



MHA Message

There is *NO* health without Mental Health!

From The Executive Director



How are you doing right now? No, really, how are you doing? We're so quick in our society to say, "Great!", "OK" or "I'm fine." Right now many of us are just barely getting by. We're collectively fatigued by all of what is going on – COVID-19 hovering over our world and affecting so many facets of our lives, wild fires that keep multiplying despite firefighters' heroic efforts, political turmoil, hurricanes and tropical storms that have outstripped our alphabet's naming capacity for only the second time ever, and incidences of racial injustice that continue to loom over our country on top of the normal stresses of life. Illness other than COVID-19, death from other causes, accidents, relationship struggles and more have not stopped just because our normal activities have been impacted.

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So if your answer is, "This is a really hard time for me" or "I'm not doing very well right now," you're not alone. On Mental Health America of Licking County's website (www.mhalc.org/resources/), you'll find links to MHA National's screening tools to help identify signs of mental health issues including depression, anxiety, bipolar disorder and post-traumatic stress disorder as well as screening tools to help young people and parents determine if a youth's emotions or behaviors might be signs of a mental health problem.

MHA's August screening results indicate a marked increase in the number of people who screened moderate-to-severe for depression or anxiety above what was typically seen prior to the pandemic. "'Loneliness and isolation' were cited by the greatest percent of moderate-to-severe depression (74%) and anxiety (64%) screeners as contributing to mental health problems right now. These percentages have been steady since mid-April."

It's not easy to stay upbeat and motivated right now. Maybe you just have the occasional day of feeling down or maybe you're experiencing these feelings consistently. Either way, we all need to do what we can to manage this COVID funk and take care of ourselves. We're not going to be able to care for those around us and fulfill our ongoing responsibilities if we don't spend some time on ourselves. If you or someone you care about is having a difficult time, please call your family doctor or a mental health professional to be assessed. At the very least, take an online screen to see if something bubbles up as an issue that can be addressed. And when you're out in the community, consider that you could be standing next to someone who is trying their best not to fall apart. Whatever you do today, do it with kindness. You never know what someone else is going through.

To your mental health,

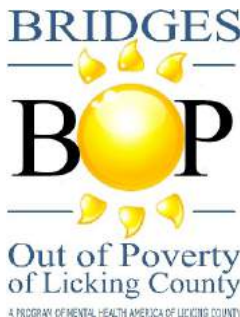
Penny C. Sittler
Executive Director

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FREE
MENTAL
HEALTH
SCREENING
AT
WWW.MHALC.ORG

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS



The Bridges Out of Poverty (BOP) program has made great strides towards reducing poverty in the Licking County community. Getting Ahead (GA) classes offered through BOP promote financial literacy and develop opportunities for job training and career advancement.

The program is still thriving as are its participants. BOP graduate and MHA's 2019 Mental Health Consumer of the Year Stephanie Vanbibber is now managing three recovery centers. She is a certified Peer Support Specialist and is leading meetings all over town. Courage House has had ten graduates, Spencer House six, and Adult Probation's Day Reporting has had 16! (See her photos on page 4).

@mhalcBridgesOutOfPoverty

The Compeer program's mission is to reduce isolation and stigma for individuals who live with severe and persistent mental illness and to improve their quality of life.

The program is going strong. Six new volunteers from OSU are helping with our Facebook interactions. We continue to have



*Bridges Out of Poverty and Compeer
Program Coordinator
Donna Lee*

walks through Facebook Messenger at 4 pm Monday through Friday and Compeer Coordinator Donna Lee plans to reinvigorate interest by going live once a week for the walk through Compeer's Facebook page @CompeerCircleOfFriends.

She also plans to host a live Zoom tutorial on the page to help members navigate the group. Donna will be hosting a bingo night via Zoom with the winner being awarded a piece of custom artwork donated by the recovery artists!

Donna continues to host weekly virtual art classes via Facebook and was quoted by Compeer International in their *Compeer Connects July 2020 Newsletter* saying she hasn't let COVID-19 affect Compeer's Art in Recovery group. She explains, "It's been my observation that the people who come into the art room are far less likely to self harm when they have the comradery that is developed

from encouraging each other to laugh and have fun...They are proud of their art and their healing processes. It does provide a venue for us to advocate for people in recovery from mental illness and all of the stuff that goes with that, addiction, trauma, grief, etc."



Self-advocacy is speaking up for yourself, asking for what you need, negotiating for yourself, knowing your rights and responsibilities, and using resources that are available to you.

The Youth Self-Advocacy program is designed to help youth with developmental disabilities cultivate self-advocacy skills as they transition from high school into adulthood.

Program Coordinator Christina Peña continues to provide resources to schools and plans to return to schools mid-fall. She also posts resources and updates on the Youth Self-Advocacy Facebook page.

@MHALCYouthSelfAdvocacy



YES Club took its programming from the clubhouse to social media in March, covering topics from anxiety to nicotine to service work that could be done during the stay at home recommendations. While the staff missed interacting with the members in person, this also allowed them to thoroughly cover topics on a weekly basis.

When YES reopened its doors in July, we welcomed a small but consistent group of members back. Safety guidelines made things look and feel a little different, but the core values and features of the program remain the same. Members learned how to make healthy choices, played socially distant games, helped complete an ocean-themed mural and decorated a sign for the wildflower garden among many other activities. YES also got brand new backboards for its basketball court, thanks to the generosity of community member Billy Jefferson.

@YESClub



Amazing new basketball backboards courtesy of Billy Jefferson (project coordinator), Ashcraft Machine Shop, Dush Graphix, Corder Construction and the seniors from the Newark High School basketball team

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS



GIP plans to return to in-person classes in four school districts early to late October once schools make this transition and find their stride again. For the 2020-21 school year, the GIP acronym will be transitioning to stand for GRIT-INTEGRITY-PRESENCE (previously Girls In Progress) as a way to remain inclusive and welcoming to girls coming into the program. The program content

will be unchanged. Same program. New name.

GIP online includes a private group for both current and alumni students, and a public Facebook page @GirlsInProgress. Daily posts offer support, encouragement, social and emotional health and education as well as fun artistic prompts and projects. A positive outcome of this time has been the establishment of this online component of the program which Program Manager Shari Johnston plans to continue. This has become an additional support, and small group Zooms and messenger conversations have also helped meet the needs of girls while at home.



GIP Members

Parent Support

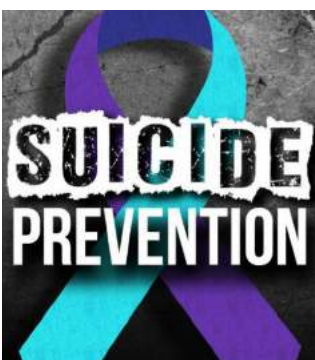


MHA's Parent Support program is happy to be able to provide the Triple P Positive Parenting Program for free to any Licking County resident. Triple P promotes good communication and strong relationships between parents and children. This positive approach to parenting helps parents guide their

children's development and manage their behavior in a constructive and caring way.

This evidence-based program has evolved through more than 25 years of professional research. It was founded by Dr. Matt Sanders at the University of Queensland, Australia and has been proven to be effective.

MHA is currently offering all Triple P workshops virtually on Zoom. This is an opportunity for parents to see and talk with other parents while receiving helpful Triple P Parenting strategies that are proven to work. Please visit our Licking County Parent Support Facebook page @MHALCParentSupport for our current workshop schedule. You can also contact our Parent Support Program Coordinator Kitty Roahrig at 740-919-6905 or kroahrig@mhale.org. We are here to help make a difference!



The Suicide Prevention program is reaching out to educate youth and adults on the signs and symptoms of suicide in Licking County to help save lives. Whether it's teaching Signs of Suicide (SOS) in area middle and high schools or offering Gatekeeper Suicide Prevention training to adults, this critical program is working hard to improve the mental health of the community.

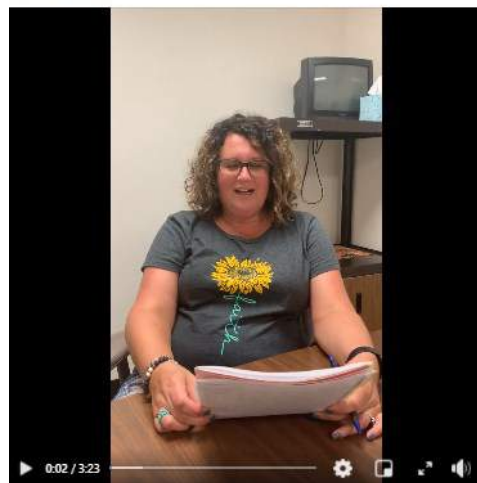
The SOS program returns to the Licking County middle and high schools starting in October and will be facilitated virtually as well as in-person.

Suicide Prevention Program Coordinator Christina Peña has returned to facilitating the Bipolar/Depression support groups in-person while requiring social distancing and mask wearing. Meetings are held every Wednesday at the MHA office from 3:30 pm – 4:30 pm. The Survivors After Suicide support group will resume in person starting October 13 and will meet the second Tuesday of each month from 6:30 pm – 7:30 pm at the MHA office while also requiring social distancing and mask wearing.

Christina continues to post updates and resources on the Suicide Prevention Facebook page @mhaleSuicidePrevention.



In lieu of the Suicide Prevention Walk and Candlelight vigil (due to Covid-19) we are sharing a video on grief. I sat down with Tarsha Raker-Henry; she explained her journey with grief. Tarsha is a suicide loss survivor and a member of our LOSS team. Please remember it is okay to not be okay and there is always help 1-800-273-8255 (Suicide Prevention Lifeline), text HOPE or HELP to 741741 and 211 (Pathways Crisis Lifeline).




PROGRAM CREATIVE MOMENTS

Follow our programs on Facebook!


- @mhalcBridgesOutOfPoverty
- @CompeerCircleOfFriends
- @GirlsInProgress
- @MHALCParentSupport
- @mhalcSuicidePrevention
- @YESClub
- @MHALCYouthSelfAdvocacy

 Bridges Out of Poverty Licking County
May 19 ·  <https://www.facebook.com/107915512651338/posts/2746318785477651/>



Licking County Adult Felony Probation
May 19 · 

Please take time to congratulate Stephanie VanBibber! She successfully completed the Licking County Addiction Recovery Court Program (Drug Court). Please read on to learn "in her own words" how the program impacted her life.

 Compeer Circle of Friends

Virtual Art Class Piece



 Parent Support Licking County
April 14 · 

8 WAYS A CHILD'S ANXIETY SHOWS UP AS SOMETHING ELSE

- 1. Anger**
The perception of danger, stress or opposition is enough to trigger the fight or flight response leaving your child angry and without a way to communicate why.


- 2. Difficulty Sleeping**
In children, having difficulty falling asleep or staying asleep is one of the hallmark characteristics of anxiety.


- 3. Defiance**
Unable to communicate what is really going on, it is easy to interpret the child's defiance as a lack of discipline instead of an attempt to control a situation where they feel anxious and helpless.


- 4. Chandeliering**
Chandeliering is when a seemingly calm person suddenly flies off the handle for no reason. They have pushed hurt and anxiety so deep for so long that a seemingly innocent comment or event suddenly sends them straight through the chandelier.


- 5. Lack of Focus**
Children with anxiety are often so caught up in their own thoughts that they do not pay attention to what is going on around them.



FOCUS


- 6. Avoidance**
Children who are trying to avoid a particular person, place or task often end up experiencing more of whatever it is they are avoiding.


- 7. Negativity**
People with anxiety tend to experience negative thoughts at a much greater intensity than positive ones.


- 8. Overplanning**
Overplanning and defiance go hand in hand in their root cause. Where anxiety can cause some children to try to take back control through defiant behavior, it can cause others to overplan for situations where planning is minimal or unnecessary.



 Suicide Prevention - Mental Health America of Licking County
September 8 at 12:01 PM · 

Self-care is important to maintain a healthy relationship with yourself as it produces positive feelings and boosts your confidence and self-esteem.



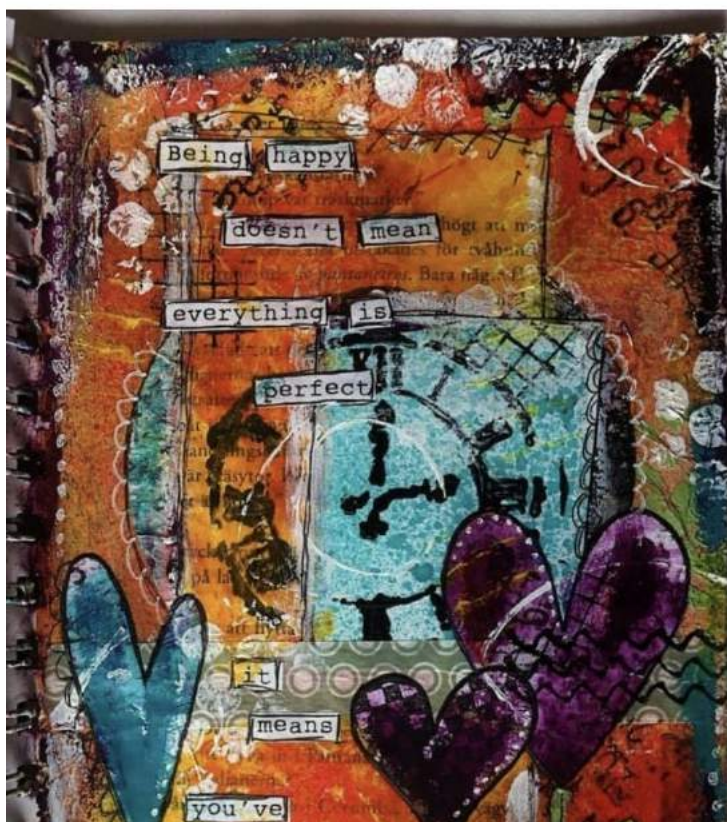
PROGRAM CREATIVE MOMENTS



Girls In Progress

Jul 28 · 🌐

ART PROJECT THIS WEEK: Create an art journal page or poster. Begin by writing all of the negative and false beliefs that you have that hold you back, and keep you stuck. Then cover with paint, collage, words, mantras of your truth. However you want to do it. Reflect your dreams, hopes, and strengths and release the negativity. **POST ON FRIDAY.**



YES Club

April 27 · 🌐

Here's an original YES Club slide show about this week's topic, resilience.



Youth Self Advocacy of Licking County

June 15 · 🌐

Transition planning may be difficult and emotional. Please include your child/student when making these choices.



YES Club

September 10 at 10:43 AM · 🌐

An ongoing project...Succulent and rock garden in drip decorated pots.



67TH ANNUAL MEETING

VIRTUAL ON NOVEMBER 12TH AT 5:30 PM

Due to COVID-19, MHALC will be unable to host our regular dinner and celebration. We will be hosting our annual meeting virtually on Thursday, November 12th at 5:30 pm. Please contact Rhea Pierron at rpierron@mhalc.org if you are interested in joining us.

Lou Mitchell Memorial Golf Outing

Although MHALC was unable to host the Lou Mitchell Memorial Golf Outing this year, we would like to acknowledge the following individuals and organizations for their generosity in support of our Suicide Prevention program:

Mr. and Mrs. Michael Cantlin
Licking Memorial Health Systems
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Waste Away Systems
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Mulligans/ 50/50 Sponsor

THANK YOU VERY MUCH!

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 January 1, 2020 through June 30, 2020.

We make every effort to accurately reflect donations.

Please call 740-522-1341 if you feel we have inadvertently left your name out and please accept our apologies.

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Mr. James Ward
Waste Away Systems
Dr. Mary Elizabeth Weiser
Ms. Sheri White
Ms. Ann Whitlatch*
Mr. Scott Williams
Mr. & Mrs. Mike Wilson
The Winter Picnic Club of
Granville
Mr. Raymond York Jr.*
Ms. Cynthia Young
Ms. Gemma Zimmerman*

* Signifies MHALC member

Thank you!

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TWO EASY WAYS TO HELP MHALC



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Every time you use 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 we can be of any assistance, please call our office.

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- Click on Savings.
- Click on Kroger Community Rewards.
- 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 # AX606.

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. **BE SURE TO SCAN YOUR KROGER CARD WITH EVERY PURCHASE!**

Thanks for your continued help and support!



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 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.