


## NorCal Services for Deaf and Hard of Hearing

The following grant activities were conducted by our Peace of Mind Program from June 2020 through August 31, 2022.

- I. **Referral/Linkage:** We provided information and referrals to 26 individuals from Sacramento County and 6 from out of Sacramento County. Of those who resided in Sacramento County, more than half of the contacts were from individuals however 15% were family members and 15% were service providers. Over 90% were requests for mental health services, specifically ASL-fluent counseling. One request was for a counselor experienced in helping people who lost their hearing as adult.

Our staff utilized the Information and Referral Communication Log form for documenting referrals. We were not able to use any of the forms provided to us by contract administrator because of language barriers. For many individuals we serve, ASL is their first language and English is a barrier for them. We also had issues with survey monkey which barred repeated submission of the same forms.


- II. **Training to Sac County Providers:** The following trainings were provided live through Zoom. Anne-Marie Rucker and Mary Nakamoto were instrumental in disseminating our training flyers and encouraging participation in our trainings. The flyers provided information for registering. Upon registration, participants received Zoom link for the training. At the end of each training, we also disseminated online survey for participants to provide feedback and compiled the feedback into an evaluation report for each training.

Topic	Time Period	# Sessions	Total Participants
<p><b>Deaf 101 Trainings (Live on Zoom)</b></p>  <p><b>Photo: Cover of Training Video</b></p>	April 2021 to March 2022	16	316 providers
<b>Mental Health in Deaf Community</b>	October 2021 to December 2021	3	26 providers
<b>How to Work with ASL Interpreters</b>	August 25, 2022	1	21 providers

### Comments from Participants about our Trainings:

- *This was an incredibly valuable, informative, eye-opening presentation. It helped me learn so much and in a way that I could apply it to so many work and personal situations. The insights into how ASL is a language took on so much more depth of understanding from how you explained it at different points in the presentation.*
- *This was an exceptional training! I cannot thank you enough. More please!*
- *I found that I do not really think about how complicated it would be in finding ways of communicating adequately to those like myself who take things for granted*
- *This training really enlightened me on a community often overlooked that share many of the same struggles as many other minority groups.*
- *I really enjoyed and appreciated this training. It was truly eye-opening, and it was only an hour! I can only imagine what I could learn in two hours!*
- *I cannot thank you for enough for this incredible training! It was very insightful, and I appreciate the awareness that I have for the culture. I love that she shared her personal experiences, the slide show statistics, and answered our questions. When she ended with the superhero quote, it was truly moved!*
- *Training was excellent as was the Q&A*
- *All the information presented was very informative! It truly opened my eyes to the Deaf Culture.*
- *It was a great learning experience. I feel I have learned quite an amount about the Deaf culture.*
- *I enjoyed the training!*
- *Great presentation and interpreters.*
- *It was a very informative training.*
- *It was helpful to see how I can serve and provide needs of D/HOH client.*
- *I learned very important facts about deaf people and can apply to my work as well as in life.*
- *The personal examples made the training interesting*
- *Jillian was a wonderful presenter and very engaging! Appreciated her personal experiences.*
- *I did not realize I was offending deaf people by using the incorrect term. Thank you for educating me.*
- *I appreciated her willingness to share her perspective of how navigating the world has had barriers because the world is designed as hearing centered, and the experiences she has in life of audism that would not have occurred to me to be a risk*
- *This workshop was very informative. I will recommend to colleagues. Thank you.*
- *The presentation was really well-done.*
- *I have gained a better understanding of some of the challenges a deaf person may encounter.*
- *Very moving presentation. It was helpful both professionally and personally.*
- *Very interesting and helpful training, thank you so much!*
- *Great job! I have told all my coworkers about how great this training is.*
- *Thanks for providing this valuable training*
- *One of the best online trainings I have attended.*
- *Very helpful and informative. Thank you so much!*
- *I don't say that often about a training, but this was really great.*
- *I learned so much, especially about that ASL has its own sentence structuring and the slang lingo!*

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Behavioral Health in Deaf Community July 29, 2022	Panel	Total Participants
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Amanda Somdal (Deaf), LCSW, Alabama Mental Health Deaf Services</li> <li>2. Belinda McCleese (Deaf), MFT, Deaf Services Coordinator at Orange County Health Care Agency Behavioral Health</li> <li>3. Makoto Ikegami (Deaf), DSW, MSW, LCSW, Georgia</li> <li>4. Kevin DeWindt (Deaf), certified alcohol and drug counselor and addiction specialist, Orange County Health Care Agency</li> </ol> <p>Facilitator: Tiffany Wilson, (ASL Fluent) counselor</p>	<p>36 providers</p>

**Comments from Participants:**

- *All of the information shared by the panelists was incredibly helpful and I appreciated the learning! Thank you!*
- *The presenters were incredible! Each presenter was knowledgeable and articulate about their professional and personal experiences.*
- *It was great learning from people who are actively working in the community and could share their direct lived experience”*
- *The awesome panel! And their HONEST discussion. I learned so much about my own limited vision as a hearing person.*

**Note:** At the end of the grant period, NorCal provided Mary Nakamoto at Sacramento County with 1) a video recording of the Deaf 101 training video and 2) an audio recording of Deaf Provider panel for their use in training new staff or providers.

**III. NorCal Staff Trainings:** NorCal provided 6 trainings for up to 33 NorCal Sacramento-based staff in addition to outreach staff. All trainings took place on Zoom on Wednesdays 11am – 1pm and were conducted in ASL with voice interpreting and captioning. At the end of each training, we also disseminated online survey for participants to provide feedback and compiled their feedback into an evaluation report.

Topic	Date	Trainer
Self Care	10/14/2020	Tiffany Wilson
Vicarious Trauma	6/23/2021	Christine Ellis
Suicide Prevention	10/6/2021	Alison Loughran
Mini-Intervention Strategies	2/2/2022	Alison Loughran
Racial Disparity in Mental Health	2/23/2022	LeeAnne Valentine
Somatic Experience: Personal Story of Deaf mother who lost her Deaf son to suicide	8/24/2022	Terrylene Sacchetti

Comments from Staff regarding training:

<u>Self Care</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>A better understanding about how much working from home can impact our mental health and physical well-being.</i></li> <li>• <i>One way I learned to improve work and life balance is to disconnect from work when I am off.</i></li> </ul>
<u>Vicarious Trauma</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>With today's virtual training, I absolutely appreciated understanding what Vicarious Trauma looks like and ways to alleviate this experience.</i></li> </ul>
<u>Suicide Prevention</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>This made me feel more comfortable with the serious topic. Now I'm not so scared of broaching the subject with clients.</i></li> <li>• <i>Safety Plan template is a VERY resourceful tool to have!</i></li> </ul>
<u>Mini-Intervention Strategies</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>I liked the acronym CAF because it provided me with a clear guided strategy to crisis intervention; Calm, Assess, Facilitate. Should I encounter any clients in crisis, I can use CAF to help them and also keep a level head myself.</i></li> <li>• <i>It is great that our job provides this type of training so that we are fully prepared for any scenario. Great support for employees.</i></li> <li>• <i>I really enjoyed the training because it helps me remember to be human above all else. Yes, I have a job to do, but that shouldn't get in the way of allowing other people their right to be human too. Life is messy, I have been messy, this helps me feel more confident in my ability to be the person helping to clean up when life gets messy.</i></li> </ul>
<u>Racial Disparity in Mental Health:</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Alot of the information was well known for the General POC population but learning about it through the Deaf POC lens was very insightful,</i></li> <li>• <i>The information about the "white savior complex" was also terrific and it makes me mindful of my own interventions as a white person</i></li> <li>• <i>I really enjoyed her presentation. It made me realize we have much work to do to make progress!</i></li> </ul>
<u>Somatic Experience</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Appreciate her bravery to share her story to help others understand the process.</i></li> <li>• <i>Outstanding training, this needs to be continued to other audiences!</i></li> <li>• <i>the training was wonderful - Terrylene is so open and articulate about her experience that you could not help but be moved by it.</i></li> </ul>

**IV. Peer Group Activities:** Through this grant, NorCal hired a parttime peer group facilitator to meet with Deaf and Hard of Hearing students at local schools in Sacramento and a licensed counselor to conduct staff training and facilitate peer group meetings at our one-week residential Camp Grizzly program.

- **Local Schools:** During the initial period of the grant, schools were online. Many teachers indicated they were overwhelmed with the online format and asked us to wait until classes resume in person. Demographic information was provided by teachers. The biggest largest group was age 6 – 12, most of whom ASL or ASL/English were identified as their primary language. Approximately one third of the students were identified as white, one third as Mexican, and one third identified as other races.

	# of Participating Schools	Total # DHH students	Total # of Peer Group Meetings
<b>Spring 2021</b>	3 schools	33 DHH students	21 peer group meetings
<b>Fall 2021</b>	7 schools	41 DHH students	65 peer group meetings

In absence of finding culturally and linguistically appropriate social emotional learning (SEL) curriculum, our facilitator used curricula which she modified to fit the students’ language and their experience as Deaf and Hard of Hearing people. Unfortunately, our staff accepted a fulltime position and could not continue as facilitator for Spring 2022. The teachers welcomed having the peer group meetings during Spring 2022, but we were not successful in finding a replacement with the expectation that the grant would end May 2022.

Responses we received from two teachers who completed our evaluation surveys:

- *We loved having Rima come to our class. It is always good for our DHH students to get exposed to other deaf role models, and Rima was one of the wonderful role models. We would love if this can be continued. :)*
- *It was great for my kids!*

**This is clearly an area of unmet need considering the lack of SEL materials that fit the experience and language of DHH students and the lack of accessible mental health services for DHH students that are available to hearing students.**

- **Camp:** A licensed counselor, Sheila Jacobs, facilitated 9 cultural identity group meetings at Camp Grizzly during the week of July 31 – August 6, 2022, with 52 youth age 7 – 18 who are Deaf, hard of hearing, Koda (child of Deaf parents), Soda (sibling of Deaf family member), Goda (grandchild or family member of Deaf person). Sheila grew up as the only hearing family member in a Deaf family and is fluent in ASL. The camp took place at a camp facility in Wilseyville, CA.

Due to COVID Pandemic, our camp program was cancelled in 2020 and 2021. We were glad to have the opportunity to provide facilitated camp group meetings at our camp in 2022. Cultural identity which is the feeling or sense of belonging to a group has positive impact on self-esteem. Cultural identity is important in the Deaf community for Deaf children, most of whom have hearing parents or is the only Deaf person in their families, and for hearing children with Deaf parents. Most of the camp staff agreed that the campers benefitted from the cultural breakout peer group meetings led by the MFT counselor.

**V. Training for ASL Interpreters:** We provided 2 Mental Health Interpreting trainings to a total of 37 ASL interpreters. Our workshops provided CEUs (continuing education units) for certified interpreters. Both workshops were offered through ZOOM. At the end of each training, we also disseminated online survey for participants to provide feedback and compiled their feedback into an evaluation report.

Date	Trainer	Comments from Interpreters
<b>August 9, 2022</b>	Amanda Somdal: Deaf licensed social worker employed at Alabama Mental Health Deaf Services	Interpreters attending this workshop found information about language dysfluency in the Deaf population, especially in Mental Health, most helpful.
<b>August 17, 2022</b>	Marci Volkman: MFT Associate at Hope Counseling in Sacramento and an ASL interpreter	The interpreters found most helpful the explanations of the therapist's expectations and thought process of a therapist and the different types of therapy.

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 SERVICES FOR DEAF & HARD OF HEARING

**Mental Health Interpreting:  
 What do I need to know?**

**Tuesday, August 9th, 4 to 6 p.m.**

Mental Health Interpreting is a specialized field yet mental health situations can emerge in any community interpreting. This workshop will discuss about mental health interpreting and some of the issues to be aware of such as language dysfluency, language deprivation, interpreting both the content and form of language and recognizing the necessity for boundaries.

**Target Audience:** ASL and Deaf Community Interpreters

**Workshop Presenter:**  
**Amanda Somdal, LCSW, LICSW**  
 Amanda has over 25 years of professional counseling experience. A Southern Californian native, she currently works for Alabama Department of Mental Health, Office of Deaf Services. Amanda is passionate about providing workshops and presentations on a wide varied mental health topics. Amanda graduated from California State University, Northridge and Gallaudet University.

Communicate Interpreting is an approved RID CMP Sponsor for continuing education activities. This RID Professional Studies program is offered for .2 CEUs at the Some Content Knowledge level. Educational objectives include:

- Evaluate unique boundary considerations for mental health situations
- Explain the impact of language dysfluency has on a person's learning ability and interaction with the community at large.
- Identify the differences between psycholinguistic errors and deaf culture tendencies.

Workshop conducted in ASL. If you need accommodations, email [peaceofmind@norcalcenter.org](mailto:peaceofmind@norcalcenter.org) by August 3rd.

This training is funded by the Division of Behavioral Health Services through the voter approved Proposition 63, Mental Health Services Act (MHSA). There is no fees charged to participants for this workshop.

NorCal does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion (or creed), gender, gender expression, age, national origin (ancestry), disability, marital status, sexual orientation, or military status, in any of its activities or operations.

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**Mental Health Interpreting:  
 How to Work with Providers**

**Wednesday, August 17th, 4 to 5:15 p.m.**

Therapy in a counseling session using an interpreter will never be the same as when both the therapist and the consumer speak the same language. However, with few available ASL-fluent counselors, many therapists and mental health providers are serving Deaf patients using ASL and Deaf interpreters and are not familiar with the language and culture of their Deaf patients. This workshop will discuss how interpreters can work with providers to effectively serve Deaf patients.

**Target Audience:** ASL and Deaf Community Interpreters

**Workshop Presenter: Marci Volkman**  
 After many years of working as educational, freelance, and VRIS ASL interpreter, Marci found a way to merge her two passions: ASL and marriage & family therapy. She went back to school to receive a BA degree in Human Development and MA degree in Psychology. She is currently working as an Associate Marriage and Family Therapist and Associate Professional Clinical Counselor under the supervision of licensed clinicians. She has worked closely with various agencies within the Deaf community and HOPE Counseling to provide support, education, and tools regarding culturally specific ideations.

Communicate Interpreting is an approved RID CMP Sponsor for continuing education activities. This RID Professional Studies program is offered for .1 CEU at the Some Content Knowledge level. Educational objectives include:

- Obtain practical skills and knowledge to feel confident in accepting mental health assignments.
- Gain perspectives from both the Mental Health provider and the interpreter in different mental health settings.
- Manage a variety of therapeutic phenomena that happen primarily when working with Deaf clients in mental health environments.

Workshop conducted in ASL. If you need accommodations, email us at [peaceofmind@norcalcenter.org](mailto:peaceofmind@norcalcenter.org) by August 10th.






This training is funded by the Division of Behavioral Health Services through the voter approved Proposition 63, Mental Health Services Act (MHSA). There is no fees charged to participants for this workshop.

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## VI. Community Outreach:

- Social Media and ASL Videos:** Initially, NorCal created a separate Facebook page for Peace of Mind, then decided to use NorCal’s main Facebook page which has over 6,400 followers so everyone can benefit from learning about mental health. Postings included short ASL videos and visual messages related to Mental Health.

Through this project, NorCal worked with Deaf West Theatre to produce the following five videos in American Sign Language (ASL). The ASL videos were posted on NorCal social media and website and will remain posted to serve as information and resource. Below are some Facebook metrics related to the video posts. The videos continue to attract new viewers every week.

Video		Date Posted	reached	engagement
<b>What is Mental Health?</b>		3/16/2022	8,201	389
<b>What is Depression?</b>		3/30/2022	1,946	66
<b>Suicide Prevention</b>		4/6/2022	770	30
<b>What is Trauma with PTSD?</b>		4/13/2022	1,123	40
<b>What is Anxiety?</b>		5/27/2022	6,446	244

- **Exhibit Booths:** We were fortunate to have the opportunity to attend three community events in person during our grant period. At these events, NorCal manned exhibit booths and provided ASL interpreters for the program. We asked the conference hosts to indicate on their promotional that ASL interpreters would be provided. We also promoted each event on NorCal Facebook page including making announcements in ASL.

At our booth at NAMI Walk, we gave out stress toy that doubles as phone holder which drew people to our booth and provided us with opportunities to engage people about mental health services for Deaf people. Regarding the stress toy, we explained that Deaf people need their hands free (to sign) when talking on their phone which was an eye opener for many visitors. We had ASL interpreters to allow visitors to ask questions and learn more about our program. The ASL interpreters were also available to accompany Deaf individuals to be able to ask questions and receive information at other exhibitors. We also had ASL interpreters on the stage for the various speakers for Deaf individuals in the audience.

We also provided interpreters for the program at Recovery Happens which took place at the Capitol during Fall 2021. At the end of the event, the event sponsor contacted our staff to find out how they could get ASL interpreters at their next event in Southern California. We referred them to the local Deaf service agency in Los Angeles.

**Recovery Happens**

**9/1/2021**

**25 people**

**Photo:** Jillian, Don Lee and ASL interpreters at NorCal booth at the event – posted on NorCal Facebook.



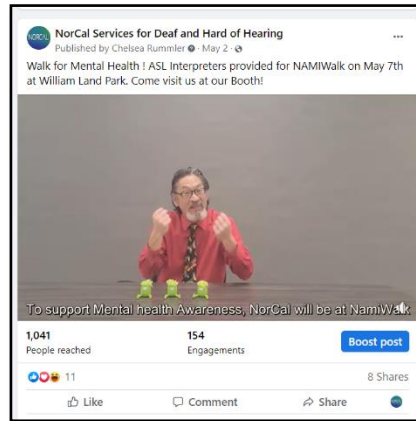


## Nami Walk

5/4/2022

180 people

**Photo:** Don Lee promoting event in ASL on NorCal Facebook



**Photo:** Our ASL interpreter on stage interpreting for Mayor Steinberg – posted on NAMI Sacramento Facebook

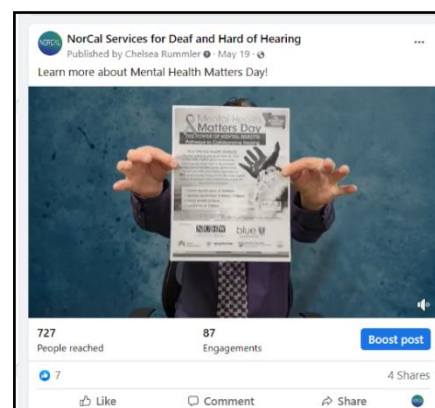


## Mental Health Day Matters

5/26/2022

40 people

**Photo:** Don Lee promoting the event in ASL on NorCal Facebook page



Our staff joined the NorCal booth at these events to promote Peace of Mind.

<b>Healthy Day Sacramento</b>	10/23/2021	55
<b>Love and Literacy (for families with Deaf children)</b>	3/5/2022	25

**VII. Collaboration:** Our Peace of Mind staff attended Sacramento County Steering Board meetings and Cultural Competency Committee meetings and worked with Anne-Marie and Mary. In two separate situations, our office received complaints from family members and a social worker about the lack of interpreters in treatment facilities. By have working relationship with Sacramento County Behavioral Health, our CEO was able to connect with the county about these situations. Our staff also developed referral list for Deaf counseling services. While searching for licensed ASL-fluent counselors for our trainings, our staff developed network of professional counselors throughout the country who are Deaf and/or ASL-fluent.

**VIII. Deaf Zen Activities:** The pandemic had the biggest impact on our original proposal to conduct Deaf Zen activities in person which did not transition well to virtual environment as our training activities did. Our first two Zoom activities drew people from outside Sacramento. On the last three activities, we advertised priority for Sacramento residents. The challenges of virtual activities include unfamiliarity with using Zoom, not able to follow or understand ASL in 2-dimensional mode, Zoom fatigue. Many preferred in person but did not feel comfortable meeting in person yet.

<b>Deaf Zen</b>	<b>Topics</b>	<b>Attendance</b>
2/2021	Reset - Meditation	49
3/2021	Meditation	13
11/2021	Contemplative Painting	7
1/20/2022	Vision Board	12
2/3/2022	Vision Board	7

We were not able to use any of the forms provided to us by contract administrator because of language barriers. For many individuals we serve, ASL is their first language and English is a barrier for them. We developed our own simplified survey in English but not receive many responses.

**IX. Individual case:** Through our grant, we provided as ASL interpreter for Deaf parent (Sacramento Resident) who was referred by NAMI Sacramento to attend a NAMI support group meeting in Placer County for family members. After attending the meeting, the parent

expressed appreciation for the interpreting service, indicating *I have learned a lot about my son's mental disorder. And I feel good that I am not alone.*

### **Sustainability Plan**

As a result of this project, NorCal will continue to provide referrals, network with Sacramento County Behavioral Health, and provide Deaf 101 trainings on request. The ASL videos developed through this project providing basic mental health information in ASL will remain posted on our social media and our webpage updated to serve as a Mental Health resource page.

We will continue to advocate for regional funding for mental health services for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Californians. There are simply not enough qualified personnel to fund direct mental health services for Deaf individuals on county level. Our primary goal remains to provide direct ASL-fluent counseling service. Most calls we receive are requests for counseling services. Deaf Counseling Center and National Deaf Therapists have waiting lists and only accept specific health insurances, not Medi-Cal or Medicare.

Despite the ending of our funding for Peace of Mind, our agency remains committed improving mental health access. Some of our post-grant activities include:

- Discussion with J. Reiman about preparing the Sacramento County Mobile Crisis Support Team if they encounter a Deaf person.
- Meeting with NAMI California about making their materials and training accessible to train Deaf leaders who can in turn train Deaf people to facilitate support groups in ASL.
- Development of video and webinar through a separate grant for mental health professionals working with or treating Deaf+ (with disabilities) individuals.