



The Link

A Community Mental Health Services of Livingston County Newsletter

Volume 3 • Issue 2

April 2008

ANNUAL TOWN HALL MEETING

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Front Office Staff wants to remind you that if you think you may have left something behind at one of our buildings to please check out our Lost & Found

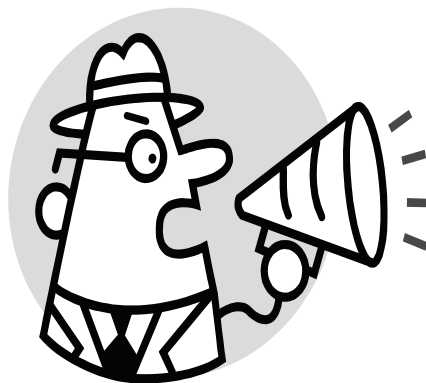
WHEN: Tuesday, May 6, 2008 at 7:00pm

WHERE: * **NEW LOCATION** * 1400 W. Grand River Howell, MI

* **Howell High School Freshman Campus Cafeteria** *

Each year, Livingston County Community Mental Health holds a Town Meeting to get feedback from consumers and from family members. At this meeting **consumers are asked two key questions** regarding services: *“What’s working for you or your family?”* and *“What would you like us to improve?”* This information is then used to make improvements. Some examples of actions CMH has taken as a result of these meetings are:

- Creating additional therapy groups to serve needs that were expressed at the meeting
- Hiring additional staff
- Creating community action committees to address community issues, such as transportation and homelessness.



Your input and ideas matter!
 Groups from the community such as the ARC and the National Alliance for the Mentally Ill (NAMI) attend to hear what you have to say---as well as legislators and CMH’s Board. Child care and transportation are available — please contact Leslie Hall of Customer Service for more information at 517.546.4126.

See you on Tuesday the 6th of May at 7:00pm!!!

Once in a while everyone feels like a stranger in the crowd. In fact, twenty-five percent of American adults experience loneliness. One key aspect of loneliness is isolation and a feeling of not having strong emotional ties with other people. This debilitating form of loneliness affects many people. Research indicates that young adults and older adults are most prone to have a lasting problem with loneliness. Twenty-five percent of young adults are forced to cope with loneliness. One study indicates that older men often feel lonely too. Many men from the age of 50 to 80 years may feel sad, tired and worn out. These feelings are all symptoms of loneliness. Loneliness and isolation occur when one feels disconnected from other people. Some indications of loneliness are the following feelings:

- ◆ Unloved
- ◆ Exclusion from a group (e.g. your peers, family, or society)
- ◆ Lacking friends
- ◆ Feeling like everyone except you is in a relationship
- ◆ Like you can't adjust to a new environment
- ◆ Distant from friends and family
- ◆ Out of touch with society
- ◆ That you have no choice other than to be alone

Loneliness Exists in Our Society

By Laura Lancaster

Studies show there are two types of isolation: emotional and social. When one is going through emotional isolation, he or she may be emotionally isolated but continue to have many connections with people. On the other hand, when individuals become negative or threatening to the community, this is called social isolation. A social network is comprised of the following: similarities people have in their lives: friend, kinships, similar dislikes, values, ideas, financial exchange, web links, and sexual relations.

Here are some characteristics that define social isolation:

- ◇ Expression of feeling aloneness imposed by others
- ◇ Expressing values acceptable to subculture, but unable to accept values of dominant culture
- ◇ Expressing feelings of rejection
- ◇ Expressing feelings of difference from others



A couple of suggestions for coping with loneliness and isolation are the following: relaxation therapy and doing activities that make you feel better.

Though isolation and loneliness appear to be large trends of behavior in our society it appears that researchers and sociologists are searching for an answer to the problem.

Family and Community Training Series ~ FACTS

This series provides education and support to families with loved ones who are mentally ill. While mentally ill family members are welcome to attend, the focus of these groups will be the families' issues.

WHEN: Tuesdays, beginning April 15 to May 20 from 3pm to 4:30 pm for six sessions

WHERE: Sunshine Room at Maplewood Outpatient Services

3760 Cleary Drive, Howell - Enter through the rear entrance in the back

COST: *FREE* - Sponsored by CMH

CONTACT: Mike Wines or Mary Leitkam at 517-546-4126 for more information

- * Prior registration by April 8th appreciated but not required *
- * We will be discussing various topics with a variety of presenters *
- * There will be opportunity for questions and discussion from members *
- * As always, confidentiality will be respected *
- * Any family member or friend is welcome to attend *
- * Sessions are informal and light refreshments will be provided *

WE HOPE TO HEAR FROM YOU!

Group Corner



This column will be dedicated to informing you about the various support groups available in Livingston County

NAMI {National Alliance for the Mentally Ill}

Topic: Does Anyone Out There Know What I'm Going Through?

Presented By: Peter Pascaris

When: Tuesday **May 6th** at 7 p.m.

Where: Woodland Health Center

7575 Grand River Ave, Brighton

Call Barb at: 810-231-6011 for more info

Walking With Grief for Spouse Loss

Offered by:

St. Joseph Mercy Hospice

When: Thursdays, April 17—May 22

Time: 6:30 pm—8pm

Where: St. Joseph Mercy Hospital
Community Room 1, Howell

**To Register call Kate Ritter,
Bereavement Coordinator at:
517-540-9131**

Walking With Grief

Offered by:

St. Joseph Mercy Hospice

When: Fridays, April 11—May 23

Time: 2:30 pm—4pm

Where: Independence Village

7800 Nemco Way, Brighton

**To Register call Kate Ritter,
Bereavement Coordinator at:
517-540-9131**

NAMI {National Alliance for the Mentally Ill}

Topic: Come Find Out What Recovery is All About

Presented By: Barb, Recovery, Inc.

When: Tuesday **June 3rd** at 7 p.m.

Where: Woodland Health Center

7575 Grand River Ave, Brighton

Call Barb at: 810-231-6011 for more info

HEALTH CORNER: Tips from our Medical Staff

Smokers: Don't Quit Quitting! ~ *IT ISN'T EASY, BUT IT CAN BE DONE*

If you have been thinking about quitting, but haven't quite gotten around to it yet, or...

If you have tried 987 times and are almost ready to give up, or...

If you have a friend or loved one or client whose health you are concerned about...

PLEASE READ THE FOLLOWING

When Smokers Quit ~ Benefits Over Time

20 minutes after quitting: Your heart rate and blood pressure drops.

2 weeks after quitting: The carbon monoxide level in your blood drops to normal.

2 weeks - 3 months after quitting: Your circulation improves & your lung function increases.

1- 9 months after quitting: Coughing and shortness of breath decrease; cilia (tiny hair-like structures that move mucus out of the lungs) regain normal function in the lungs, increasing the ability to handle mucus, clean the lungs, and reduce the risk of infection.

1 year after quitting: The excess risk of coronary heart disease is half that of a smoker's.

5-15 years after quitting: Your stroke risk is reduced to that of a nonsmoker.

10 years after quitting: The lung cancer death rate is about half that of a continuing smoker's. The risk of cancer of the mouth, throat, esophagus, bladder, cervix, and pancreas decrease.

15 years after quitting: The risk of coronary heart disease is that of a nonsmoker's.

This information was obtained from the American Cancer Society.

They have additional excellent resources to help at:

Toll Free (800) ACS-2345 or online at www.cancer.org

Other good resources include:

American Lung Association: Toll Free (800) 548-8252 or www.lunguse.org

Centers for Disease Control & Prevention: Office on Smoking and Health

Toll Free (800) 232-4636 or www.cdc.gov/tobacco

Nicotine Anonymous: Toll Free (877) 879-6422 or www.nicotine-anonymous.org

Education & Support are Wonderful Assets in Fighting this Potentially Debilitating Addiction

GOOD LUCK!

RIGHTS CORNER: Tips from our Rights Staff

How Can Water Scalds be Prevented?

Ideas to Protect Against Burns

Do You or Your Loved One Receive Help with Bathing?

If so, the following information could help protect you or your loved one from a burn.

What is a *Scald*?

Scalds are a type of burn caused by a hot liquid or steam.

How Many People Per Year are Scalded by Hot Water?

1. Every year, about 110,000 people are taken to the Emergency Room for scald burns.
2. Elderly people and children under the age of five, are the greatest risk of these types of burns.
3. Individuals with disabilities may also be at greater risk of these types of injuries.

How are Burns Defined?

Burns are defined by the level of tissue damage.

1. A first degree burn causes redness and swelling of the skin.
2. A second degree burn causes redness, swelling and blistering of the skin.
3. A third degree burn can destroy the skin. It may also damage fat, muscle or bone.

How Can I Prevent Hot Water Scalding?

1. Set the water heater to 120 degrees Fahrenheit. Not only does this help prevent an accident, it also helps reduce your energy bill. If you are not sure how to do this, call your local electric company to adjust the temperature.

2. Fill the bathtub with cold water first. Then, add hot water. Use a large kitchen spoon to mix the water across the length of the tub. The water should be mixed from the bottom of the tub. If you check the water temperature with your hand, it should barely be warm. The safest way to check the temperature is to use a thermometer after the water has been mixed. The temperature should not exceed 102 degrees Fahrenheit.
3. Face the individual away from bathtub fixtures. This may prevent the child or adult from turning on the faucet.
4. Ensure that a child is never left alone while bathing. For adults that need this level of supervision, ensure that they are never left alone while bathing.
5. Install a tempering valve (temperature regulation device) in the water line. This leads from the hot water heater to the bathroom. Set the temperature to 120 degree Fahrenheit. If you or your loved one are renting a home, ask the landlord to do this for you.
6. Should scalding occur, immediately apply cool water to the skin. Seek emergency medical treatment and/or contact your health care professional.

What Steps Should I Take if my Loved One or Myself has a Caregiver Assist with Bathing?

Add these prevention steps to the Person Centered Plan. Also, add to the plan that caregivers shall be trained by shadowing and experienced caregiver.

Sincerely,

Kristen Ora, Rights Officer

Peer Support Specialists: Another Voice for the Consumer

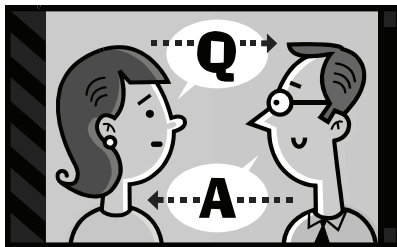
Currently, CMH has three Peer Support Specialists, each of whom has different roles and experiences. The purpose of a Peer Support Specialist is to serve both as a staff person for a consumer, but also to send the message: “I’ve been there, I am there, and I am here to help.” In this article, we’d like you to get to know our Peers a bit and celebrate their successes!

Stephanie works in the Community Independence Program. Her warmth and empathy immediately put people at ease. She says she’d like people to know that what she likes best about her position is “working with individual consumer’s one-on one, sharing my story and traveling this path toward recovery together, as well as celebrating each other’s successes.” Stephanie says, “The Peer Support movement continues to grow and flourish---it’s here to stay! As of this fall, Michigan had the most Certified Peer Support Specialists in the country.” Exciting news for each of us!

Mark works as a Peer Support Specialist in the Co-occurring Disorders Program. He shares with us that he believes he is “lucky to have a job where I can go out into the community and offer support and encouragement to my peers, people with whom I share a common purpose (our recovery) and then come to work and work with people who share a common goal. Mark, a Certified Peer Support Specialist, echoes Stephanie in discussing our State and our Community Mental Health Agency. He says, “After working with other Certified Peer Support Specialists across the State, I am convinced that I work in a particularly special CMH.” Mark’s sensitivity and kindness help create an atmosphere of safety and support.

Our third Peer Support Specialist, Greg, works in our Assertive Community Treatment Program. Greg, like Stephanie and Mark, appreciates “working with fellow consumers and giving them hope so that they understand they are not alone.” Greg also shares that he finds it extremely exciting to see people grow. Greg’s sense of humor and kindness are evident immediately and help create a space for people to relax and work on their goals.

CMH will be hiring an additional three Peer Support Specialists in the near future---hopefully each of you will have an opportunity to get to know them!



Questions for the Team at Livingston CMH

Each newsletter will contain a question for the community of Community Mental Health staff that has been submitted by a consumer or group of consumers. This month’s question is:

How do I know I’m ready to leave Community Mental Health? What are the steps to terminating services at CMH?

Our answer was provided by Dave Anderson, LMSW, Coordinator of Adult Outpatient and Children’s Respite:

“The best way is to have ongoing conversations about your goals and progress in your Person Centered Planning meetings. You determine your goals and the conversations you have with your team and that will tell you when you think you’re ready. Community Mental Health supports you throughout this process by valuing your recovery.”

Provider Appreciation Luncheon

In an effort to help keep great staff who are committed to caring for our most vulnerable populations, Livingston County Community Mental Health sponsored a Provider Appreciation Luncheon in April. The luncheon recognized the efforts of employees who provide community living support services to individuals with a diagnosis of developmental disability and mental illness.

The Provider Appreciation Event was hosted at Chemung Hills Banquet and Golf Course on Wednesday, April 9, 2008. Attendees were staff who provided supports to individuals with disabilities for a minimum of one year. Each employee received recognition. In addition, three monetary awards of \$250 were presented to employees who had demonstrated excellence in their profession.

Community Living Supports are among the many services provided by Livingston County Community Mental Health. Community Living Supports (CLS) are activities provided by paid staff that help adults live independently and participate actively in the community. CLS may also help families who have children with special needs (such as developmental disabilities or serious emotional disturbance). These services include assistance with bathing, food preparation, community outing, money management, non-medical care, socialization and relationship building, transportation and assistance with shopping.

If you have any questions about the event feel free to contact Shawn Lindberg at 517-546-4126 for more information.

On-Line Resources for **FREE STUFF!**

Patrick Murowsky, ACT Case Manager, suggests the following two websites for *Free Stuff*:

www.freecycle.org - Once you establish an account, this website gives you access to plenty of listings of items that people want to give away strictly for free; sales are prohibited - the spirit is recycling. This community is unique in that, over time, it is expected that people donated things for free in return. But, at least initially, that could help people here find items they need - it's not uncommon to see free televisions, furniture, etc.

www.craigslist.org - A better website which does not require an account nor any kind of give and take (and it has no advertisements or graphics). Once you select Michigan as the state, and then select Ann Arbor, Flint, or Lansing as the city (all three tend to have posts from the Livingston County area, and sometimes Detroit Metro does too), click the "FREE" tab under classifieds for listings of the free items, which usually spans all types of products. There are also classified listings for furniture, housewares, electronics, musical instruments, etc. that are likely to be cheap, as it is a free classified site (and you can also make offers). Craigslist may also be useful as they have job listings, apartment sub-leases, and cheap car ads. It allows you to post/reply anonymously for security. Craigslist also works very well for those who may want to sell some items.

Odds are there are many websites similar to these that can be found with a simple "free stuff" search, but these are the two that have proven track records.



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Howell, MI 48843

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Fax: 517-546-1300

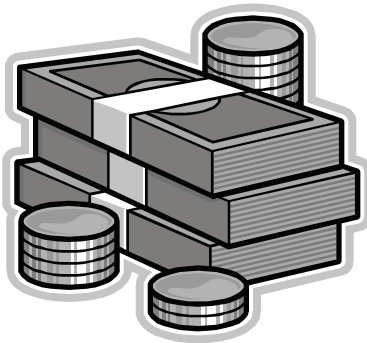
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Check Out Our Website at:

www.cmhliv.org

Affix Label Here



ECONOMIC STIMULUS PAYMENT

You ***must*** file a tax return to be eligible to receive an economic stimulus payment. Congress recently passed an economic stimulus package that includes payments between \$300 and \$600 for individuals and \$600 to \$1200 for joint filers. Many low-income people who are not required to file income tax returns may find that it makes sense to file this year in order to receive the stimulus payment. To receive a stimulus payment, individuals must have a minimum income of \$3,000 for 2007, and file a tax return.