



# Mental Health America of Jackson County

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Affiliate of Mental  
Health America

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## May is Mental Health Month

When mental illness or disorders are talked about, the language typically used to describe them tends to be clinical and impersonal. These words, while useful for doctors or clinicians, often don't do justice to what life with mental illness feels like. That is why this year's theme for May is Mental Health Month - "Life With a Mental Illness"- is a call to action to share what life with mental illness feels like to someone going through it.

May is Mental Health Month was started 67 years ago by Mental Health America of Jackson county national association, Mental Health America, to raise awareness about mental health conditions and importance of good mental health for everyone.

Last year, Mental Health Month materials were seen and used by 19 million people, with more than 5,550 entities downloading MHA tool kits. The 2015 theme -- based off our "B4Stage 4" initiative -- helped individuals understand that when you address mental health symptoms before Stage 4, people can often recover quickly, and live full and productive lives.

This year, we are building of the "B4Stage4" message and encouraging individuals to give voice to what is really means to live at stages 1, 2, 3, and 4 of mental illness. Life with Mental Illness is meant to help to remove the shame and stigma of speaking out, so that more people can be comfortable coming out of the shadows and seeking the help they need.

Mental illnesses are common and treatable, and help is available. We need to speak up early - before Stage 4 - and in real, relatable terms so people do not feel isolated and alone" said Bob Dembek, Director of Mental Health America of Jackson County. "Sharing is the key to breaking down the stigma surrounding mental illnesses and to showing others that they are not alone in their feelings and their symptoms."

This Mental Health Month, we are encouraging people to speak up about how it feels to live with a mental illness by tagging social media posts with *#mentalillnessfeelslike*. Posting with our hashtag is a way to speak up, to share your point of view with people who may be struggling to explain what they are going through - and help others figure out if they are too showing

## **Mental Health Month cont.**

signs of mental illness.

MHA has developed a series of fact sheets available on its website ([www.mentalhealthamerica.net/may](http://www.mentalhealthamerica.net/may)) on realizing the critical importance of addressing mental health early, recognizing the risk factors and signs of mental illness, understanding what mental illness is and isn't, and how and where to get help when needed.

The website also has screening tools for Depression, Anxiety , PTSD Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, Bipolar Disorder, Alcohol and Substance Abuse Use, Youth Screening for those 11-17 who are concerned if their emotions attention or behaviors might be signs of a problem, Parent Screening to determine if your child's emotions, attention or behaviors might be signs of a problem, Psychosis screening for those 12 -35 feel their brain is playing tricks on them (seeing ,hearing or believing things that don't seem real or quite right), Work Health Survey is a screen to explore how healthy your work environment is. You can take these screening by going to our website [www.mentalhealthamericajc.net](http://www.mentalhealthamericajc.net) and click on screenings on our Homepage

Research shows that by ignoring symptoms, we lose ten years in which we could intervene in order to change people's lives for the better. Speaking out about what mental illness feels like can encourage others to recognize symptoms early on in the disease, and empower individuals to be agents in their own recovery.

"Prevention, early identification and intervention, and integrated services work" concluded Bob Dembek. Telling people how life with a mental illness feels helps build support from friends and family, reduces stigma and discrimination, and is crucial to recovery.

Check out our display on the second floor at the Jackson County Library in Seymour.

For more information on May is Mental Health Month, visit Mental Health America's website at [www.mentalhealthamerica.net/may](http://www.mentalhealthamerica.net/may).

## **First Quarter Activities**

Three "I'm Thumbody" classes at Head Start 65 students ; Three "I'm Thumbody" classes at Seymour High School 11 children; Three I'm Thumbody classes at Brown Pre-School 24 children; Valentine Day Dance at Central Christian Church 90 people; Newsletter; Participated on Jackson County Drug Free Council ; Helped to plan 2016 Kid's Fest; Participated in Transitional Fair at Seymour High for Special Ed Students 3/9, Met with United Way Intern on Ethical Issues for Social Workers, Attended Jackson County United Way Partner meeting, Met with volunteer whom works on website and she has updated the website . She is still working on it. Participated in event for National Drug & Alcohol Facts Week at Seymour High School Basketball game on 1/23, Attended the Jackson County United Way Annual Meeting on 1/30, Attended Mental Health America Executive Roundtable Meeting in Indianapolis on 1/27, Attended 3 Jackson County Community Service Council meetings.

## **New Addiction Service Available in Jackson County**

Jackson County Way (JCUW) has been awarded a \$28,247 Work2Gether grant from the Indiana Association of United Ways. This grant will address health barriers in accessing and receiving Intensive Outpatient Treatment (IOP) focused on addiction services.

JCUW has partnered with Christopher & Associates to provide support for individuals and families who are residents of Jackson county and are in need of IOP Treatment. There is a small fee that clients must pay for the IOP program, but JCUW is covering 70% of the cost of the program. This program will serve approximately twenty residents who are adults or adolescents.

Christopher & Associates have seen great success in the last few months of IOP graduating five clients out of the program. Two recent graduates discussed why this program works. The first client shared, "Going through the Intensive Outpatient Program at Christopher and Associates has been a blessing. It's made me have a new approach in life. It has taught me so many new ways to cope with high risk situation and get positive and motivating feedback in a small group setting. I definitely know I have gained a great network of people that are here to support me if any concerns may arise in my recovery."

Another client shared, "I recently completed IOP at Christopher and Associates. I tried to attend therapy at another place, I went through three counselors and when I met the fourth; he told me they couldn't help me. Then I was referred to Christopher and Associates. I went one time and ended back in jail before I got any help. When I got out, I went back. I finished the IOP program and have a little over one year of sobriety now. The people at Christopher and Associates really care. I still go for individual and couples' therapy and my son goes for his autism. Christopher and Associates has helped me and my family a great deal."

Dr. Jill Christopher shared, "Christopher and Associates has recognized the great need for quality substance abuse treatment in our community. We were thrilled to have Kim Nelson, LCSW join our team and fulfill that roll. She has seen great success with the clients that she has worked with through the IOP program. We are very appreciative of this grant that will allow those with financial barriers to access appropriate treatment."

To learn more about how you, or someone you love, can access this service, please contact Christopher and

## **MHA Collaborates with Walgreens**

Mental Health America announced a new national collaboration with Walgreens. Working with MHA, Walgreens launched a new mental health "answer center" on its website ([www.walgreens.com/mentalhealth](http://www.walgreens.com/mentalhealth)) to help connect people to the MHA's Online Screening program - scientifically-based online screenings for depression, anxiety, bipolar disorder, PTSD, Psychosis, Youth Screening, Parent screening, Work Health Survey

The platform aims to improve health outcomes through early screening and intervention, to heighten consumer awareness and reduce stigma associated with mental illness, and connect more people with clinical resources in their community who can help. With timely intervention so critical to early stage treatment, Walgreens and MHA together have set a goal to complete 3 million online screenings by the end of 2017.

MHA believes that tasking a screening is one of the quickest and easiest ways to determine whether you are experiencing symptoms of a mental health condition. These screenings are part of an ongoing effort by MHA to address mental illness *Before Stage 4*.

## MHA Collaborates with Walgreens cont.

“Mental Health America is very pleased to partner with Walgreens in this way, “ said Paul Gionfriddo, President and CEO, MHA. Walgreens is a trusted part of the fabric of so many local communities in which we and our affiliates work. In which we and our affiliates work. Our online mental health screening program has rapidly become amazing year-round way to reach people who have mental health concerns with helpful information and supports. Adding the Walgreens suite of supports and services to our program will strengthen our offerings, and help many more people recover from serious mental health conditions.

Walgreens provides a broad range of services to improve adherence for patients, including those with certain mental health conditions. As part of the effort, the company will also be providing opportunities for continuing education for its pharmacists and nurse practitioners, to better serve needs of mental health patients. Its new mental health answer center features informational resources and content, and connect users to MHA Online Screening Program. MHA can also facilitate follow-up treatment and care through provider and specialist in local communities well as through it affiliates across the United States.

“We are proud to work with MHA on this important initiative to help meet the need for mental health resources in our communities and to better support our customers and patients in attaining both good physical and mental health” said Alex Gourlay , Walgreen President.

## Divorce Care

**Divorce? Separated?** Find Help, Discover Hope, Experience Healing. Weekly Divorce Support Group. Meets Wednesday Evenings at 6:30. At Immanuel Lutheran Church For More Information contact the church office at 812-522-3118.

## Upcoming Events

May 30 - Free Meal, Community Diner at First United Methodist Church, 4:30PM - 5:30PM  
June 2 - Mental Health of America of Indiana, 19 Annual Mental Health Symposium, “Finding Help, Finding Hope” , Grand Hall at Historic Union Station in Indianapolis 8:30 - 4:00  
June 6- Free Meal, Community Diner at First United Methodist Church, 4:30PM - 5:30PM  
June 8 - Jackson County Community Service Council, Jackson County library, 12:00 - 1:30  
**June 13 - MHAJC Bowling Social, Kingpin Bowl, 5:00PM - 6:30PM**  
June 13- Free Meal, Community Diner at First United Methodist Church, 4:30PM - 5:30PM  
June 14 - Jackson County Drug Free Council Meeting, Community Foundation Building, 4:00PM  
June 15 - Mobile Food Pantry, Anchor House, Tanger Mall, 10:00AM - 12:00PM  
June 20- Free Meal, Community Diner at First United Methodist Church, 4:30PM - 5:30PM  
June 27- Free Meal, Community Diner at First United Methodist Church, 4:30PM - 5:30PM



Jackson County  
United Way