October 2019

At the Heart of Wellness

Message from Maria

Maria Coutant Skinner, Executive Director

Dear friends;

There’s a LOT of talk about mental health swarming all around us these days. In our culture, the term mental health has become a very large bucket into which quite a few things are thrown. As we consider and discuss mental health/mental illness and wellness... language and nuanced understanding about each is so important. There is a shortcut too often taken in conversations related to violence that gets attributed to mental

Have you heard the news?

McCall Center for Behavioral Health has been selected as the beneficiary of the Big Y World Class Market Community Bag Program!

Each time the $2.50 reusable Community Bag is purchased at the Big Y at 504 Winsted Road, Torrington CT during the month of November we will receive a $1 donation.

Identify. Understand. Respond.
illness. This is a dangerous and false assumption. It also feeds stigma, makes others afraid of someone with a diagnosis and creates a barrier to care for someone who may be suffering.

The truth is that one in five Americans is living with a mental health condition. In recent years, there have been alarming increases in the rates of depression, anxiety, suicide, and addiction. That’s the bad news. The good news is that we’re talking about mental wellness and how to achieve it. We’re talking about how important and effective treatment is. We’re working to reduce that stigma by using respectful language to discuss a person living with a mental health diagnosis. And we’re working to train as many people as possible in Mental Health First Aid.

Here’s what I hope you take away from this month’s message. Each one of us….without exception, can do something to help. Caring for others; that is, recognizing a distressed person, a person in need, a lonely or an angry or even a potentially violent person is not the exclusive domain of mental health professionals. Showing up for others; having coffee with your neighbor who is worried about their kid, stopping by to visit your

If someone you knew was showing signs of mental health and or substance use challenges, would you know where to turn? One in five Americans has a mental illness or substance use disorder, yet many are reluctant to seek help or simply don’t know where to turn for care. It is so important to understand the warning signs and risk factors associated with mental health and substance use challenges, as often those closest to the person experiencing these symptoms are the first to recognize the signs.

In 2005 The Mental Health First Aid Act was passed and provided twenty million dollars in federal funding for the Mental Health First Aid training program. Under this funding, participants are trained in:

- Recognizing the symptoms of common mental illnesses and substance use disorders.
- De-escalating crisis situations safely.
- Initiating timely referral to mental health and substance use resources available in the community.

Studies have shown that Mental Health First Aid successfully increases help provided to others and guidance to professional help and improves communication with health professionals about treatment. The course “introduces participants to risk factors and warning signs of mental health concerns builds an understanding of their impact and provides an overview of common treatments. Through role-playing and simulations, it demonstrates how to assess a mental health crisis; select interventions; provide initial help; and connect people to professional, peer and social supports as well as self-help resources.” (National Council on Behavioral Health, 2019). Mental Health First Aid provides participants with the skills and confidence they need to provide early detection and intervention by teaching the signs and symptoms of specific illnesses like anxiety, depression, eating disorders and addictions. The Mental Health First Aid program provides participants with concrete tools and answers to key questions like “What can I do?” and “Where can someone find help?” by providing them with information about local mental health resources, national organizations, support groups and online tools for mental health and addiction treatment and support.
aunt in the hospital, calling your good friend from high school, inquiring how your co-worker is doing after suffering a loss – this is what it means to build life sustaining connections. When we feel seen and heard, a critical part of our selves is cared for. Loneliness and disconnection are literally killing us. The remedy is the opposite. I have the great fortune of witnessing this every single day. It’s the very best therapy, intervention and medicine we ‘prescribe’. It transforms us. We can absolutely change the tide – together.

My very best to you always,
Maria

If you or someone you know is struggling with mental illness or substance use disorder and you do not know where to turn to call our office at 860-496-2100 to be connected with someone who can provide you with help and support. You can also visit our website at www.McCallCenterCT.org to learn more about the programs we offer and other local resources.

McCall's Heart
The McCall Center for Behavioral Health is fortunate to have a remarkable group of staff members who are dedicated to our clients, our community and our agency. Beginning this past January, and continuing throughout the year, we will be featuring a staff member. We know how amazing our staff is and we think it is important for you, our readers, to get to know a little bit about them as well. For McCall staff this is not just a job, they love this agency, believe in its mission, have hope for their clients (even when those clients feel lost and hopeless) and know that their work is critically important to turn the tide of the ravages of addiction toward the journey of health. Our staff are the HEART of McCall and this month we are featuring Ted Ruiz.

Make a difference in someone's life and support McCall today.

Our mission is to provide comprehensive integrated substance abuse and mental health treatment to help people lead healthier and more productive lives.

Your donation will directly support our prevention,
recovery and community programs and help us provide clients with the support they need—regardless of their ability to pay. Click here to donate today!

Hometown: Torrington

Position: Receptionist

Quote: “I’ve learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel.” – Dr. Maya Angelou

Something I love: I’m inspired by the individuals that work here. Everyone is almost single track minded in their dedication to the community. To work around a group of highly motivated and compassionate individuals, it’s such a treat.
Mental Health First Aid Training
A community public health course provided by
the McCall Center for Behavioral Health

November 12 & 13, 12:00-4:00PM
McCall Center for Behavioral Health
58 High St., Torrington, CT

To register visit https://www.eventbrite.com/e/mental-health-first-aid-training-torrington-ct-tickets-77839274365
(or search event #77839274365 at www.eventbrite.com)

Mental Health First Aid is an international, validated, 8-hour certificate course that teaches participants how to respond to signs of mental health and substance use problems. The training teaches skills needed to reach out and provide initial help and support to someone who may be developing a problem or experiencing a crisis.

An evidence-based training, Mental Health First Aid is managed in the U.S. by the National Council for Behavioral Health.

For information, contact instructor Valerie English Cooper at venglishcooper.mhta@gmail.com or 860-671-0674.