



The Mental Health Resource—

A monthly newsletter focusing on current mental health issues.

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610-363-6164 (fax) 610-594-0278 (email) mhs@coadgroup.com

Local Organizations Partner for 9th Liv • Live Concert

The first Liv•Live Concert was held at the Coatesville Cultural Society in May, 2006 to raise awareness about teen depression and suicide prevention. Since then, the Chester County Youth Suicide Prevention Task Force (YSP) has sponsored seven additional concert events for hundreds of area youth at a wide range of venues - including The Garage in Kennett, The Paul Green School of Rock in Downingtown, local universities and the Steel City Coffee House in Phoenixville.

Now, for the 9th concert, YSP is partnering with a new local organization, Educational Mentoring through the Arts and Humanities (EMTAH). The event is scheduled for February

5, 2010 and is once again to take place at the Steel City Coffee House.

EMTAH, a nonprofit that offers weekly instruction in music and dance in West Chester, is open to anyone but works especially well with young people who are struggling with various mental health or emotional issues. It utilizes a philosophy and teaching style founder Bill Rossi developed over many years as a musician and instructor interacting with at-risk youth. The idea is to focus on the students' strengths and talents and incorporate mentoring with progressive fine arts instruction to develop creativity and student

potential. EMTAH students will be among the performers at this 9th event.

Liv•Live Concerts are named in memory of Jake Kelleher, a 22-year-old college student who died by suicide in the spring of 2004. Jake's parents, John and Susan Kelleher,

have been strong supporters of these events and have raised awareness by sharing their story. Along with raising awareness, Liv•Live Concerts showcase the talents of many local young musicians. For information about the next concert, call 610-363-6164.



West Chester University students who participated in the 8th Liv • Live Concert held October 8, 2009

Almost Half of America's Youth not Treated for Mental Health Issues

For parents and guardians, it is not difficult to see their child's basic physical needs such as hunger, hygiene, and health, but for most, it's almost impossible to know their child's overall mental health needs. In a recent study by the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH), almost half of the 3,042 adolescent participants who had a mental health disorder went untreated.

Researchers discovered six mental disorders within the study, which included attention deficit disorder (ADHD), generalized anxiety disorder (GAD), panic disorder,

depression, conduct disorders, and eating disorders. NIMH researcher Dr. Kathleen R. Merikangas notes the problem lies with the severe shortage of child psychologists. Merikangas also believes that if mental health disorders are identified earlier in a person's life, there will be greater chances of success in resolving them.

The study produced significant differences between age, gender, and socioeconomic groups. ADHD was twice as common in boys, while mood disorders were twice as likely in girls.

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Accessing The Child Serving Systems in Chester County A FREE workshop—all are welcome!

Learn about the following agencies:

- Children, Youth & Families
- Mental Health / Mental Retardation
- Juvenile Probation
- Drug & Alcohol Education
- Health Department
- Chester County Youth Center

Wednesday, 1/13/10 — 8:30 to Noon
Government Services Center, Rm 149
601 Westtown Rd., West Chester

Call Lisa Richardson at 610-344-6265
to register by 1/8/10

A new documentary to air on HBO2

Diagnosis Bipolar: Five Families Search for Answers

Air dates:
Jan. 6 @ 7pm
Jan. 15 @ 10:30 am
Jan. 21 @ 8 am

For more information go to www.hbo.com/docs

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Mood disorders occurred more in adolescents age 12 to 15 years old. Furthermore, ADHD was more common to those in lower socioeconomic status, while anxiety disorders were more common to those in higher socioeconomic brackets.

Good mental health is imperative for children just in their everyday activities. It affects their ability to think clearly, develop socially, and also learn important skills for life. For friends and parents/guardians, it is important to provide comfort, support, and encouragement to the children because this will aid in their road to recovery. Merikangas says, "The earlier you can intervene, the less likely you are to see the negative consequences such as the inability to socialize, substance abuse, and even suicide"

- by *Melissa Anne Hopely*

Building Emotional Fitness

Individuals can build their "emotional immune systems" to improve mental health and emotional well-being, mental health experts say. But what specific skills help to build emotional strength?

Acceptance is crucial. Being realistic about what you do well and what you don't is valuing your strengths and respecting your limits. To hone these skills individuals must learn to be kind to themselves and be generous with others.

Strong relationships, and knowing you can depend on the people you are close to is also important. Individuals can build strong relationships by being kind to themselves, being fair to others, learning to communicate and listening.

Another important skill is being able to choose the positive over the negative. Re-

search shows that positive people have better moods, try harder, succeed more often and have better physical health. It always helps to find the humor in situations and use strategies to deal with challenging emotions, such as stress, sadness, disappointment or anger.

Being responsible and feeling confident about accepting challenges, taking risks and learning from your mistakes are all good things to cultivate as well.

While these suggestions should help build your "emotional immune system," healthy attitudes and behaviors do need to be practiced. In time, just about anyone can learn the skills they need to recognize, talk about and manage emotions.



Love - Nothing

*An original play written and directed
By Andrea Daniels*

BARLEY SHEAF PLAYERS
810 Whitford Rd., Lionville, PA 19353
January 22, 23, 29 and 30 at 8pm

This play examines the ideals of faith, hope, and love as foundations for three different coming out tales. Proceeds from this benefit go to The SPOT, a GLBTQA Youth Group in Chester County.

Reservations: 610-363-7075
Admission is based on a donation at the door.

Play contains adult themes & language.

Support a Chester County YSP Fundraiser, below!

Eat at Stoney's
Wed. Jan. 20th 2010

**Youth
Suicide
Prevention**

Stoney's will donate 10% of all food proceeds to the YSP fund

We Care. Do You?
Help our Kids.

Stoney's
3007 Osmond Park
Wilmington, De
302-477-8740

Marijuana's connection to Mental Illness

Surveys have indicated that marijuana is the most commonly used illegal drug in the United States, but what does this mean for the mental health field? Some argue that marijuana actually helps reduce anxiety and stress, while others say it increases paranoia and unwanted thoughts. In 2004, Yale University researchers produced a study that provided a link between the use of marijuana and schizophrenic-like symptoms ranging from paranoia to impaired memory.

Yale researchers found cannabinoids, the main active ingredient in marijuana, can actually induce an acute, but brief, experience with mental illness. The researchers cannot figure out why it affects some people and not others, but they found that the cannabinoids actually worsen psychotic symptoms with those more vulnerable to schizophrenia and with those already

suffering with a diagnosed psychotic disorder.

Researchers around the world are trying to determine the exact link between marijuana and mental illness. Two years ago, French researchers completed a study where they evaluated 32 cannabis abusers and 30 healthy control subjects using self-reports. Results showed that cannabis abusers were more likely to experience mood and anxiety disorders, psychological distress, and trait anxiety. In the Netherlands, a similar study showed that acute cannabis use produced memory impairment that lasted months after the study.

Delta-9-THC is one of the six cannabinoids present in marijuana and is found to be one of the most active. It is said to actually increase anxiety and levels of intoxication. Furthermore, it can produce delirium, sedation and psychotic

symptoms such as suspiciousness, paranoia, hallucinations and hearing voices. One person recalls, "I have been smoking for eight years and in the last two years, I do it more like three to four times a week. Last month I stopped smoking right after I started hearing voices at work. They would come and go, but it was the most frightening experience I have ever had. After this experience, I have decided to stop smoking weed."

Yale researchers have indicated that their studies are in very early stages, but there is clinical evidence that marijuana can cause paranoia and schizophrenic-like symptoms in some people.

- By *Melissa Ann Hopely*

Autism on the Rise

A new study from the University of Alabama at Birmingham School of Public Health and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) indicates that one in 110 American 8-year-olds is classified as having an autism spectrum disorder.

Compared to studies just four years ago, this is a 57 percent increase.

West Chester Area Communities that Care
And the YWCA present ~

Beyond the BUZZER!

A new after-school program for all West Chester Area Middle School students is designed to promote positive peer relationships and community involvement by offering recreational activities, community guest speakers, discussions and homework time.

For registration & more information
contact Mallory Showalter
610-696-8262

Calendar of Meetings & Events —

- Every Thurs. — **The Depression and Bipolar Alliance** 6:30- 7:30 pm at the Peer Support Center, 825 Paoli Pike, West Chester. For more info. call 610-429-1702.
- Every Tues. & Thurs. — **Double Trouble** for those recovering from addiction and mental health problems. 3:30-5 pm at the Peer Support Center, 825 Paoli Pike, West Chester. For more info. call 610-429-1702.
- Every Tues.— **Recovery Works** a schizophrenia support group. 6:30 – 7:30 pm at the Peer Support Center, 825 Paoli Pike, West Chester. For more info. call 610-429-1702.
- 2nd Tues. — **ADHD Support Group for Adults with ADHD.** 7 pm Keshet Israel Congregation, 1000 Pottstown Pike, West Chester. For more info. go to www.chadd.org or call 610-429-4060.
- 3rd Tues. — **ADHD Support Group for Parents, Teachers, Caregivers.** 7 pm Keshet Israel Congregation, 1000 Pottstown Pike, West Chester. For more info. go to www.chadd.org or call 610-429-4060.
- 2nd Wed. — **ADHD Support Group for Parents** in Oxford. For more info call 610-384-2568.
- 2nd Wed. — **Chester County Youth Suicide Prevention Task Force** 3:30 – 5pm at COAD, 930 E. Lancaster Ave., Exton. For more info. call 610-363-6164.
- 2nd Wed. — **Survivors of Suicide(S.O.S.)** 7:30 pm at Paoli Memorial Hospital in Paoli. For more info call 215-545-2242.
- 4th Thurs. — **Mental Health / Mental Retardation Advisory Board Meeting** 6pm at the Government Services Bldg., 601 Westtown Rd., West Chester, Room 149. For more info call 610-344-6265. (no meeting July, August and December)
- 1st Thurs. — **NAMI Southern Chester County Family Support Group** 7:30 pm at Friends Meeting House, Rt. 82, Kennett Square. For more info. call 610-444-5993.
- 3rd Thurs.— **NAMI PA Chester County General Meeting** 7pm at Christ Memorial Lutheran Church in Malvern. For more information call 484-947-5643. The Help Line is 610-430-0177.
- 2nd Thurs. — **NAMI North East Chester County**—Phoenixville Family Support Group—7-8:30pm. Call ahead—610-430-0177.
- 2nd Mon. — **NAMI CAN** Mental Health Family Support for families with children up to age 22. 7-9 pm at Central Presbyterian Church, Rt. 113 in Downingtown. For more info call ahead - 610-935-9739.
- 3rd Wed. — **NAMI Grief & Support Group** 7:30 - 9pm in Downingtown. Call for location. Call ahead—610-269-3476.
- 1st Wed. — **CSP Meeting** - Noon to 2pm, the Peer Support Center 825 Paoli Pike, West Chester. For more info call 484-239-2188.
- 3rd Wed. — **Participatory Dialogue Committee** Noon to 2pm at Peer Support Center, 3rd Floor Conference Room, 825 Paoli Pike, West Chester. For more info email Jamie Messersmith at jmessersmith@ccbh.org.
- 2nd Mon. — **Adult MH Meeting** - 6 - 8pm, the Peer Support Center, 825 Paoli Pike, West Chester. For more info call 610-344-6265.
- 2nd Tues. — **Chester County Children's Committee** 9:30 –11 am at Government Services Bldg., 601 Westtown Rd., West Chester. For more info call 610-344-6265.

The COAD Group
Mental Health Services
930 E. Lancaster Avenue
Exton, PA 19341