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Learn how

Bucklew Programs offers crisis support for North Bay residents

Healthier Lives Stronger Communities

**SLIDE 1 OF 2**

Chris Kughn, CEO of Bucklew Programs, photographed in his Novato office on Friday Feb. 5, 2022. (Photo by John Burgess/The Press Democrat)

MATT VILLANOFOR THE PRESS DEMOCRAT
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If you ever find yourself hopeless, if you ever feel irreparably despondent, if you ever get to the point where you're contemplating ending it all, rest assured that counselors affiliated with [Bucklew Programs](#) have your back.

These specially trained mental health professionals are the ones who answer the phone when you call the suicide crisis hotline from anywhere in the North Bay.

The hotline offers 24/7, free and confidential crisis support for callers having thoughts of suicide, as well as friends and family worried about loved ones who may be experiencing suicidal ideation. Bucklew also supports the community at large by helping those with mental health issues who may or may not be considering suicide.

Bucklew Programs

Bucklew Programs is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. Bucklew Programs' mission is to promote recovery, resilience and hope by providing behavioral health and support services that enhance quality of life.

Location: 2300 Northpoint Pkwy, Santa Rosa

If you need help: 1-855-587-6373 or bucklew.org/services/suicide-prevention

More information: bucklew.org/services/sonoma-county

Where to donate: bucklew.org/get-involved/donate/ways-to-donate

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WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN	MON
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s, according to executive director Chris
zation helps manage treatment or

artments and provide A-to-Z support,"
and their families."

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outpatient counseling, administering medication, and, of course, offering suicide

is residential facility.

involvement with inRESPONSE, the
 ts like medical crises, not criminal

fire departments, the National Alliance
Education Services, and Sonoma
mental-health-first approach.

an respond to incidents immediately
"investigators" to follow-up with people and
around services following a call.

these services disrupt what insiders call
d distress.

appointments and meetings.

to see non-police response to mental health crises. "We've been in the IAMI chapter for years. "Even our name is a reflection of the community what it needs. This is a reflection of the community. It lays a key role."

Community-based 24-hour facility serving

placed out of county, where loved ones

into the community.

North Bay business events

WED 20 **Marketing Committee Meeting**
Clearlake City Cou... | Clearlake, CA

THU 21 **Executive Board**
Bay Area Metro Cen... | San Francisco, CA

THU 21 **ISC2 North Bay Chapter Monthly M...**
Microsoft Teams | Santa Rosa, CA

THU 21 **The Current State of Great Power C...**
<https://www.isc2-n...> | Santa Rosa, CA

THU 21 **POWER Executive Committee**
Bay Area Metro Cen... | San Francisco, CA

THU 21 **Business After Hours RIVER TERRA...**
River Terrace Inn | Napa, CA

THU 21 **McEvoy Ranch Outlet Open in Down...**
McEvoy Ranch Wareh... | Petaluma, CA


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Today Buckelew has offices across the North Bay, and works in Marin, Sonoma and Napa counties. The organization also manages some services in Mendocino and Lake counties.

“Our evolution over time is rooted in our belief that people can and do recover from mental health and substance abuse challenges,” Kughn said. “So long as there are people in need, we will do what we can to help them.”

Continuing the mission through partnerships

One of the ways Buckelew provides the services it offers is by partnering with other social work organizations in the community.

These partnerships are on full display through the trailblazing inRESPONSE program. Most of these services are delivered in English, but as part of that effort Buckelew works with Humanidad to employ a counselor who is tasked to provide wraparound efforts to Spanish-speaking families as well.

Another example of how these relationships can work is the partnership Buckelew has with [West County Community Services](#) to provide support to those county residents who live west of Guerneville and east of Jenner.

Christy Davila, director of counseling and behavioral health, said Buckelew regularly feeds people into WCCS' Peer Education and Training Program, a 180-hour course completed over three months.

Once a “peer” completes the class, that person begins work on 80 hours of internship to become a peer-certified counselor — an unpaid position that pays out in experience, kindness and karma. These counselors go on to other jobs in the region, where they expand the network of service and help.

“It’s hard to find placements, and although this is an unpaid internship, it is a great opportunity and support to the recent graduates to have a place to practice the skills they have learned through the class,” said Davila, who noted WCCS has had three interns in the last three years. “It certainly helps them find a paid position.”

Breaking stigma around mental health

Looking forward, Buckelew will continue doing what it does best: Helping people.

Because the inRESPONSE program is so new, Kughn said it will remain a primary focus for most of this year. Cregan, with the police department, noted that the program expects to have two crews on call for 15 hours a day by the end of May, and three crews offering 24-hour coverage by the end of the year.

Kughn said he is optimistic that as mental health becomes a larger and less stigmatized part of healthcare overall, Buckelew’s role will become even more important.

“People are talking about mental health in ways they’ve never discussed it before — that openness and acknowledgement can only lead to greater response,” he said. “The innovative nature of the North Bay, the resiliency of the community, and the willingness of our partners to come together give me hope for seeing our communities get healthier and thrive.”

Buckelew also will host a big fundraiser on May 14. The event, dubbed Bike4Buckelew, aims to highlight and bring awareness to Buckelew’s work across the region. The bash comprises a series of fitness challenges at Miwok Meadows and China Camp in Marin County; all registered attendees are welcome to attend a post-trail party in the woods. For more information, visit [Buckelew.org](#).