Message From Executive Director

What an exciting new year to meet challenges and advocate for improved healthcare and understanding.

SARDAA is advocating for:

1. Changing the misperceptions of Schizophrenia spectrum disorders
a. They are medical, neurological brain illnesses that require treatment
b. If you read or view the media misusing the word schizophrenia, please address it with the person and let us know so that we, too, can advocate and educate for change.
c. We don't punish people with other illnesses - until everyone realizes these are medical illnesses that no one elects to experience, parity and proper treatment will not be available.

2. The opportunity for everyone experiencing a schizophrenia spectrum brain illness to receive appropriate treatment.
   a. That includes appropriate and accessible treatment with Assisted Outpatient Treatment (AOT) when necessary

3. Improvement in HIPPA so that care providers (i.e. parents, clinicians, caregivers) can communicate valuable life-saving information and be informed so that they can help the individual they care for.

Together we can make a difference in lives affected by schizophrenia spectrum brain disorders – inform everyone. The **Hearing Voices of Support (HVoS)** initiative will help people understand –

**Be sure to:**
1. Visit [hearingvoicesofsupport.org](http://hearingvoicesofsupport.org)
2. **Listen** to brave people tell their stories
   Leave a comment of support and
   Share
3. 'Like' our Facebook page [facebook.com/hearingvoicesofsupport](http://facebook.com/hearingvoicesofsupport)
   Ask others to 'Like'
4. Add the hashtags #HVoS #schizophrenia@SARDAAC to photos and footage you're sharing about the initiative
5. You can **upload** videos, photos, or inspiring stories to the ‘Visitor post’ section of our Facebook page

Thanks to a major grant for the *Hearing Voices of Support Experiential* Event, SARDAAA is preparing for this historical event to be held in New York City during Schizophrenia Awareness Week, the third week of May. You will be updated with exact dates and location once they are secured.

Be sure to take advantage of the Schizophrenia App – a tool over 1000 people have downloaded thus far. This is a tool NOT treatment and people have found it to be helpful.

With sincerest gratitude,
Linda Stalters, MSN
Executive Director
Schizophrenia And Related Disorders Alliance of America

Rob is Dan’s dad. He is a
nephrologist with an interest in
psychiatry. He founded a psychiatric
clinic to help people with mental illness get stabilized on their medication. He works in the Bronx at hospitals including Montefiore Medical Center. Rob also started the non-profit organization Team Daniel, organizing running events to raise money for research, support, and recovery from mental illness.

WATCH HIS STORY HERE

Susan is the mother of four boys. Her eldest son, Lance, is an ex-drug addict who has schizophrenia. She is passionate about advocating for her son's recovery and also helping others so that they do not have to go it alone. Susan discovered SARDAA and is committed to sharing her experience, strength, and hope with others through the Family and Friends Support Group.

WATCH HER STORY HERE

The newest version of the **You Are Not Alone Blue Books** are available for order. Please contact Angel at 240-423-9432 or
We are now accepting messages from SA Members to include in the newsletter. Please submit your message to: info@sardaa.org or mail to SARDA PO Box 941222, Houston, TX 77094-8222 for consideration for next month's newsletter.

Your story might be included in a SARDA newsletter and might be published in a future edition of the SA Blue Book.

Phone Support Groups

SA Conference Call Groups
Only for individuals diagnosed
Sundays - 7 pm Eastern Time
Mondays - 4 pm Eastern Time
Thursdays - 7 pm Eastern Time
Fridays - 7 pm Eastern Time

Spirit of SA Conference Call
For SA Leaders and Potential Leaders
First Wednesday of Each Month - 7 pm Eastern Time

Family and Friends Support Group
Not for individuals diagnosed
Every Tuesday - 7 pm Eastern Time

Toll-free Calls
Call-in information (855) 640-8271
Entry Code 88286491#
International Number (720) 362-6499
**HOW TO START AND GROW A SA GROUP**

By Margery Wakefield

Welcome to SA (Schizophrenics Alliance)! I understand that you want to start an SA group, and that is great!  

**Help for people with Schizophrenia and Related Disorders.**

Now it is easy to record details and specifics about symptoms, medication, moods, and more. Choose what you want to track, and see all the information you need to help you or your loved one who is living with schizophrenia and related disorders.

**Get the Schizophrenia Health Storylines™ Mobile App Today!**
The mobile app is FREE for all users on iOS and Android devices. There is also a web version available, accessible through the browser of any desktop computer or mobile device.
What are you doing for your self-care today? With your feedback, Schizophrenia Health Storylines introduces two new health tools to help you track your self-care and physical activities. Self-care goes beyond the pill and we want to make sure your tools reflect that. With the new and improved tools, you will be able to:

- Reflect holistically on your self-care activities with the Self-Care Reflection Tool
- Track the intensity of your physical activity with the Physical Activity Tracker

"Where Do Auditory Hallucinations Come From?" - A Brain Morphometry Study of Schizophrenia Patients With Inner or Outer Space Hallucinations
Auditory verbal hallucinations are a cardinal symptom of schizophrenia. Bleuler and Kraepelin distinguished 2 main classes of hallucinations: hallucinations heard outside the head (outer space, or external, hallucinations) and hallucinations heard inside the head (inner space, or internal, hallucinations). READ MORE
New Way of Studying DNA as it’s Bundled in Cells Reveals New Schizophrenia Risk Genes, Daniel Geschwind, Ph.D.
A new study implicates two cellular pathways in schizophrenia risk that haven’t been well supported by genetic evidence before. They involve processes related to the birth of new nerve cells, called neurogenesis, and cell-to-cell signaling by a neurotransmitter called acetylcholine. READ MORE

Can Mental Illness Be Prevented In The Womb?
In 2013, University of Colorado psychiatrist Robert Freedman and colleagues recruited 100 healthy, pregnant women from greater Denver to study whether giving the B vitamin choline during pregnancy would enhance brain growth in the developing fetus. READ MORE

NIMH Director’s Message, Neural Circuits Research: How and Why
By Joshua Gordon
Yes, schizophrenia spectrum disorders are neuro-circuitry disorder and NIMH is focused on discovering which neuro-circuits and how to manage them to alleviate symptoms. It would be amazing if this could lead to eradicating schizophrenia spectrum illnesses. Read NIMH Director, Dr. Joshua Gordon’s message. READ HERE

Metabolic Changes in Schizophrenia May Predate Antipsychotic Use
American Psychiatric Association
By the time a person with schizophrenia presents at the onset of the illness, he or she may already be experiencing glucose dysregulation-increasing the risk of type 2 diabetes, a meta-analysis published today in JAMA Psychiatry reports. The findings highlight the importance of prescribing antipsychotics at a dose that limits the metabolic impact and educating patients about diet, exercise, and diabetic screening as early as possible after diagnosis. READ MORE

NIDA: As Some States Implement New Marijuana Laws, Science Should Guide Public Health Policy, NIMH
After the election on November 8, marijuana is now or will soon be legal for adult recreational use in eight states plus the District of Columbia. These states, and those that may join them in the future, will have choices to make in
how they enact and implement their policies. NIDA Director Nora Volkow blogs about the importance of using science as guide to create a regulatory framework that prioritizes public health. READ MORE

Serious Mental Illness Among Adults Below the Poverty Line, NIMH
According to SAMHSA’s National Survey of Drug Use and Health, an estimated 9.8 million adults aged 18 or older in the U.S. had a serious mental illness, including 2.5 million adults living below the poverty line. READ MORE

Adding Better mental Health Care to Primary Care, NIMH
A new era of behavioral health integration
Many people visit a primary health care provider to treat physical diseases and injuries; however, it is also common for patients to see a primary care provider because of brain health issues, including such as depression, anxiety, alcohol use and might be the first contact for schizophrenia prodrome. The primary care provider can treat some brain disorders, particularly through medication, but that may not be enough. Integrating a “Collaborative Care” approach is one proven way primary care providers can enhance the quality and effectiveness of their brain health treatment. This Science Update describes new Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) Medicare coverage policy in which CMS will begin paying primary care clinicians separately for Collaborative Care services that they provide to patients who are being treated for a mental, or behavioral health condition. It also summarizes an analysis of the new CMS behavioral health integration policy by National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) and CMS staff. READ MORE

Chantix and Zyban: Drug Safety Communication - Mental Health Side Effects Revised, FDA
Based on a Food and Drug Administration (FDA) review of a large clinical trial that FDA required the drug companies to conduct, FDA determined the risk of serious side effects on mood, behavior, or thinking with the stop-smoking medicines Chantix (varenicline) and Zyban (bupropion) is lower than previously suspected. The risk of these mental health side effects is still present, especially in those currently being treated for mental illnesses such as depression, anxiety disorders, or schizophrenia, or who have been treated for mental illnesses in the past; however, most people who had these side effects did not have serious consequences such as hospitalization. The results of the trial confirm that the benefits of stopping smoking outweigh the risks of these
medicines. FDA review of the clinical trial results also confirmed that Chantix, Zyban, and nicotine replacement patches were all more effective for helping people quit smoking than was an inactive treatment called a placebo. These medicines were found to better help people quit smoking regardless of whether or not they had a history of mental illness. READ MORE

HHS selects eight states for new demonstration program to improve access to high quality behavioral health services
HHS announced the selection of eight states for participation in a two-year Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinic (CCBHC) demonstration program designed to improve behavioral health services in their communities. This demonstration is part of a comprehensive effort to integrate behavioral health with physical health care, increase consistent use of evidence-based practices, and improve access to high quality care for people with mental and substance use disorders. The eight states HHS selected for this demonstration program include Minnesota, Missouri, New York, New Jersey, Nevada, Oklahoma, Oregon, and Pennsylvania. READ MORE

Archived videocast: Evidence-based Treatments for First episode Psychosis
This archived videocast of a NIH Grand Rounds lecture features NIMH Division of Services and Intervention Research Director Dr. Robert Heinssen and NIMH investigator Dr. Dwight Dickinson discussing the NIMH Recovery After an Initial Schizophrenia Episode (RAISE) Initiative and cognitive impairment in schizophrenia. WATCH HERE

Strategies to Improve Mental Health Care for Children and Adolescents: Research Review
This Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality review assesses the effectiveness of quality improvement, implementation, and dissemination strategies that seek to improve the mental health care of children and adolescents. READ HERE
SAMHSA-NIDA Webinar: Substance Use Disorder and The Adolescent Brain
January 17, 2017, 1:00-2:00 PM ET
This SAMHSA-NIDA webinar will focus on the adolescent brain, provide information on those adolescents who are at increased risk for drug use, and present the major impact of home, family, and peers. In addition, the presenter will address the increased potency of marijuana and its potential long-term impact on this population. REGISTER HERE

NIMH WEBINAR: Mental Health Research: What You Need to Know
January 23, 2017, 1:00-1:30 PM ET
Clinical research is medical research that involves people like you. People volunteer to participate in carefully conducted investigations that may ultimately uncover better ways to treat, prevent, diagnose, and understand human disease such as mental illnesses. Join Kalene DeHaut, LCSW, of the NIMH for this webinar on clinical research. Learn about the basics of clinical research – what it is, why it’s important, key research concepts, and steps to take if you, a family member, or a client is interested in participating in clinical research. REGISTER HERE

Donate to SARDA
Brain Campaign: 
*Take the Pledge*

I **will** change my language from Behavioral or Mental disorder to Brain disorder.

I **will** educate others to change their language from mental illnesses to brain illness.

I **will not** use stigmatizing, discriminatory or derogatory language related to brain disorders.

I **will** encourage my peers, family members, and colleagues to advocate when they see discriminatory language or practices in the
media or in public.
I will advocate that people with brain disorders have equal and comprehensive health care.
I will treat all people with brain disorders with respect and compassion.

Please take a moment to find out how you can help support SARDAA, not only today but every day - at no extra cost to you!!

When you do your shopping at AmazonSmile, Amazon donates 0.5% of the purchase price to Schizophrenia And Related Disorders Alliance Of America.

IT'S SO SIMPLE: just bookmark this link http://smile.amazon.com/ch/33-1213657, start shopping and support us every time you shop.

Texas and Louisiana Friends:
Re-Enroll Your Kroger Plus Cards

You can support SARDAA without spending a penny! Register Schizophrenia and Related Disorders on your Kroger Plus Card and they will donate a percentage to SARDAA each time you use your card.

Please register online at www.krogercommunityrewards.com
Help Change Lives -- Donate Now

Thank you to those who already made a donation - Every contribution makes a difference.

Sincerely,
Angel White, Editor