



# SFUSD Student Intervention Team (SIT)

February 2015 Newsletter

## February Updates

- \* SIT is full speed ahead with intern recruitment for the 2015-2016 school year.
- \* Future informational interview sessions will be held at School Health Programs (1515 Quintara St.) on:
  - ⇒ **Monday, February, 9, 2015, 9:00-11:00AM**
  - ⇒ **Thursday, February 26, 2015 1:30-3:30PM**
  - ⇒ **Wednesday, March 11, 2015 2-4PM**
- \* Please help us get the word out...SIT provides a wonderful school-based internship opportunity for those interested in working with children and families!

## Appreciations

- \* A special thanks to Laura Savage, M. Ed., Ombudsman, Office of Family and Community Engagement/Special Education Services for delivering a training on working with students in special education this month.

## Upcoming Trainings...

### SFUSD Trainings:

#### February 2014

- [Navigating Special Education Services in SFUSD.](#) Thursday, February 26th 2-4PM, 1515 Quintara Street.



#### March 2014

- **Spring Institute for SFUSD Interns**, March 4th and 5th, 8:15am-12:45pm, 1515 Quintara Street. *Interns are required to attend one of these days.*

### RAMS Trainings:

- Friday, February 13th 9-10:45AM, **SF Gangs**.
- Friday, February 19th 10AM-2PM, **Teaching Mindfulness to Youth**.

**If interested in attending a RAMS training, please register by emailing:**

Kristin Chun, Director, Behavioral Health Services/RAMS Wellness Program  
[kristinchun@ramsinc.org](mailto:kristinchun@ramsinc.org) or calling (415) 309-4434.

## Mark your Calendar!



- \* **Thursday, February 19th** is Lunar New Year...schools are closed!
- \* **Friday, February 20th** is President's Day observed...schools are closed!

How to reach us...



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## Location

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# SIT Mental Health Intern Corner and Resources

## Exercise and Mental Health

Current research has shown that exercise has many benefits and may even be considered vital for mental health (Anxiety and Depression Association of America, 2014). Scientists have found that regular participation in aerobic exercise has been shown to decrease overall levels of tension, elevate and stabilize mood, improve sleep, and improve self-esteem (Otto and Smits, 2011). Further research has found that exercise alleviates symptoms such as low self-esteem and social withdrawal (Sharma et al., 2006). According to the ADAA (2014), even just five minutes of aerobic exercise can begin to stimulate anti-anxiety effects.

According to the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI), people with mental illness often have a higher risk for medical illnesses and vice versa. Therefore, they suggest that by improving one's general physical health, an individ-

ual is less at risk of developing mental illness (NAMI, 2014).

The positive effects of aerobic exercise on mood are proposed to be caused by exercise-induced increase in blood circulation to the brain by an influence on the hypothalamic-pituitary-adrenal (HPA), which is directly related to the stress we experience physiologically. Other hypotheses explaining the benefits of exercise are related to the fact that exercise is a distraction, involves social interaction and self-efficacy (Sharman et al., 2006).

Studies show that exercise is also very effective at reducing fatigue, improving alertness, and at enhancing overall cognitive function (ADAA, 2014). Finally, studies suggest that exercise helps to improve energy, concentration and sleep (NAMI, 2014).

All of this research has tremendous implications to not only our mental

health community, but the general student population with whom we work in the schools.

By having a deeper understanding of the positive effects of exercise on mood, energy, and cognition we can begin to educate our students and parents about the importance of integrating exercise into daily routines.

### References

<http://www.adaa.org>

<http://www.nami.org>

Otto, M. and Smits, J. *Exercise for Mood and Anxiety, Proven Strategies for Overcoming Depression and Enhancing Well-Being*. Oxford University Press, 2011.

Sharman et al. (2006) *Exercise for Mental Health*. J Clinical Psychiatry, Vol 8(2)



## Intern Spotlight

Brad Akin is a SIT Intern at Washington High School. After reading Irving Yalom's book "Staring at the Sun", which deals with the value of examining one's life, he could think of nothing more that he would love to do than apply to graduate school in counseling psychology, even though his educational background is in electrical engineering. Brad had been working in the field of electrical engineering for over 30 years.

Brad started at JFKU in Berkeley in October of 2012. The university's Field Placement Coordinator, who had extensive, positive experience with SFUSD strongly recommended the Student Intervention Team. Brad also spoke to another grad student at JFKU who had been a SIT intern in 2013 who recommended the program.

Brad is currently in the middle of his second year internship at George Washington High School's Wellness Center.

Brad completed his master's coursework in December and will have his degree in-hand in March. Although he'll have most of his "children hours" completed in May, he's considering returning to SIT for the 2015-2016 school year. He may also apply for positions at local mental health agencies or join a private practice as an intern. He's looking forward to seeing how the next few years unfold, and would like to eventually move into his own private practice perhaps working with folks in technology, as well as LGBTQ individuals, couples, and families.

## Resource Corner

- [www.health.gov](http://www.health.gov)
- [www.cdc.gov/healthyyouth/physicalactivity/facts.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/healthyyouth/physicalactivity/facts.htm)
- [www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/7180.php](http://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/7180.php)
- [www.fitness.gov/](http://www.fitness.gov/)
- [www.healthfinder.gov](http://www.healthfinder.gov)
- [www.nih.gov](http://www.nih.gov)
- [www.presidentschallenge.org/informed/digest/docs/september2009digest.pdf](http://www.presidentschallenge.org/informed/digest/docs/september2009digest.pdf)



February is **Physical Activities Awareness month**. See your site supervisor and [www.healthiersf.org](http://www.healthiersf.org) for information and resources.