At the Heart of Wellness

April 2018
Message from Maria

Give by Clicking Here

Give Where Your Heart Is
Hello friends;

I’d like to share a quick story with you. About 15 years ago, I was facilitating a group for children of people struggling with addiction. We used a children’s workbook called; The Elephant in the Livingroom as the basis of our work. There was a sweet and insightful 7 year old girl who said that her best friend should come and could she bring her along next time? She did just that and over the months and years I got to know both girls very well. In my work in the McCall prevention department, I learned that these characteristics termed ‘risk and protective factors’ – the parts of us that make us more or less vulnerable to developing things like addiction – are not fixed. Strengths like resilience, connections to positive people, healing from events like neglect or intense fear and learning coping skills are all significant skills that people can acquire. The importance of these skills can NOT be overstated. It means all the difference.

These girls managed to do all of that. Each of them graduated with honors from high school despite some tragic events and major challenges. They both attended college, are thriving, independent, and both are

The McCall Center for Behavioral Health is excited to announce our first ever participation in the Give Local Greater Waterbury and Litchfield Hills giving event. Hosted by the Connecticut Community Foundation, this 36 hour online giving event unites individuals, businesses and nonprofit organizations across the region to reach one goal: to raise much-needed dollars for the community work of hundreds of local nonprofit organizations including The McCall Center for Behavioral Health.

Donors can contribute to our unique giving page by clicking here or going to https://givelocalccf.org/npo/the-mccall-center-for-behavioral-health at any time during the 36 hours event. For added incentive, each dollar donated will be boosted further with a percentage of bonus dollars, so we can do further good for the community. At the McCall Center, Give Local funds will be gratefully accepted and directed towards prevention, recovery and community efforts at a time when it is most desperately needed. We find ourselves in an era of unprecedented challenges; the opioid epidemic is now the leading cause of death for Americans under 50, and the numbers are rising. We are exceptionally appreciative of the faith afforded us through donations and intend to honor that with outcomes that transform lives.

Remember the old saying that "an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure"? Prevention can take place in many ways, such as getting a shot to prevent the flu, wearing a seat belt to prevent injury in a crash, or going to a primary care physician to prevent disease. Here at the McCall Center for Behavioral Health, we focus on how to prevent substance abuse. Over the past two decades research has shown that drug addiction is preventable, and therefore prevention efforts are vital to our communities. For example, studies show that children who first smoke marijuana under the age of 14 are more than 5 times as likely to abuse drugs as adults than those who first use marijuana at age 18. If we can prevent a 14-year-old from smoking marijuana, we hopefully have prevented drug abuse in his or her future.

At the McCall Center for Behavioral Health we understand that prevention is a critical component of our substance abuse strategies. The Prevention Department at the McCall Center was formed more than 20 years ago with only 2 staff members and 2 programs. Currently, the Prevention Department is one of the fastest growing teams within the agency and boasts 10 staff members, 7 of whom are Master's Level, and offers both micro and macro level services and programming. Our micro services work with individuals or small groups to give more individualized attention. Services and programming include: Parenting Support Services, Early Childhood Consultation Partnership, Parent Education Program, Insight Group, Girls Circle, The Boys’ Council, Educational Presentations, Botvin LifeSkills, and Recovering Together.
working in the human services field. Their lives could have been very different. The risk factors were all there. Instead, these remarkable, kind, hardworking young women are inspiring leaders in our community. In fact, one of those women is Dayna DiStasi – our intake coordinator here at McCall. When a person needs help, is in crisis, needs guidance and compassion – it’s Dayna who is there for them. I’m in awe of her – she is giving the gift of a positive and caring connection to others every hour of every day.

This is where we direct your generous donations. To making those lifesaving connections. Thank you – from the bottom of my heart - for making this possible.

My best always,

Maria

Our macro level services in the prevention department focus on groups, communities and society as a whole. Currently, the McCall Center has 4 community coalitions that focus on 14 communities in northwest Connecticut:

- The Northwest Corner Prevention Network (NCPN) which includes Kent, Sharon, Salisbury, Falls Village, North Canaan and Cornwall
- The Northwest Hills Prevention Connection (NHPC) which includes Winsted, Barkhamsted, Colebrook, New Hartford, and Norfolk
- The Region 10 Coalition to Stop Underage Drinking which includes Harwinton and Burlington
- The Torrington Coalition to Reduce Youth Substance Use

The foundation for all of McCall Center’s coalition work is the Strategic Prevention Framework (SPF) developed by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), which provides prevention staff with a blueprint on how successful coalitions can craft environmental strategies tailored to each community’s characteristics. The SPF assists our staff in developing the infrastructure needed for community-based, public health approaches that can lead to effective and sustainable reductions in alcohol, tobacco and other drug (ATOD) use and abuse. The five elements are: assessment, capacity, planning, implementation and evaluation, with regard to sustainability and cultural competency. In short – these researched based strategies achieve progress toward a healthy community; where youth have healthy coping skills, families feel supported and substance use is not considered the ‘norm’.

All McCall Center coalitions are open to members of the public and are always looking for individuals and organizations who are interested in actively participating in the planning, design, and implementation of substance use prevention activities. Anyone interested in finding out more, or becoming involved, are encouraged to reach out to the Prevention department, at (860) 496-2139.