



## Where People and Possibilities Meet

Volume 4, Issue 3

Summer 2017

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## Salary Increase for Mental Health Employees

**O**n June 28, Governor Phil Scott signed the state budget bill for the next fiscal year. Among the policies and investments included in the bill "\$8,370,000 was appropriated in Secs. B.314 (Mental Health) and B.333 (Developmental Services) shall be used to increase payments to the designated and specialized service agencies in fiscal year 2018. It is the intent of the General Assembly that funds allocated, are for increased payments to the designated and specialized service agencies in fiscal year 2018 be used to fund or offset the costs of increasing the hourly wages of workers to \$14.00 and to increase the salaries for crisis response and crisis bed personnel in a manner that advances the goal of achieving competitive compensation to regionally equivalent State positions." This increase comes after months of advocating for parity pay for mental health workers, who have for years been burning out and/or moving to other jobs because of low pay.

This is only one of the issues of the state's mental health system, which have been greatly discussed, examined and put into a bill (S.133) by our Legislature this year, and signed by Governor Scott on June 16th (Act No.82).

This act requires the Secretary of Human Services in collaboration with the Commissioner of Mental Health and the Green Mountain Care Board, providers, and person affected by current services, to produce an analysis and action plan for the General Assembly by the end of this year. A status report describing the progress made in completing the analysis and action plan shall be submitted to the General Assembly by the Secretary this Fall. In addition, this act requires the Secretary to submit a comprehensive evaluation of the overarching structure for the delivery of mental health services within a sustainable, holistic health care system in Vermont on or before January of 2019.

For a complete list of topics covered by this plan, please visit [www.legislature.vermont.gov](http://www.legislature.vermont.gov) and search "Act No. 82".

### LCMHS Staff "Getting Outdoors" by LCMHS Wellness Committee

**L**CMHS Wellness Committee launched a "Getting Outdoors" initiative during the month of May. Employees were asked to share photos of them doing outdoors activities like walking dogs, hiking, gardening, or simply being outside and enjoying Spring. The winning photo was submitted by Danielle Cote, DS Service Coordinator, from among many submissions. Her prize was a backpack picnic basket! On the left, the winning photo.



## LCMHS Supported Employment Program

*By Sherry Jones*

**L**CMHS Supported Employment Program provides a full range of services which enable people with disabilities to access and succeed in competitive employment. The program goal is to provide full access to employment through the provision of individual support services for people who have historically been excluded from employment. Services have developed from a philosophy that presumes employability for all given the right supports are provided to the individual. Person-centered planning, meaningful job matches, full inclusion in the Vermont workforce, and creative strategies that broaden employment opportunities are all cornerstone practices of Vermont Supported Employment.

Supported Employment involves a wide range of services, including person centered employment planning, job search assistance, assistance in negotiating job accommodation or modification, on the job training, follow along services for duration of employment, career enhancement supports, and advocacy skills.

Our Developmental Services (DS) Supported Employment (SE) Program has had great success over the years. The program received its first Vocational Rehabilitation Grant in 2006 for \$5,000.00 and continued to grow each year as outcomes were exceeded and performance bonuses accumulated to a total of \$31,050.00 for FY17. In FY17, the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) experienced a 4.5 million reduction in Federal funding which unfortunately caused a 27% reduction in the LCMHS DS SE Grant for FY18.

At the end of FY 16 the DS SE Program had the following statistics:

- \* 41 Individuals are in the SE Program
- \* 37 Individuals were employed
- \* The total wages earned by all of the individuals in the program were \$166,311.07
- \* The total amount of dollars saved in SSI benefits were \$65,820.81

The State of Vermont is a leader in Supported Employment and as the first state to close sheltered workshops, Vermont serves as an example and resource to other states looking to transform their systems. Vermont hosts numerous visitors who come to research our supported employment model and values. Our state was featured last fall in the Minneapolis Star Tribune's acclaimed series on civil rights and segregation of people who experience developmental disabilities. The reporter spent a full week traveling the state to meet with workers, families and agencies, with many hours spent at job sites speaking directly with employers. Many individuals described their current jobs in the regular workforce as rewarding and matched to their talents and abilities. These stories serve as a serious reminder of the immeasurable human connections that participation in Vermont's workforce brings into peoples' lives.

View Vermont in this five-part series:

<http://www.startribune.com/Vermont-took-bold-step-to-end-segregation-of-disabled-adults/330697181/>

In February 2017, the State of Vermont was selected as one of 11 Innovative Policies by the Zero Project's Selection Committee of renowned experts on disability and employment. Exemplary in the areas of innovation, impact and transferability, our state's SE Program is outstanding as it facilitates the shift from sheltered employment settings to more inclusive employment for people with developmental disabilities, by providing state-wide a full range of services that enable individuals to access and succeed in integrated competitive employment.

In May 2017, our DS Director Jennifer Stratton and I attended the State of Vermont House of Representatives

*cont'd pg 3*

### *Supported Employment Program cont'd*

resolution of the House Concurrent Resolution H.C.R. 106 (Act R. 136), which congratulates the Vermont Supported Employment Program for Individuals with Developmental Disabilities on winning the 2017 Innovative Policy Award on Employment, Work, and Vocational Education presented on February 23, 2017 in Vienna, Austria. It states that the Vermont Supported Employment Program currently provides 1,260 Vermonters with developmental disabilities employment in a regular work environment, in 2015 the wages totaled \$5,101,938.00, facilitating a corresponding reduction in Supplemental Security Income payments of \$1,699,763.00 and recognized Vermont's Leadership in supported employment for persons with developmental disabilities.

We can proudly say that people who experience developmental disabilities in Vermont are rooted in their communities and we are proud of the path our state has taken and the marked difference it makes for our fellow Vermonters and business community!

Sherry Jones is the Supported Employment Coordinator for LCMHS Development Services Division.

## Support LCMHS

LCMHS serves children, youth, families, and adults, providing treatment and supports—at home, in school, and at work. **No one is turned away, regardless of their ability to pay.** However, the need for LCMHS' services continues to grow at a rate that outpaces the state's ability to fund them.

Support from our donors is absolutely vital to ensuring that LCMHS can continue to provide life-changing services and care to Lamoille County.

You can help by donating on our website (we accept credit cards) at [www.lamoille.org](http://www.lamoille.org) or by sending your gift to:

LCMHS  
Attn: Savi Van Sluytman  
72 Harrel St.  
Morrisville, VT 05661

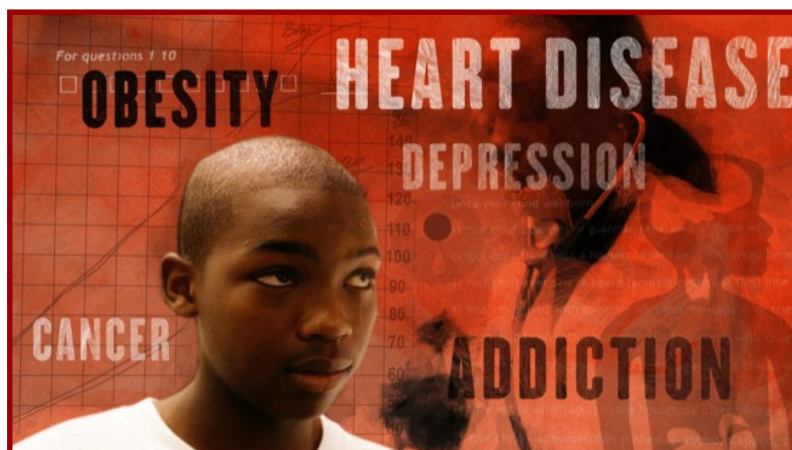
## Resilience

### *The Biology of Stress & Science of Hope*

“The child may not remember, but the body remembers”

Researchers have recently discovered a dangerous biological syndrome caused by abuse and neglect during childhood. As the new documentary *Resilience* reveals, toxic stress can trigger hormones that wreak havoc on the brains and bodies of children, putting them at a greater risk for disease, homelessness, prison time, and early death. While the broader impacts of poverty worsen the risk, no segment of society is immune.

*Resilience*, however, also chronicles the dawn of a movement that is determined to fight back. Trailblazers in pediatrics, education, and social welfare are using cutting-edge science and field-tested therapies to protect children from the insidious effects of toxic stress—and the dark legacy of a childhood that no child would choose.



*Resilience* is available for check-out at these Lamoille Valley Libraries: Varnum Memorial Library, Waterville Town Library, Johnson Public Library, Lanpher Memorial Library, Morristown Centennial Library, Stowe Free Library, Glee Merritt Kelley Community Library, Jeudevine Memorial Library, Craftsbury Public Library, and the Greensboro Free Library.

For more information about this film, please visit: <http://kpfjfilms.co/resilience/>

## Children's Emotional Wellness Day

by Kiah Palumbo

**C**hildren's Emotional Wellness Day took place on June 2nd, after being rained out the Friday before. This was the 4th annual Children's Day.

Every year this event continues to improve and more CYFS consumers are in attendance. This year we had 20 children and staff in attendance.

Events included face painting, basketball, ice cream Sunday bar, and completed with a scavenger hunt that took kids all around the building.

### CYFS Summer Program

by Anna Moog

**T**he Children, Youth and Family Services Program will be running their summer day-camp the weeks of June 26th-30th and August 14th-18th. The camp will serve children ages 5-18, with approximately 20 participants each session and 1:1 support from a staff member. The first week of camp will primarily consist of children with EFT or ISB Services, and the second week will consist of children receiving Outpatient Services. Access clients will also be included. New this year, the CYFS camp has been titled Wellness Camp, with an emphasis on the whole-being. Each morning, one of the five dimensions of wellness will be presented by therapeutic staff and implemented with various hands-on and movement activities. The afternoons will be filled with community outings such as swimming, miniature golf, bowling and much more. Breakfast, lunch and snacks will be provided to the campers, with a final barbeque lunch on Friday.



## Early Childhood Program

by *Stephanie Beattie*

**E**arly Childhood Family Mental Health Services serves children and their families prenatal to 6-years-old. We provide parent education and training, early childhood clinical assessments and intervention. We partner with the Lamoille Family Center. Here is one of our stories!



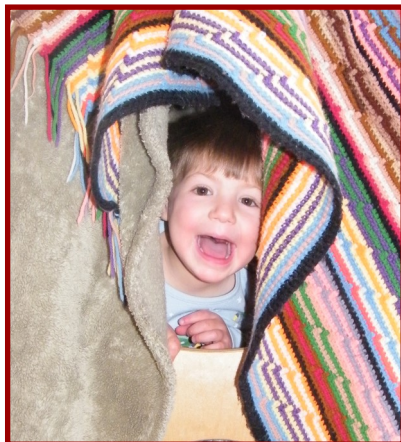
The first time I met Oliver, I was with my friend Deanne Blueter, a Children's Integrated Services Family Support worker, from the Lamoille Family Center! We pulled in the driveway and saw two little faces in the window. Who were they? Oliver and Penelope! Oliver was just three-and-a-half years old! I knew in an instant that Oliver and I were going to have a ton of fun together because his smile instantly touched my heart. Over the years, Oliver and I worked hard to discover which strategies would help us to feel like we were in control of our bodies. Some of our favorites are: belly breathing, bubble breathing, yoga, lifting heavy objects, playing in water, and being rolled out like cookie dough!



Two of our favorite strategies: Shooting snow balls and building forts!

Oliver and I went through a lot of transitions together! We went from childcare, to preschool, and finally to Kindergarten!

Throughout the years, we continued to practice our regulation techniques, grow our social/emotional development, and advocate for Oliver's needs across environments.



When Oliver turns six, it will mean that he and I have finished our work together. I feel sad that I will not get to see Oliver as much as I have. But, I am also happy because I have so many amazing memories with Oliver! Oliver, thank you for teaching me



so much on our journey together. You are one FANTASTIC kiddo!

Stephanie Beattie is a Therapeutic Case Manager for LCMHS Children Integrated Services.

# The Difference Between Sadness and Depression

by Danielle Poole

Source: [www.MentalHealthFirstAid.org](http://www.MentalHealthFirstAid.org)

**S**adness is a normal part of the human emotional spectrum—we all experience it from time to time. When we lose a loved one, go through a breakup or watch one of those heartbreaking ASPCA commercials, sadness is a typical reaction and a healthy part of the emotional process. But there is a difference between healthy sadness and the often-debilitating symptoms of depression.

## Sadness is just one symptom of depression

For the 6.8 percent of U.S. adults who have a major depressive disorder each year, sadness is only one of the many symptoms they will experience. The difference between sadness and depression can be easy to miss, especially when you consider the number of people who misuse the word “depression” or say, “I’m depressed” to describe the everyday “blues.” But sadness is not a depressive disorder.

Depression affects a person’s emotions, thinking, behavior and physical well-being. Someone who is feeling sad might cry for a while, spend some time alone, and then get back to their normal lives within a short span of time. But a person with clinical depression will have symptoms like loss of interest in activities, withdrawal from others, difficulty sleeping or a drastic change in appetite that last for two weeks or more. They may even have thoughts of death or suicide.

## Signs of depression you can see

Though people with depression often hide their symptoms from those around them, there are some signs you can look for to know when a person in your life may need help.

*A person who has depression may:*

Move, think or speak slowly, making conversation and other interactions difficult.

Stop caring about personal hygiene and grooming.

Gain or lose weight in response to changes in appetite.

Become agitated easily, or cry uncontrollably.

But depression is not always marked by extreme displays of emotion. Some people with severe depression may become emotionally unresponsive—appearing “numb” or “beyond tears.” They may not feel anything at all. And this lack of emotion can be just as painful as prolonged sadness, anxiety or anger. Just because someone isn’t crying all the time doesn’t mean they aren’t suffering.

## How can I help someone with depression?

For people living with depression, early intervention is key. Those who have one episode of depression are prone to subsequent episodes and may fall into depression more easily with each subsequent episode. Preventing this pattern from occurring can start with you. If you think someone you know is experiencing depression and in need of help, approach the person about your concerns. Make sure the person is ready and available to talk, is in a comfortable environment and doesn’t feel pressured. Ask how you can help. Tell the person what you’ve noticed and express genuine concern. If the person is receptive to help and is not at risk for suicide or harm, it’s helpful to know what resources are available in your community and what questions you should ask to best provide initial help and support.

## Mental health challenges affect everyone and we all have a responsibility to support one another.

To learn an action plan for helping someone with depression or another mental health or substance use problem, find a Mental Health First Aid course near you and get trained.

## LCMHS at WLVB Vermont Radio 93.9

**D**uring the month of May, LCMHS joined Roland Lajoie at WLVB Vermont Radio 94.9 on a series of informative chats about mental health, and services provided for the Lamoille County community. If you were not able to listen to them, you will find the recordings of those sessions on our website [www.lamoille.org](http://www.lamoille.org). Just follow the link under News & Events/Newsroom.



## LACiNg Up for Cancer

*by Monique Reil*

**T**he Care Bears team, comprised of 32 staff, consumers & family members from LCMHS joined in this year's LACiNg Up for Cancer event on June 24th to benefit the Lamoille Area Cancer Network. The theme was “Angels Among Us” and celebrated the 15th anniversary of the event, which we have participated in every year. We had a magical day of near perfect weather, and the event raised over \$200,000 for the cancer network. We remember those who have passed from cancer, and celebrate those survivors who inspire all of us, truly our angels. Thanks to everyone who contributed money, time and energy, and for promoting hope in the spirit of recovery! Special thanks to Shannon for her many years co-chairing our team – we will miss her as she moves on to another adventure!



## LCMHS Welcomes New Board Member



**D**orothy (Dot) Reeve is an experienced nurse, now retired. She worked more than 25 years for the Morrystown School District, and then some more for the State of Vermont, including the VT Department of Health. She’s an active community member, and serves on the board of the Lamoille Family Center as well as the First Congregational Church in Morrisville.

Dot was born and raised in Morrisville. She and her husband have raised three children in this community and presently have six granddaughters who are attending Morrisville schools. They have one grandchild who is on the autism spectrum and has used LCMHS services through the Redwood program. She is in her words “firmly committed in advocating for programs that enhance our community and make it a viable place for all people to live”. We are thrilled to have her serve on LCMHS board of directors, bringing her knowledge and passion to our community! Welcome Dot!

LAMOILLE COUNTY  
MENTAL HEALTH  
SERVICES

**Board of Directors**

Beverly Allen  
Karen Carlson  
Nancy Durand  
Ted Lambert  
Mary Anne Lewis  
Sharon Menard  
Fred Ober  
Dot Reeve  
Fein Rosenblum  
Chip Troiano  
Francinne Valcour  
David Vinick  
Michele Whitmore

**Upcoming Events**

Independence Day*	Jul 4
Board Meeting	Jul 19
Staff Develp. Day*	Jul 31
Board Meeting	Aug 16
Labor Day*	Sep 4
Board Meeting	Sep 20
MindWalk	Sep 24
Columbus Day*	Oct 9
Annual Meeting	Oct 18

\*The Agency is closed on

*Homelessness facts from our region*

*Did you Know?*

⇒As of December 31, 2016 1,500 households were documented as homeless in the state of Vermont.

⇒On January 12th, 2017 the point in time count accounted for 62 homeless individuals in Lamoille County, 27 of them were children.

⇒The point in time for January 29th, 2016 accounted for 22 literally homeless households. This number can be influenced by weather as there was no cold weather exception that night.

⇒Lamoille County currently does not have a homeless shelter.

⇒Lamoille currently holds a 2% vacancy rate for rental units that are considered to be affordable housing.



Lamoille County Mental Health Services  
72 Harrel St.  
Morrisville, VT 05661

