

**Special points of inter-
est:**

- Upcoming Events

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Mental Health America of Jackson County

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Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD)

As the days get shorter and shorter we approach winter, the mood of many people may also change. Some people suffer from depression during the winter months, with symptoms subsiding in the spring and summer months. These symptoms may be a sign of seasonal affective disorder (SAD). SAD is a mood disorder associated with depression and related to seasonal variations in light. SAD affects a half million people every winter between September and April, peaking in December, January and February. The "Winter Blues" is a mild form of SAD, may affect even more people.

Three out of four SAD sufferers are women. Its usual age of onset is between 18 and 30 years of age. SAD occurs in both the northern and southern hemispheres but is extremely rare in those living within 30 degrees latitude of the equator. The severity of SAD depends both on a person's vulnerability to the disorder and his/her geographical location.

A diagnosis of SAD can be made after three consecutive winters of the following symptoms if they are followed by complete remission of the symptoms in the spring and summer months. Symptoms: Depression, - misery, guilt, loss of self-esteem, hopelessness, despair, and apathy; Anxiety - tension, and inability to tolerate stress; Mood Changes - extreme of moods and, some, periods of mania in spring and summer; Sleep Problems - desire to oversleep and difficulty staying awake, or sometimes, disturbed sleep and early morning wake; Lethargy - feeling of fatigue and inability to carry out normal routine; Overeating - craving for starchy and sweet foods resulting in weight gain; Social Problems - irritability and desire to avoid social contact; Sexual Problems - loss of libido and decreased interest in physical contact.

As the sunlight has affected the seasonal activities of animals (i.e. reproductive cycles and hibernation) SAD may be an effect of this seasonal light variation in humans. As seasons change, there is a shift in "our biological internal clocks" or circadian rhythm, due partly to these changes in sunlight patterns. This can cause our biological clocks to be out of "step" with our daily schedules.

Melatonin, a sleep-related hormone secreted by the pineal gland in the brain, has been linked to SAD. This hormone, which may cause symptoms of depression, is produced at increased levels in the dark. Therefore, when the days are shorter and darker then production of this hormone increases.

Phototherapy or bright light therapy has been shown to suppress the brain's secretion of melatonin. Although, there have been no research findings to definitely link this therapy with an antidepressant effect, light therapy has been shown to be effective in 85 percent of diagnosed cases. Patients remain in light up to ten times the intensity of normal domestic light up to four hours a day, but may carry on normal activities such as eating or reading while undergoing treatment. The device most often used today is a bank of white fluorescent lights on a metal reflector and shield with plastic screen.

For mild symptoms, spending time outdoors during the day or arranging homes and workplaces to receive more sunlight may be helpful. One study found that an hour's walk in the winter sunlight was as effective as two and a half hours under the bright artificial light.

If phototherapy does not work, an antidepressant drug may prove effective in reducing or eliminating SAD symptoms. But there may be unwanted side effects to consider. Discuss your symptoms thoroughly with your family doctor and mental health professional.

Mental Health America - www.mentalhealthamerica.net

Society for Light Treatment and Biological Rhythm - www.websciences.org/sltr

SAD Association - www.sada.org

Mental Health Before Stage 4, Changing the Way We Think About Mental Illness”.

It calls attention to the importance of addressing mental health symptoms early, identifying underlying disease, and planning an appropriate course of action on a path towards overall health.

Mental health matters for everyone. One in five American adults will have a diagnosable mental health condition in any given year. About half Americans will meet the criteria for a diagnosable mental health in their life, with first onset usually in childhood or in adolescence.

Research shows that ignoring mental health symptoms, we lose ten years in which we could intervene in order to change people's lives for the better. During most of these years most people still have supports that allow them to succeed – home, family, friends, school, and work. Intervening effectively during the early stages of mental illness can save lives and change the trajectories of people living with mental illness.

When people first begin to experience symptoms of mental health conditions, they shouldn't be ignored or brushed aside in hopes that they go away. One of the quickest and easiest ways to determine whether you are experiencing symptoms of a mental health condition is to take a mental health screening. Go to www.mentalamerica.net to take a screening for depression, anxiety, bipolar disorder and post-traumatic stress disorder, alcohol or substance abuse, youth, parent, and psychosis

If you are having trouble sleeping lately, if you have been experiencing racing thoughts, or you are just curious - the screens below can help you understand more about your mental health. If you are unsure which screen to take, here are some guidelines:

- The Depression Screen is most appropriate for individuals who are feeling overwhelming sadness.
- The Anxiety Screen will help if you feel that worry and fear affect your day to day life.
- The Bipolar Screen is intended to support individuals who have mood swings - or unusual shifts in moods and energy.
- The PTSD (Post Traumatic Stress Disorder) Screen is best taken by those who are bothered by a traumatic life event.
- Alcohol or Substance Abuse will help you determine if your use of alcohol or drugs is an area to address
- Youth - ages 11-17, who are concerned their emotions, attention or behaviors might be signs of a problem
- Parent - Help parents determine if their child's emotion or behavior might be a sign of a problem
- Psychosis - for young people (12 - 35) who feel like their brain is playing tricks (seeing, hearing or believing things that don't seem real or quite right)

Following screens, you will be provided with information, resources and tools to discuss with a provider. Use the screening results to start a conversation with your primary care provider, or a trusted friend or family member and begin to plan a course of action for addressing your mental health. There are a variety of treatment options ranging from talk therapy to medication to peer support. The earlier we treat mental health conditions the easier it is for people to recover and the less it costs.

Third Quarter Activities

Two "I'm Thumbbody" classes at Head Start 65 students, One class at Seymour High School 11 children (You are Special), Social at Centerstone 27 clients, Newsletter, Display at Seymour Library for Suicide Prevention Week, Table at Redding School Fair, Membership Drive, Review Meeting with to Jackson County United Way, Participated on Jackson County Drug Free Council Board of Directors, Started to prepare for Christmas Gift Lift, Prepared for Wreath Sale, Participated in 2 United Way Kick -Off program in Crothersville and Seymour, Wrote an column on Self-Injury and Suicide both not published , Participated in Overdose Awareness Day,

Christmas Gift Lift

MHAJC's Annual Christmas Gift Lift has started. Wish Lists have been submitted and Angel Tree lists has been delivered to Cummins Engine Plant and Kremers Urban Pharmaceuticals. Financial and gift donations have been coming in from the community.

"A common problem for people with mental illness is the social isolation and loneliness that comes from feeling disconnected from their community and peers. Engaging people with a gift during the holidays can help towards those feeling of being left out. Help us brighten the holidays for individuals with mental illness during the holiday season by supporting the Gift Lift." (1)

We strive to reach those facing mental health problems living in residential programs, state hospitals, in the community or with their families. For more information on how you can help contact Bob at 812-5232-348- or mhajc@cabjackson.org .

I - Mental Health America of Greater Indianapolis November 2015 newsletter

Latina 4H Club

I want to thank the Latina 4H Club for decorating the 200 hundred bags that will be used this used this year for our Christmas Gift Lift. The students did a great job.

Membership Drive

I want to thank the board members who worked hard on this year's Membership Drive. I also like to thank all the people who contributed and became members of MHAJC. This support helps us to continue providing the "I'm Thumbbody" classes, socials, provide educational materials to the public and all the work we do to serve the needs of individuals in Jackson County who face mental illness.

Mental Health Resources

- **Esperanza** - Hope to Cope with Anxiety and Depression - hopetocope.com
- **BP** - Bipolar Disorder - bphope.com
- **Anchor Magazine** - quarterly digital publication dealing with recovery from depression, anxiety and bipolar disorder mentalwellnesstoday.com
- **SZ Magazine** - digital; only publication with inspiring stories, recovery and support for those affected by schioaffective disorder and psychosis. mentalwellnesstoday.com
- **Mental Health America** - mentalhealthamerica.net

Available for Speaking Engagements

Bob Dembek, Director, is available to come speak to any group on the agency or if they would like to learn more about mental health. Please contact him at 812-522-3480 or mhajc@cabjackson.org.

Halloween Social

85 clients and caregivers attended our Halloween Social in October at Central Christian Church. Most of the clients were in costume. Three prizes were rewarded for the : Best - Bryan Harmon - Knight; Funniest - Christa Birch; and Scariest - Cassie Brock - Ghost. We had good food, played corn hole and everyone had their picture taken. A Good Time was had by all. Most important the clients had an opportunity to see their friends. Socialization is important for all of us and many of our clients do not have regular opportunities to be with their friends.

Thank you to the Board of Directors!

Thank you to the members of Board of Directors of Mental Health America of Jackson County for the support they provided the program through out the year. Members organized two fundraisers a garage sale and wreath sale. They promoted our membership campaign. They provide most of the food for our socials and help with them. They support the director in his educational efforts and working with local funders. It is a good partnership and look forward to 2016.

Recruiting CASA Volunteers

Child Care Network is looking for Court Appointed Special Advocate, people who care about children and have common sense. As a volunteer you will be thoroughly trained and well supported by professional staff. To help you through each case. Contact Deena Personette 569-2598.

Upcoming Events

November 9 - **MHAJC Board Meeting 4PM**

November 9 - Free Meal, Community Diner at First United Methodist Church, 4:30PM - 5:30PM

November 10 - Jackson County United Way Partner Meeting, Community Foundation Building 9:00AM

November 10 - Jackson County Drug Free Council Meeting, Community Foundation Building, 4PM

November 11 - Jackson County Community Service Council , Library, 12 Noon

November 16 - Free Meal, Community Diner at First United Methodist Church, 4:30PM - 5:30PM

November 18 - Mobile Food Pantry, Anchor House, First United Methodist Church Parking Lot 10:00AM
12 :00PM

November 23 - Free Meal, Community Diner at First United Methodist Church, 4:30PM - 5:30PM

November 26 - Thanksgiving

November 30 - Free Meal, Community Diner at First United Methodist Church, 4:30PM - 5:30PM

December 7 - Free Meal, Community Diner at First United Methodist Church, 4:30PM - 5:30PM

December 8 - Jackson County Drug Free Council Meeting, Community Foundation Building, 4:00PM

December 9 - Jackson County Community Service Council , Library, 12 Noon

December 10 - **MHAJC Christmas Gift Lift Social, Central Christian Church, 5:00PM - 6:30PM**

December 14 - Free Meal, Community Diner at First United Methodist Church, 4:30PM - 5:30PM

December 16 - Mobile Food Pantry, Anchor House, Site to be determined, 10:00AM - 12:00PM

December 17 - **MHAJC Christmas Gift Social at Centerstone 1:00PM - 2:00PM**

December 21 - Free Meal, Community Diner at First United Methodist Church, 4:30PM - 5:30PM

December 22 -31 - MHAJC Office Closed

December 25 - Christmas

December 28 - Free Meal, Community Diner at First United Methodist Church, 4:30PM - 5:30PM