



The ANSWER

Fayette County Behavioral Health Administration's Newsletter

Spring 2013

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Memorial Day
May 27, 2013

Independence Day
July 4, 2013

May Is Mental Health Awareness Month



Commissioner Vince Zapotosky, Commissioner Alfred F. Ambrosini, Chairman, Commissioner Angela M. Zimmerlink, Windy Dougherty, Donna Raymond, Kim Bowser-Murtha and Shannon Soltis.

On April 16th, County Commissioners officially proclaimed May as Mental Health Awareness Month in Fayette County. Joining them for this public announcement were Kim Bowser-Murtha, Behavioral Health Director at Fayette County Behavioral Health Administration (FCBHA), Windy Dougherty, Chestnut Ridge Counseling Services, Inc., Donna Raymond and Shannon Soltis.

Raymond and Soltis shared the positive experiences they have had with local service providers and thanked everyone who helped them on their paths to recovery. Ms. Soltis' hobbies include baking and exercising. She is a recent graduate of the Phoenix Adult Partial Program. Her next goal includes obtaining employment. Ms. Raymond appreciates the guidance she received from Windy Dougherty in locating stable housing and learning budgeting skills to live a more independent life.

Good mental health is fundamental to overall health and results in productive activities, fulfilling relationships with others, and the ability to adapt to change and cope with adversity. Throughout the month there are numerous trainings, open houses and community events aimed at increasing awareness and understanding of mental illness and reducing stigma and discrimination. Please visit our website at www.FCBHA.org or call 724-430-1370 for more information.

Mission

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



Kid Talk

Your Child's Habits

Many kids have habits that can be downright annoying. Four of the most common ones that children develop and parents complain about are nail biting, thumb sucking, hair twirling, nose picking. Although your child's habits may bother or even worry you, relax. In most cases, a habit is just a phase in the normal development process and is not cause for alarm.

What's a Habit?

A habit is a pattern of behavior that's repeated, and the person usually isn't even aware of it. Although kids may be blissfully unaware of a habit, their parents aren't so lucky. And if your little one usually has one hand stuffed in the mouth and the other entwined in the hair, don't be surprised: Habits tend to occur in clusters.

What Causes a Habit?

Why do your son's fingers appear to be an extension of his mouth, and why is there always a propeller of hair circling above your daughter's head? Experts admit that they are not always sure what causes a habit, but that it is a learned behavior that usually provides a positive outcome for the child. Habits may develop as entertainment for a bored child or more commonly, as a coping mechanism to soothe an anxious one. The next time you see nail biting or hair twirling, try to recall if your child has recently had a stressful experience. If so, the behavior might be your child's attempt to relieve tension just as you would by working out at the gym. Some kids engage in habits when they are relaxed, other habits may be leftovers from infancy. In infants, thumb sucking is a common self-comfort behavior that has a pleasurable association with feeding so it may linger into childhood. Or perhaps the explanation for your child's nail biting may be in your mirror. Do you bite your nails? Some kids will engage in habits to attract attention or as an attempt to manipulate their parents.

Coping with Your Child's Habit

The good news is that most habits disappear usually by the time a child reaches school age, because the child no longer needs it or outgrows it. But if you think it's time to help your child break a habit, consider these steps:

- Calmly point out what you don't like about the behavior and why. This approach can be used with kids as young as 3-4 to help increase awareness of the problem.
- Involve your child in the process of breaking the habit. If your 5-year-old comes home crying from kindergarten because the other kids made fun of his thumb sucking, understand that this is a way of asking you for help.
- Suggest alternative behaviors. If your child is a nail biter, instead of saying "Don't bite your nail," try saying "Let's wiggle our fingers." This will increase awareness of the habit and serve as a reminder.
- Reward and praise self-control. Allow your little girl to use nail polish if she lets her nails grow. Or if your son refrains from sucking his thumb, reinforce the positive behavior by praising him and giving him a sticker or small prize.
- Be consistent in rewarding good behavior. If you fail to notice a good behavior, it will disappear over time. The new, positive habit must be firmly established before the old one will disappear.

When is a Habit No Longer Just a Habit?

In some instances, a habit may be the result or cause of a physical or psychological problem. For example, a nose-picker may be uncomfortable because there's actually an object stuck in the nose. And the habits themselves may cause some medical complications such as nosebleeds in the nose picker, ingrown or infected nails in the nail bite, dental problems or thumb or finger infections for the thumb sucker. A habit may no longer be a simple habit if it negatively affects a child's social relationships or interferes with daily functioning.

Older kids who constantly suck their thumb might be experiencing significant stress or anxiety. If kids are the subject of teasing at school or have difficulty talking because they won't take their thumbs out of their mouths, the behavior has progressed beyond a simple habit. Kids who pull their hair out may have trichotillomania, a condition that results in hair loss. And habits that are in response to obsessive thoughts may be a sign of Obsessive Compulsive Disorder.

However, most habits don't cause any significant problems and tend to improve as kids get older. But if you are concerned about your child's health, talk with your doctor.

(This information was provided by Kids Health, one of the largest resources online for medically reviewed health information written for parents, kids, and teens. For more information like this one, visit KidsHealth.org or TeensHealth.org © 1995-2009. The Nemours Foundation. All rights reserved.)



FCBHA Employee Retires



On March 1, 2013, fellow employee, Cheryl Kraynak retired after 14 years of employment with us.

Cheryl is a graduate of South Union School District and California University of Pennsylvania with a Bachelor of Science in Social Work and has more than 20 years of experience working in the mental health and intellectual disability community. She started with Goodwill where she worked as a job trainer. She also worked for Fayette County Service Connections until 1998.

Cheryl was then hired at FCBHA as an Adult Administrative Case Manager. She loved working with consumers and was always willing to go above and beyond her job description to see that folks needs were being met. Cheryl says this is one thing she will truly miss.

In retirement, Cheryl plans to golf, travel, camp and spend more time with her husband Bob, three children, six grandchildren and four great-grandchildren.

Thank you Cheryl for your years of service! Enjoy your retirement.

Miracle League Updates for 2013

We hope our readers are now familiar with a group that has become near and dear to our hearts...The Miracle League of Pennsylvania's Laurel Highlands (MLPLH). The MLPLH is an amazing organization that enables kids with special needs to be kids by providing them the opportunity to play baseball throughout the summer months. For many years, it was a struggle for them to find a place to play and the league was forced to move from field to field, but last year that all changed. Through the kindness and generosity of many wonderful and caring individuals, the City of Uniontown, and the Laurel Highlands Visitors Bureau (LHVB), the league now calls Bailey Park in Uniontown home.

Now that they have a home field, the new goal is to raise enough funds to transform the Bailey Park field into a "field of dreams". To be a true Miracle League sanctioned field, a special rubberized surface must be laid. The surface makes it possible for all children, including those in wheel chairs and in braces, to enjoy playing baseball! It will take a lot of energy and devotion to raise \$250,000 and likely a couple more years, but things are rolling along for the 2013 season.

Last week, MLPLH received some great news! They were awarded a grant from the Laurel Highlands Visitors Bureau that will enable them to build handicapped accessible restrooms, a quiet room and press box at the park, and if the budget allows, purchase some concession equipment for game days. Our sincere gratitude goes out to this wonderful friend of the MLPLH and our communities for the ongoing support that will help make game days more comfortable and enjoyable!

For more information about games, how to participate in the league, or to make a donation to the Miracle League of Pennsylvania's Laurel Highlands, please go to www.mlph.org





Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month



The Fayette County Board of Commissioners officially kicked off March 2013 by proclaiming it “Developmental Disabilities (DD) Awareness Month” at their public meeting. Aaron Zubovich and Lynn Orawiec, FCBHA’s Developmental Program Director joined the commissioners for this event and invited community members to attend social and educational programs planned throughout the month.

Aaron was honored to participate in the proclamation. He lives in a community living arrangement through Twin Trees and has worked at Goodwill Industries for the past two years. In his free time he enjoys going on dinner dates with his girlfriend, bowling, playing video games and working on puzzles and word searches.

Annually, FCBHA serves nearly six hundred individuals with developmental disabilities and 300 children who are eligible through the Early Intervention Program. A broad range of services are available throughout the county which include residential, home-based, day programs, vocational services, and speech, occupational and physical therapies through contracted agencies and vendors. DD Awareness Month affords a platform for FCBHA, provider agencies, individuals and community members to attend Open Houses, trainings, bake sales and various other events.



The month concluded with the 22nd annual Board Meets Board event on March 27th. This is an evening when FCBHA, Advisory Board Members, and provider agencies come together to network and share in an uplifting, information event.



Lisa Ferris, FCBHA’s Chief Executive Officer, opened the evening with a synopsis of Fayette County’s continuous progress and commitment to folks with developmental disabilities. She also took time to thank Shelby Clingan, a long-time volunteer for Board Meets Board.

Shelby is the daughter of Lynn Orawiec and Douglas Clingan. This exceptional young lady has attended and assisted with numerous agency events over the past 14 years and most recently served as a volunteer for The Fayette County Special Olympics as part of her senior project at Uniontown High School. She wants to dedicate her life to empowering others to live full and meaningful lives and will be attending California University of Pennsylvania in the fall to continue her education as a psychology major.





Following Ms. Ferris's opening remarks, Lynn Orawiec moderated the much anticipated panel discussion which included John Hustosky, Janie Johnson, Savannah Kurcina, Bobbi Jo Miskanin, Chelsea Sinsley, Alan Weiblinger and their friends and families. Each shared success stories which involved numerous decisions, learning experiences and great pride in their own or a loved ones accomplishments.



Jason Sproul, Global Messenger for the Special Olympics, took a minute to talk about the importance of the organization in his life and urged his peers to become involved in their year round events.

The heartwarming evening concluded with a patriotic musical performance by George Hudak. Then it was time for networking, refreshments and informational resource sharing amongst the 100 attendees.

To find out more about the services and supports available in your community visit www.fcbha.org or call 724-430-1370.





Here's the Buzz...

LTSR Relocates

Crossroads Long-term Structured Residential (LTSR) program has relocated to Connellsville. Their new, spacious building on South Pittsburgh Street allows every resident to have private rooms. The site features group programming rooms, private therapy rooms, offices, and an art therapy studio. Their new telephone number is number is 724-626-9603,

FCBHA wishes the Crossroads residents and staff all the best as they settle-in to their new location.

Fayette County Family Fun Fest

This free annual event will be held at the Fayette County Fairgrounds on Saturday June 15th. The day includes games, prizes, entertainment, balloon art, food and a resource fair. It is organized by the Fayette County Human Service Council and welcomes over 1,000 attendees each year. Join in the fun this year!

Joint Military Suicide Prevention Symposium

Wednesday, June 12, 2013-9:00am-3:30pm (registration begins at 8:30am)

Keystone Conference Center, Building 17-104 Essayons Rd

Fort Indiantown Gap, Annville, PA 17003

This event is intended as a planning and collaboration project, initiated through the efforts of Service Members, Veterans and Family Members Military Policy Academy. The Policy Academy was developed through an interagency initiative which includes veterans, service members, and their families. The purpose of the project is to determine the mental health and suicide prevention needs of current and former service members of all military branches in Pennsylvania and how those needs can be met, both by the military and the community. Current and former service members from all branches, family members, military staff that work in the area of suicide prevention and others interested in preventing suicide are encouraged to attend.

Registration is available online at <https://www.research.net/s/DHGZ5VB>. Registration deadline is June 3, 2013. If you are unable to register online, please call 717-885-9161 or email info@preventsuicidepa.org.

Senior Depression Screenings

Members from Fayette County's suicide prevention taskforce, Community Awareness of Life and Loss will be traveling to senior centers throughout the month of May to play mental wellness games and offer depression screenings.

Raising Money

FCBHA employees voluntarily participate in dress down days. With their generosity carrying over into 2013, the following organizations have benefited from these fundraisers:

January:	Big Brothers and Big Sisters	\$156
February:	The American Heart Association	\$112
March:	Fayette County Special Olympics	\$138
April:	The American Cancer Society	\$123



Recovery Corner

I'm going to write you a story on how High Fidelity Wraparound helped my family. I was a quiet mom. I didn't speak much. I let people down me and I listened to it. Now, I speak up when I don't like what people are saying. I have more confidence in myself and my family. The Family Support Partner and the Facilitator were like family to me. I could talk to them and they listened to me and helped me.

I was involved with Children and Youth Services because of their previous school, because like I said before, I never spoke up. I started speaking up and my voice was finally heard. High Fidelity Wraparound helped me learn that my voice needs to be heard. I feel proud of myself, not down anymore. I learned that family comes first. Thanks High Fidelity Wraparound team.

A Mother of Two Special Needs Youth

**High Fidelity Wraparound is a team approach that builds on the strengths of the family and their supports. The team brainstorms ideas with families to develop plans around their needs.*

It's a Great Time to be a KID!

There are so many things changing every day that it is almost impossible to be on top of anything, but in Fayette County, we are working hard to make sure that our children are not falling through the cracks that are ever present and expansive between the systems of care.

Over the past several years, a lot of time and attention has been given to identifying and disseminating a comprehensive assessment tool to uniformly assess a child's status and progress. The instrument selected to gather and chart local youths' progress in the service systems that support them is the CANS (Child & Adolescent Needs & Strengths) assessment, which is used throughout the world. This tool has been further refined and developed by a team of dedicated individuals in Allegheny County and shared with Fayette County Behavioral Health Administration and Westmoreland County Behavioral Health and Developmental Services to streamline cross-county assessment of child and family needs. . The information gathered from CANS is entered into KIDNET, a repository and outcomes reporting application developed by the University of Maryland's Children's Outcome Management Center. KIDNET reports clearly illustrate the youth's progress and outcomes to the family and treatment providers.

A week-long symposium coordinated by Kellie Gavran at FCBHA provided CANS training and certification to Behavioral Health and Rehabilitation Services (BHRS) clinicians and evaluators in the southwestern PA region. The event was hosted by Fayette and Westmoreland Counties in collaboration with the Community Data Roundtable (CDR) with funding support from a grant awarded through the Stanton Farm Foundation.

The CANS training and education sessions were conducted by John Lyons, Ph.D., author of the book *Communimetrics* and many others that address outcomes measurement in children's behavioral health and other human service systems. *Communimetrics* presents theories and guidelines for designing communimetric measures and evaluating their reliability and validity. A communimetric-approach is defined by *presenting information in an accessible style or way* to increase communication and understanding among the family, youth, treatment providers, and county entities. The language we all are learning is guided and driven by the Child and Adolescent Needs and Strengths tool (CANS) and *Communimetrics* theory of communication and measurement in the Human Service Field.

If you are interested in learning more about this System of Care approach or the CANS assessment, contact Kellie Gavran at FCBHA, 724 430 1370 or kelliegavran@fcbha.org

The ANSWER

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Fayette County Behavioral Health Administration

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Lisa A. Ferris
Chief Executive Officer

Fayette County Board of Commissioners

Alfred F. Ambrosini, Chairman
Vince Zapotosky
Angela M. Zimmerlink



May 21, 2013
10:00AM-12:00PM
Anger Management
at FCBHA
Register at:

www.hcqu.apshealthcare.com

June 12, 2013
9:00AM-11:00AM
Fetal Alcohol Syndrome
at FCBHA
Register at:

www.fcbha.org/Current.html
or
www.wpic.pitt.edu/OERP/video/default.htm

June 18, 2013
10:00AM-12:00PM
Autism
at FCBHA
Register at:

www.hcqu.apshealthcare.com

June 27, 2013
10:00AM-1:00PM
Women & Addiction
at FCBHA
Register by contacting
judycarpeal@fcbha.org
or (724) 430-1370

July 18, 2013
10:00AM-12:00PM
Abuse: Individual to Individual
at FCBHA
Register at:

www.hcqu.apshealthcare.com

The ANSWER is a publication of the Fayette County Behavioral Health Administration.
Any comments, questions or suggestions may be submitted to the Newsletter Editor at www.fcbha.org or
Fayette County Behavioral Health Administration, 215 Jacob Murphy Lane, Uniontown, PA 15401.