

Mental Health Connections

Summer 2006



How often is there an opportunity to make a difference in someone's life?

The argument was becoming heated and the parent was at a loss of what to do. A call to 211/First Call For Help (FCFH) initiated Mobile Crisis to respond, talking through the situation with the family. Tempers cooled and decisions were made that allowed everyone to feel safe.

After presentation on child abuse prevention, Mom expressed gratitude for the handling of a difficult topic and the words to speak with her kids. Child abuse prevention is important and hard to talk about, and now I have the words. Thank you?

Their daughter would not listen and they were afraid she was ruining her life. Parents were arguing more and more. Parents wanted things to improve, exhausted from the struggle. They called and made an appointment for In-Person Counseling. Over several weeks, parents realized how concern for their daughter became a battleground for their marriage. They learned to acknowledge one another's feelings and identify they were on the same side. While they could not control daughter's choices, they could control how they treated one another and dealt with their daughter. Husband and wife stated relief and that In-Person counseling sessions saved relationship.

A young man telephoned 2-1-1 facing homelessness and talking about suicidal thoughts. He had lived with a relative. When the relative lost his apartment, caller became homeless. Caller was able to stay the night at another relative's home and needed to vacate in morning due to limits in the lease agreement. Caller had attempted suicide in past, statistically increasing probability he may try again.

Telephone Counselor empathized with caller's frustration, helplessness, anger and offered referrals to crisis shelters. Caller stated he felt better after talking with someone and discovered he does have options. Caller reported no suicidal thoughts and would call again if he had further thoughts of suicide. Caller stated he would call shelters in the morning. He would also not worry about everything that happened because things would work out.

A few weeks later, a call came in and caller asked for referrals to do community service. After clarifying need, referrals were provided for volunteering. Caller also stated he wanted to say thank you to 211/First Call For Help because he called a few weeks ago around this time, was homeless and having suicidal thoughts. Caller stated talking helped him realize he needed help. He stated all shelter referrals worked out and he then realized his behavior had to change. Caller stated the call changed his life. He is sober and no longer engaging in illegal activities and trying to turn his life around. Caller stated he is changing and has never felt better. Caller stated he would never go back to that way of life.

Every Day. All Day.

A Letter from the Board President

Dear MHA Friends and Supporters:

Minding Your Mental Health is the topic for this Newsletter. We are now in the sixth month of MHA's 2005-2006 year and already setting records for the number of people served through our programs. For example, if the volume of 2-1-1 calls continues at the current rate, we will handle more than 50,000 calls this year! Our Staff, both full and part-time, under the leadership of our Executive Director, Lisa McLean, are coping well with the increased workload while implementing plans to handle whatever the rest of the year may bring to our agency.

The recent series of articles in the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel on mental health issues help to highlight many of the concerns regarding our citizens with mental health issues. We need to build on this publicity as it relates to our Waukesha County residents. We need your help to reduce the stigma of mental health issues. You can help by assisting us in educating colleagues and acquaintances about MHA's mission and services as part of our outreach efforts. The more individuals that become aware of services that MHA provides to individuals with mental health concerns, and how themselves, friends, or family can benefit, then the more effective our Agency can be in fulfilling our mission to assist with access to treatment, promoting mental health, and reducing stigma.

This year is likely to be a critical one for us, as statewide 2-1-1 leadership develops a statewide business plan to assure 2-1-1 access for all Wisconsin residents. Funding sources have tightened their belts as a result of both economic conditions, and significant catastrophes that have siphoned funds, typically allocated to area non-profit agencies. Because of these conditions, non-profits have to rely even more on their own fund-raising events and direct solicitation than in the past.

We have a vigorous Board of Directors and a dedicated Staff working diligently to become more effective and efficient in providing a broad spectrum of services to residents in our county who have mental health concerns.

Thank you for your continued support in time, talents and financial or in-kind contributions to the Mental Health Association in Waukesha County.

Jon B. Myers
Board President 2005-2007

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Mental Health Month is for Everyone

Practicing minding our mental health spans the life cycle. This year's Mental Health Month outreach campaign targeted everyone: families, students, employees and older adults. Each week in May, volunteers in Community Prevention Education reached out to different groups with "anti-stress kits" to brighten the day. These small kits had candy 'hugs and kisses' as a reminder people care and a light-hearted poem explaining the other "anti-stress" items. MHA services were also listed to assist when one feels at the 'end of their rope'. ***Caring for one's mental health can be as simple as 1, 2, 3: gather information; make a plan; and utilize a support system.***

1 Gather information. Information can help you create an informed plan to manage mental health. It may be information provided by your doctor specific to your needs for a healthy life; diet, exercise and activities you enjoy. It may also be information on specific topics of interest to you in your current life.

MHA's Community Prevention Education Program (PE) has telephonic taped messages on mental health, parenting, adolescence and older adults. These free, confidential, anonymous tapes allow you to gather information even if you are not ready to talk with someone else. You can access Dial Harmony from a touch tone telephone by calling (262) 547-3826. You will be asked to enter your zip code, then the four-digit code.

Dial Harmony topics range from stress management (code: 3003) and relaxation techniques (code: 3004); to building your child's self-esteem (code: 4600) and divorce and the family (code: 4201); to growing up female (code: 0400) and growing up male (code: 0401); to memory loss in aging (code: 1002) and facing loneliness when you are older (code: 1004). Information is a telephone call away. PE also has print information on these topics and more than 100 videos including; stress management, coping and specific mental illnesses; available free of charge. This program is a community resource available for individuals, families, schools and businesses.

Information and referrals can be obtained by calling 211/First Call For Help (FCFH). Immediate information is a simple telephone call away. A telephone counselor can also refer you to the Community Outreach Counselor for face-to-face assistance with additional needs or advocate on your behalf.

2 Make a Plan. What is it you want to accomplish in minding your mental health? Ask yourself, then develop a written plan that allows you to hold yourself accountable to work on goals you set for yourself.

If it is services you need to make your plan, contact 211/FCFH, 2-1-1 or 262.547.3388. Twenty-five hundred social service programs are available to Waukesha County residents. Telephone counselors are ready to listen and support you as you identify a plan that will work for you.

Have multiple needs and unsure how to start your plan? The In-person counseling component of 211/FCFH provides anonymous, confidential, free, short-term counseling. Appointments are available each week free of charge. Set an appointment by calling 211/FCFH.

3 Utilize support. Family or friends can be the greatest gift. They can offer a helping hand or a listening ear. On your plan, consider including who you would call when you need a good laugh and who you would call when you need a shoulder for crying. In some life events, it helps to talk with someone. Whether cancer survivor, loss of a loved one, or recovery from drug addiction, support groups including those who understand through experience may be what you need. 211/FCFH has support group referrals throughout Waukesha County.

As you read on, you will identify opportunities for each stage of life, along with statistics about mental health and mental illness. Use the information to make a plan and garner support.

Mind your health and be well!

Youth Mental Health

Birth to Five

First time parents of newborns were given surveys to indicate what characteristics they wanted for their newborn child. Among words like smart, artistic, and funny, were healthy and happy; healthy and happy were chosen 98 - 100% of the time. Parents want their babies to be healthy and happy.

Infants are born learning and developing, both in physical and mental health. Parents, grandparents, other family, and caregivers impact baby's mental health by showing love, caring about needs, and providing a predictable environment. Know you cannot 'spoil' an infant. Responding to their needs promotes trust and baby's sense that the world is a safe place. Ignoring baby's cries causes their stress level to rise.

Young children need to develop a sense of trust in others to achieve their many firsts: first steps, first words, first adventures, and first 'no's'. The trust they develop helps them achieve the autonomy needed to learn and explore the world.

Mental disorders in children under the age of five are not as uncommon as you may think. One of five children under age five has a diagnosable mental, emotional or behavioral disorder. Out of these children, more than 70% do not receive mental health services. Parents commonly recognize their children's mental health disorders before age four. School agency records document certain warning signs.

1-2-3: Gather information you need to help your infant or child, make a plan, and connect with support to help you through the process. Parenting is one of the hardest jobs you can get – no experience necessary!

<http://www.bornlearning.com>
<http://www.ncsl.org/programs/cyf/CPI.pdf>

Adolescence

Adolescents have the job of 'coming into their own', differentiating themselves from their parents and family. They need rules and boundaries to help them feel safe although they argue against them. Adolescents are under stress to be liked, do well in school, get along with their family, and make important life decisions.

Adolescence offers many opportunities to learn, grow, and explore. Hormones have the body changing and growing rapidly. Friends take on greater importance in time and activities. Being older provides opportunities for employment, driving, and looking at colleges. And yet, the part of the brain controlled by emotion overwhelms the reasoning center in the brain at this critical time. Talk to your teen about their feelings, or ask them to talk with a health professional, school counselor, or trusted adult. You can also help teens increase their self-esteem by encouraging them to take on new challenges which build confidence and demonstrate strengths.

Be aware seven to twelve million youth suffer from a mental illness. Over 90% of teens who die by suicide suffer from mental illness. Teens who participate in risky behaviors-- including sex, alcohol, and drugs -- are at a higher risk of depression and 2/3 do not receive treatment.

Whether a teen, parent or family member, *the 1-2-3's: information, plan and support work for adolescence, as well.* To find help, you can call 211/FCFH; or discuss your concerns with teachers, school counselor or others such as a family doctor, psychiatrist, psychologist, social worker, religious counselor or nurse. *When you have the information, create a plan, and build support for a challenging part of family life for every member of the family.*

<http://www.mentalhealth.samhsa.gov/publications/allpubs/Ca-0023/default.asp>

Save the Dates!

Your Chance to Golf at The Legend at Brandybrook

Join more than 100 golfers at the Mental Health Association in Waukesha County's 29th Annual Golf Outing on Monday June 19, 2006 at the Legend at Brandybrook. This is your opportunity to play a course not ordinarily open to the public while supporting community mental health needs. Proceeds from the Golf Outing will benefit MHA, supporting programs and services for the Waukesha County community. A Golf Clinic by Professional Kurt Mantyla precedes a shotgun scramble and 18 holes of golf. Dinner and an auction will follow.

Your Opportunity to Attend Lake Country's Premier Wine Tasting Event

Trek through Wines of the World and savor exquisite cuisine at MHA's 3rd Annual Charitable Event. Join more than 200 wine connoisseurs on November 2, 2006 at the Pines Restaurant at Bristlecone Pines Golf Club. This is your opportunity to taste a wide array of wines from around the world paired with a sampling of world class cuisine. With the success of last year's event you may want to reserve your space early. By supporting MHA's 3rd Annual Wine Tasting you help MHA continue to offer programs and services to the Waukesha County community.

Ways to become involved

- Serve on the planning committee
- Attend the event
- Become a sponsor
- Donate an item for the auction

For more information please contact Debbie Bayee at 262-547-0769 x114.

Adult Mental Health

Young Adults

Young adults have new responsibilities and first time decisions about how they will live their lives. For most, it is a time of living on their own for the first time, being in college or working full time. Suddenly, they have freedom and responsibility and the stress of being adults.

While an exciting time of choices, new friends and new experiences, it is also a time of rapid change that may not have been predicted or prepared to handle. Again, gathering information to assist in normalizing the change and handling the responsibilities is a first step. Colleges have freshman prep days, jobs have orientation for new employees, and information and support are available in a variety of places for new parents.

According to a 2004 survey by the American College Health Association, nearly half of all college students report feeling so depressed, they had trouble functioning, and 15% meet criteria for clinical depression. Untreated depression can lead to suicide, which is the second leading cause of death of college students.

1-2-3; Again, staying connected with your support system, or expanding it at this time can be crucial. Gather information and create a plan that helps you manage changes, responsibilities, and stressors of adult life.

Middle Life

Individuals in middle life are often parenting while caring for their parents and working outside the home. While a certain amount of stress challenges and balances, too much stress can take its toll. Self care is important because how well mental health is maintained in middle life can affect all the people in their lives.

Mental health disorders account for four of the top 10 causes of disability in established market economies, such as the US, worldwide, and include: major depression, bipolar disorder, schizophrenia, and obsessive-compulsive disorder.

Scientists at the Karolinska Institute in Sweden found that people in mid-life who exercised at least twice a week had about a 60 percent lower risk of suffering from dementia than more sedentary people. Keeping, or increasing health from 40 onward impacts how the older adult years may look.

Again, following the 1-2-3 approach, gather information to assist when stressors become too much. There are numerous programs and services to assist middle year adults as parents as well as assisting as they care for older parents. Use the information to establish a plan so you can care for yourself while caring for others. And, find support. Taking care of others can be stressful and talking with others can help.

http://www.workplaceblues.com/mental_health/index.asp
http://www.nmha.org/may/OlderAdults_factsheet.pdf

Older Adults

“Grow old along with me, the best is yet to be,” may be the plan as adults work through their middle years. Plans may include retirement, or starting a hobby business, spending time with grandchildren, travel plans, and having enough time to finally finish projects. Being at peace with life choices and being satisfied with a well-lived life is often the plan.

Maintaining mental health means continuing to do the self-care that has worked so far: eating healthy, sleeping well, getting exercise, and staying connected. Continuing to do the things one enjoys, developing new interests and friends can all be a part of growing older.

Yet compromised health, loss of friends and families and sometimes finances, impact the reality of life in older years. Like every other stage of life, *having information, a plan and a support system* is invaluable in making the most of this part of life. Information may be about health, finances, choices, and grief.

Nearly 20% of those who are 55 years and older experience mental disorders that are not part of normal aging. Most common disorders, in order of prevalence, are: anxiety, cognitive impairment, and mood disorders. Studies report, however, that mental disorders are underreported in older adults. The suicide rate is highest among older adults compared to any other age group – and the suicide rate for persons 85 years and older is the highest of all – twice the overall national rate.

Several studies have found that many older adults who commit suicide have visited a primary care physician very close to the time of the suicide – 20 percent on the same day, 40 percent within one week of the suicide (Conwell, 1994).

Elders account for only 7% of all inpatient psychiatric services, 6% of community mental health services, and 9% of private psychiatric care, although they make up 13% of the population. Few older adults with mental disorders use mental health services. The lack of perceived need for mental health care may contribute to low rates of mental health service use among older adults. *Preparing for the older years and maintaining mental health can be 1-2-3: gathering information, having a plan, and support to address mental health needs.*

<http://www.mhaging.org/info/olus.html>

Mind Your Mental Health Daily Reminders

Daily stress is inevitable; and even healthy for creativity, motivation, and accomplishment. However, when problems with chronic stress occur and last over time, it can negatively affect your health. In fact, according to the National Mental Health Association, chronic stress can double one's risk of a heart attack, and increase likelihood of developing serious illnesses like diabetes and cancer.

This is why it is important to manage and reduce daily stress and know when to seek help. Seeking help is not a sign of weakness—taking care of yourself is a sign of strength! Below is a list of some signs of stress. If you find yourself experiencing some or all of these stress signs for an extended period, it may be time to seek help.

- Constantly Overwhelmed
- Poor Work Performance
- Insomnia
- Headaches and Backaches
- Strained Relationships
- Overly Emotional
- Fatigue
- Rise in Blood Pressure

Good mental health is important in every stage of life. From childhood to our golden years, we need to be actively taking care of our mental health. MHA invites you to focus on one small way you can improve your mental health by providing some daily tips. These tips were developed by National Mental Health Association and National Council for Community Behavioral Healthcare, and are designed to help you feel good both inside and out!

Sunday-Relax Try meditating, taking a walk in a natural setting or reaching out spiritually. Quiet reflection can improve your state of mind, strengthen your sense of self, and give you time away from a hectic schedule to collect your thoughts and reenergize for the week ahead.

Monday-Make a Plan Decide what tasks you need to complete for the week and make a plan for when and how to do them. If you are overscheduled, decide what can wait a week or two. If you don't have much on your schedule, plan some activities to which you will look forward.

Tuesday-Surround Yourself With Supportive People Make plans with family members and friends, or seek out activities at which you can meet new people, such as a club, class, or support group. Reconnect with someone you have lost touch with and create new memories.

Wednesday-Take Care of Your Body Taking care of yourself physically can improve your mental health. Be sure to eat nutritious meals, drink plenty of water, get enough sleep, and exercise regularly.

Thursday-Give of Yourself Volunteer your time and energy to help someone else. You'll feel good about doing something tangible to help someone in need—and it's a great way to meet new people who share your interests and compassion.

Friday-Broaden Your Horizons Create a change of pace or expand your interests. Explore a new hobby, plant a garden, plan a road-trip, try a new restaurant, take dance lessons, or learn to play an instrument or speak another language.

Saturday-Value Yourself Treat yourself with kindness and respect, and avoid self-criticism. Take stock of qualities you like about yourself, your accomplishments, and abilities. Take some time every day to relax, reflect, and rejuvenate.

MHA Increases Awareness of 2-1-1: National 2-1-1 Day

In February, MHA, in cooperation with United Way of Waukesha County, recognized National 2-1-1 Day, February 11 or 2/11. A press release resulted in an article in The Waukesha Freeman. New 211/FCFH cards were distributed to city, town, and village halls in northwest Waukesha County. MHA delivered packets of information for local officials to distribute based on needs in their community. If you are interested in volunteering to distribute 211/FCFH information in Waukesha County, or would like 211/FCFH flyers in your workplace, please call 262-547-0769.



Programs

MHA exceeded goals in meeting needs of individuals and families in Waukesha County in five program areas in 2005: Community Advocacy Outreach Program, Community Prevention Education, HELP Center, Mobile Crisis and 211/FCFH.

Community Advocacy Outreach Program

Worked directly with individuals and families to access mental health services, increase self-advocacy skills and provided individual, systems and legal advocacy:

- 126 adults
- 2 children
- Outcome: 97% of clients are able to identify one resource to assist with presenting need

Community Prevention Education

Educated individuals about mental health, mental illness and worked to reduce stigma:

- Speaker's Bureau and Video Lending Library: 2,490 youth and 920 Adults
- Speaker's Bureau: 31 adult and 23 children's presentations
- Video Lending Library: 96 videos
- Youth Peer Educators and Waukesha Teens On Line: 457 youth participated
- Resource Center: 73,275 materials distributed
- Dial Harmony: 1,391 tapes accessed
- Outcome: 73% of participants state will use information learned in daily lives

HELP Center

Master prepared volunteers provided free, anonymous, confidential short-term counseling to individuals and families in community:

- 92 appointment provided
- 49 clients
- Outcome: 91% of HELP Center clients reported symptom reduction

Mobile Crisis

Licensed mental health professionals provided emergency mental health intervention service providing telephone support or in-person contact to assist individuals in community:

- 67 personal contacts
- 444 telephone contacts
- Outcome: 87% of assessed clients stabilized at home or other non-institutional setting.

211/First Call For Help

Provided critical, immediate connections to community resources for individuals and families in Waukesha County, 24/7:

- Total calls received: 39,389
- 25% increase over 31,616 calls received in 2004
- Outcome: 87% of callers contacting 211/FCFH were "able to state the next step"

Mobile Crisis Program Expands Services

MHA will be hiring a licensed mental health professional for a full time, 30-hour position on weekday nights. In April 2006, Mobile Crisis began providing additional crisis intervention coverage for Waukesha County Department of Health and Human Services (WCDHHS) on weeknights. This weeknight coverage will allow staff to increase capacity to develop relationships with local law enforcement to assist in developing alternatives to hospitalization, when appropriate, in mental health crises. Interested individuals can forward a resume and cover letter to Jane DeGeorge, Programs Director.



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If you are interested in making an impact in your community by volunteering with MHA, please call 262-547-0769.

Thanks so much to all our dedicated volunteers!

Volunteers are vital to MHA. Volunteers provide expertise to an audience and stimulate discussion at Speaker's Bureau presentations. Youth perform puppet shows and skits, teach youth about self-esteem, respect for others, and how to handle conflict. Volunteers provide in-person and telephone counseling, assist at health fairs, assist in MHA office and with annual Gift Lift Project. Volunteer Board of Directors oversees fiscal responsibility. Fund development and special event volunteers assist in raising funds for programs and services so client services remain free. Our volunteers are dedicated to mental health and making our community a better place.

Thanks to MHA Volunteers