

The ANSWER

Fayette County Behavioral Health Administration Newsletter

FALL 2015

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OFFICE CLOSINGS:
Columbus Day—10/12/15
Veteran's Day—11/11/15
Thanksgiving—11/26/15
Thanksgiving—11/27/15

Contact Us:
(724) 430-1370
www.FCBHA.org

10-YEAR EMPLOYEE ANNIVERSARY LUNCHEON



Honorees shown in the photo above include: Joy Anderson, Tina Pahula, Deb Pace, Brandi Denny, Lester Visnosky, Jennifer Farquhar, Justin Fullem, Karen Amicarella Darla Riggan, Regina Moore, and Jeannie Vanbremen.

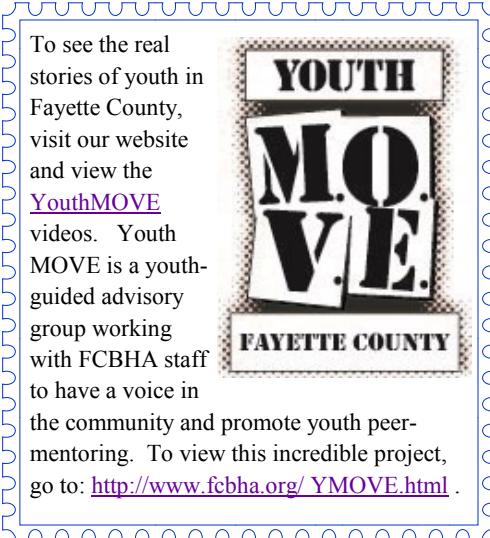
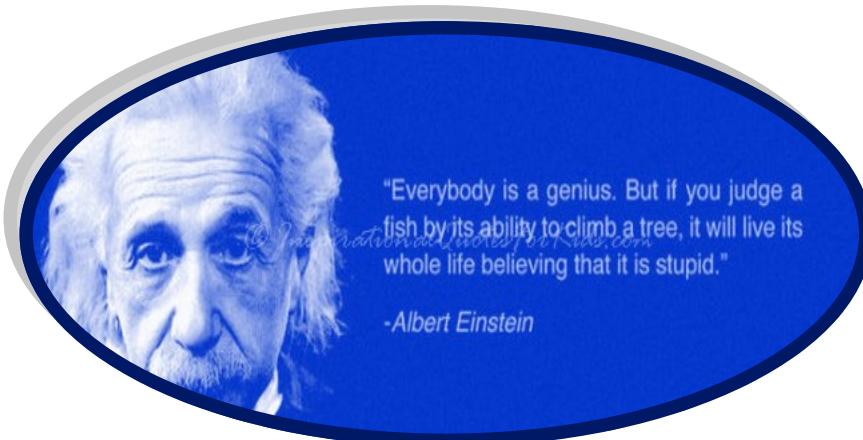
Recipients not pictured: David Artis, Dr. Purushothama Iyengar, William Johnson, Regina Moore, Nancy Turis, May Gill, Melinda Wright, Ken Dillinger, Maria Cavanagh, Paul Holland, Roger McGurgan, Jennifer Sharp, Ashley McLaughlin, Cheryl Schurg

The Annual 10-Year Anniversary luncheon is held each summer to honor individuals who work in the social, human, and community services either for FCBHA and/or one of our Provider Partners. This year on June 17th, 24 employees were honored for their dedication to the citizens of Fayette County through their work. Members of the FCBHA Advisory Board recognized each worker individually and thanked them for continuing to provide quality service to our elder population, those with mental illness, intellectual disabilities, co-occurring disorders, and physical disabilities. This is neither easy nor ordinary work but work that takes a lot of heart and strength. Social service workers help people overcome some of life's most difficult challenges: poverty, discrimination, abuse, addiction, physical illness, divorce, loss, unemployment, educational problems, disability, and mental illness. They help prevent crises and counsel individuals, families, and communities to cope more effectively with the stresses of everyday life. Congratulations to you all in recognition of your 10th Anniversary and Direct Support Professionals Week, September 13th through the 19th.

**“THE MIRACLE IS NOT THAT WE DO THIS WORK,
IT IS THAT WE ARE HAPPY TO DO IT”.**

Mother Teresa

MISSION: To enrich lives by providing choice and access to resources that encourage hope, independence and recovery.



ARE YOUR KIDS WIRED & TIRED ?

All that screen-time may be making your child or teen Moody, Crazy, and Lazy according to a recent article in [Psychologytoday.com](https://www.psychologytoday.com). They may be prone to rages, or alternatively depressed and apathetic, agitated but exhausted due to chronically high arousal levels which may just make them likely to struggle academically as well. What was once thought to be and sometimes treated as "X" mental disorder may just be a serious case of electronics overload. The new, true underlying diagnoses could be **Mood Dysregulation** which requires an "electronic fast" in order to allow the nervous system to "reset". This type of intervention can produce deeper sleep, a brighter more even mood, better focus and organization, and an increase in energy. In addition it seems there is increased ability to tolerate stress and meltdowns diminish in frequency and severity. It turns out that while enjoying the "electronic fast", the child realizes that they enjoy the things they used to, they are drawn to nature, and creativity and imagination returns. With teens, an increase of self-directed behavior is observed...the exact opposite of apathy and hopelessness.

Below are six physiological mechanisms that explain electronics' tendency to produce mood disturbance:

1. Screen-time disrupts sleep and desynchronizes the body clock.
2. Screen-time desensitizes the brain's reward system.
3. Screen-time produces "light-at-night".
4. Screen-time induces stress reactions.
5. Screen-time overloads the sensory system, fractures attention, and depletes mental reserves.
6. Screen-time reduces physical activity levels and exposure to "green-time".

So what is the reality of the situation in today's world that relies so heavily on electronics? Does it even make sense to attempt to restrict their use under any circumstance? That is a question for every parent to ask themselves. The theory is that when kids are struggling, a parent is not doing the child any favors by leaving electronics in place and hoping they can "wind down" by using them in moderation; BUT that in contrast, by allowing the nervous system to return to a more natural state via an "electronic fast", you take a step toward helping them become calmer, stronger, and happier.

READ THE FULL ARTICLE AT

[HTTPS://WWW.PSYCHOLOGYTODAY.COM/BLOG/MENTAL-WEALTH/201508/SCR...](https://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/mental-wealth/201508/scr...)

PREVALENCE OF MENTAL ILLNESS AMONG CHILDREN & YOUTH

A report published by Mental Health America entitled “[The State of Mental Health in America](#)” brings some startling statistics to light and stresses that protecting youth against mental health problems cannot be emphasized enough. As with other interventions for children, early mental health services can reduce school dropout rates, engagement in substance abuse, and other risky, self-injurious behaviors. Sadly much less mental health data is available for youth populations, which means that tracking the impact of mental illness on their wellbeing is much more difficult. In Fayette County, the CANS / Kidnet assessment and tool has been in development for the past five years and is now providing this very valuable information to clinicians serving the children here. Ongoing trainings are conducted by FCBHA with providers and FCBHA staff on the Child and Adolescent Needs & Strengths assessment tool and the Kidnet information system that provides the data outcomes so critical in helping children focus on their strengths to move forward in life. Again, Fayette County paves the way with strategies that lead to positive outcomes. We look forward to the success of the tool and enhanced outcomes for children in Fayette County.

STATISTICS FROM MENTAL HEALTH AMERICA

6.2 Million—8.5% of Children in America suffer from emotional, behavioral, or developmental issues (EBD)

1.6 Million—6.48% of children in America have substance use problems.

2.1 Million—8.6% of children in America report having at least one major depressive episode in the year

8.01 % of youth report having attempted suicide once in the last year

2X More—females attempt suicide (10.6%) compared to males (5.4%)

Pennsylvania ranks 44th of the 50 states with 11.57% of children having EBD issues (280,880 children). Nationally it is 8.5%. The lowest is Alabama at 6.87%.

Pennsylvania ranks 29th for youth dependence or abuse of illicit drugs or alcohol.

Pennsylvania ranks 7th for students identified with serious emotional disturbance.



THE BABY & THE BUTTERFLY

This story demonstrates the importance of helping wisely.

A man found a cocoon of a butterfly. One day a small opening appeared. He sat and watched the butterfly for several hours as it struggled to force its body through that little hole.

Then it seemed to stop making progress. It appeared as if it had gotten as far as it could and it could go no farther. So the man decided to help the butterfly. He took a pair of scissors and sipped off the remaining bit of the cocoon. The butterfly then emerged easily. But it had a swollen body and small, shriveled wings.

The man continued to watch the butterfly because he expected that at any moment, the wings would enlarge and expand to be able to support the body which would contract in time. Neither happened. In fact, the butterfly spent the rest of its life crawling around with a swollen body and shriveled wings. It was never able to fly.

The man is driven by his compassion for the butterfly's struggle and by his desire to make things easier for the emerging creature. But struggling through its restricting cocoon is the butterfly's only way of forcing fluid from its body into its wings and it is only after this process is complete that a butterfly's wings are prepared for flight. In his well-intentioned haste, the man bypassed one of natures most efficient and necessary processes, crippling the very life he meant to aid.

Sometimes struggles are exactly what children need in order to grow strong and fly with their own competent wings. A childhood without challenges soothes our parenting minds but stunts our children's ability to cope, persist and persevere.

From [Psychologytoday.com](#)

SEPTEMBER IS NATIONAL RECOVERY MONTH

This is a national observance to educate Americans that treatment and services can help those with mental health and substance use disorders to live healthy and rewarding lives. This month celebrates the gains made by people in recovery and reinforces the positive message that behavioral health is essential to overall health, prevention works, treatment is effective, and people can and do recover. Millions of Americans have been transformed through recovery but often those successes go unnoticed. This month provides an opportunity for many to celebrate their recovery and speak out about the positive things that can be achieved through treatment.

The theme for 2015 is “Join the Voices for Recovery, Visible, Vocal, Valuable” ! It encourages people to join the conversation about prevention, treatment, and recovery because it is through this kind of conversation that everyone can better understand mental health and substance abuse disorders in the same ways they understand heart disease and other physical health disorders. There are many individuals in recovery who now serve their communities and others in recovery through peer support. They now share their voice and understanding to create better support systems and are catalysts for change. They also experience and enjoy gainful employment as certified recovery and peer specialists.

It is also an excellent time to focus some energy on PREVENTION. This is a powerful word and a powerful opportunity to help children be less afflicted and more affirmed about having good health (both physical and mental) and good habits . Prevention comes in many forms....and “***an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure***”. So it may be most important to start with the young to promote a lifestyle that encourages them to exercise to stay fit, to eat well to fortify their body and mind, to have a life that does not include tobacco or excessive alcohol, to get health screenings and vaccinations to maintain their health and that of their community, and to care for the environment that will support them for years to come.

ON PREVENTION ...

Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder

(FASD)

Awareness Day is September 9th. FASD is an umbrella term describing the range of effects that can occur in an individual whose mother drank alcohol during pregnancy. These effects may include physical, mental, behavioral, and/or learning disabilities with possible lifelong implications. FASD affects more children than autism and the number of new cases grows each year. A woman should not drink if she is pregnant or attempting to get pregnant.

Pregnant women and new mothers can now signup for an app that provides them with information and tools like appointment reminders, weekly planning lists and more. Text4baby was developed to help women because healthy decisions affect the health of their babies for a lifetime!

Goto: <https://www.text4baby.org/>



TRENDS IN MENTAL HEALTH TREATMENT

The search for effective and practical models of treatment and accessibility to care for all Americans is an ongoing effort according to the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI). In addition to treatment, the most popular new approaches of those involve technology, nutrition, meditation, Yoga, and support groups. To read more about how these things can be incorporated into a treatment plan, go to NAMI.org.

TO READ THE 10 PRINCIPLES OF RECOVERY, GO TO:

<http://store.samhsa.gov/shin/content/PEP12-RECDEF/PEP12-RECDEF.pdf>

H.O.P.E.

HOLD ON, PAIN ENDS

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Recovery Month - September 2015

September is National Recovery Month, an observance that increases awareness and understanding of mental and/or substance use disorders. In recognition of Recovery Month, the Fayette County Board of Commissioners acknowledges the following:

WHEREAS, behavioral health is an essential part of health and wellness; and

WHEREAS, prevention works, treatment is effective, and people recover; and

WHEREAS, because individuals with mental health and substance abuse conditions can recover and live full and successful lives, we encourage those in need to seek treatment; and

WHEREAS, the stigma that often prevents individuals from seeking appropriate treatment and care can be significantly reduced by a commitment to learning more about mental illness and substance abuse and seeing people for who they are; and

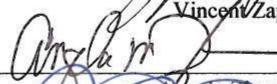
WHEREAS, we ask citizens of Fayette County to "Join the Voices for Recovery" so that all Fayette County residents are "visible, vocal and, valuable" as we unite to educate, support, mentor and help others to live fulfilling lives; and

WHEREAS, Fayette County Behavioral Health Administration is committed to reducing the impact of mental health and substance use conditions in Fayette County and helping individuals experience long-term recovery;

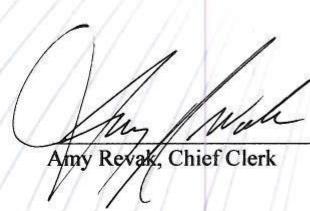
NOW, THEREFORE, we, by virtue of the authority vested in us by the laws of Fayette County, Pennsylvania, do hereby proclaim the month of September 2015 as **National Recovery Month** and call upon the people of Fayette County to "Join the Voices for Recovery: Visible, Vocal, Valuable!"

FAYETTE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS


Vincent Zapotosky, Chairman


Angela Zimmerlink, Vice Chair


Alfred Ambrosini, Secretary


Amy Revak, Chief Clerk

SUICIDE PREVENTION AWARENESS WEEK

SEPTEMBER 7–13, 2015

GOOD NEWS !

On Thursday, June 26th, House Bill 1559 was signed into law in Pennsylvania. Beginning with the 2015-16 school year, each school must now adopt an age-appropriate youth suicide awareness and prevention policy and procedure to help identify students who may need help. It should include 4 hours of training in youth suicide awareness and prevention every 5 years for educators in grades 6–12 and it may incorporate a youth suicide and prevention curriculum into existing instructional programs. The Department of Education will aid school districts in this process by developing model programs and curriculums that it will make available to all schools. Several area schools, including the Career & Technical Institute in Uniontown, have already developed their policies and procedures and are implementing them this year. Other special activities are planned with students for Suicide Prevention Awareness Week.

ACT 26

CYBERBULLYING LAW PASSED

GREAT NEWS !

On July 10th, 2015 Governor Wolf signed ACT 26 into law. This creates the offense of *Cyber Harassment* with some real and serious consequences. Offenses would include; making seriously disparaging statements about a child's physical characteristics, sexuality, sexual activity, mental or physical health, or that threatens to inflict harm. The harassment could be made electronically, either directly to the child or through social media.

For a juvenile charged with the crime, a diversionary program which might include an educational program on cyber harassment would be considered first. Successful completion could lead to the juvenile's record being expunged. The law makes cyber harassment of a child a 3rd-degree misdemeanor, punishable by a maximum fine of \$2,500 and/or 1 year in prison. The law may help schools, which are often expected to handle cyberbullying whether it happens on school grounds or not.



ACT-25

Police Training Law Passed



On July 10th, Governor Tom Wolf signed a law that requires training of Magisterial District Judges and Municipal Police on how to recognize and more effectively manage people with mental illness, intellectual disabilities, and autism. FCBHA Mental Health Director, David W. Rider, sits on a committee that provided guidance on the bill that went on to become ACT 25. He has seen the successes that can and have been achieved in Fayette County. Under his direction, a 40-hour Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) Training program was developed and has been conducted regularly over the past several years. It teaches officers that mental illnesses and intellectual disabilities are not character weaknesses or flaws and helps them understand what to expect from a person experiencing symptoms. It goes a step further with how to connect those individuals to appropriate resources within the community all of which serves to de-escalate most situations. There are currently 30 officers in Fayette County who have completed CIT Training. Many of these officers have seen first hand the benefit of the training and have led the movement to have more officers trained. Mr. Rider praises the efforts of Connellsville Police Chief James Capitos, who has encouraged other chiefs to have their patrol officers trained. Another CIT standout is State Trooper George Mrosko who shares his thoughts on the importance of police to "keep in mind that a person's perception of the world may be affected by their illness". He tells us he has been better able to de-escalate quite a few situations due to his CIT Training. We sincerely thank these special CIT trained officers who have volunteered in the past as well as the 40+ mental health professionals who have collaborated and taught specialized modules. We look forward to working with those who are now mandated to receive similar training. We know they will find it is an excellent tool with outcomes that benefit our communities everyday.

FCBHA STAFF TRAINED IN FIRST AID & CPR

Connie Summerson (left)
Hollie Shimatzki (Right)

From left to right below:

Susan Wilson, Chrissy Collier,
Mary Cseripko, Jane Ann Bielecki,
Nicole Kmetz, Leslie Parsons



From left to right (left):
Stacey Evans, Pat Morrison,
Susan Wilson and Chrissy Collier

Special Thanks to our Trainers
from
Fayette EMS



EXCELLENT NEWS !

DANCE WORKS ... A local dance studio, **KOZA & COMPANY**, is now offering dance instruction for children with special needs. The program was created by Penny Koza-Lemansky, a graduate of Point Park University and Board Member of Dance Masters of Pennsylvania and Dance Masters of America and Allison Pegg who holds degrees in Elementary and Special Education. Their combined credentials provide a perfect blend of experience to work with special needs children eager to have fun and explore the world of dance. For more information about the classes that will begin September 19th, 2015, please call (724) 437-6393.

FCBHA CEO, LISA FERRIS-KUSNIAR

was the keynote speaker at a recent fundraising event hosted by the Bruderhoff of New Meadow Run to benefit Genesis House Ministries. Led by Reverend Terry Sanders, Genesis House helps young men overcome addiction and transform themselves into contributing members of society. There were many testimonials throughout the evening to the power of faith and hard work with great thanks and appreciation also going to Reverend Sanders!



FAREWELL COMMISSIONER LEBDER

Former Commissioner Fred L. Lebder passed away peacefully on July 25th at home with friends and family by his side. He was a supporter of many organizations in his community including Crosskeys Human Services in Brownsville, to which the family has requested contributions be made in his honor. We extend our sympathies to his family for their loss, he will be remembered fondly.



Fayette County Behavioral Health Administration

215 Jacob Murphy Lane

Uniontown, PA 15401

Fayette County Behavioral Health Administration

(724) 430-1370

Lisa Ferris-Kusniar
Chief Executive Officer

www.FCBHA.org



Fayette County Board of Commissioners

Vincent Zapotosky, Chairman
Angela M. Zimmerlink, Vice Chair
Alfred F. Ambrosini, Secretary

FCBHA Advisory Board 2015 Meeting Dates

April 15, 2015

May 20, 2015

September 16, 2015

November 18, 2015

(open to the public)
5:30 PM

215 Jacob Murphy Lane
Uniontown, PA 15401
724-430-1370

For information about this Advisory
Board and how to apply for a position on
this Board, please visit our website:

<http://www.fcbha.org/Advisory.html>



Video Conferences And Trainings At FCBHA

9/15/15

Evidence Based Treatments for Post-Traumatic Stress Disorders

11/18/15

**Working with Reactive
Attachment Disorder Children**

12/9/15

MH & Homelessness

Go to:

<http://www.fcbha.org/Current.html>

For a Full List of
Events and Activities