

CSP Newsletter

Special Interest Articles:

- Conference Information
- Wellness Summit
- Mental Health Awareness Walk
- Combating Stigma by Personal Storytelling

Cumberland/ Perry Community Support Program: (717) 254-6060

Wellness Summit

In the midst of the regular hustle and bustle of the already busy month of May, there will be a new event for the Cumberland/Perry Counties Community Support Program, the "Wellness Summit: The Connection between Healthy Minds and Bodies", which will be held on **Monday, May 23rd**, 2011, at **6:00 PM** at the campus of **Central Pennsylvania College, Enola**.

A major part of this project is to reach out to providers, community organizations, family members, and consumers who are not already involved with the Community Support Program, or know that the Community Support Program exists. Please help us to promote this new program.

Feature presentations:

- * Healthy Physical Activity & Exercise for a Healthy Mind & Body
- * Nutrition & Healthy Eating
- * Healthy Ways to Spend Free Time
- * Friends & Family as Natural Supports of Wellness
- * Give Your Medicine a Check-Up
- * Primary Care Physicians Working with Mental Health Systems.

Another part of the Wellness Summit will be a mini-health, wellness, and recreation fair, which will provide resources and information on a number of health, wellness, and recreational services which are available in the Cumberland & Perry County communities.

The Wellness Summit has been planned by a sub-committee of the CSP who have worked together to select the presentations, presenters, and to organize the mini-health, wellness, and recreation fair.

This event is funded, in part, by a seed grant from the Central Region Community Support Program. Seed grants provide local Community Support Programs the opportunity to try something new and innovative to increase awareness of the Community Support Program.

Submitted by Joseph Alex Martin

Combating Stigma by Personal Storytelling

For many people who experience mental health difficulties one of the barriers to seeking treatment is Stigma. Even once in treatment the effects of Stigma can complicate and cause roadblocks for the person's recovery journey. Many of us hear about Stigma but what exactly is it?

Stigma is a mark of shame or negative judgment based on a personal trait (Mayo Clinic). Stigma and prejudice can lead to acts of discrimination, negative attitudes, abuse and maltreatment toward persons with mental illness. Additionally, Stigma can result in a person being shunned or marginalized by family, peers, and the community-at-large. Some also may face discrimination by employers, landlords, and insurance companies.

Though most people quickly associate Stigma with mental illness, Stigma is associated with other illnesses and groups of people for instance HIV/AIDS, GLBTQI, racism, homophobia, people with epilepsy, and substance abuser/addicts.

Now that we know what it is and what some of the negative effects of Stigma can be, how can we counteract it? **NAMI StigmaBusters** suggests these things to combat stigma 1) have people in recovery share their stories; 2) aggressively challenge inaccurate portrayals of mental illness in the media; 3) educate the public about mental illness and what can be done to promote recovery; and 4) watch the language we use specific to persons with all disabilities. While using words like "wacko," "loony," "psycho," are not forbidden they should not be used to refer directly to individuals struggling with mental illness or to the illness itself.

One of the methods Cumberland and Perry NAMI utilizes to combat Stigma is through personal storytelling. On March 2, 2011 **Tracy Bomgardner** (pictured on the Nittany Lion at the entrance to the Penn State Mont Alto Campus) and I had the opportunity to enlighten 44 senior Penn State RN nursing students who will be graduating this May on recovery concepts and principles specific to



mental illness. The presentation was titled "Recovery is Possible; Recovery is a Reality." I presented information on the 10 recovery components, the difference between a medical model versus a recovery model pertaining to mental illness, and what does recovery mean in the context of mental illness. This was followed by Tracy's compelling story of recovery.

Tracy shared her personal journey with living beyond the multiple labels she has been given through the years in "the mental health system." Tracy explained to the students how at one time the diagnosis of mental illness consumed almost her entire identity but as she has learned coping skills, made peace with her past, and accepts the ups and downs of life that now the mental illness part of who she is plays less prominence in her overall view of herself. She said that's a "good thing."

Tracy described her experience of being physically restrained during one of her psychiatric in-patient stays. Tracy said that some providers have accused her of wanting to be admitted to an inpatient psych unit for a vacation. She explained to the students that for her in-patient psychiatric stays are not "a vacation." Tracy pointed out what kind of break is it to be locked up in a place without the key to get out; in the close company of a group of other psych patients who have a variety of their own problems and you didn't get to decide who they are; told what you can and can't do; and when you will do things. Tracy said that sure isn't my idea of a "fun time or a vacation."

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Combating Stigma by Personal Storytelling

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On a positive note when Tracy was asked what things helped her most in her recovery she listed these things: 1) People believing in me when I did not believe in myself; 2) Talking and learning from other consumers; 3) The self help section of the bookstore - she does a lot of workbooks to help her build skills and gather tools which allows her to grow and cope better with life's challenges; and 4) having a few true good friends and supports.

The students felt the presentation and especially Tracy's story opened their minds to a part of mental illness and recovery they were not aware of in a hopeful way. To me that was success. I want to again say thank you to Tracy for sharing her story including her struggles and triumphs, from where she was to where she is today.

If you would like to schedule an "In Our Own Voice" presentation contact namipacp@nami.org. The Cumberland and Perry Counties' Community Support Program has a Speakers Bureau and to contact them by email cspcp@cspcp.org or by phone (717) 254-6060

Right now you might be thinking, I want to share my story. There is an upcoming Recovery Storytelling and Advocacy Training Workshop planned for April 13, 20, 27, 2011 in Carlisle for details visit this website www.namipacp.org or contact Theresa at (717) 423-6907. Preregistration is necessary.

By Theresa Myers



“Everyone has a story...”

PMHCA Conference

This year's Pennsylvania Mental Health Consumer's Association conference is being held in Pittsburgh at the Radisson Hotel Pittsburgh Green Tree from June 14 to the 16th, this year's theme is "Energize, Organize, Act!"

The annual statewide conference provides an opportunity for peers to network, and learn from the keynote presentation, and educational workshops.

This year's keynote is Robert Whitaker, an accomplished author of *Mad in America*, and *Anatomy of an Epidemic*. In 1998, Robert was a finalist for the Pulitzer Prize for Public Service, and was awarded the George Polk Award for medical writing.

For complete conference information, you can go to PMHCA's web site at <http://www.pmhca.org/conference/>

Submitted by: Joseph Alex Martin

2011 MH Awareness Walk

The Cumberland and Perry Counties Community Support Program will be hosting their 6th annual Mental Health Awareness Walk. The walk is fast approaching. It will be held on **Friday April 29th 2011**. The walk has outgrown STAR now and we had to move the luncheon part of the walk to a different venue. This year the walk will be **beginning at Le Tort Park in Carlisle**. For those of you who are not familiar with the park, the entrance is located at **260 East Pomfret Street**. The other change is that the walk will be held **rain or shine**.

David Crider was just announced the winner of our T Shirt design contest. The drawing was chosen out of 9 entries by the CSP committee at large. David's drawing will be featured on the back of our red t shirts that we will be wearing on April 29th.

We are going to start passing out the t-shirts around 11 a.m. with a light lunch following at 11:30. The walk to the Carlisle Square will begin at approximately 12:30. We will stay at the square long enough to listen to the speakers, which will include Commissioner Eichelberger, and then we will head back to the park for cupcakes.

Last year 128 people showed up to walk with us and show their support for Mental Health Awareness. This year CSP is hoping to get even more people who are willing to participate. This event serves as the kickoff for Mental Health Awareness Month which begins in May. CSP, NAMI and the drop in centers have a great month of activities planned for May. Please look for the schedule of events on our website at www.cspcp.org

We hope that all of you will come out and bring a friend to join us for at least one of the events that are being held during Mental Health Awareness Month.

Submitted by Katie Wilson



CSP Conference

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Editor: Katie Wilson

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“**Making H.O.P.E. Real**” is the theme for this year’s Tri-County CSP Conference. The conference is a one day conference held for consumers, family members and providers in Dauphin, Cumberland and Perry Counties.

H.O.P.E. is an acronym created by Gina Calhoun that stands for How Other Possibilities Emerge. Our emphasis this year is how hope can be instrumental in Helping Other Possibilities Emerge. This year’s conference will be held at the **Holiday Inn New Cumberland on Tuesday, May 10, 2011**. This will be the third year that the conference will be held at the Holiday Inn in New Cumberland. The conference will be from **9 am – 4 pm**.

The keynote speaker for this year’s conference will be Tammy Miller who will be speaking on “Discovering the Healing Power of Humor”. The power of humor in healing is still a relatively new topic of research. In this lively presentation, Tammy examines how we can use humor to help us heal in even the most serious of health issues. It also serves as a reminder of the value of humor in all of our lives daily! As a cancer survivor, Tammy discusses the “Lessons Learned Along the Path”, but Tammy’s path to recovery may not be the path you expect. This lighthearted approach to healing is a healthy reminder to all of us that life is about choices, and we have many more choices than we realize!

We will also have several workshop options for the morning session and in depth “institutes” for the afternoon. Some of the workshops will include; Supported Employment, Evidence Based Practices, Spirituality and Becoming Your Own Hope Coach. Some of the institutes will include Learning To Tell your Story, Poetry, Wellness Recovery Action Plans. The Ray of Hope singing group from Danville State Hospital will be performing at the conference again this year during the lunch break.

We had 168 people show up for last year’s conference. We are hoping that this year’s conference will be just as successful. The registration forms for the conference will be out shortly. Come to the April CSP meeting for more information!

Submitted by Katie Wilson



C/P Community Support Program

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Cumberland/ Perry County
CSP

Meets every third Tuesday of
the month @10 AM
Meetings are held at
S.T.A.R.
253 Penrose Place
Carlisle, PA 17013

Recovery Quotes....

*"It does not matter how deep
you fall, what matters is how
high you bounce back."*

-Unknown

*"Forget past mistakes. Forget
failures. Forget about everything
except what you're going to do
now- and do it."*

-William Durant

Double Trouble

1st & 3rd Wednesdays

12:30 pm

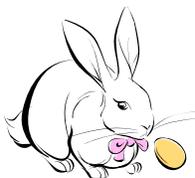
Mechanicsburg Café Aurora

104 W Main St

Mechanicsburg, PA

(Across from Jo's-Jo's Pizza)

Double Trouble is a support group
For individuals who are dually diagnosed
With a mental illness and an addiction.



Aurora Cyber Café Consumer Run

Fridays 6-10 PM

Upcoming Events for April

April 15th – BINGO

April 22nd – Cards and Games

April 29th – Movie and Popcorn

Enjoy Free WiFi, Beverages, & Desserts
Every Friday!
Donations are Appreciated



104 W. Main St- Mechanicsburg
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www.auroraservices.org
www.reverbnation.com/auroracafe