

Mental Health America of Jackson County

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What's Going On

Mental Health Month

May has always been Mental Health Awareness Month. Numerous famous people throughout history have suffered from mental illness. Abraham Lincoln suffered from severe depression and had thoughts of suicide as noted in biographies by Carl Sandburg. Ludwig van Beethoven, a great composer, suffered from bipolar disorder. Brooke Shields, a popular actress discussed her Post Partum Depression in her book, "Down Came the Rain: My Journey Through Post Partum Depression." Patty Duke, an award winning actress documents her bipolar disorder in "Call Me Anna." Jane Pauley, the former NBC broadcaster wrote about her struggle with depression in her book, "Skywriting: A Life Out of the Blue." Mike Wallace, the 60 Minutes contributor has suffered bouts of depression throughout

his life. Medication and therapy has kept his depression under control.

There is a social stigma associated with mental illness, and this stigma prevents the majority of people with mental illnesses from seeking help.

Mental Health Month occurs each year in May and is designed to increase awareness about mental illness to reduce stigmatized thinking.

Mental Health America of Jackson County, an agency of the United Way, is located in the Community Agency Building in downtown Seymour. Our mission is to educate the public about mental illnesses and assist those who are affected by a mental illness.

Our nine member board of directors consists of:

Vicki Johnson, President, Doris Kovener, Secretary, Carolyn Bruce, Treasurer, Melissa Dick, Karen Metz, Sandra Tuner, Becky Boas, Jenny Lockman,

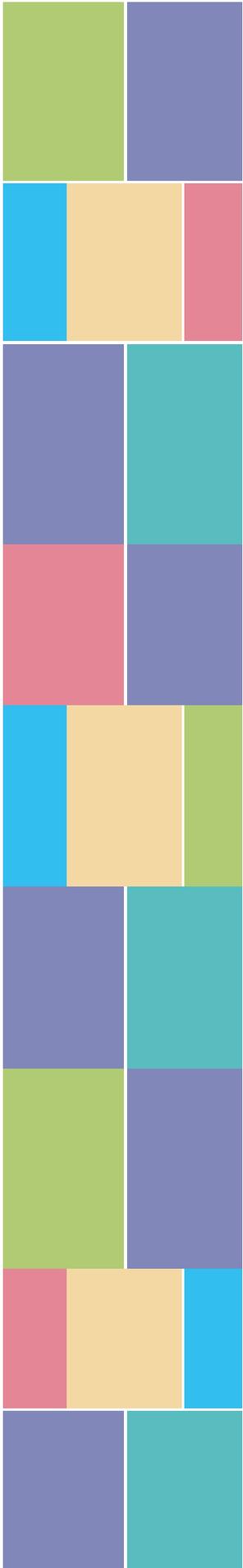
and Dr. Brenda Smith.

We meet the second Monday of each month at noon (except July & December). If you would like to be a volunteer in helping us fulfill our mission, please contact the director, Laura Stahl, at 522-3480.

Did you know?

Seymour has several large group homes as well as many smaller ones. The larger ones are Lancelot Group Homes, Elm Street Group Home, Hillcrest House, Evergreen Group Home, Pin Oak Group Home and Broadway House. Since the closing of Muscatatuck State Hospital, there are numerous group homes which house 2 or 3 clients. Some Jackson County residents are also housed at Madison State Hospital.

**MIND YOUR
HEALTH-MENTAL
HEALTH AND
PHYSICAL HEALTH
GO HAND IN
HAND!!**



Our 1st quarter activities included:

- self esteem lessons taught at the 4 Head Start classrooms in January, February, March and April
- Disabilities Awareness Fair
- Schneck Medical Health Fair
- self-esteem lesson taught in Child Care Network Preschool, March & April
- KidsFest
- working on a new website, soon to be up and running
- April social where our clients made door hangers for the nursing home clients
- newspaper articles on National Anxiety & Depression, Mental Health Month, Bipolar Disorder, Depression, Parenting Tips, Emotional Health Mental Health IQ, Being Role Models for Your Children, and Antidepressant Medications.

MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

Mental Health America of Jackson County is currently having their annual membership campaign. There are three levels of giving for our membership. Associate membership is \$5.00, Friend membership is \$10.00, and a Patron membership is \$25.00. If you are interested in a membership with MHAJC, please make checks payable to Mental Health America of Jackson County and mail them to P.O.Box 51, Seymour, Indiana 47274. Membership is valid for one year. Our membership monies are used in our programs for our clients we serve. Won't you join?

Mental health problems, including depression and anxiety disorders, are as treatable as many physical illnesses.

SPOTLIGHTING A MHAJC PROGRAM:

One of our great efforts that we do each year is our Christmas Gift Lift. It actually begins in the summertime, contacting clients about their Christmas wishes. Donation boxes are placed in schools and various locations in October and mailings are done to solicit monies and donations for our gift lift. Several local businesses do angel trees for our project. We also receive grant monies .

It takes about 2 full months to purchase, sort, and then begin to plan for the December social where the gifts are presented to our clients. The gifts are then delivered to those clients who are not able to attend the social. Last year we distributed more than 1500 Christmas gifts to those in the group homes and Madison State Hospital. What a great feeling to do for others who might not have any Christmas at all!!!!