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County United Way

**Special points of inter-
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Mental Health America of Jackson County

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Social Anxiety and Alcoholism

Millions of people continue to fight an uphill battle against alcohol abuse and alcoholism. While some are able to look at the past and pinpoint where their problem started, others are unsure of what led them down the path.

While it may not always be the case, most people place some blame for their drinking problem on social anxiety.

It is difficult for some people to understand, but social anxiety is a major health problem that affects many people throughout the world. According to the Anxiety and Depression Association of Americas (ADAA) approximately 15 million Americans adults suffer from social anxiety disorder; 36 percent of people with this problem have symptoms for 10 years or longer before seeking medical assistance.; the typical age of onset is 13 years old.

These statistics alone show just how serious anxiety has become. Not only can this keep people away from social situations, but it can lead them to trouble such as an addiction to alcohol. In some case, a person realizes the only way they can communicate in a social setting is if they are drinking.

For this reason, they continue to turn to alcohol, time and time again. Before they know it, this has developed into another problem in the form of an addiction.

The National Institute of Mental Health defines social anxiety disorder as follows: "social phobia is strong fear of being judged by others and being embarrassed. This fear can be so strong that it gets in the way of going to work or school or doing everyday things".

This disorder is equally common among men and women. There are many symptoms that can trigger social anxiety, such as: being the center of attention, having to speak in public, and being watched while doing something.

The Social Anxiety Institute defines social anxiety: "Social anxiety is the fear of interaction with other people that brings on self-consciousness feelings of being negatively judged and evaluated., and, as a result, leads to avoidance". The institute notes that this is the third largest mental health care problem in the United States. It is estimated that approximately seven percent of the population struggles with some form of social anxiety.

What does this have to do with alcohol use and addiction? In short, people with social anxiety are always searching for an answer. Rather than turn to a medical professional, somebody who may be able to help better deal with the problem., they rely on the use of alcohol. By drinking, these people no longer feel the anxiety associate with being in a social situation. Since this solves their problem, even if only for the short term, they continue to turn to this "solution" time after time.

Social Anxiety and Alcoholism Cont.

A study by the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism found: “approximately one-fifth of patients with social anxiety disorder also struggle with an alcohol use disorder, such as dependence or abuse”. The study goes on to provide a theory on the connection: “One theory to explain the comorbidity between social anxiety disorder and alcohol use and dependency is the tension reduction theory, which posits that people with social anxiety use alcohol to alleviate fears. This expectation that alcohol reduces anxiety may motivate alcohol consumption even if pharmacological studies do not support that assumption”.

Most people who suffer from social anxiety disorder are aware that this is a problem that has altered their life in many ways. Here are some ways to pinpoint if you also suffer from alcoholism: drink alcohol on a regular basis to cope with problems, stress, and anxiety; not able to stop drinking despite your best efforts; need a drink in the early morning hours to feel better about your day; feel guilty after you drink too much.

Even though social anxiety disorder is a big problem for those dealing with it, there are treatment options available to help control the situation and hopefully put it in the past: Cognitive behavior therapy is a type of psychotherapy that has been proven effective in treating social anxiety. It teaches a person how to think and behave differently, allowing them to feel less anxious in social situations; some doctors believe in prescribing medication to help treat social anxiety disorder. Most commonly, these include antidepressants, and anti-anxiety medications. Monoamine oxidase inhibitors have been proven especially effective in treating this medical condition.

If you suffer from both social anxiety disorder and alcoholism, it is often times best to check in a rehab facility that offers dual diagnosis treatment. This will ensure that you are treated for both issues, not just one.

Those who attempt to treat alcoholism, without realizing that social anxiety disorder is just as big a problem, will likely slip back to their old ways. Treating both issues in full and at the same time improves the chance of long term success.

Social anxiety disorder can lead people to a life of drinking and/or drug abuse. If alcoholism comes into play, seeking professional treatment is often times the best solution.

For more information www.quitalcohol.com

Thank you to Christmas Gift Lift Sponsors

Thank you to the following groups and individual who supported the 2014 Christmas Gift Lift by donating money supportsor gifts:

Walmart Foundation ,Bowling Transport , Inc., F.O.E. Ladies Auxiliary, F.O.E. # 655, Roberta Speaker, Gene & Joan Knott, Ruby Niccum, Sandra Zickler, Ann Zabel, Masonic Lodge #146, Loyal Devoir of Central Christian Church, Prudential Indiana Realty, Dicksons, Tri Kappa Ladies, Jan Morrison, Seymour American Legion Auxiliary Post #89, Thomas Cooley, Delta Kappa Gamma, Jane Thomas, Brownstown Afternoon Extension Homemakers, Kids N Kettles Extension Club, Mr. & Mrs. Dannie Lewis, Mark & Susan Haskett, Cummins Third Street Plant Employees, Seymour Eye Clinic Employees, Kremers Urban Pharmaceutical Employees, Teacher and staff of Seymour Community Schools, Crothersville Schools, and Brownstown Central Schools, Jackson County United Way, Seymour Tribune, State Bank of Medora, Jackson County Bank, Delta Delta Chapter ESA, Wayne and Pam Huddleson and numerous anonymous donors.

Wreath Fundraiser

Thank you to the Board Members and Roberts Tree Farm for our successful Wreath Sale. Thank you to all the people who supported the sale by purchasing a wreath, spray, Christmas tree or yule log. We sold 179 items and made \$1250.00 to help with our programming.

Fourth Quarter Events:

Monthly Thumbody classes and topics were: Working Hard and doing the Right Thing, Responsibility-Being Responsible for our Actions and Healthy Lifestyle-Value Good Health Habits. MJHAJC had a display in the front window of the Community Agency Building for December. Two columns appeared in the Jackson County Banner "Knowing the Signs of Teen Depression" and "Coping with Loss", A lot of time was spent on the preparation for the Annual Christmas Social. About 120 people attended the event. 160 clients were served through the Christmas Gift Lift. The Seymour Tribune published a wonderful article on the Christmas Gift Lift.

Head Start Enrolling for the Fall

Head Start will start to take names for enrollment for next August's Pre-School school year. This is for ages 3,4,and 5. Call in to answer pre-registration questions. Once the pre-registration is evaluated a staff member will meet with the parents at the school. Those who are accepted will be setup for an at home visit by a teacher.

Head Start currently has 3 openings for the remainder of this semester.

Transportation is available within a limited area.

Income guidelines are \$15,730 for a 2 family household and \$23,950 for a 4 family household.

Phone Number: 812-522-2065

GriefShare Program

Schneck Medical Center Hospice is hosting, a 13 week free program open to anyone who coping with a loss.

GriefShare seminars feature video sessions and discussion. You will gain access to valuable GriefShare resources to help you recover from your loss and look forward to finding joy again.

GriefShare is a friendly, caring group of people who will walk alongside you through one of life's most difficult experiences.

"In our fast-paced society, I believe it is imperative for us to tend to our losses" said Suzie McDonald, Schenck Hospice Nurse Manager. "Being with others that have had similar experiences can be extremely healing. This program is designed to be a place of hope and healing for those whose lives have been broken."

GriefShare will meet every Thursday, for 13 weeks. It started on January 8th from 7:00—8:30p.m.. It is free and there is no registration. You can attend any or all the sessions. Topics will include Living with Grief, the Journey of Grief, the Effects of Grief, and the Uniqueness of Grief.

There are two locations: The Point in Seymour led by Steve Dalquist and Pam and Ron Evans host the sessions at Brownstown Christian Church. If attending in Brownstown, please park in lot #1 and enter through entrance #1.

For more information, please contact Suzie McDonald at 812-5220508, or email smcdonald@schneckmed.org

Volunteer Income Tax Assistance ,VITA

Get your Federal and State of Indiana Taxes prepared for free. Volunteers are trained and certified by the IRS and prepare basic taxes for you. It is fast! E-file and E- Deposit is a 7 - 10 day turn around.

Qualify for free tax prep if you have an individual or combined household income of \$53,000 or less.

Make an appointment by calling **United Way 2-1-1. Monday - Friday 8AM - 5PM**

Call 2-1-1 or 812-376-6666

File your Taxes Online for Free

Prepare your Federal and State of Indiana Taxes for **Free**. Qualified taxpayers with an **individual or combined household income of less \$60,00** may file their own Federal and State taxes for **Free** online: www.myfreetaxes.com

Upcoming Events

January 26—Jackson County United Way Annual Meeting, Cupids Arrow, 5:30PM

January 30—Most Teens Don't' - Seymour High Gymnasium, 6:00PM

February 2—Free Meal, Community Diner, at First United Methodist Church, 5:00PM

February 5—MHAJC Valentine Social, Central Christian Church, 5:00PM

February 9—MHAJC Board Meeting, Community Agency Building 12 Noon

February 9—Free Meal, Community Diner at First United Methodist Church, 5:00PM

February 10—Jackson County Drug Free Council Meeting, Community Foundation Building 4:00PM

February 11—Jackson County Service Council Meeting, Seymour Library, 12 Noon

February 11 National 211 Day, United Way 211 Open House, 2:00PM - 4:00PM, 1531 13th St, Suite 1100, Columbus, IN, 812-376-0011

February 15 - "Bowl for Kids Sake," Big Brothers Big Sisters of Southeast Indiana, for more information call 812-522-9699

February 16—Free Meal Community Diner, at –First United Methodist Church, 5:00PM

February 18—Mobile Pantry, Anchor House, Bullard Building, 209 E. Second Street, 10:00AM—12:00PM

February 19 - I'm Thumbody classes at Head Start

February 23—Free Meal, Community Diner, at First United Methodist Church, 5:00PM

February 28 - Pre-Spring Craft Show and Bazar, Southern Indiana Hispanic Services, Celebrations 9AM - 3PM, Vendors call 812-524-6818 or 812-521-7772 for more information

March 2— Free Meal, Community Diner, at First United Methodist Church, 5:00PM

March 9—MHAJC Board Meeting, Community Agency Building, 12 Noon

March 9 - Free Meal, Community Diner, at First United Methodist Church, 5:00PM

March 10—Jackson County Drug Free Council Meeting, Community Foundation Building 4:00PMs

March 11 - Jackson County Transitional Council Fair, Seymour High School, 9:00AM

March 11- Jackson County Service Council Meeting, Seymour Library, 12 Noon

March 16—Free Meal, Community Diner, at First United Methodist Church, 5:00PM

March 18 - Mobile Pantry, Anchor House, Bullard Building, 209 E. Second Street, 10:00AM—12:00PM