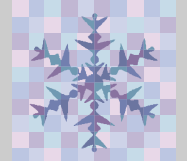




VOICE

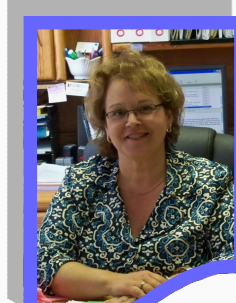


Winter 2012
Volume 95

From the desk of the Executive Director

Hello everyone,

WOW! I just recently celebrated my 5th anniversary at the MHA as the Executive Director. It seems like it's been a lot longer than that! (SMILE) Through this journey I've witnessed many changes. I've had to make some difficult decisions, let some of our programs go and work twice as hard to find funding, yet I stay positive and am encouraged daily by all of the hard work I've seen through advocacy and new collaborations. I look forward to new adventures and am hoping to occupy this seat for a bit longer.



Cheryl Blacklock

The MHA is the largest, most advanced resource center for all of Niagara County. Information, referrals and resources can be obtained by calling our office and or looking us up on-line. We can also be found on Facebook and Twitter. The MHA has been providing assistant services for many years and are always updating our information, making changes and additions every day. Our entire HELP BOOK is available on line with a listing of all of the programs and services we offer. Last year alone, we reached out to more than 80 thousand people. That's a LOT of people!

Although we can't predict the future, we do have many goals for 2012. I'm sure the MHA will continue providing the essential services that we've been providing for many years to come. We'll continue to do our best as always and will strive to provide residents of our community with the most helpful, high quality services available. Remember, if you have a question in regards to where to get services, how to get these services, or just need to talk, stop in or pick up the phone and call us at (716) 433-3780. We'll be there for you!

See you next time!

Cheryl



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Community Education

by: Destinee Henderson,
Community Education

Seasonal affective disorder (SAD), also known as **winter depression**, **winter blues**, **summer depression**, **summer blues**, or **seasonal depression**, is a disorder in which people who have normal mental health throughout most of the year experience depressive symptoms in the winter or summer, spring or autumn year after year. The **U.S. National Library of Medicine** notes that “some people experience a serious mood change when the seasons change. They may sleep too much, have little energy, and may also feel depressed. Though symptoms can be severe, they usually clear up”.



HOW TO “BEAT THE BLUES”



Proper Sleep



Eat Good Food



Get sunlight



Don't self medicate



Exercise



Take care of yourself and others

In-Home Respite

By: Marg Raduns,
In-Home Respite Coordinator

In Home Respite is a non-therapeutic break for a family that has a child or children with a mental health diagnosis. In Home Respite workers are trained and have had a background check done. Respite workers provide a family with a break or respite by someone they can trust; workers provide one on one time for the children. The Respite workers may bring a game, movie or snack to provide a break to everyone in the house. The parents or caregiver is then able to go shopping, have dinner with a friend or spend quality time with their significant other.

The end of year surveys have been returned, the results are being compiled. Congratulations to the winner of the drawing! Thank you to everyone that took the time to fill them out and return them. Your positive responses are greatly appreciated. Criticisms are also good so we can see where we need to make improvements.

Have you scheduled a respite yet to help you relax after the hustle of the holidays? Call to set up a time for all of you to get a break. If you need to set up a home visit to see if you qualify for respite or to set up a respite, call (716)433-3780 ext. 304.

Helping Men Beat the Baby Blues and Depression

By: Carleen Stover,
Moms Net Coordinator

*An excerpt from
www.postpartummen.com*

“Researchers are only beginning to understand men’s unique experience of depression. As for PPND, research is lagging even further behind. But there are a few things we’re learning.

In terms of depression – in general – if you’re a man, you’re more likely than a woman to try to hide your depression or to withdraw from others. This only worsens your symptoms. As for PPND (Paternal Postnatal Depression), some research suggests that it develops more gradually in men over the course of the child’s first year than postpartum depression develops in women.

Researchers are also beginning to discover that men often experience depression in ways that are different from women. Men sometimes cope with their symptoms in different ways too. These findings might help explain why even trained mental health professionals frequently overlook or misdiagnose men’s depression.

To better understand men’s depression, it’s useful to look at both the classic symptoms of depression and symptoms that may be specific to men. These symptoms must also be causing significant distress and interfering with the person’s social, work or academic functioning.

One of the problems with this classic diagnosis of depression is that researchers are beginning to recognize that men often don’t acknowledge feelings of sadness, hopelessness, or guilt. Researchers – and clinicians specializing in helping men – are also beginning to recognize symptoms of depression that seem to be unique to men.

A man who’s depressed won’t experience all these symptoms. Some men experience only a few of them, while others experience many. And how bad these symptoms get also varies among men – and over time.



The important thing to know about these symptoms, and about men’s depression, is that they’re treatable. You don’t have to continue suffering from them. And although it’s a very serious – and sometimes life-threatening – condition, you can recover from depression”.

Symptom’s of Men’s Depression

- Increased anger and conflict with others—Increased use of alcohol or other drugs
- Frustration or irritability—Violent behavior—Losing weight without trying
- Isolation from family and friends—Being easily stressed
- Impulsiveness and taking risks, like reckless driving and extramarital sex—Feeling discouraged
- Increases in complaints about physical problems
- Ongoing physical symptoms, like headaches, digestion problems or pain
- Problems with concentration and motivation—Loss of interest in work, hobbies and sex
- Working constantly—Frustration or irritability—Misuse of prescription medication
- Increased concerns about productivity and functioning at school or work—Fatigue
- Experiencing conflict between how you think you should be as a man and how you actually are
- Thoughts of suicide

Compeer for Adults

By: Stacy Bowman,
Compeer Adult Coordinator

Welcome to the dark days of January where fewer daylight hours, frigid temperatures, and lack of motivation can be rather cruel to your mental state of well-being. As the days get shorter and winter blues set in, many people, including myself, feel like hibernating. Typically, individuals start sleeping more, eating more and avoiding social contact. Unfortunately the effects can be rather oppressive for people, particularly those with chronic depression. Although statistics on depression are staggering, it is believed that over 15 million Americans are currently suffering and more importantly indicates that if you or someone you know are suffering, you/they are not alone. I regretfully cannot make it warmer nor can I make the days longer, but what I CAN do is continue to encourage you to socialize with others and attend Compeer's monthly activities.

There are some exciting activities planned to help us through the winter months so be sure to watch for Compeer's monthly newsletter for more details. Our 2012 activities will include some of the traditional and favorite events as well as many brand new adventures. It is with pleasure that a steady increase in attendance at Compeer activities has been marked and I truly hope that this trend continues. As always, I highly encourage everyone, matched, or unmatched to attend our activities. Be mindful that going to the activities alone DOES NOT indicate that you will be alone. More often than not, someone will see you and start a conversation with you. I cannot stress enough how getting to know you on a personal basis enhances the matching process. I

In closing, I want to stress how extremely important volunteers are in the lives of those we serve. Without them, the Compeer program could not exist. Our volunteers are screened, trained, matched and spend an hour a week or more bringing the gift of friendship to those in need. If you find that you don't have the time to meet with someone on a weekly basis, a once a month match accompanying someone to a Compeer activity could be arranged. Spending one hour a week can make a difference in someone's life! Please consider becoming or referring a friend to someone who doesn't know the joy of having a supportive friend. You may contact me at 433-3780 ext. 309 to learn more about our program.

~Submitted by Stacy Bowman
Adult Compeer Coordinator



Consumer Activities

By: Marg Raduns,
CPAC Coordinator

Consumer Planning Advisory Committee (CPAC)

CPAC (Consumer Planning Advisory Committee) meets on the third Thursday of every month, alternating between Lockport and Niagara Falls. Speakers have included The Tower Foundation they were looking for participants opinions. A speaker from Niagara County spoke about Kendra's Law and the AOT program. Speakers share information about their position and what services are offered from their agency. New topics are suggested by attendees.

CPAC meetings are open to consumers and providers. At CPAC meetings we fill out surveys twice a year identifying where gaps in services are occurring. Surveys have been completed at both locations. Grand totals should be available soon for anyone interested. The latest legislation is often discussed, the changes and how they affect us. CPAC meetings are a good place to share information with each other, to learn about services available and things that may work for each individual.

Postcards are mailed monthly with the location, date, time and speaker (if there is one). The New Year will have the meeting trying out new locations, so please watch for your postcard. If you wish to be added to the mailing list please call Marg at (716) 433-3780 ext. 304.

Compeer for Kids

By: Heather Jones,
Compeer for Kids Coordinator

Program Update

The Compeer for Kids families have had a wonderful few months. We have visited the Cambria Fire Station, held a swim party at the YMCA of Lockport, took a guided tour of the Buffalo Museum of Science, and many other activities for the kids. It's been wonderful to see some of our families take advantage of the free parent workshops offered to them in collaboration with Parent Network of WNY. Two more workshops will be offered in the next few months regarding advocacy in the school. Our current group of children has all bonded quite well and looks forward to seeing each other at activities, as well as the caregivers. With the New Year here I am busy planning more educational opportunities for the families and supportive experiences. Our program continues to grow as more families are being referred throughout Niagara County therefore the need for volunteer's increases. If you or anyone you know has 4 hours a month and is willing to be a friend to these awesome kids, please call 433-3780 ext.313. There is a child waiting to be friends with you.



As of 2012 the Compeer Kids Referral Packet can be found on our website at www.mhanc.com. The packet can be accessed by clicking the Programs link, then following the Compeer Niagara for youth link. This packet is to be iled out by

a Mental Health Provider and returned to Heather at :

The Mental Health Association , 36 Pine Street Lockport N.Y. 14094.



Compeer volunteers are matched in a one-on-one friendship, and spend time doing the things they enjoy.

Compeer is always looking for new volunteers.

If you're interested in becoming a friend in either our adult or kid's program, please call 433-3780 for more information.



Hearing Voices training's to be held by The Mental Health Association-

By: Destinee Henderson,
Community Education

Here at the MHA we strive to provide Niagara County with programs aimed at promoting good mental health and services to assist those who have mental illnesses. As part of our continuing education, the employees and Executive Director participated in a training called “**Hearing Voices**”, in late August 2011. This is a schizophrenia simulation created by Patricia Deegan PhD, a veteran of schizophrenia since her teenage years. “**Hearing Voices**”, is a training in which participants can hear distressing voices through headphones while undertaking tasks, including social interaction, cognitive testing, and an activities group in a mock day treatment program. After the simulation there is a debriefing and discussion group.

After the simulation the general consensus from the MHA was that there are mental health provider's who would greatly benefit from this overall experience. Compeer Adult Coordinator Stacy Bowman, was able to share her insight. “After experiencing the loss of a friend by suicide, I was eager to obtain a broader understanding of Schizophrenia. Years of coursework, numerous textbooks, and countless articles do not hold a candle to what I gained from the **Hearing Voices** training. It allowed me to have empathy for those suffering as opposed to basic knowledge”.

Since then The MHA has purchased a **Hearing Voices** kit, and did mock trials in the office. Executive Director Cheryl Blacklock has now booked a few trainings for our Board Members, as well as the LPN's in the Boces Program. This training is available through the MHA and is open to the public, and service providing agencies. We can accommodate groups of 10-20, and there will be a small fee . For more information please call the Mental Health Association at (716) 433-3780.



Dr. Patricia Deegan

Creator of “Hearing Voices that are Distressing”

“One of my favorite life lessons is “put yourself in their shoes”, and the **Hearing Voices** training does just that. It's impossible to tell someone you know how they feel until you have been there yourself”. — Stacy Bowman, Adult Compeer Coordinator

Youth Education

By: Destinee Henderson- Community Education

Hello everyone and welcome to 2012! Last year was very busy for the Youth Education Department. It seemed as though 2011 brought a heightened awareness to bullying and how it related to teen suicide. The CDC (Centers for Disease Control) reports for every one suicide among young children, there are 100 attempts. Over 14% of high school students have considered suicide, while 7% have attempted, that's a staggering amount! Earlier this fall MHA participated in National Depression Screening Day in local Niagara County schools. While there we handed out surveys that contained mental wellness questions. Among these were two questions pertaining to suicide, the thoughts of and attempts. We found that right here in our county there was an overwhelming number of “YES” answers.

With that being said the MHA sprung into action to set up a second survey session more geared towards suicide, cause and effect questions. We will be conducting this survey in local schools again very soon. The exact dates aren't posted yet, but keep an eye on the newspaper, and our Website or Facebook page. We are conducting this continuing survey in effort to see what services need to be utilized and offered to help reduce this number. As always our HELPLINE is open to anyone needing to talk. If you would like further info on this upcoming event please contact Stacy Bowman at (716)433-3780 ext. 309



The Mental Health Bell



During the early days of mental health treatment, asylums often restrained people who had mental illnesses with iron chains and shackles around their ankles and wrists. With better understanding and treatments, this cruel practice eventually stopped.

In the early 1950s, Mental Health America issued a call to asylums across the country for their discarded chains and shackles. On April 13, 1956, at the McShane Bell Foundry in Baltimore, Md., Mental Health America melted down these inhumane bindings and recast them into a sign of hope: the Mental Health Bell.

Cast from shackles which bound them, this bell shall ring out hope for the mentally ill and victory over mental illness.

—Inscription on Mental Health Bell

The Mental Health Bell rings out hope for improving mental health and achieving victory over mental illnesses.

Over the years, national mental health leaders and other prominent individuals have rung the Bell to mark the continued progress in the fight for victory over mental illness.

-From Mental Health America



**Mental Health Association
In Niagara County, Inc.**

Mission Statement

The mission of the Mental Health Association in Niagara County, Inc. is to promote mental wellness by sponsoring and implementing advocacy, education and community service programs.

Executive Board

Cheryl Blacklock - Executive Director
Howard Morgan - President
Susan Mason - Vice President
Dona Chase - Treasurer
Stacy Passino - Secretary

Board Members

Rhonda Bivins Frances Crosby
Rebecca Edmister Jeffery Peresie
Douglas Luke

Funded by the New York State Office of Mental Health, the Niagara County Department of Mental Health, the United Way of Greater Niagara, the United Way of the Tonawandas, grants, memberships and voluntary contributions.

Become a Friend of MHA

Membership to MHA Niagara offers the opportunity to improve the services provided to individuals with mental illness, and also to promote mental health education.

To become a member:

- I would like to become a member of the Mental Health Association in Niagara County, Inc. I understand membership entitles me to receive the *VOICE* newsletter, use of the resource library and access to all Mental Health Association educational programs and conferences, as well as voting rights at the Annual Meeting.

Membership Rates

- | | |
|---|----------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Senior/Student | \$10.00 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Individual | \$15.00 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mental Health Worker | \$20.00 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Family | \$25.00 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Organization | \$50.00 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sustaining | \$100.00 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Corporate | \$500.00 |

To make a donation:

- Please accept this donation:
 In memory of In honor of

Person's Name _____

Amount of Donation: \$ _____

For Memberships and Donations:

Please fill out contact information below and mail this form to:

The Mental Health Association
36 Pine St
Lockport, NY 14094

Make check payable to: "The Mental Health Association in Niagara County, Inc."

Your Name _____

Address (Street and Apartment No.) _____

City State Zip

Phone _____



Sending this newsletter by email saves us money and helps us reduce the amount of paper we use. We ask both new and existing members to consider an electronic subscription! Call us, use the form below, or send your request by email to web@mhanc.com

- Please send me the *VOICE* newsletter by email.

Email Address (please write clearly) _____



**Mental Health Association
in Niagara County, Inc.**

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Lockport NY 14094

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Fax: 716-433-3847

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**We're on the web!
www.mhanc.com**



Find us on Facebook
and Twitter at
"MHAniagara"



Just A Reminder

Grief Share Support Group for Adults
2012 Schedule:

Niagara Falls

Niagara Falls Memorial
Medical Center, Floor S-
6 Conference Room. Free
Parking

- The 1st & 3rd Tues-
days of the month
- 6:00-7:30 p.m.

Lockport

Mental Health Associa-
tion Office, 36 Pine
Street, Lockport NY

- The 2nd & 4th
Wednesdays of the
month
- 6:00-7:30 p.m.

There is never any cost for this group

