



# *The ANSWER*

Fayette County Behavioral Health Administration's Newsletter

Winter 2012

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## FCBHA CLOSINGS

New Year's Day  
January 1, 2013

Martin Luther King, Jr. Day  
January 21, 2013

President's Day  
February 18, 2013

Good Friday  
March 29, 2013

## Annual Message from Our CEO

### Lessons of 2012.....

**R**emember that each day is a gift

**E**mbrace those who make you the happiest

**F**orgive those who may not

**L**ove everything and everyone with sincerity of heart

**E**nvelop your anger and find something productive to do with it

**C**ontinue to pray for the sad, lonely, and ill

**T**hey are all of us at one time or another

**I**n all honesty, be the best person you can be

**O**ffer something good to the world each day

**N**ow is a perfect time to heal and grow

**S**ee something positive and wonderful in each new day!

This year, have a very happy, healthy, and prosperous New Year!

Lisa A. Ferris, CEO



## Mission

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



## Kid Talk

## Cold, Ice, and Snow Safety

Winter isn't a time to just stay indoors and wait for spring. There's a whole wonderland of sports out there for the entire family—sledding, snowboarding, and skiing to mention a few. Plus, someone has to shovel the snow, right?

Once outdoors, however, take precautions to keep your family safe. In ice and snow, accidents can occur easily, and before you know it you might be on your way to the emergency room. It's easy to keep safe—and stay fit—during the cold months. By following a few tips, you can have a great time no matter how much white stuff piles up outside.

### Cold Weather Hazards

Certain injuries are more common in the winter because cold-weather activities like ice-skating, sledding, snowboarding, and skiing can lead to accidents that often involve kids. Now that snowboarding is drawing more kids out in the cold weather, ER's are seeing more abdominal, head, and neck injuries in those who run into trees or large rocks while snowboarding. And some illnesses are more common when the weather turns colder. Respiratory ailments, especially viruses like the flu, are prevalent because people stay indoors more and thus are exposed to more airborne germs.

### At Home

One way to stay healthy while cooped up inside is to make sure your family washes their hands. It's especially important to wash after sharing toys, coughing, and blowing a runny nose to help prevent the spread of viruses. Decided you've had enough of the indoors and you're going to get the family outside to shovel snow? Fine, but take care. Snow shoveling is strenuous work. It's ok for older, school-age kids to help out, but young children should not be shoveling because they can strain their muscles from lifting heavy shovels full of snow. Younger or older, kids sometimes have a tough time knowing when to come inside from the cold. To nip frostbite in the bud, check on your kids regularly to make sure that mittens are dry and warm and noses aren't too red.

### Dressing for the Cold

If you're going outside in the cold, stay safe—and warm. Make sure your kids have a snack before going outside. The calories will give their bodies energy in the cold weather. And protect your kids' faces with sunscreen. The idea of sunburn in January can seem odd, but snow can reflect up to 85% of the sun's ultraviolet rays. Kids should dress warmly in layers of clothes. If the top layer gets wet from snow or freezing rain, they can peel off some clothes down to a dry layer. Avoid cotton clothing because it won't keep the kids very warm. Stick with wool or other fabrics. Dress them in long underwear, a turtleneck, a sweater and a coat. Add more layers depending on the temperature. Waterproof pants and jackets are great top layers because they don't let the wetness seep into the other clothing. The cold-weather ensemble wouldn't be complete without warm socks and boots to keep feet dry and a hat to top it off. There's no set amount of time kids should be allowed to stay out in the cold. However, when being cold becomes unpleasant, it's time to go inside. Sometimes, though, kids may just need some dry gloves. It helps to have an extra pair of gloves or mittens tucked into their pockets if they plan to be outdoors for a while.

### In an Emergency

Kids are at greater risk for frost nip and frostbite than adults, and the best way to prevent it is to make sure they're dressed warmly and don't spend too much time in extreme weather. Frost nip is an early sign of the onset of frostbite. It leaves the skin white and numb. After bringing your child inside, remove all wet clothing because it draws heat from the body. Immerse the chilled body parts in warm (not hot) water—104-108°F (40-42°C)—until they are able to feel sensation again. Frostbite occurs mostly on fingers, toes, ears, noses, and cheeks. The area become very cold and turns white or yellowish gray. If you notice frostbite, take your child immediately to the nearest hospital emergency room. Going on a road trip for the holidays? Make sure you have a first-aid kit, extra blankets, and gloves in the car.

(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](http://KidsHealth.org) or [TeensHealth.org](http://TeensHealth.org) © 1995-2009. The Nemours Foundation. All rights reserved.)





## Value Behavioral Health Honors Exceptional Parents



Mark Fuller, MD, Medical Director, VBH-PA, Stan Mrozowski, Director, OMHSAS Bureau of Children's Behavioral Health Services, Beverly Pletcher, Laverne Cichon, CEO, VBH-PA, Anna Korba, Connellsville Counseling & Psychological Services, Audra Dudek, Community Program Manager, OMHSAS

Each year, Value Behavioral Health of Pennsylvania (VBH-PA) accepts nominations from each county for the Exceptional Parent Award. Fayette County's exceptional parent awardee, Beverly Pletcher, was nominated by a staff member at Connellsville Counseling & Psychological Services. She received this honor on October 7<sup>th</sup>, at VBH-PA's annual forum at Westmoreland County Community College in Youngwood, PA.

Ms. Pletcher is a single mother of two energetic teenage daughters. Since her daughter Ally's first day of services, she has been committed to helping her achieve a healthier way of living. Seeing that her daughter was struggling in public school, Ms. Pletcher quit her job so that Ally could attend Cyber School. She sits with her during her classes and encourages her to do her work and remain on task and focused.

Ms. Pletcher has become an amazing advocate for her daughter. She challenges others to be supportive of Ally's treatment and to understand that she still may have rough days. She has inspired others, to accept her daughter as she is, and appreciate how far she has come. Through it all, the good days and the bad, the triumphs and the failure, she pushes through. Ms. Pletcher continues to exhibit a resilient spirit and refuses to give up on her family or herself. She continually puts her happiness and her dreams on the back burner to be able to provide for the happiness and the dreams of her family.

In a recent online post Ally wrote the following: "I love you. You're the best mom ever. I couldn't ask for a better mom. You've been there for me through everything. You never gave up on me." Ms. Pletcher is indeed an amazing mom, she is always there, she will never give up and she is an exceptional caregiver.

Congratulations to Beverly, and to all of this year's VBH-PA's Exceptional Parent nominees.

*Congratulations!*



## **Free Trainings for 2013**

Fayette County Behavioral Health Administration is pleased to host the following trainings in 2013:

### **American Psychiatric Systems (APS) - Southwestern PA Health Care Quality Unit (HCQU)**

#### *Infectious Diseases: General Infections*

January 17, 2013 - 10:00AM - 12:00 PM

#### *Communicating Effectively with Healthcare Providers and Physical Distress:*

##### *Recognizing the Signs*

February 21, 2013 - 10:00AM - 12:00PM

#### *Heart Healthy Nutrition*

March 21, 2013 - 10:00AM - 12:00PM

#### *Diabetes: The Basics*

April 18, 2013 - 10:00AM - 12:00PM

#### *Anger Management*

May 21, 2013 - 10:00AM - 12:00PM

#### *Autism*

June 18, 2013 - 10:00AM - 12:00PM

To register please go to: [www.hcqu.apshealthcare.com](http://www.hcqu.apshealthcare.com)

### **Western Psychiatric Institute and Clinic/Office of Education and Regional Programming Videoconference Series**

#### *Munchausen Syndrome by Proxy*

January 16, 2013 - 9:00AM - 11:00AM

#### *Psychopharmacology for Children and Adolescents*

January 30, 2013 - 9:00AM - 11:00AM

#### *Ethics in Multimedia*

February 13, 2013 - 9:00AM - 11:00 AM

#### *Behavioral Treatment of Obesity with Mental Health Clients*

March 27, 2013 - 9:00 AM - 11:00 AM

To register please go to: [www.fcbha.org/PDF/2013 WPIC OERP Videoconference.pdf](http://www.fcbha.org/PDF/2013 WPIC OERP Videoconference.pdf)

## **Mark Your Calendars!**

March is Intellectual Disabilities (ID) Awareness Month. Visit our website at [www.fcbha.org](http://www.fcbha.org) in February for a complete calendar of events that will include trainings, open houses and various activities.



## **Torrance Tradition**

On December 5th, staff members from FCBHA and the Mental Health Association in Fayette County traveled to Blairsville and spreading holiday cheer at Torrance State Hospital. During this annual event the group had the pleasure of visiting with approximately 75 people on this fun-filled day. With cookies, icing bags and sprinkles in hand everyone creatively decorated their holiday cookies which they ate following the festive rounds of caroling. Before leaving, staff delivered gifts to the Fayette County consumers.



## **FCBHA Employee Fundraisers**

Each year FCBHA employees submit the names of organizations that they would like to see benefit from our voluntary staff Dress Down Days. This year we raised a total of \$1,102.00 for the following organizations:

The American Cancer Society  
Big Brother Big Sisters of the Laurel Region  
Domestic Violence Services of Southwestern PA  
East End United Community Center's Caring Corner  
Fayette County Association for the Blind  
FCBHA's Employee Flower Fund  
Fayette County Special Olympics  
The Leukemia and Lymphoma Society  
The March of Dimes  
The Miracle League of Pennsylvania Laurel Highlands

## **Honoring Our Veterans**



In observance of Veterans Day, FCBHA employees took time to honor and thank their fellow co-workers for their service in the United States military. Everyone gathered at the flag to recite The Pledge of Allegiance and acknowledge the veterans. Afterwards, the group enjoyed a covered-dish luncheon and browsed a photo display of loved ones who bravely served our country.





## Here's the Buzz...

### EI Elves



Early Intervention Staff took a few minutes out of their busy schedule to help Santa wrap some special gifts for local children.

### NICU Training

At a forum hosted by FCBHA in November, West Penn Hospital's Neonatal Intensive Care Unit and individuals from Children and Youth Services, Early Intervention, Mental Health, Human Services and the Nurse Family Partnership discussed the effects of fetal exposure to drugs and alcohol. The goal is to have substance abuse providers partner with organizations that support positive outcomes for infants and their families. It was a real eye opener for everyone involved. Information on this topic can be found at <http://aspe.hhs.gov/hsp/cvp/drugkids.htm>

### Cross System Training

The Collaborative for Families hosted another well attended Cross Systems Training on November 9<sup>th</sup>. The focus of the one-day training was on the development of early childhood social and emotional development. The event was held at FCBHA and there were approximately 60 participants. The audience consisted of professionals, community service providers, community members, students from Penn State, and Foster Parents. The full agenda accommodated 12 presenters and 12 exhibitors from Fayette County and surrounding areas.

The Cross Systems planning team will host a one-day Cross Systems training in Spring 2013. If you have any questions or would like to attend the Cross Systems Training please contact Kellie Gavran at [kelliegavran@fcbha.org](mailto:kelliegavran@fcbha.org) or (724) 430-1370.

### Teaming Up

In October, members of Fayette County's Suicide Prevention Taskforce: Community Awareness of Life and Loss (CALL) teamed up with the Area Agency on Aging and spent some time talking with older adults at local senior centers. Visits included conversations regarding healthy lifestyle choices, signs and symptoms of depression, depression screenings and games.

### FCBHA.org

Thanks to the work of some very dedicated and hardworking FCBHA employees, our website not only has new look, but contains updated information and resources. Please take a look at [www.fcbha.org](http://www.fcbha.org)

### Voter Registration

On Sept. 28<sup>th</sup> the Let Our Voices Be Heard Self Advocacy Group held a meeting to learn about voter registration, especially the rules for the photo id requirement. The event was hosted by Crosskeys Site Based Psych Rehab. Other sponsors of the event were Allegheny County Mental Health America and Mental Health Association In Fayette County.





## Recovery Corner

*The following recovery story was sent to FCBHA. Although the writer wishes to remain anonymous, they asked us to share it with our readers.*

I am writing this article to let you know how I am managing my recovery. I credit my outpatient therapist, my psychiatrist and my family and friends who have all supported me through some pretty tough times.

I have been depressed for many years and thought that I could just smile and snap myself out of it or self-medicate with alcohol, I am here to tell you that is not the way to handle depression. I have a great family and great friends, so with much encouragement from them, I realized that I needed to get professional help in dealing with my depression; that I could not do it myself.

I have to say that starting therapy was not easy...I had to get used to talking about my problems with a total stranger when I never shared my feelings with my family all the time, so that was difficult. But every time we met, I began to trust her more. I also have a great psychiatrist who not only prescribed me an antidepressant but explained to me how they work. In the past, I have gone to doctors for medical problems who say take this medication but don't explain why and how it will help you; they just expect you to do what they say. I have learned that you need to ask questions about all medications that you are prescribed regardless of what they are for.

So, I take my medication every day, I get up and go to work and take care of my family. Therapy and medication have helped me a lot. If you are like me and not sure how to handle your feelings of depression, please call the local Mental Health agency for help, that is what they are there for.

### ***“What does recovery mean to you?”***

*If you have a recovery story that you would like published in our quarterly newsletter, please contact Robyn Brady at (724) 430-1370 or [robynbrady@fcbha.org](mailto:robynbrady@fcbha.org)*



## **Health & Wellness Fest**

This year October Health & Wellness Fest was held on Tuesday, October 16<sup>th</sup>. There were 177 participants, exhibitors and staff present. The highlights of the day included “Feel Good Bingo, hosted by the FCBHA, a cooking demo was how to make gluten free meals by Chef Joe Carai . Following lunch, there was a zumba exercise demo by Cris Collier and the very popular Scarecrow Stuffing Contest sponsored by SPHS Case Management.

Some of the agencies that participated as arts and crafts exhibitors were CRCSE’s LTSP program, Domestic Violence Services, Site Based Psych Rehab and Mental Health Association. Other exhibitors conducted health screenings such as blood pressure and hand washing techniques. All of the exhibitors and Mental Health Association donated prizes for a drawing at the end of the day.

The evaluation forms showed that the participants enjoyed all of the demonstrations. Getting together with their friends was the most enjoyable part of their day.

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***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](http://www.fcbha.org) or  
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