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**SC Dept. of Mental Health Client Affairs Office to be topic of August 11 Education Meeting**

Katherine Roberts and Bobbie Lesesne will present "The Role of the Office of Client Affairs & Self Identified Employees at the South Carolina Department of Mental Health" at the August 11 Education Meeting. This presentation will focus on how SCDMH began moving towards becoming a more recovery oriented system of care. The history of events leading to the development of the Office of Client Affairs will be covered with an emphasis on the role current role of the Office and of self-identified employees. They will also explain how the peer support service was developed and implemented, the certification training program, and the benefits to the clients served and the workforce based on service evaluation results.

Join us for this informative session on Tuesday, August 11, at 6 pm in the parlor of Trenholm Road United Methodist Church, 3401 Trenholm Road.

**Family-to-Family Course begins Monday, September 14**

The next Family-to-Family course will begin on Monday, September 14, at the Dorn VA Medical Center. This is a free 12-week course for family members of a person with a mental illness. For more information about the sessions, visit [www.nami.org/familytofamily](http://www.nami.org/familytofamily). Please register by calling 803-776-4000, extension 4116.

**President's Letter**

By Buddy Wier

Have you taken NAMI's 12-week Family-to-Family course?

If you are an adult parent, spouse/significant other, sibling or adult child of one who has a mental illness, you should take Family-to-Family. People consistently say how powerful the course is and how much it helped them and their family. Yesterday, I heard a recent graduate say, "I learned so much. I was doing so many things wrong and now am more tolerant because of what I learned. Family-to-Family is a good course." Family-to-Family is a life changing program. I encourage you to take advantage of this opportunity. The next class begins September 14, 2009 and will run for 12 weeks. Class size is limited and pre-registration is required. Please call 776-4000 ext. 4116 to register.

Did you know that many NAMI affiliates have only one support group per week or even possibly only one per month? Because of generous members who volunteer to be trained as support group facilitators, NAMI Mid-Carolina offers two Family Support groups and four Connections Support Groups each week. Please see the schedule and locations for the groups on page four. We will add more when we have more trained facilitators.

Let's highlight NAMI's newest support group: Norma Free is facilitating the newest Family Support Group. She is very enthusiastic about growing this group, so please join her on Thursdays at 6 pm at Trenholm Road United Methodist Church. Our experience is that by having a Family Support Group at the same time as a Connections Group, both groups have more participation because of the availability of transportation. Norma's example of a willingness to be trained and volunteer her time to help others is the reason NAMI is so successful. Thank you, Norma!

On the weekend of November 6-8, 2009, a statewide training for NAMI Connections and Family Support Group facilitators as well as Family-to-Family and NAMI Basics teachers will be held. More information is on page three of this newsletter. Will you volunteer to be trained? Yes, you can do it! Give me a call 776-9548 to sign-up or if you have any questions.



## Shining a Light on Children

Article adapted from *Hope & Harmony Headlines*

With back to school around the corner, August is an ideal time to increase understanding and awareness of children's and mental adolescents' mental health issues.

It's no surprise that mental health problems can be especially painful for young people. They can damage self-esteem, produce feelings of guilt and shame, and make children feel lonely and isolated.

But there are things adults can do to nurture the emotional well-being of the children in their lives. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services recommends taking the following steps:



- Learn more about mental well-being in children.
- Celebrate their strengths and accomplishments.
- Foster their self-worth and independence.
- Help them express their feelings.
- Promote mutual respect and trust.
- Recognize their strengths.
- Appreciate each child's uniqueness.
- Encourage individual talents.
- Help children set goals based on their abilities and interests.
- Show confidence in their ability to handle problems and tackle new experiences.

It's often said that it takes a village to raise a child. These tips serve as great reminders of the important role everyone can take in that process.

To learn more about children's mental health issues, read two stories from past issues of *bp* and *esperanza* that highlight the struggles families face when a child is diagnosed with bipolar disorder, anxiety or depression.

- Keeping In Step With *Your Teenager* (Spring 2005 issue of *bp* Magazine)
- The Myths of Teenage Depression (Spring 2008 issue of *esperanza*)

To subscribe to *bp Magazine* or to subscribe to *Hope and Harmony Headlines*, visit [www.bphope.com](http://www.bphope.com)

## Sexual Trauma Services of the Midlands offers Darkness to Light Stewards of Children Training

Darkness to Light is a grassroots national non-profit organization based in Charleston, South Carolina, that seeks to protect children from sexual abuse by placing responsibility squarely on adult shoulders. They educate adults to prevent, recognize, and react responsibly to child sexual abuse.

Consequences to children and to our society begin immediately. Child sexual abuse is a direct source of a number of problems facing us.

Sexually abused children who keep it a secret or who "tell" and are not believed are at greater risk than the general population for psychological, emotional, social, and physical problems, often lasting into adulthood.

- 70-80% of sexual abuse survivors report excessive drug and alcohol use.
- One study showed that among male survivors, 50% have suicidal thoughts and more than 20% attempt suicide.
- Young girls who are sexually abused are more likely to develop eating disorders as adolescents.

The Darkness to Light program teaches seven critical steps to protecting children:

1. Learn the facts. Understand the risks. Realities—not trusts—should influence your decisions regarding children.
2. Minimize opportunity. If you eliminate or reduce one-adult/one-child situations, you'll dramatically lower the risk of sexual abuse for children.
3. Talk about it. Children often keep abuse secret, but barriers can be broken down by talking openly about it.
4. Stay alert. Don't expect obvious signs when a child is being sexually abused.
5. Make a plan. Learn where to go, whom to call, and how to react.
6. Act on suspicions. The future well-being of a child is at stake.
7. Get involved. Volunteer and financially support organizations that fight the tragedy of child sexual abuse. For more information or to discuss attending an upcoming training, call Katie Ried, Community Education Program Director for Sexual Trauma Services, at 803-790-8208.

## Dealing with Stress

The stress of having a child with behavioral or substance abuse issues generally causes great



stress for parents as they deal with the uncertainty of what might happen next with their child. What affects one family member affects all in some way.

Stress increases as they try to also care for other children in

their family and meet the demands of their jobs, duties and other roles. Helpful Tips:

- Know the triggers that set you off and use your emotional intelligence to reduce the impact of situations that impact you. When panic or fear arise, recognize their impact on your body, mind, and heart and use strategies like breathing and reframing to reduce their impact.
- During difficult times it's not unusual for people to let go of behaviors that are healthy. You need all the resources that you have to meet the challenges you are facing, so remember to continue exercising, eating well, and getting as getting proper sleep.
- It's not unusual for parents to feel isolated and hesitant to share what's going on in their family with others. The added stress may also affect relationships with their spouse and with other children in the family. Reach out for help from extended family members, personal coaches and therapists. Find regular times to spend with your spouse to stay connected and maintain support between you. Create regular times for the family to be together and support one another.
- It's easy, when under significant stress, to get lost in work, to spend excessive time at the computer researching the problems we're facing, and to spend more and more time indoors at work and at home. Make time to get outside and get in touch with nature, perhaps an evening walk with your spouse. Maintain regular schedules at home that include time with other family members and regular dinner times for the family to be together.

Excerpts for this article taken from article written by Dr. Dan Kaufman on EzineArticles.com. For the article in its entirety go to: <http://ezinearticles.com>.

## New and Renewing Members

Karen Crockett	Carla Damron
Charlie & Paige Davis	Dale and Cherrie Hamrick
Pam Hoffman	Julius Jones
Justin & Ashli Lakes	Bobbie Lesesne
Marietta Matthews	Rhonda Owens
Delores Reeves	Carol Rudder
Ann Wier Shumpert	Anne Ellison Stewart
Sue Carol Vernon	Louise Will-Wallace
Carol LeFebvre Wrigley	

## Donations and Memorials

Randy and Mary Alice Akers  
Karen Crockett  
Helen Baldwin Kingkade  
Kohl's – Lexington

## If a NAMI Program has Helped You, Are you Ready to Pay it Forward?

The annual NAMI SC Training Event will take place November 6-8 at the White Oak Conference Center in Winnsboro. NAMI SC will be covering the cost of meals and rooms if volunteers are willing to share a room, or a portion if they do not share (\$16.00 per night, per room will be due from the trainee if they do not share a room). The only cost to participants is the price of gas to get to Winnsboro and that extra per night room charge of \$16.00 if the trainee does not want to share a room. The NAMI class trainings for this fall are:

- NAMI Connection—train to be a facilitator for this 1½ hour weekly support group for people who have a mental illness. The groups are facilitated by a team of people in recovery
- Family-to-Family—NAMI's signature program for family members of people who have a mental illness. The course is facilitated by two people who have family members with a mental illness and is 30-hour course spread over 12 weeks.
- NAMI Basics—a newer NAMI program for parents and caregivers of children and adolescents. The course consists of 6 sessions and is 15 hours long.
- Support Group Facilitator—this training is for general support group facilitation

If you are interested in more information or becoming trained for any of these programs, please call 803-776-9548 so that an interview can be scheduled.

Return Service Requested

You can also view the Brain Storm  
at [www.namimidcarolina.org](http://www.namimidcarolina.org)

Mondays 8/3, 8/10, 8/17, 8/24, 8/31  
6 pm NAMI Connection, Bridges  
Clubhouse, 2015 Commerce, Cayce

Tuesdays 8/4, 8/18, 8/25  
6 pm NAMI Connections and Family  
Support Group, Trenholm Road  
United Methodist Church (TRUMC),  
3401 Trenholm Rd.

Wednesdays 8/5, 8/12, 8/19, 8/26  
3 pm NAMI Connection  
Dorn VA Bldg 106, Room A-237

Thursdays 8/6, 8/13, 8/20, 8/27  
6 pm NAMI Connection and Family  
Support Group, TRUMC

Tuesday 8/11  
6 pm, Education Meeting, TRUMC  
(see story page 1)

Monday, 9/14  
Family-to-Family Course begins.  
(see story page 1)

Sunday, 10/11, 2 pm  
Out of the Darkness Walk for Suicide  
Awareness and Prevention

11/13 & 11/14, NAMI State  
Conference, Charleston

**Federation  
of Families  
for Children's  
Mental Health  
of South Carolina**



## More Resources for Adolescents and Parents

On the first Tuesday of each month, the Federation of Families of South Carolina sponsors a Youth Network support group for ages 12-21. A parent group meets at the same time. The groups meet at 7 pm at Three Rivers Behavioral Health, 2900 Sunset Blvd., West Columbia.

The Federation's staff also provides telephone support and consultation to parents and family members. Parents and family members can request educational materials and referrals to community resources, as well as seek advice to address particular issues they may be facing. If the Federation cannot assist the family with its immediate needs, staff will make every attempt to link the family to the appropriate services and resources.

Their Educational Resource Center offers a variety of publications, pamphlets and audio-visual materials. The Resource Center maintains a collection of fact sheets about children's emotional and behavioral disorders. Parents, teachers, social workers and other professionals will find materials suited for their particular needs. For more information about Federation of Families, call 803-779-0402.