



Where People and Possibilities Meet

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May is Mental Health Month

Each year, millions of Americans face the reality of living with a mental health condition, as 1 in 5 U.S. adults will experience a mental health condition in their lifetime. However, everyone is affected or impacted by mental illness through friends and family. Each year, we fight stigma, provide support, educate the public and advocate for equal care.

Lamoille County Mental Health Services launched a series of awareness activities for this year's Mental Health Month, starting with a performance by the Me2 Orchestra on May 4 at the Lamoille Union High School Auditorium. It was a free event for the community.

Me2/ ("me, too") is the world's only classical music organization created for individuals with mental illnesses and the people who support them. Me2/ serves as a model organization where people with and without mental illnesses work together in an environment where acceptance is an expectation, patience is encouraged, and supporting each other is a priority.

Our CEO Savi Van Sluytman introduced the orchestra's Executive Director and Co-Founder Caroline Whiddon. Caroline is a past Chair of the Youth Orchestra Division of the League of American Orchestras and a graduate of the Snelling Center's Vermont Leadership Institute. A graduate of the Eastman School of Music, Caroline was diagnosed with depression and generalized anxiety disorder more than twenty years ago.

Caroline is married to Music Director & Conductor Ronald Braunstein. Ronald Braunstein received his musical training at The Juilliard School, Salzburg Mozarteum, Fontainebleau and the Tanglewood Music Center, where he conducted in master classes of Leonard Bernstein and Seiji Ozawa. At Juilliard, he studied composition with Elliot Carter and Milton Babbitt and was a winner of the BMI Award to Student Composers.

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cont'd May is Mental Health Month

He later entered the school's conducting program, graduating with a Bachelor's of Music in Conducting. Following graduation from Juilliard, Braunstein won first prize in the Herbert von Karajan International Conducting Competition in Berlin and spent the four years that followed working with Maestro von Karajan and the Berlin Philharmonic. Braunstein has conducted orchestras all over the world most notably the San Francisco Symphony, Berlin Philharmonic, Stuttgart Radio Orchestra, Residentie Orchestra of The Hague, Israel Sinfonietta, Swiss Radio Orchestra, Auckland Philharmonia, Oslo Philharmonic, Kyoto Symphony, Osaka Symphony, National Orchestra of Taiwan and the Tokyo Symphony. Braunstein served on the conducting staff at Juilliard and the America Opera Center, where he performed cornerstone orchestra repertoire and operas. He also served as Music Director of the Juilliard pre-college orchestra for six seasons. He later became Music Director of the Mannes School of Music's Philharmonia, a position he held for several seasons. Braunstein was diagnosed with bipolar disorder in 1985. In 2011, he and his wife, Caroline, launched Me2/Orchestra because of their desire to support others who struggle to maintain good mental health.

The orchestra's performance included the Johannes Brahms' "Hungarian Dance No. 5" and "Academic Festival Overture", Franz Schubert's "Symphony No. 8, "Unfinished", and the orchestra interacted with the audience in answering questions between each piece. It was a very inspiring evening! We would like to thank all that attended and/or made a donation to this event, especially all 50 orchestra members that brought such joy to Lamoille County.



From left to right: Savi Van Sluytman, Ronald Braunstein and Caroline Whiddon

Fact: 43.8 million adults experience mental illness in a given year.



1 in 5 adults in America experience a mental illness.



Nearly 1 in 25 (10 million) adults in America live with a serious mental illness.



One-half of all chronic mental illness begins by the age of 14; three-quarters by the age of 24.

Source: NAMI

StigmaFree Me

Source: www.NAMI.org

The need to eliminate stigma is nothing new. Fifteen years ago, a U.S. Surgeon General's Report on Mental Health—the first and only one to date—identified stigma as a public health concern that leads peoples to “avoid living, socializing or working with, renting to, or employing” individuals with mental illness. Thanks to stigma, people living with mental health conditions are:

- Alienated and seen as "others."
- Perceived as dangerous.
- Seen as irresponsible or unable to make their own decisions.
- Less likely to be hired.
- Less likely to get safe housing.
- More likely to be criminalized than offered health care services.
- Afraid of rejection to the point that they don't always pursue opportunities.



Many people living with mental health conditions don't feel comfortable talking to their friends and family about what they're dealing with. Those living with a mental health condition don't want it any more than a person would want a broken leg. But focused thought and effort can't make depression go away, just as focusing on healing won't fix a shattered bone.

Even worse, individuals living with mental illness often internalize the stigma that exists in our culture, damaging hopes for recovery. Some don't seek treatment from a mental health professional. Their conditions worsen because they aren't receiving the support and care they need to recover. And too often people take their own lives because they aren't told by anyone that they're not alone, they can recover and there is hope.

To change this harmful status quo, NAMI and LCMHS are asking everyone to take a StigmaFree Pledge. Building a movement for change will require commitments from individuals, businesses, organizations, campuses and churches, as well as others. Once you've taken the pledge, consider all the ways you can live StigmaFree in your daily life. Maybe you can begin by being aware of the language you use or by choosing to be open or by deciding to learn more about mental illness.

Every day brings new hope. Every day, we have an opportunity to help create broader understanding of mental health, overcome stereotypes and break down barriers. We can all do a little bit more each day to eliminate stigma and replace it with help and hope. This initiative, this movement is our attempt to reverse the harmful effects of stigma. So, when you hear someone using stigmatizing language, correct them. If you see someone using misleading stereotypes, educate them. And never forget to see people for who they are, not for how they act during their darkest days. Together, we will turn the tide on stigma by spreading awareness, support and understanding for every person who experiences mental illness. Together, we can make a difference for the better.



EVERYONE CAN PLAY A ROLE

- > Use respectful language to talk about mental health conditions.
- > Challenge misconceptions when you see or hear them.
- > See the person, not the condition.
- > Offer support if you think someone is having trouble.



AVOID LABELS SUCH AS THE FOLLOWING:

- > Challenged
- > Psycho/psychopath
- > Crazy
- > Schizo
- > Demented
- > Special
- > Lunatic
- > Sufferer/victim
- > Normal/not normal
- > Wacko

USE RESPECTFUL LANGUAGE THAT DOES NOT DEFINE SOMEONE BY AN ILLNESS:

	INSTEAD OF...	TRY...	
	She's bipolar Schizophrenic Manic depressive The mentally ill Committed suicide	She has bipolar disorder/She's living with bipolar disorder person with schizophrenia person with bipolar disorder people with a mental illness/mental health condition died by suicide	

FREE Youth Mental Health First Aid Training

We invite the community to participate in the FREE Youth Mental Health First Aid training being offered on Tuesday, May 30, 2017 from 8am to 4:30pm.

Youth Mental Health First Aid (YMHA) is a class designed to teach parents, family members, caregivers, teachers, school staff, peers, neighbors, health and human services workers, and other caring citizens how to help an adolescent (age 12-18) who is experiencing a mental health or addictions challenge or is in crisis. The course introduces common mental health challenges for youth, reviews typical adolescent development, and teaches a 5-step action plan for how to help young people in both crisis and non-crisis situations. Topics covered include anxiety, depression, substance use, disorders in which psychosis may occur, disruptive behavior disorders (including AD/HD), and eating disorders.

There is no cost to attend this important training; however space is very limited, so please RSVP as soon as possible. If you would like to attend, please call 888-5026 or email info@lamoille.org to reserve a spot.



KNOW THE SIGNS



LEARN THE ACTIONS



BE A LIFELINE



2nd Annual Zumbathon Recap

Our 2nd Annual Zumbathon was a success! We had a gym filled with wonderful people ready to dance for LCMHS!

On behalf of our CEO, our Board of Directors, our staff and the consumers and families we serve, we would like to thank everyone that donated, sponsored, volunteered, participated, and helped in any way with our fundraiser. Also, a special thank you to Lamoille Union High School for hosting the event, which was sponsored by individuals and local businesses alike. We had a great turnout and a wonderful afternoon of fun! Thank you!



Pizza for a cause!

GATSA (Getting Acquainted Through Self-Advocacy) advocacy members had a lot of pizza to deliver in April! They sold around 200 pizzas and raised \$1000! All the money they raised goes towards the cost of attending the annual Voices and Choices. This is a very important event for people with disabilities from around the State. They get together to discuss issues around living with an intellectual disabilities, and the GATSA advocates organize several fundraisers throughout the year in order to attend this event. If you'd like to help with their future fundraisers, please email us at donate@lamoille.org and we'll keep you informed of their upcoming fundraising efforts.



Support LCMHS buying Hannaford reusable bags in June



Hannaford has selected Lamoille County Mental Health Services as the June recipient of the Hannaford Cause Bag program! During the month of June, for each Fight Hunger reusable bag sold at the Hannaford store located at: Route 100, 80 Fairground Plaza, Morrisville VT, Lamoille County Mental Health Services will receive \$.25! Please make sure to stop by the Morrisville Hannaford in June and purchase a few Fight Hunger reusable bags to support LCMHS!

Snowshoeing 100 Miles for Mental Health



In December last year, we were contacted by local community member Stephanie Manosh. Stephanie told us she was preparing for a challenging 100-mile snowshoe race in March 2017, and that she planned on not only participating at this race but also fundraising for mental health awareness, and Lamoille County Mental Health Services. We were amazed with her generosity, and impressed with her goal of raising \$500, which she surpassed by more than double, raising a total of \$1,100!

Stephanie created a fundraising page, and on that page she shared her families' loss of her uncle to suicide. Stephanie shared her fundraising page on social media, and as the race got closer, she was interviewed by local newspapers.

"A lot of times there's a lot of stigma surrounding illnesses like schizophrenia and bipolar disorder than there is around something like a DUI," said Stephanie. "People can openly talk about getting DUIs, but if you talk about maybe struggling with depression or mental illness or something like that, it is frequently frowned upon. Those are personal problems."

During her interviews Stephanie highlighted LCMHS' initiatives, including the efforts on achieving a "Zero Suicide Area," aimed at keeping Lamoille County suicide-free.

"I think it's an admirable goal," said Stephanie to Jacob Greenia, from Johnson State College's student-run community newspaper. "It's really difficult to get funding in rural areas for these programs. I think it's incredibly important for that reason alone. ...we're really secluded out here and getting the appropriate treatment is often difficult if you can't make it into Burlington. [You need] a wide range of professionals. You need people here who can triage and recognize and understand mental health issues and get people where they need to be. That's really what Lamoille County Mental Health Services does."

"Also, it's kind of morbid, but in rural counties people tend to have a lot of guns," she added. "That can be an issue; you live in a rural area and sometimes you don't have therapists around . . . Talking about those things are hard."

The Peak 2017 Snowshoe Race is run by the Pittsfield-based endurance event organization, Peak Races, founded in 2005 by endurance athletes. Stephanie has competed in this event multiple times, but this time she wanted to do it for more than just herself, but for her cause. Stephanie is very athletic, she has a background with ultra-running, which is something akin to the 100-mile snowshoe race for runners, and notes for those



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aspiring to compete in such an event that preparation is both time and energy-intensive. She an avid hiker and participates in several marathons.

March 10 arrived and temperatures were ranging from 26.4°F - 36.1°F, then dropped overnight and the next day ranged from 11.4°F - 29.6°F! Needless to say, it was an extremely cold weekend. Many participants dropped out or didn't even show up, not Stephanie! As we followed the updates on Peak Races Facebook page, there was Stephanie! By 7pm on she was on her third 10 mile lap! Peak Races had volunteers helping out, pacing her during the cold night. At the end she was able to complete 50 miles, and was the last one to leave the trail.

We are really proud of Stephanie, for her initiative, and for bringing compassion, and awareness of mental health illnesses! Thank you Stephanie!

Wellness at LCMHS

On March 23, Lamoille County Mental Health Services was awarded with the 2017 Governor's Excellence in Worksite presented by Governor Phil Scott and Health Commissioner Mark Levine, MD during the 2017 Worksite Wellness Conference.

"We have been continually working on improving the wellness programs we offer to our staff, and we are very proud of their efforts to make daily healthy choices." said Savi Van Sluytman, LCMHS CEO.

Ninety employers received Governor's Excellence in Worksite Wellness Awards, and another nine were presented with Rising Star Awards. Awardees represented workplaces with a wide range in employee numbers. "Each of the employers have met a standard of excellence for worksite wellness programs," said Janet Franz of the Vermont Governor's Council on Physical Fitness and Sports. "Effective wellness programs take effort and commitment, and it's important to acknowledge and thank these employers for promoting a healthy environment."

Each month, LCMHS Wellness Committee work on different initiatives with staff. They work on themes for each month, in which staff is invited and challenged to join and participate.

In May, the theme is "Getting Outdoors". Employees are sharing their pictures hiking, fishing, riding a bike, going for walks, etc.

June's theme is "Volunteering/Community Service". Employees will be encouraged to give back to their communities, participate in blood drives, join awareness walks/runs (example: our local LACiNg Up for Cancer in Morrisville, on June 24), help the local food shelf, and appreciate each other for their continuous work with the community.

Then in July, we will focus on "Mindfulness", sharing tools to help one achieve a better self, trying to help their search within for their personal wellbeing, and/or self-acceptance.



The New Biology of Depression

By Dr. David Mooney

Major depressive disorder is one of the most common mental disorders in the United States and the world, with 16 million people experiencing at least one episode in the last year. You may worry that having a depressed family member increases the likelihood that you will suffer depression as well. However, in terms of depression, there is new science indicating that our destinies are not necessarily written in our genes.

The field of psychiatry has held on to the belief that depression is an imbalance or deficiency of neurotransmitters like serotonin. This 'serotonin model' led to our current widespread treatment using selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors (SSRIs) such as Prozac and Zoloft. As time has gone on, the field of psychiatry has had to take a hard look at the antidepressants we have been prescribing. Though these medications have been life savers, literally, for many people, we also know that there are some individuals that just never get better or have intolerable side effects on antidepressants. Why is that? Well...we are beginning to discover that depression is often a symptom of chronic inflammation and may not be as directly related to a 'serotonin deficiency' as we thought.

We live at a time of evolutionary mismatch and are all at risk for chronic, silent inflammation. Our modern lifestyles set us up for incompatibilities between what our genes expect of us and what the world demands. We eat processed foods and sit inside offices and cars most of the day. We are exposed to thousands of modern chemicals in our environment. Inflammation is a result of these conflicts.

Science has shown that chronic inflammation is at the root of nearly every disease including obesity, diabetes, and cancer. Depression is a symptom, not a disease and we need to treat its cause which is inflammation.

Often pain is associated with inflammation. However, our brains do not have pain receptors and therefore, it is difficult for us to know when our brains are inflamed. Researchers identify brain inflammation by measuring an inflammatory protein called C-reactive protein. When this is elevated, inflammation is present and the onset of depression can be associated with this marker. We also know that those depressed patients with elevated C-reactive protein may respond better to anti-inflammatory treatment than to antidepressants in many cases. Brain inflammation creates brain symptoms.

The intestinal wall is our barrier to the outside world. The gut is designed to handle interactions with the foreign matter. Most of the cells that protect us from illnesses, our immune cells, are located in the gut and we have trillions of beneficial microbes living in our guts. When a potential threat is sensed in the gut, large, far-reaching inflammation occurs and can travel from our guts to our brains via the vagus nerve which is the largest nerve stemming from the brain.



This vagus nerve is a two way information highway that connects 200 to 600 million nerve cells between the intestines and the brain. Have you ever been too stressed to eat or had butterflies in your stomach? This stress or anxiety isn't just in your head; it can lead to inflammation in your gut and beyond. Just as emotions send messages to your gut, food sends messages to your brain and therefore, one of the best direct ways to calm the vagus nerve is through dietary change.

How does food create inflammation? Processed foods are the biggest culprits because they are foreign to our bodies. Many people unknowingly eat gluten and dairy which can be inflammatory. Sugar, artificial sweeteners, and casein products (found in dairy) also can activate inflammation.

Consuming processed, nutrient-poor foods can radically change the gut microbiome ("small community of organisms") and this alteration is called dysbiosis or 'wrong living.' This can lead to intestinal permeability or leaky gut which contributes to inflammation and depression.

For some people, the commitment to stop eating the gut bombs that drive inflammation is effective in resolving depression. For others, probiotics have helped the gut microbiome. Curcumin, the active ingredient of turmeric, has been shown to be an effective anti-inflammatory and has antidepressant properties.

Start by mindfully choosing what you eat and you can reclaim health and vitality.

A healthy gut means a healthy brain.

Be well,
Dr. Mooney

Consequences



10.2m

Approximately 10.2 million adults have **co-occurring** mental health and addiction disorders.¹



26%

Approximately 26% of **homeless** adults staying in shelters live with serious mental illness.¹



24%

Approximately 24% of **state prisoners** have "a recent history of a mental health condition".²

Impact



1st

Depression is the leading cause of disability worldwide, and is a major contributor to the global burden of disease.¹



-\$193b

Serious mental illness costs America \$193.2 billion in lost earning every year.³



90%

90% of those who die by suicide have an underlying mental illness. Suicide is the 10th leading cause of death in the U.S.³

Valley ABA Program is Growing

Valley ABA (Applied Behavior Analysis) is proud to announce that in the summer of 2017 we will be collaborating with Lamoille South Supervisory Union (LSSU) school district. With our latest collaboration comes a new addition to the Valley ABA Program. We are excited to welcome Katie Nielson as our newest behavior technician. Valley ABA will be offering 1:1 direct service to children diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) attending school within the LSSU school district. In the summer of 2017, Valley ABA will be offering ABA therapy in two locations at the LSSU graded building and at Valley Counseling. This is an exciting time for Valley ABA, as we grow and expand our services we are now serving individuals from 18 months – 22 years of age. Applied Behavior Analysis is an evidence-based treatment that is mostly used to treat children and adults diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder (ASD). ABA utilizes a variety of research supported practices such as discrete trial training (DTT) and natural environmental training (NET). Behavioral principles such as positive reinforcement has been supported through research to be an effective method for demonstrating success in increasing desired behaviors across settings. For additional information please contact Paula Reynolds at paula.reynolds@lamoille.org



Upcoming Redwood Program Summer Camp

The Redwood Program will be running their Summer Camp from Monday July 3, 2017 through Friday August 11, 2017. This will be our eighth year of providing summer camp. This summer we will be introducing new exciting materials so that returning students are exposed to new activities. We will be providing students the opportunity to work on self-regulation skills, team building, and problem solving activities in small groups, followed by an hour of 1:1 instruction maintaining IEP/504 Plan goals. In the afternoons, there will be community outings. Fridays will be a full day community outing, and the last week of camp will be full day field trips. All students who attend camp will be able to have a full breakfast. Breakfast, snacks, lunch and water will be provided daily. On the last day of camp, families are invited to join the children for a celebration BBQ!

Our Four Legged “Therapist”

Xander and his handler Dede LaRow are a common (and always smiley) sight in our hallways these days. They’ve started to work with our Developmental Services as well as our Children, Youth and Family Services consumers. Xander is a therapy dog that has been working with our Copley House consumers for a while, and now he’s been spending some time at our offices at Harrel Street too!



Who we are and what we do: Johnson Group Home

History

The earliest records show that J.P. and Lovina Langdell owned the home in 1884. Soon after, C.H. Stearns, the Vermont Lieutenant Governor from 1904-1906, purchased the home. Stearns Street was named after him. According to the records, the home was first recognized as “Stearns Place” in 1946 even though another family was occupying it at that time. In 1983 the home was purchased and renovated by Lamoille County Mental Health. The initial manager was Ed Lovejoy followed by John Egan and the current manager is Shannon Perry. Over the past 30 years we have served 63 residents, employed 105 staff, and 35 residents have successfully transitioned to independent living.

Program Participation Criteria

- Consumer must be Community Rehabilitation and Treatment (CRT) Eligible/ Provisional D
- Receive SSI/SSDI or authorized and approved Housing Recovery Funds
- Meets eligibility criteria for HUD funding
- Has clear goals to achieve during stay in the facility
- Agree and be able to follow Johnson Group Home rules and expectations including:
 - ⇒ Agree to work on Individual Plan of Care (IPC) and any areas deemed necessary for successful transition.
 - ⇒ Generally the residents are expected to work on goals, making noticeable progress, and have a stay of 6 to 18 months, but the stay is based on individual need and progress.
 - ⇒ Abiding by Therapeutic Community Residence regulations also set forth by Department of Disabilities, Aging and Independent Living (DAIL)/Licensing and Protection.

HUD Criteria

Households must meet eligibility criteria for the specific apartment community; this community restricts occupancy to:

- Applicants 18 years of age and over currently in the Community Rehabilitation Treatment (CRT) program through Lamoille County Mental Health Services or applicants 18 years of age and over eligible to participate in the CRT program.

- Applicants receiving SSI or SSDI or authorized and approved to receive Housing Recovery Funds.
- Applicants who agree to work on Individual Plan of Care (IPC), Independent Living Program (ILP), Personal Strength Inventory (PSI) and any areas deemed necessary for successful transition.
- Applicants do have to be assessed for criminal background and substance use challenges that could distress other residents, as well as not have a past history of eviction from a federally subsidized housing unit.
- The household’s annual income may not exceed the applicable Income Limit for the community, which is determined to be the 50% Area Median Income level (Very low Income),
- The Applicant agrees to pay the portion of rent required by the subsidy program under which the Applicant will be admitted.
- The unit must be the Family’s only residence.
- At the time of admission, the Applicant may not be receiving Section 8 assistance on another housing unit.

Challenges

There are numerous challenges in the operation of Johnson Group Home. These include:

- Fewer clients are experiencing longer term institutionalization and thus have a different profile than many of the residents in the past;
 - ⇒ There may be more referrals with more complex behaviors—self-harm, substance use—due to the change in lengths of hospitalization
 - ⇒ Responding to all ages and experiences of residents is a constant for staff
- The transition aged youth residents need more support for transition from late adolescence to young adulthood, often this is a combination of providing support to address daily needs, but enough distance to allow for autonomy.
- This is an emerging population, which will probably grow as Department of Children and Families and Mental Health programs work toward a better planning process for youth who will emerge from custody.
- A stronger emphasis on vocational activity and social connectedness is another need for this population.

LAMOILLE COUNTY
MENTAL HEALTH
SERVICES

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Upcoming Events

Radio-spot WLVB	May 17
Board Meeting	May 17
Radio-spot WLVB	May 24
Memorial Day*	May 29
Youth Mental Health First Aid	May 30
Radio-spot WLVB	May 31
Flag Day	Jun 14
Board Meeting	Jun 21
Independence Day*	Jul 4
Board Meeting	Jul 19

*The Agency is closed on these days

**LCMHS Mission,
Vision & Core
Values**

Mission: Lamoille County Mental Health Services is a nonprofit organization providing quality developmental and behavioral health to the Lamoille Valley area, enhancing independence and quality of life.

Vision: A collaborative community with wellness at its core providing excellence in behavioral health and developmental services, that promotes wellness, independence and quality of life through access to person-centered integrated care in Lamoille Valley.

Core Values: Acceptance,, Advocacy, Collaboration, Dedication, Integrity. Respect, and Self Determination

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 or by sending your gift to:

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



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