



A WORLD OF HOPE, RESOURCES, AND SUPPORT

**About IBPF:** International Bipolar Foundation (IBPF), was founded in 2007 in San Diego, California by four parents with children affected by bipolar disorder. Understanding the lack of education, supportive resources, and the intense stigma associated with bipolar disorder, these parents felt compelled to do something constructive to create a positive impact.

IBPF focuses on mental health awareness, education, resources, and a supportive connection for all who are touched by bipolar disorder, which can be a very complex illness. We also highlight and honor the multitude of remarkable contributions that those living with bipolar disorder continue to offer throughout our world.

**IBPF Board of Directors:** Listed on our website at [ibpf.org](http://ibpf.org), within the About/Board Member tabs, you will find information about each contributing board member, including our scientific board which provides IBPF scientific updates, research participant (lived experience community), and stakeholder opportunities.

**IBPF Mission:** International Bipolar Foundation empowers individuals living with bipolar disorder and their caregivers by providing advocacy, education, support, and awareness—fostering a caring community and stigma-free world where mental health is equitably acknowledged and treated.

**IBPF Vision:** International Bipolar Foundation envisions wellness, dignity and respect for people living with bipolar disorder, and a world free of mental health stigma.

**IBPF Website:** See all programs, locate resources, be educated, connected, and understand how to get involved with IBPF through our website [ibpf.org](http://ibpf.org).

**Healthy Living with Bipolar Disorder Book:** Our *Healthy Living with Bipolar Disorder* book features up to date contributions from experts in mental health such as clinicians, scientists, and those with lived experience. You can read online, or a hard copy can be shipped directly to a place of residence at no charge. By placing this critical resource in the hands of youth, families and caregivers, each are empowered with education and awareness to assist in strengthening our communities. Our book is also a popularly requested by clinicians, support groups, employers, school administrators and counselors, outreach for the homeless, and those who are incarcerated.

**Mental Health Awareness Program:** Adopted by Girl Scouts of America and other organizations around the globe, this program allows youth from 5 to 17 to be age appropriately educated about the brain and its influence on thoughts, feelings, and behavior which creates awareness and understanding of mental health, leading to changed perceptions and stigma elimination. Participants are offered a safe group space including open conversations which encourage youth to recognize their own potential mental health struggles, and how to ask for help if needed. Each participant receives a graduation patch upon completion of the program.

**Social Channels:** Through our social media platforms, IBPF interacts with over 650,000 followers daily. Support, education, and hope are offered through our diverse array of content ranging from our blogs, webinars, and other programs, to the latest in research, relevant news stories, messages of inspiration, and lived experience stories and suggestions for healthy living tips. Our comments section allows our audience, many with little physical access to support and resources, to connect with our online community of individuals with shared experiences, including challenges and successes for a feeling of togetherness,



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**Webinar/Lecture Series:** Bipolar disorder continuing education is vital to successful living for those who are managing the illness and their caregivers. Our Webinar and Lecture series cover a range of topics including lived experience interviews, updates from mental health advocates, current research and clinical/therapeutic education, and conversations with mental health authors, all including a Q & A opportunity to gain further insight and inspiration. Webinars and most lectures are recorded and archived on our website for online viewing.

**College and Community Outreach:** This program consists of the screening of the *Lift the Mask* film with a panel discussion following including members of the film and a mental health professional. This program has had an important impact on hospitals, both general and psychiatric, as well as college campuses and adult and young adult groups throughout the nation. This film shares the daily lives and perspectives from those living with mental illness as well as their caregivers which allows a better understanding to assist in normalizing conversations around mental health, and encourages people to seek help when needed. Ultimately, we hope to reduce the alarming number of suicides that take place in our world. Also, lived experience and/or caregiver experience panels are held at local universities and community workplaces to allow the audience to interact and have honest, stigma-reducing conversations.

**Community events:** IBPF participates in resource fairs (community and school held), as well as running events to spread awareness, provide resources, and engage in conversations to eliminate stigma.

**Blog:** IBPF's blog program consists of current research and treatment updates, healthy living management strategies and wellness tips from clinical therapists and doctors, and lived experience perspectives for publication on our online and direct mail communities. These blogs have helped others to identify symptoms, triggers, and coping skills that allow them to have a better understanding of their illness. IBPF blogs are useful for individuals to share with their loved ones to help foster understanding and greater perspective into bipolar disorder. Our "Faces of Hope and Recovery" blog invites our community to share moments where they have overcome challenges in their mental health management and hopeful messages to those that may be currently suffering.

**Monthly Newsletter/Quarterly Research Newsletter:** Published monthly, over 20,000 individuals and families in need of support and resources receive our e-newsletter each month. Our newsletters contain information on upcoming events and current webinars, blog features, community outreach, and books for reading resource. In addition, we share current mental health research findings as well as opportunities to participate in studies and trials throughout the world. In our "Ask the Expert" column we have clinicians respond to questions we receive from our online community.

**World Bipolar Day:** IBPF is one of three founding organizations of WBD which occurs annually on March 30th where education and statements of hope and awareness are circulated through our social media around the world. World Bipolar Day is celebrated on March 30th in honor of Vincent van Gogh's birthday and famous works of art, who was thought to have bipolar disorder.



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**Teen Changeloger Essay Contest:** We believe that mental health education is most effective when it begins in our youth, and is shared and initiated by youth. Each year we host an essay contest for teenagers between 13 and 19 years old. Applicants are required to research a particular topic and then perform a specific activity to foster mental health awareness and resources within their school and/or community while working with school administration. The top 3 entries receive a cash award and recognition on our website.

**HUGS for Kids:** HUGS benefits children who are admitted to Sharp Mesa Vista Children's Hospital psychiatric unit. Each kit includes our San Diego Resource Guide that will provide critical resources for the affected youth and their families, as well as comfort items to ease the child's inpatient stay such as, a sweatshirt, slipper socks, note card for parents including a message of hope from IBPF, and plush animal friends for the very young. An invitation is offered to attend our Caregiver Connection meetings which provide education and a safe place for families to speak openly and feel a connection to other families on similar journeys. "These vulnerable patients are feeling hopeless, scared, lonely, unloved and/or unlovable. The IBPF comfort kits will wrap the children in comfort and show them that they are worth it, and that their recovery is real and valued", says Dr. Carpenter of Sharp Mesa Vista Pediatric Psychiatric Hospital. Research shows that patients and families who have connection and support have better outcomes when it comes to healing, recovery and continued wellness. In addition, pediatric psychiatric patients historically have not received the same community support that children hospitalized for other reasons have, and IBPF is creating change through the HUGS for Kids program.

**Young Investigator Research and Travel Grant to ISBD Conference:** IBPF grants a Young Investigator Research and Travel Grant biannually which allows the winning researcher to travel to the International Society of Bipolar Disorders Scientific Conference. Here they are able to network with experts in the field, have an opportunity to share their current studies, and be encouraged to continue researching this complex illness.

**International Society of Bipolar Disorders Conference:** This conference is the leading international mood disorders conference focusing on bipolar disorders, major depressive disorders and other common co-morbid psychiatric conditions. It is a world-class platform for clinicians and scientists to present, discuss, and trade expertise in the most rapidly evolving area of psychiatry, mood disorders. where cutting edge findings are shared with distinguished experts in the field.

Biennially, IBPF hosts a "lived experience" track within this conference of professionals to provide invaluable insight to the professional attendees, allowing them a greater understanding as to how their work affects individuals and families living with bipolar disorder.

**Volunteers and Interns:** University students and volunteers can apply for an in-person or virtual opportunity through our website under the "get Involved" tab to assist with content research, translations, graphic design and more!