



# SAFE

YOU ARE NOT ALONE

## News and Events May 2024



*Thank you for helping SAFE celebrate another year of growth, change, and community at our May gala.*

## FEATURED EVENTS

### **Be Here Tomorrow**

In 2000, Kevin Hines attempted his death by jumping off the Golden Gate Bridge at age 19. He survived the fall and ever since he's dedicated his life to advocating for those with mental pain and talking about mental health. Kevin now travels the world sharing his story of hope and healing while teaching the art of wellness and surviving pain with true resilience. Wednesday May 29, 6-8pm. [Registration and more info here.](#)

### **Pride Karaoke and Crafts**

Join us for an evening of pizza, karaoke, and crafting! We will have plenty of crafts to choose from or you can BYOC (bring your own craft ;). Enjoy DJ'd music and karaoke with friends old and new. All high school-aged youth invited. June 1 6-8pm at SAFE. [Registration required.](#)

### **LGBTQIA+ Community Education Night**

Education, resources, support, and ally-ship skill building. June 13 6-7:30pm at SAFE. [Registration and more info here.](#)

### **Families Anonymous**

Join our 12-step support group for family members impacted by their loved ones substance use or mental health concern. Tuesdays 6:30pm. [Registration and more info here.](#)

## **Join Us**

All our programs are free and confidential.

Drop by Fridays 8:30am-12pm to see SAFE's space, meet a member of our team, and discover offerings that work for you.

SAFE Program List



## THE BIG STORY

SAFE's Trickle Up Effect is Creating  
Space for Conversations about Identity



*SAFE’s course on gender, identity and inclusion offers a safe space to connect, be curious, and learn from one another.*

SAFE’s Trickle Up Effect is an interactive workshop offering businesses and organizations the chance to get curious and have courageous conversations around gender, sexuality, and the importance of inclusion in the workplace.

Through Trickle Up Effect’s interactive lessons, participants learn how to be better advocates for LGBTQ employees and clients and how to respond to challenging and uncomfortable situations.

Developed in 2018 and brought to SAFE in March 2022, Trickle Up Effect has since trained 75 individuals. Now more than ever, groups are seeing the value of leveling up their knowledge on how to nurture inclusivity and promote authenticity in the workplace.

The program was developed by SAFE Director of Training and Development Oomiya Kawas (they/she pronouns), who has a background in diversity, equity, and inclusion, gender support resourcing, and LGBTQIA+ adolescent outreach. “When families struggle to accept their LGBT child’s identity, it can result in anxiety, depression, and suicidality—all these negative outcomes,” says Kawas. “I was working with families to put systems in place to reduce those negative outcomes, and the most effective of those were love, acceptance, and encouraging their kids to be their authentic selves. Those experiences really honed my skills.”

More than a lecture, Trickle Up Effect is a conversational space for asking questions and coming to a better understanding of gender, identity, transness, marginalization, and privilege. Kawas says they

have witnessed these seemingly small moments of conversation offer a powerful impact. “Being able to facilitate spaces where people feel safe to ask questions and get vulnerable, it promotes learning and growing. Each time that happens, the ripple effect is powerful.”

Kawas has seen this impact in businesses as well. “Educating your teams on how to meet people from all different walks of life increases revenue,” she says. “And many companies are beginning to see that.” The program encourages new ways of identifying accessibility needs, helping organizations meet the goal of ensuring anyone—not just a few people—can say, ‘This place is built with me in mind.’

One Massachusetts-based medical group was motivated toward tangible change in their organization following their Trickle-Up Effect training. The team of doctors and nurses became aware of a need to revise their intake process and decided to consult with Kawas. Together, they went through the clinic’s intake paperwork and processes and made sure that they were inclusive of trans and gender-expansive identities. “It was really moving knowing that patients who might have struggled going to the doctor because of the psychological implications of being misgendered or dead-named would have safeguards in place to prevent that,” says Kawas. “I was honored to be a part of it.”

Businesses are increasingly seeking out the Trickle Up Effect with their bottom line in mind, an intent that Kawas says is paying off. “If I have to show up every day at my job and I can’t be who I am, I am using a big piece of my bandwidth to shield myself, privately build my own accommodations, and be this other person,” they say. “When we can show up as our authentic selves without fear, we are more creative, more innovative, and can more easily see our work in a new way. We all know that unhappy employees equal more turnover, which is more onboarding and training, one of the biggest internal expenses. So equity really is money in your pocket.”

One point of the Trickle Up Effect curriculum is to show the ways stereotypes limit our understanding of others. In one activity, participants practice telling their life story in gender stereotypes, holding back details that don’t seem to fit. One participant expressed how freeing this was for him. “He didn’t like cars, tools,

or sports. He loved to garden, and considered himself very nurturing,” Kawas recalls. “He felt secure in who he was now as an older gentleman, but realized how much these stereotypes impacted him when he was younger. He had felt he needed to be something he wasn't.”

For Kawas, Trickle Up Effect is ultimately about seeing the value of everyone’s authenticity. “My greatest hope when teaching is that I can inspire folks to see the value in authenticity and to cherish it, both theirs and others” she says. “I want them to leave with permission to explore who they are, to live in their truth, and to encourage and honor the space for others to do the same.”

For more information on SAFE’s Trickle Up Effect see [our website](#) or email [okawas@safecoalitionma.org](mailto:okawas@safecoalitionma.org).

## FAMILY RECOVERY CORNER



When someone we love has Substance Use Disorder, it is often difficult for us to know how to help. Watching our loved one suffer leads to fear, anxiety and confusion. The following is a letter from a person, living in recovery, to his mother.

*Dear Mom, I have an addiction and I need your help.*

- *Don't lecture, blame or scold me. You wouldn't be angry with me if I had cancer or diabetes.*
- *Don't let me provoke your anger. If you attack me verbally or physically, you will only confirm my bad opinion about myself.*
- *Don't let your love and anxiety for me lead you into doing for me what I ought to do for myself.*
- *Don't accept my promises. I will promise anything to get you off of my back. The nature of my illness can prevent me from keeping my promises, even though I might mean them at the time.*
- *Don't make empty threats. Once you have made a decision, stick to it. Denial of reality is a symptom of my illness. I am likely to lose respect for those I can fool too easily.*
- *Don't let me take advantage of you or exploit you in any way. Don't cover up for me or try in any way to spare me the consequences of my using.*
- *Don't lie for me or pay my bills, or meet my obligations. It may avert or reduce the very crisis that would prompt me to seek help. I can continue to deny I have a problem as long as you provide an automatic escape from the consequences of my using.*
- *Above all, DO learn all you can about addiction and your role in relation to me. Go to open AA meetings when you can. Attend support meetings like Families Anonymous regularly, read their literature, and keep in touch with their members. They are the people who can help you see this situation clearly and provide the support you need.*

*I love you Mom.*

Families Anonymous is a 12-step support group meeting for parents, spouses and loved ones of someone suffering from Substance Use Disorder or a related behavior concern. It meets every Tuesday at SAFE , 31 Hayward St in Franklin. A zoom option for the meeting is available. Email [jderick@safecoalitionma.org](mailto:jderick@safecoalitionma.org) for more information.

## Volunteer with SAFE

Want to be a part of SAFE's mission to bring care to our community? Have a skill to share? Email us and let us know you'd like to be a part of our volunteer outreach

network. All ages, all skills, any donation of time welcome!

[Learn More](#)

## PHOTO GALLERY: THIS MONTH AT SAFE

This month SAFE held its annual Gala at the Lakeview pavilion in Foxborough. This beautiful evening offered our community the chance to celebrate our work and fundraise to further our impact.

Notably at this event, former Patriots linebacker Rob Ninkovich spoke and shared his passion for mental health advocacy. We also heard touching testimonials from members of the community who sought out help from SAFE in a time of crisis and as a result, received life-changing assistance from the SAFE staff.

The Millis Town Fire Department received the Jeffrey N. Roy award for going above and beyond to help the local community, oftentimes alongside SAFE. Our friendship with the Millis Town Fire Department has been so meaningful and has allowed us to further our reach.

Many thanks to all who attended or celebrated us from afar!

















**Our Contact Information**

\*{{Organization Name}}\*  
\*{{Organization Address}}\*  
\*{{Organization Phone}}\*  
\*{{Organization Website}}\*

\*{{Unsubscribe}}\*



DONATE