NEW ENROLLMENTS
52

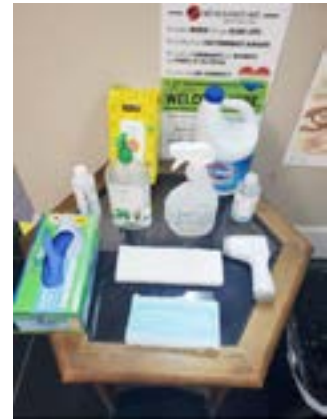


SERVICE HOURS RENDERED
4,018



PHONE SESSIONS
2,668

www.felton.org



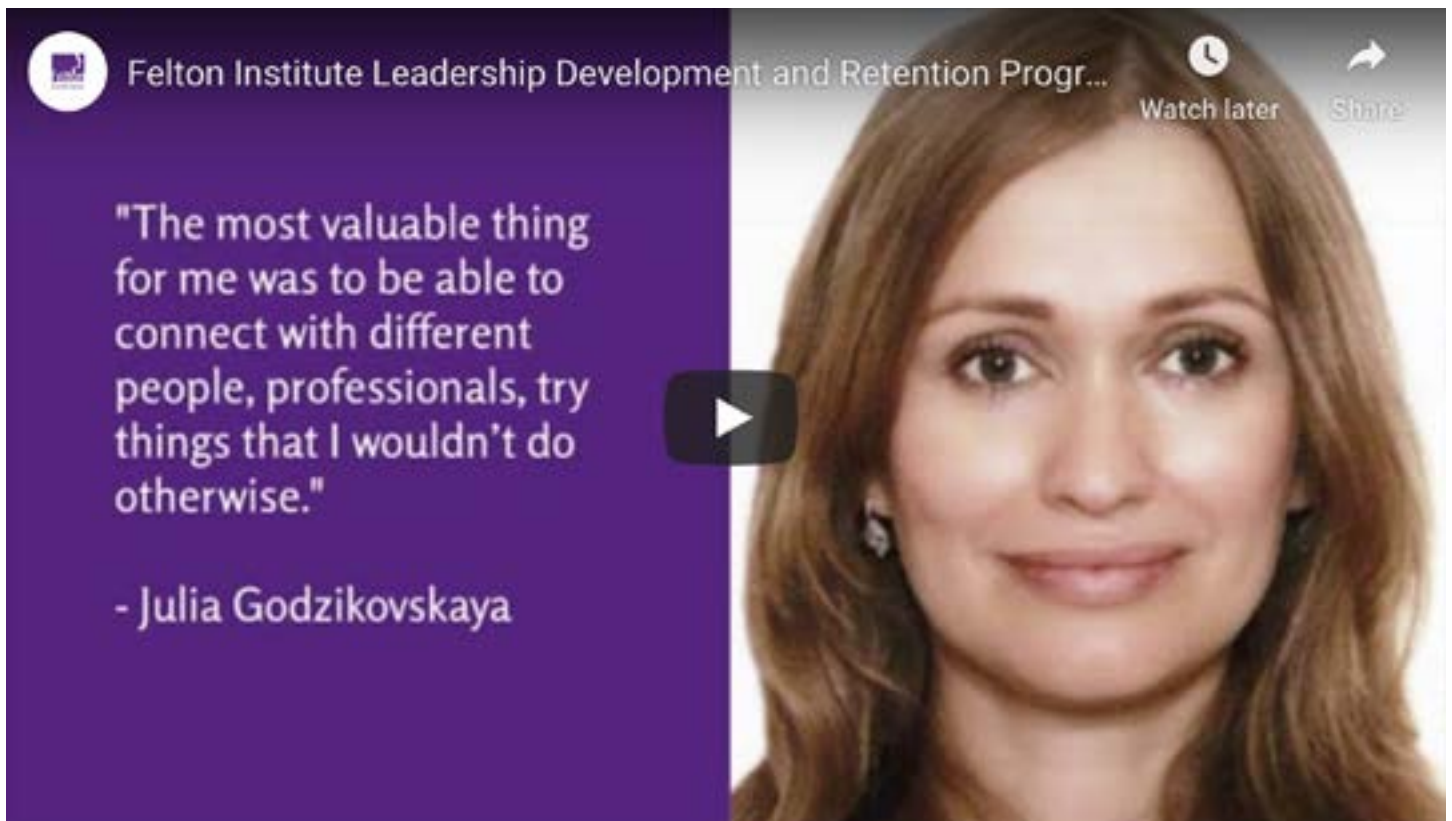
Felton's First Cohort Graduates From Leadership Development and Retention Program

On September 22, 2020, the first cohort of Felton Institute's Leadership Development and Retention Program graduated in a virtual ceremony.

The four graduates completed a three-year program designed to support leadership development and reward those who best represent the agency.

2017-2020 COHORT LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT & RETENTION PROGRAM GRADUATES





The training program runs for three years and features formal learning, coaching and mentoring, experimental learning, working in different departments and a \$15,000 payment after successful completion. Employees eligible for the program are those who have worked with Felton Institute for at least three consecutive years and incurred no written warnings during the fiscal year period.

The leadership development program selected Bruce Adams, Julia Godzikovskaya, Jordan Pont, and Adrienne Abad Santos to flourish via an expanded introduction to leadership responsibilities within various divisions of the agency.

The goal of the program was to retain and reward those who represent future agency leadership. President and CEO Al Gilbert provided congratulations and explained his vision that led to the creation of the Leadership Development and Retention Program.

Chief People Officer Lizatte Dalmacio-Julien gave a welcome. In addition to CPO Liz Dalmacio-Julien, Felton COO of Children Youth & Family (CYF) and Transitional Age Youth (TAY) Yohana Quiroz and Felton CFO and COO Marvin Davis serve as executive-level mentors for the program. Five cohorts have been chosen for the 2020-2023 program. 📺

**Congratulations again to the graduates
and to the new cohort group!**

September is Suicide Prevention Month

The world is now seven months into the “new normal,” and the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic continues.



There is consistent developing news about the disease spread, rising death rates, a struggling economy, and the constant risks faced by health care professions and essential workers.

During Labor Day Weekend this month, Felton’s San Francisco Suicide Prevention (SFSP) team participated in an event that provided a preview of LatinX Heritage Month (September 15-October 15) and commemorated Suicide Prevention Month.

LatinX Heritage Month recognizes the enduring contributions and importance of LatinX Americans to the United States. The month-long celebration honors the many heritages and cultures of Americans from or with ancestors from Mexico, the Caribbean,

Spain, and Central and South America. The term “LatinX” refers to people of Latin American origin and is used as a gender-neutral or non-binary alternative to Latino or Latina.

Latino Connect and Carnaval SF invited SFSP to do socially distancing outreach awareness at its “Healing and Recovery, Salud es Poder” event in the Mission at John

O’Connell High School and on Harrison Street. In addition to dancing and music, the event had free COVID-19 testing, diabetes, blood pressure and dental screenings, free grocery distribution, a job fair and small businesses onsite.

You may contact San Francisco Suicide Prevention by phone or text:

Crisis Line: 415-781-0500 or 1-800-273-8255

Crisis Text Line: 24/7 Confidential Support, Text MYLIFE to 741741

In the wake of news regarding vaccines and therapeutics in the future, we wait and contemplate the long-term consequence of the pandemic on our mental health. Reports inform us that pandemic-related suicides are surging in many high-risk countries. Suicide hotlines are busier than ever. Suicide prevention, mental health, and self-care should be everyone’s priority.

Mental health professionals have identified a few factors related to COVID-19 that can be expected to increase suicide risk.

Economic Stress

Research studies have long linked economic downturns with increased suicides, and we are now experiencing the worse employment rates since the Great Depression. Due to COVID-19, we face business closures, unemployment, and the shutdown of major public events.

Social Isolation

Social distancing efforts, while an essential tool in containing COVID-19 spread, has meant the loss of contact with friends and family. The isolation is incredibly hard on those living alone or in retirement homes. The loss of human interaction feeds into depression and suicidal thoughts.

Social Media and News Overwhelm

While social media has been a useful way of staying connected with loved ones, we have been besieged with news and non-stop coverage of the pandemic. Given the negative outlook on how the pandemic will drag on for another year, it is hardly surprising that many experience disorientation, depression and frustration.

Personal and Family Issues

The fear that you and your loved one might contract COVID-19 is very real. Grief over the loss of a loved one is very apparent in these times. Being in constant close contact with the family under shelter-in-place orders or having to step in as a caregiver and teacher for young children as they navigate virtual learning are also significant adjustments and cause for sadness.

Health Care Challenges

Many people with existing medical care problems are finding themselves with limited access to health services. Some are canceling elective procedures and having to deal with symptoms such as chronic pain. Since many people with chronic medical issues are already vulnerable to suicide thinking, losing access to medical services reduces the ability to cope. Reports indicate that some primary care facilities are also not giving priority to mental health care services.

SFSP has been operating for the past 58 years and has an incredibly large volunteer base, receiving more than 300 calls a day and saving lives 24/7. The organization was founded by British journalist and Episcopalian priest Bernard Mayes. Upon his arrival in the Bay Area in 1960, San Francisco had the highest suicide rate in the country.

Today, SFSP has a long history of service and has grown into a network of over 500 crisis centers. SFSP has trained over 6,000 youth members in recognizing warning signs and in suicide de-escalation. San Francisco Suicide Prevention's 24-hour Crisis Line provides immediate crisis intervention and emotional support to everyone who calls.

SFSP aims to help people find a treatment that encourages them to end suicidal thoughts and start finding healthier ways to cope. Mental health conditions are often seen as the cause of suicide, but suicide is rarely caused by one single factor. Other contributing factors are related to relationships, substance abuse, physical health, career and financial problems. Many people who die of suicide are not diagnosed with a mental health condition at the time of death. Whether this is because the mental health issues miss diagnosis early, the fact remains that continuing mental health care after the initial cry for help is critical. Suicide is preventable. Even after the immediate crisis passes, be sure to seek help and get appropriate treatment for suicidal thoughts and feelings and learn effective coping strategies. Reach out to a close friend or loved one. ■

If you would like to support SFSP in our mission, please donate today. To give, text 'Felton' to 41444 on your mobile device, it's quick and easy. You may also [donate online](#) to directly support SFSP.

SFSP Guests on KCBS Radio's "I'm Listening" Special

Amid 2020 Stresses, Community Advocates Step Up Mental Health Support

First aired on September 23, 2020



September is National Suicide Prevention Month, and on September 23, 2020, Felton's San Francisco Suicide Prevention (SFSP) team members, Director of Programs Van Hedwall and Hotline Manager Meg Sierra were special guests on KCBS Radio. Hosted by Keith Menconi, the two-hour special aired as part of the national "I'm Listening" campaign to promote suicide prevention and end the stigma around mental health needs.

Hedwall spoke of the challenges SFSP faces in COVID-19 times and how high-risk callers increased significantly. He also spoke of the unique challenges faced by both the elderly and teens, two groups who are at higher risk of having isolated feelings.

He said, "Isolation is one of the main causes of suicidal ideation. When teens are isolated, they tend to carry out suicide attempts, which brings us to the idea that human connection is related to being one of our basic needs. When that's taken away, mental health issues arise, and our depression and anxiety increase."

The radio show also featured SafeSpace, an advocacy group devoted to teen mental health, and the nonprofit agency National First Responders Fund that supports the mental health of first responders, including firefighters, paramedics and police. SFSP's Meg Sierra stressed the need for self-care in these critical times and the importance of reaching out for help. "San Francisco Suicide Prevention's mission is to focus on safety first. SFSP is an alternate resource for people to reach out," she said. 📺

For more information, please visit sfsuicide.org

SAVE THE DATE!

Virtual Laughs for Life 2021



To learn more about San Francisco Suicide Prevention (SFSP) visit: sfuicide.org.
Click [HERE](#) to Donate Specifically to San Francisco Suicide Prevention.

Feeling Stressed?

These last few months, you've been handling a lot.
If you need ANY emotional support,
you know you can call us, ANYTIME!

You don't have to be considering suicide to call.

TRUE OR FALSE

You must be actively suicidal
to call our hotline.

FALSE

Anyone can call our hotline to talk
through emotional challenges.

IF **YOU** OR SOMEONE YOU KNOW
IS IN CRISIS, CALL OUR **24HR HOTLINE**



(415) 781-0500



sfsuicide.org





Make a *Donation* to Felton Institute today!

Help Felton continue creating impact in the Bay Area by making a [monthly or yearly commitment](#).

All contributions are tax-deductible.

Felton Institute is a tax-exempt organization registered 501(c)(3) nonprofit under EIN 94-1156530.



MOBILE PHONE DONATION:
Text 'FELTON' to 41444 to donate today!



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