



# MHA Message

There is *NO* health without Mental Health!

## From The Executive Director



May is Mental Health Month and I'm sharing a story that illustrates why it's so important to be mindful of our mental health. I was recently with a group of high schoolers from Licking County who chose to hear about mental health as they prepare to launch their adult lives. They were chatting when one young man said, "I signed up for this session because I have mental health issues." The room immediately became perfectly still. After thanking that brave boy for sharing, I asked why the others were so quiet all of a sudden. "I'm embarrassed for him," came one reply. Another said, "It's scary."

I explained that in our country, one in three people up to age 24 and one in five adults experience a mental health issue annually. Why be embarrassed or afraid when it's such a common experience? I asked them if they would have gone silent if he'd disclosed, "I have a broken arm." "No! I'd ask to sign his cast," someone said. Another volunteered, "I'd ask if he needs help carrying his backpack."

When asked what they thought would happen if someone with a broken arm waited years before seeing a doctor, they answered, "It wouldn't heal right." "He may never be able to use it again." "It'd hurt!" On average people wait ten years from first symptoms to diagnosis for mental health issues. They're often embarrassed, scared or they don't recognize that they have an illness. Think of how much better outcomes would be if people got treatment for mental illness right away. I encouraged that group's generation to be the beginning of change - for them to respond the same way to people with mental health concerns as they do to someone with a physical illness.

Wouldn't it be wonderful if we all would be open minded enough to recognize that someone with a mental illness is a person needing care and concern? My hope is that one day, anyone with a mental health condition will feel secure that they won't be ostracized or avoided. They'll be comfortable enough to let those around them know what they're experiencing and ask for assistance. I hope people will respond by asking what is needed and how they can help, just as we do for people with broken bones, cancer and other physical illnesses. Let's change the conversation so everyone gets the help they need. After all, there no health without mental health!

To your mental health!

*Penny C. Sifler*

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# MAY IS MENTAL HEALTH MONTH



WE'RE DONE  
BEING QUIET  
ABOUT

RISKY  
BUSINESS



LEARN MORE: [www.mentalhealthamerica.net/may](http://www.mentalhealthamerica.net/may)  
TAKE THE QUIZ: [www.mentalhealthamerica.net/whatstoofar](http://www.mentalhealthamerica.net/whatstoofar)

#mhm2017  
#riskybusiness

MHA  
Mental Health America  
B4Stage4

## Would You Know When You've Gone Too Far?

Mental health is essential to everyone's overall health and well-being, and mental illnesses are common and treatable. But people experience symptoms of mental illnesses differently—and some engage in potentially dangerous or risky behaviors to avoid or cover up symptoms of a potential mental health problem. Sometimes people—especially young people—struggling with mental health concerns develop habits and behaviors that increase the risk of developing or exacerbating mental illnesses, or could be signs of mental health problems

themselves. Activities like compulsive sex, recreational drug use, obsessive internet use, excessive spending, or disordered exercise patterns can all be behaviors that can disrupt someone's mental health and potentially lead them down a path towards crisis. This May is Mental Health Month; Mental Health America of Licking County (MHALC) is raising awareness of Risky Business (#riskybusiness). The campaign is meant to educate and inform individuals dealing with a mental health concern understand that some behaviors and habits can be detrimental to recovery—or even mask a deeper issue—but that seeking help is nothing to be ashamed of. Take the interactive quiz at [www.mentalhealthamerica.net/whatstoofar](http://www.mentalhealthamerica.net/whatstoofar) and tell us when you think behaviors or habits go from being acceptable to unhealthy. MHALC wants everyone to know that mental illnesses are real, that recovery is always the goal, and that even if you or someone you love are engaging in risky behavior, there is help. It is important to understand early symptoms of mental illness and know when certain behaviors are potentially signs of something more. We need to speak up early and educate people about risky behavior and its connection to mental illness—and do so in a compassionate, judgement-free way. When we engage in prevention and early identification, we can help reduce the burden of mental illness by identifying symptoms and warning signs early—and provide effective treatment Before Stage 4. So, let's talk about what is and is not risky business. Let's understand where it's important to draw the line, so that we can address mental illness B4Stage4, and help others on the road to recovery. For more information, visit [www.mentalhealthamerica.net/may](http://www.mentalhealthamerica.net/may).

## CAUSE AN EFFECT



Make dinner a selfless act by joining us for a fundraiser to support Mental Health America of Licking County's Compeer Program. Come in to the Chipotle at **1292 N 21st Street** in Newark on **Sunday, May 21st** between **4:00pm** and **8:00pm**. Bring in this flyer, show it on your smartphone or tell the cashier you're supporting the cause to make sure that 50% of the proceeds will be donated to Mental Health America of Licking County's

**CHIPOTLE**  
Compeer Program.

If placing an order online during your fundraiser, please note you must choose the pay in-store option and inform our cashier of your participation before paying. Gift card purchases during fundraisers do not count towards total donated sales, but purchases made with an existing gift card will count.



## It's membership time at MHA!

More than a membership, it's a partnership. In the following pages you will hear about all of the amazing things MHA is doing to impact the lives of the people in Licking County, but none of it would be possible without you! By renewing your membership or becoming a new member of MHA, you can help thousands of your community members by helping us promote and continually reinforce mental health and wellness through prevention, education and advocacy, and eliminate the stigma of mental health issues.

For more information, to renew your membership or become a member call Jill Goddard at (740) 522-1341.

*"Unity is strength... when there is teamwork and collaboration, wonderful things can be achieved."--- Mattie Stepanek*

# PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS



The Bridges Out of Poverty (BOP) program, led by Program Coordinator Donna Gibson, is reaching more and more people every day. BOP strives to directly impact those living in poverty in Licking County through promoting financial literacy and developing opportunities for job-training and career advancement.

Out of Poverty  
of Licking County  
A PROGRAM OF MENTAL HEALTH AMERICA OF LICKING COUNTY

In 2017, BOP has expanded to include Getting Ahead classes in the Licking County Justice Center, St. Vincent Haven's new transitional housing facility, and First United Methodist Church. The goals of this important program are to help participants become employed or return to school/job training, build permanent resources and strengthen their life skills.

Another important part of the BOP program is promoting awareness about the long-term effects of poverty through training and poverty simulations, available free to the Licking County community. For more information, or to schedule a training, call Donna Gibson at (740) 788-0300.



What is Compeer? The definition most commonly used is a social integration and wellness program for people who live with severe and persistent mental illness. But this definition only explains a portion of what this program really is. To those who participate in Licking County's Compeer program, it is all about friends.



Program Coordinator Shari Johnston and Compeer participants plan a variety of activities each month that center around companionship and fun. Activities this winter and spring included Karaoke nights, pizza night, the 2nd Annual Compeer Dance, and Licking Memorial Health System's Active Senior Game Show just to name a few. The goal of this program is to combat the primary issue for those living with mental illness, loneliness.

If you would like more information on becoming a member of Compeer or for volunteer opportunities, call Shari Johnston at (740) 788-0303.



Mental Health First Aid and Mental Health First Aid for Youth are trainings offered to the community to develop the first response skills necessary to identify and respond to an individual experiencing a mental health crisis. Penny Sitler, Shari Johnston, Kay Spergel, and Kim Foster facilitate the training for businesses, school teachers, or any local organization interested in taking a more proactive approach. For more information contact Kim Foster at (740) 522-1234 or Penny Sitler at (740) 522-1341.



The fun at YES Club just never stops! MHA's Youth Engaged In Service (YES) Club is a free after school and summer program for middle and high school students in Licking County. In addition to basic needs such as food, clothing, showers, laundry and toiletries, YES Club provides mentoring, tutoring, and educational and cultural enrichment activities between 2:00pm and 6:00pm during the school year and 11:00am and 4:00pm in the summer.

YES Clubhouse  
at The Miller-Murphy Building

While programming at YES is strategically planned to help vulnerable youth in this community build protective factors that lead to resiliency, it is always fun! Activities centered around STEM education, financial literacy, health body image and healthy choices are scheduled weekly. But YES also offers students homework help through tutoring, and other activities such as cooking classes and yoga. YES always offers plenty of outdoor fun with regular community service projects, geo caching, and walking and hiking events.



YES Club, working with the Licking County Health Department, has formed a *stand team*. This team works on advocating for tobacco reduction and cessation. The *stand team* at YES Club designed this emoji themed billboard to illustrate the negative effects of tobacco use. Look for it all around Licking County. For more information call YES Club at (740) 522-0937.



Yoga class at YES Club



# PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

## Girls In Progress

The Girls In Progress (GIP) program is growing! It's hard to believe that this program began only three short years ago in Heritage Middle School. Since that time, GIP has grown to include Wilson, Liberty and Licking Valley middle schools.

GIP is a youth development and empowerment program incorporating mentoring, the arts, emotional and physical health education, and community leadership exposure for middle school girls. Activities include meeting with small groups of students in the schools one to two times each week, providing inspiration and motivation. Critical conversations about identity, self-esteem, personal values, body image, interpersonal relationships, self-harm and risk-taking behavior take place along with vision and hope for the future.

Led by Program Coordinator Shari Johnston, these young girls learn to express and create through the use of art journaling. GIP focuses on a whole child, family and community approach as the group examines family systems and explores new ways of thinking and setting goals.

For more information of the Girls In Progress program call Shari Johnston at (740) 788-0303.



## Parent Support

Program Coordinator Donna Gibson works hard to promote self sufficiency through this inspiring program.

Parent Support strengthens family relationships that have been torn apart through reunification, helping rebuild and repair with Triple P, Parenting Wisely, Active Parenting, 1-2-3 Magic, 1-2-3-4 Parents and Active Parenting Now for parents, grandparents and caregivers with children ranging in age from birth through 18.

Sessions address communication skills, eliminating violent reactions to a child's behavior, emotional and physical self-control and face-to-face crisis intervention.

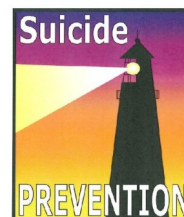
For more information, or to sign up for a class call Donna at (740) 788-0300.



Self-Advocacy is a program that came about through a partnership with Licking County Board of Developmental Disabilities. This program is designed to teach transitional youth and young adults with developmental disabilities how to speak up, request help, understand personal rights and responsibilities, utilize resources and negotiate as they move into adulthood.

Program Coordinator Justina Wade conducts sessions in Licking County schools and will provide programming this summer at the Licking County YMCA's All For One camp which begins June 5th. For more information call Justina at (740) 788-0353.

The mission of the Suicide Prevention program is to reduce the risk of suicide through education and improve access to community resources. The program reaches out to the community using Signs of Suicide (SOS) in middle and high schools throughout the county. In addition to the three day SOS training, Suicide Prevention conducts depression screenings throughout the school year for freshman students. In January, depression screenings held at a local high school revealed that 45% of freshman students answered positively to the depression questions and were referred to mental health professionals.



Program Coordinator Justina Wade also offers Gatekeeper training to businesses and organizations to teach people how to recognize the signs and symptoms of mental health issues and how to help someone experiencing them. For more information on the Suicide Prevention program, or to schedule a training call Justina at (740) 788-0353.



The Share The Love event took place in March at Mental Health America's YES Club.

## FROM THE COMMUNITY

### They are We

By Chelsea Olms

Ohio State University Newark student and MHA Intern

43.8 million. 60%. 45%. What do these numbers mean to you? Perhaps nothing. For some, they mean everything.

For some, they are the 43.8 million people who suffer from mental illness in the U.S. They are the 60% of people who do *not* receive treatment for their mental illness. They are the 45% of high school students red-flagged for depression right here in Licking County—12% of whom answered “yes” to a suicide-related question.

Mental Health America of Licking County fights every day to bring more awareness to those suffering from mental health issues. For some, mental wellness is just something they have—it isn’t a struggle to stay positive or see that hard times get better. But, for one in five people, that is *exactly* the struggle they go through.

By having programs like Compeer and Suicide Prevention, MHALC not only provides a resource for those struggling with mental health issues, but they offer education for the entire community, which will lead to a better understanding of mental illness.

Stigmas surrounding mental illness are still quite prevalent. The stigmas are almost so rooted into us that we don’t even realize we have them. That is, until you encounter these stigmas first-hand.

I have always considered myself incredibly open-minded. I am a soon-to-be graduate of The Ohio State University. I have traveled to different countries, and I have experienced different cultures. I pride myself on being accepting of all people. But, I still had something to learn when it came to mental health.

Because I live with depression myself, I assumed I knew all there was to know about what it feels like to struggle with your mental health. However, being a part of MHALC has taught me that no one’s struggle is the same. That it is possible to be a part of something and still unintentionally hold onto some of those stigmas. Which is what awareness is all about.

It isn’t about merely getting the word out that mental illness is something people in our community struggle with. It is about helping those with and without these struggles see that it is a fight for everyone—one best solved together, not apart. That anyone can struggle with mental health at some point in their life. By not simply learning about something, but taking the time to truly understand it, *then* you have become aware.

There shouldn’t be an “us” or a “they” when it comes to mental health. There should only be a “we.” Everyone in our community deserves the chance to live a fulfilled life. It is impossible to fight a battle alone, and it is impossible to achieve mental wellness alone.

And that is what I have come to realize while at MHALC, and why what they do is so important. Bridging the gap between those with mental illness and those without, bringing them together for the sake of mental health, is the only way to truly help everyone in our community live the lives they deserve. Because, there is NO health without mental health.



[www.liveyourlifewell.org](http://www.liveyourlifewell.org)

### **Free Support Groups At MHA**

#### **Autism Caregivers**

2nd Wednesday each month  
from 12 Noon to 2pm

#### **Depression & Bipolar**

Each Wednesday 3:30pm to  
4:30pm

#### **Obsessive Compulsive Disorder**

2nd and 4th Thursday each  
month from 7:00pm to  
8:00pm

#### **Survivors of Childhood Sexual Abuse**

2nd and 4th Thursday each  
month from 7:00pm to  
9:00pm

#### **Survivors of Trauma**

Each Monday from  
12:30pm to 1:30pm at The  
Main Place, 112 South 3rd  
Street, Newark.

#### **Survivors after Suicide Loss**

2nd Tuesday of each month  
from 6:30pm to 7:30pm.

**Support groups are at 65  
Messimer Drive, Unit 3  
unless noted otherwise.**

**FREE MENTAL  
HEALTH  
SCREENING IS  
AVAILABLE  
ONLINE AT**

**[www.mhalc.org](http://www.mhalc.org)**

# MHA EVENTS



## *St. Patrick's Day with MHA*

St. Patrick's Day with MHA took place on March 17th at The Midland Theatre in downtown Newark. Guests enjoyed a VIP meet and greet with We Banjo 3, followed by a live auction with emcee Bob McGaughy and auctioneer Craig Connelly. At 8:00 MHA welcomed, for the second year, We Banjo 3! The band thoroughly entertained the crowd of over 400 with their unique "celticgrass" music. MHA would like to thank all of our sponsors, the staff and volunteers at The Midland Theatre and everyone who came to support our agency at this



important fundraiser. Stay tuned for information about next year's event. Hope to see you there!

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### Free Seminars!

2017 Licking County  
Community Blueprint  
Educational Forums

- Moving Beyond a Criminal Record-Career Advancement Opportunities
- Safe & Affordable Housing
- Abuse Ignores Age
- Expect Respect
- Communicate a New You in 2017!
- Hope for Recovery-Understanding Your Mental Health & Addiction Issues 101

For a complete list of dates, times and locations call Penny Sitler or Donna Gibson at (740)522-1341

## May is Mental Health Awareness Month

Join us on Sunday, May 21st from 4:00 pm to 8:00 pm at Chipotle on North 21st Street to raise money for MHA's Compeer Program. Simply bring this flyer, show it on your smart phone or tell the cashier you're supporting MHA's Compeer Program and 50% of the proceeds will be donated to MHA's Compeer program.

## LOU MITCHELL MEMORIAL GOLF OUTING FOR SUICIDE PREVENTION

Denison Golf Club \*new location\*

**555 Newark-Granville Road, Granville, Ohio**

**Monday, July 24, 2017**

**Check in: Noon \* Simultaneous Start: 1:00 pm \* Dinner 6:00 pm**

**For sponsorship information or to register a team contact Jill Goddard at (740) 522-1341**





# THANK YOU!

## TO ALL OF OUR DONORS

Mental Health America of Licking County would like to recognize the following individuals and organizations for their support received from July 1, 2016 through December 31, 2016.

*We make every effort to accurately reflect donations. Please call Jill Goddard at 740-522-1341 if you feel we have inadvertently left your name out and please accept our apologies.*

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Ms. Cheryl Church	Ms. Maura Horgan	Ms. Jacqueline Morgan	The Patricia R. and Herbert J. Murphy Foundation
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Mr. Michael Collins	Joann Stores LLC	Newark High School	Velvet Ice Cream
Ms. Diana Conrad	Mr. John Johnson	Nutcracker Family Restaurant	Mr. & Mrs. C. Zane Wachtel
Mr. & Mrs. Rod Cook	JP Morgan Chase & Co	Rebounder's Club	Mr. Shawn Walker
Mr. & Mrs. Bill Corban	Mr. & Mrs. Dave Kane	Mr. & Mrs. Ray North	Mr. & Mrs. David Wallace
Coterie Club	Ms. Gretchen Kastet	Mr. & Mrs. James Norton	Dr. & Mrs. John Wallace
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## TWO MORE WAYS TO HELP MHALC



### HOW THE KROGER COMMUNITY REWARDS PROGRAM WORKS FOR ALL OF US!

We are so excited about the Kroger Community Rewards Program and its potential impact for MHALC! **Your information must be renewed each year so please follow the directions below.**

Every time you swipe your Kroger Plus card, while you still receive fuel rewards and coupons, MHALC receives a portion of every dollar you spend. This is such an easy way to contribute to our programs. Please follow the easy instructions below to become part of the MHALC community. If you have signed up in the past, please renew your community information each year. If we can be of any assistance, please call our office.

Go to [www.kroger.com](http://www.kroger.com).

Go to Community tab.

Click on Community Rewards Program.

Click on the COLUMBUS Enroll Now button.

Put in your information and Kroger card #.

Be sure to link your card to MENTAL HEALTH AMERICA OF LICKING COUNTY, Group # 91467.

Don't forget to buy gift cards at Kroger when you are going out to eat or shopping at stores such as Lowe's, Kohl's or Best Buy or when you start your holiday shopping, **AND BE SURE TO SCAN YOUR KROGER CARD WITH EVERY PURCHASE!**



Shop on Amazon and Support MHALC!

Through the AmazonSmile program, 0.5% of your purchase will be donated to the charity of your choice.

Sign-up is simple:

- Go to [smile.amazon.com](https://smile.amazon.com) and sign into your existing Amazon account.
- Search and select Mental Health America of Licking County to make it your charity of choice.
- The purchasing process and products are exactly the same on AmazonSmile as they are on Amazon.

Donating has never been as quick and easy! Please share with your friends and family and help MHALC continue to provide our much-needed services.