



1-833-YU-FIRST  
(1-833-983-4778)

## February Newsletter



### Fire Captain Ryan J. Mitchell's First Responders Reaches a Milestone

San Diego County Launched the [First Responders Behavioral Health Support Program](#) back in 2020 and continues to provide free confidential mental health and substance abuse services to firefighters, emergency medical services technicians, members of law enforcement agencies, 911 dispatchers, lifeguards and probation officers. San Diego County Supervisor Nathan Fletcher introduced the policy to create and fund the program after learning about Captain Ryan J. Mitchell's story during a tour. He had the chance to meet the captain's father, and received permission to honor the captain's memory by naming the program after him. Since then the county has been developing the program and conducting outreach to first responders in partnership with this program. Fletcher said, "By launching this behavioral health crisis line we are creating a better way to protect and support the lives of those who are sworn to protect us."

### Highlighting A Community Partner



[211](#) is a local nonprofit organization in San Diego County. They are a broad trusted source for information and connections to community, health, and disaster resources. Their staff is available to help 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, with assistance in more than 200 languages. Together, using their outstanding resources, Captain Ryan J. Mitchell's First Responders Programs has partnered up with 211 to bring updated real-time resources that connect San Diegan First Responders to the valuable mental health resources they need. Want to know more about 211? [Here's a short informative video.](#)

### First Responders Video On-Demand



This month features our 5th On-Demand video in the COVID-19 series, **Preventing Suicide: Understanding How COVID-19 Has Increased the Risk of Suicide in First Responders.** This is an active discussion about how First Responders can help themselves, family and co-workers choose to live. It is presented by Dustin Keller, a licensed counselor with a PhD based around suicide prevention; and Jamie Guardado, a critical care EMT with a degree in cognitive psychology.

[On-Demand Video](#)

### CLINICAL COUCH

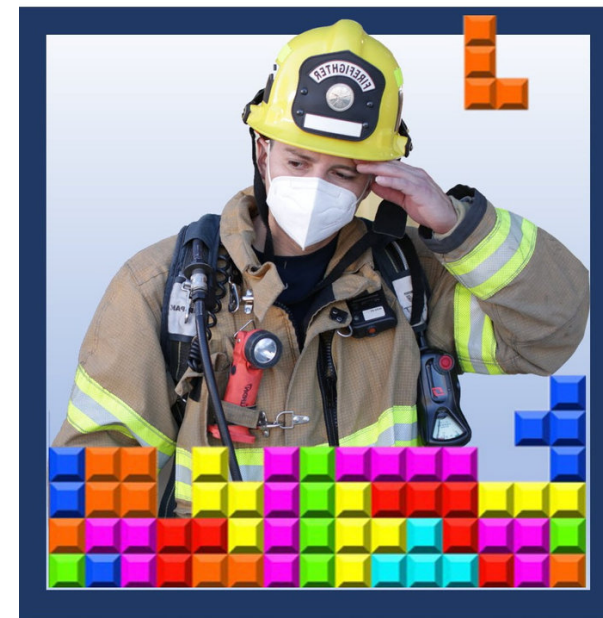
With Taylor Valdivia, LMFT  
Program Manager



### Playing Tetris Can Level Up Your Mental Health

What do you know, some games won't rot your brain after all! Turns out that Tetris is a great stress-reliever for our current era of anxiety. "There is something symbolic about things coming at you, or things that seem ill-fitting that you are trying to organize and compartmentalize," said psychotherapist Dana Dorfman. "We are trying to internalize obstacles and make some order of them so we can continue to maintain our own equilibrium."

[You can read more about this article here](#)



### Yale's Wildly Popular Free Online Course, "How to be Happier"



The Science of Well-Being is a free online course adapted from Yale's most popular class ever. It uses positive psychology and research to teach you how to be happier. Laurie Santos, a Yale professor and leading expert in positive psychology, says that leading a fulfilling life can actually be simple. [The Science of Well-Being](#), the explosively popular online course from Coursera, is adapted from Santos' 2018 *Psychology and the Good Life*, which became Yale's most popular on-campus class in its 319-year history. [Learn more about the course and sign up here.](#)



### A Few Certain Things About Living With Uncertainty

David Scharff, M.D., is Clinical Professor of Psychiatry and the author of ["Exploring What to do About Uncertainty."](#) While no one has the answers, here are some simple steps to look after yourself right now. **Get plenty of peer and social support yourself.** Regular social events, in person or online, will create a routine in your life, which will create a feeling of normality. **Take time to power down.** Remember, it's not just you: You are not immune from a situation that affects us all. Make a conscious effort, every day, to step away from screens and recharge your nervous system. **Celebrate resilience.** We all have the capacity for tremendous resilience. Celebrate successes, however small they may seem in the moment. We will need all our resources, all our resilience, to get through the tail end of this mental health pandemic to survive and thrive. We can be certain of that! [Read more here.](#)



### Nike Discount to First Responders

Wow, Nike has an ongoing discount offer of 10% to First Responders. This discount can only be received once every seven days with a promo code. When you verify your status, you'll be issued a promo code that can be used only once. When you're ready to shop again, you can re-verify your status and receive a new promo code after seven days. [Learn more about this offer here.](#) Happy Shopping!

### First Responder Community Training



Resiliency is a top priority in the First Responder community. First Responders are at a greater risk for experiencing symptoms of depression and anxiety due to repeated exposure to trauma. Many First Responders are hesitant to seek help because of the stigma surrounding mental health. Our staff provides county funded in-person & Zoom presentations to educate First Responders about stigma, resiliency & wellness; recognizing its impact, and providing tools to reduce stigma and promote wellness within the First Responder community.

Our team is working to promote prevention and support First Responders – creating custom presentations to meet department needs. Contact us today to request an in-person or Zoom presentation.

[Request More Information](#)



This program is funded by the County of San Diego/HHS&A

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San Diego First Responders Program [→](#)