

News Release

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Sacramento County Youth PSA Contest Launched to Stop Stigma and Open Dialogue about Mental Illness *Winning PSA will be broadcasted on Sacramento-area television stations*

SACRAMENTO, Calif. - Sacramento County Division of Behavioral Health Services (DBHS) is accepting entries from Sacramento County youth and young adults, ages 13-21, for the "*Mental Illness: It's not always what you think*" [Youth PSA Contest](#). The deadline for entries is December 21, 2012.

Mental illness affects one in five kids and young adults, but many are too afraid to talk about it due to stigma and shame. Youth and young adults are invited to submit a 30-second Public Service Announcement (PSA) video that has a clear message that talks about mental health in a positive way. The PSA should address one or more of the [8 Things You Can Do to Stop Stigma and Discrimination](#) and include facts about mental illness and stigma.

"This contest provides Sacramento-area youth an opportunity to express themselves in a creative way, while helping to combat the stigma that is often associated with mental illness", said Mary Ann Carrasco, deputy director of Sacramento County's Division of Behavioral Health Services.

Entries will be narrowed down by an expert panel, with the top entries being voted on by the public. Videos will be judged on the ability to motivate action or inspire change, creativity and originality, message development and clarity, and production quality. The winning PSA will be aired on television stations across Sacramento. For more information, including [rules](#) and frequently asked questions, please visit the [Youth PSA Contest page](#).

"This PSA contest not only offers my students an opportunity to work on the video production skills we already teach, but also broadens their horizons with a topic not usually discussed much at a middle school level," said Matthew Rowland, a teacher at Arden Middle School.

The contest is part of the "[Mental Illness: It's not always what you think](#)" project, which works to promote messages of hope and recovery, promote positive beliefs and attitudes about living with mental illness, and dispel myths and stereotypes about mental illness. For more information on Sacramento County's mental health efforts, please visit www.StopStigmaSacramento.org.

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