



**May 27, 2014**

Dear Friend:

In the wake of Friday's mass act of violence in California by Elliot Rodger, we are saddened and grieve for the families impacted by this event. In a growing list of mass tragedies happening each year in our country, it highlights the complicated issue of mental illness and crisis prevention/intervention by law enforcement. According to media sources, the Santa Barbara County Sheriff's Dept. had a host of red flags warning of Rodger's intent of doing harm to others. This raises the question: What can be done to prevent such tragedies?

Law enforcement agencies are responsible for providing a safe community to all citizens and are required to respond when they receive a call for assistance. The Crisis Intervention Teams (CIT) at NAMI Dallas in partnership with the Dallas Police Department, suggest that individuals and their families track crisis events and follow up with each other so they can figure out patterns and triggers to act on before the crisis. Police departments face challenges in assessing the mental health of individuals, particularly those with no history of violent breakdowns, hospitalizations or serious crimes such as what Rodger displayed. It is unclear whether Rodger's family raised concern about his ominous videos posted on social media to the Santa Barbara County Sheriff's Dept. Therefore, an emergency psychiatric evaluation of an individual who poses a serious threat was never triggered.

Through CIT training, many law enforcement agencies work to close this gap to decrease the odds of such crisis events from happening. When an assault does occur, most jurisdictions require officers to arrest an individual, in compliance with family violence laws. To learn more about our local CIT program visit (NAMI Dallas).

The goal of Child & Family Guidance Center is to aid adults, children and families in finding solutions to life challenging issues through psychiatric services, individualized counseling and family based interventions. Visit us [online](#) for more mental health resources or give us a call at 214.351.3490.

Sincerely,

Carol Lucky  
CEO, Child & Family Guidance Center



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