

Family Support

FOR FAMILIES OF ADULTS WITH A MENTAL ILLNESS

July 2017
Volume 21

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Changes in Family Support Services

After two and a half years in the role of Family Support Specialist at KCMHSAS, Heather Hoffman is transitioning into a new position. Her primary work will be providing therapy to individuals with mental health and substance use disorders.

The Family Support Specialist position has been combined with an Outpatient Therapist position. This was done with the consideration that National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) of Kalamazoo is also undergoing changes and will be providing more education and support services as their membership and pool of trained facilitators grows.

KCMHSAS remains dedicated to ensuring there will be a staff person designated to assist with problem solving, linking with community resources, developing skills for supporting loved ones who have a mental illness or substance use disorder, and navigating barriers to getting a loved one into appropriate services. The Family Support Services phone number will remain the same: 364-6961.

Children in Families with Mental Illness

If you have a loved one with a serious mental illness and they have

children or are thinking about having children, you could have concern related to how their illness may impact the kids. More than five million children in the United States have a parent who is diagnosed with a mood or thought disorder (ex: schizophrenia, bipolar, major depressive disorder). Growing up in a household where a serious mental illness is present places children more at risk of developing behavioral or emotional issues themselves, based on genetic factors and potentially harmful psychosocial experiences. However, it also can foster strength, compassion, independence, and resourcefulness.

Children of Parents with a Mental Illness (COPMI) is an organization funded by the Australian government that offers resources to children, parents who have a mental illness, family and friends, and professionals coping with this situation. Their website, www.copmi.net.au, offers free PDFs to download, links to other free resources (videos, books, websites) from around the world, and helpful tips for a variety of situations. For example, for parents who have a mental illness, there's information about talking with your child about mental illness, talking to your child's school, how to manage conflict, and how to stay connected if hospitalized. For family and friends, there are webpages to help you better support both the parent and the child.

Information, support, and hope can increase resilience in children who have a parent with a mental illness. You can help by reassuring the child they are not alone, honestly acknowledging the parent's difficulties, providing education regarding the illness, and supporting them in fighting against and coping with stigma. Let the

Find out about community events, meetings, news and more at:

www.kazooomh.org

Like us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/KazooCMH

Family to Family

~ Fall 2017 ~

Tuesdays, 6:30-8:30pm

September 19 –

December 5

Must be registered to attend
Free 12-week education group

For more info, call
(269) 364-6961



FREE!

ONGOING

Second Tuesday
of every month

6:30-8:00pm

KCMHSAS

418 W Kalamazoo Ave

Fourth Monday
of every month

6:30-8:00pm

Victory Baptist Church

308 W Milham Ave

NO REGISTRATION

REQUIRED!

youth know that they are not to blame. Allow and provide them with opportunities to be a kid and have fun. Remind them that the parent loves them. Help the young person identify who may be safe to talk to, brainstorm small ways they can be empowered, and offer hope that recovery is possible, many treatments exist and are being discovered, and things won't always feel this tough.

Families facing mental illness together can grow closer. All family members can discover strength, courage, and resilience that may not have surfaced without the illness as a catalyst for progress. By communicating openly and supporting one another, families can grow and be better able to navigate challenging situations.

- Information gathered from:

www.socialworktoday.com/archives/septoct2007p26.shtml

www.copmi.net.au

Family-to-Family

For over 20 years, KCMHSAS has offered Families In Action (FIA), a program originally developed by AMI (now NAMI) of Michigan, that has undergone several revisions made in partnership between KCMHSAS and NAMI of Kalamazoo. There are other NAMI affiliates in Michigan who offer FIA, though with changes made, there are variations on what is offered where. With increasing changes taking place with mental health diagnoses and treatment protocols, as well as changes to insurance, laws and policies, and available resources, it has become difficult to keep FIA up-to-date and to get information readily distributed to those offering the curriculum around the state.

Joyce Burland, Ph.D. developed NAMI's signature program, Family to Family (F2F) in 1991 and it has been updated continually. In 2013, it was added to the Substance Abuse and Mental

Health Services Administration's National Registry of Evidence-Based Programs and Practices. What this means is that F2F was independently assessed and met standards for evidence-based practices (EBP) for quality of research and readiness for dissemination. An EBP is one that has demonstrated results and can be presented in the same manner by those who complete training requirements. F2F is now being taught in its fifth edition with its most recent update in 2014. As a national organization, NAMI is able to stay up-to-date with current information and can readily provide updated versions of the program to their registry of trained facilitators; wherever the program is offered, whether in Michigan or in California, it is provided in a consistent, quality manner that can help people who have an adult loved one living with a mental illness.

KCMHSAS strives to provide the best EBP to our community and began considering switching to F2F years ago. Additionally, as part of their process of reaffiliation, NAMI of Kalamazoo will be offering NAMI signature programs in our community. These two factors, along with the time and commitment that would be required from both KCMHSAS staff and NAMI volunteers to update the FIA program, have made clear the need to offer F2F in Kalamazoo.

NAMI of Kalamazoo, KCMHSAS, and Southwest Michigan Behavioral Health have sent several individuals to Lansing to complete training to be F2F facilitators. FIA facilitators Kathy Thompson and Krisa VanMeter were F2F trained in April and have agreed to facilitate the inaugural F2F class in Kalamazoo. Instead of FIA, F2F will be offered this fall at KCMHSAS' 418 W. Kalamazoo location (see sidebar for more info).

Those who have taken or taught FIA know how beneficial it is. It provides not only education, but a

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KCMHSAS

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Keep Family Support Services up-to-date with your email address to receive information and resources. You will be removed from the list at your request.

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Do you have a book checked out from Family Support's Lending Library? We hope it is useful. Please make sure to get it back to KCMHSAS so that others can use it, too. Thank you!

supportive atmosphere where participants can speak freely about the challenges they face. Change is often unsettling and switching to F2F is a change. We are reminding ourselves that we can see how it goes and determine whether it meets the community's needs based on response to the program.

Both FIA and F2F are 12 week programs that provide education about mental health conditions and treatments, managing stress, self-care, communication, problem-solving, finding supports and services, and dealing with crisis. There are differences in how the information is presented. If you've taken FIA in the past, you may consider taking F2F to see how it compares and learn more. We'll welcome your feedback! If you've missed previous offerings of FIA, F2F will be a good bet to provide you with the information you are seeking, delivered via an EBP curriculum.

Upcoming Events

NAMI Calhoun welcomes all to their 2nd annual picnic on July 21 at Willard Beach Pavilion on the hill in Battle Creek. There is a \$2 entry fee per person or \$5 for 3 or more in a vehicle. You can show up early to swim. Food, beverages, and socializing will be available from 6-8:30pm. They need a head-count for food, so if you are interested, please RSVP to Gini Haffner at ghaff99432@aol.com with "picnic" in the subject line.

Summerfest returns to the front lawn of Kalamazoo Psychiatric Hospital on 7/27/17 from 11am-3pm. This is a fun event, open to the community with no charge (unless you want to purchase something). Summerfest offers live music, dancing, food vendors, rummage and plant sales, raffles with great prizes, games, and much more. Proceeds from the activities benefit the people staying at KPH and they

will also be enjoying the festivities outside. There are a variety of local organizations, including KCMHSAS, represented at information tables.

Gryphon Place will host their 4th annual 5K Suicide Prevention Walk during National Suicide Prevention Week on Saturday, September 9 at Bronson Park. Opening remarks and the walk kick-off begin at 9am. To learn more or register, visit <https://www.firstgiving.com/16297/4th-annual-suicide-prevention-walk>.

The Recovery Institute of Southwest Michigan Inc and The Peer Collaborative will be celebrating National Recovery Month with their 3rd annual Kalamazoo Wellness and Recovery Fair on Thursday, September 21, from 11am-3pm in Bronson Park. There is no fee to attend and all are welcome. The fair educates about services and resources available, helps increase awareness of recovery and reduce stigma, and offers a fun atmosphere for socialization. Plus, there are raffles, entertainment, and food trucks! You don't want to miss this event. For more information, visit <https://www.recoverymi.org/new-events/>

The Battle Creek Veterans Administration will host the fifth annual Alive and Running 5K walk/run to raise awareness about suicide on Saturday, September 23rd. The 5K will begin at 9am in the parking lot at the entrance to the Battle Creek VA Medical Center. You can learn more or register at <https://runsignup.com/aliveandrunning/va5k>.

There will be two NAMI Walks in Michigan this fall. NAMI Walks is a 5K event that raises awareness and funds for NAMI affiliates nationally. Visit <https://www.namiwalks.org/> for info. There will be a walk in Detroit at Belle Isle Park on September 23. Closer to home, there will be a walk in Grand Rapids at Davenport University on October 7. To learn about the Grand Rapids walk, or to register or donate to a team, visit <http://namimi.org/nami-michigan-grand-rapids-walk-2017>.

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KCMHSAS Housing Outreach

The Housing Department at KCMHSAS offers community outreach to link homeless individuals struggling with a mental illness to a variety of options in the community. They also oversee several grant-funded programs specific to the population KCMHSAS serves. Housing staff see individuals by appointment (364-6947) on Tuesdays at South County Community Services in Vicksburg 2:30-4:30pm. Individuals can drop-in to see housing staff on Wednesdays at the Kalamazoo Gospel Mission between 9-11am and at Housing Resources Inc on Alcott (the Goodwill building) between 4-5pm. They can also stop by Ministry With Community on Thursdays between 1-3pm to speak to available KCMHSAS Housing staff. Individuals should bring a photo ID, Social Security card, proof of income (if any), and documentation of a disability when they meet with housing staff.

Our Housing Department also oversees the Oakland House, which is shelter located in a renovated, home-like environment on Oakland Drive. Oakland House is structured around the needs of homeless individuals with a mental health condition. Peer Support services, including groups, are offered on-site. Anyone interested in staying at the Oakland House can seek placement by calling 532-1270 Mon, Wed, or Fri between the hours of 1-3pm.

Caregiver Bill of Rights

I have the right...

To take care of myself. This is not an act of selfishness. It will enable me to take better care of my loved one.

I have the right...

To seek help from others even though my loved one may object. I recognize the limits of my own

endurance and strength.

I have the right...

To maintain facets of my own life that does not include the person I care for, just as I would if he or she were healthy. I know I do everything I reasonably can for this person, and I have the right to do things for myself.

I have the right...

To get angry, to be depressed, and to express other difficult emotions occasionally.

I have the right...

To reject any attempt by my loved one (either conscious or unconscious) to manipulate me through guilt, anger, or depression.

I have the right...

To receive consideration, affection, forgiveness, and acceptance from my loved one for as long as I offer these qualities in return.

I have the right...

To take pride in what I am accomplishing and applaud the courage it sometimes takes to meet the needs of my loved one.

I have the right...

To protect my individuality and my right to make a life for myself that will sustain me when my loved one no longer needs my full time help.

I have the right...

To expect and demand that as new strides are made in finding resources to aid physically and mentally impaired persons in our country, similar strides will be made toward aiding and supporting caregivers.

By Jo Horne, author of Caregiving: Helping an Aging Loved One

