



Immediate Release
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Agencies Come Together County-Wide to End Homelessness

(SANTA BARBARA, Calif.) – On Thursday, June 29th and Friday, June 30th, over 100 community leaders and front-line staff working to end homelessness in Santa Barbara County will come together for an intensive 2-day training on how to use the VI-SPDAT (Vulnerability Index - Service Prioritization Decision Assistance Tool) and utilize the Housing First approach within the Santa Barbara County Continuum of Care. The training is being facilitated by Iain De Jong, President and CEO of Org Code Consulting. De Jong is the creator of the SPDAT suite of tools and the principle architect of the Intensive Case Management approach to delivering Housing First.

“An effective coordinated entry process is a critical component to our community’s efforts to meet the goals of ending homelessness,” stated Kristine Schwarz, Executive Director of New Beginnings Counseling Center and co-sponsor of the event, “Coordinated entry is a process that simplifies access to services, identifies and assesses people’s needs, and makes prioritization decisions based on their needs. We are making this training accessible and free-of-charge as an investment in agency staff, clients, and our community, so we can work together to effectively end homelessness in our county.”

Rob Fredericks, Executive Director and CEO for the Housing Authority of the City of Santa Barbara, and co-sponsor of the event, shared that “The only solution to homelessness is a home. If we are going to have a demonstrable impact on reducing homelessness, our community of housers and service providers must properly utilize tested tools like the Vulnerability Index Service Prioritization Decision Assistance Tool to better understand how we can meet the housing and service needs of those who are homeless. This is critically needed training and we are thankful to have Iain De Jong from Org Code to help us learn.”

The first day of the training will be offered at the Solvang Veterans’ Memorial Building in North County, while the second day will be offered at the Santa Barbara Veterans’ Memorial Building in South County, to more evenly split the length of travel for people from both areas of the county. The training is co-hosted and co-sponsored by the Housing Authority of the City of Santa Barbara and New Beginnings Counseling Center. The event is also sponsored by the County of Santa Barbara Community Services Department/HCD and the Santa Barbara County Americorps Partnership.

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New Beginnings Counseling Center provides quality, affordable counseling, shelter, case management and education that strengthens our community and provides our clients with the ability to lead healthy and productive lives. New Beginnings Counseling Center, located at 324 East Carrillo Street, Suite C, Santa Barbara, CA 93101, (805) 963-7777, is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization. For more information or to make a donation, visit www.sbnbcc.org.