

Emotional and Mental Health

Resource and Information Guide

Durham County

January 2006

**This directory has been compiled and produced by the
Mental Health Association in Durham County**

The Mental Health Association in Durham County

Our Vision Statement:

**Everyone will receive adequate mental health services
without discrimination in Durham County.**

Basic Principals:

- * Promote access to and availability of mental health services, especially the Latino / Hispanic communities**
- * Promote mental health awareness, education and stigma reduction**
- * Advocate for quality of care in Durham County as a result of changes brought about by state mental health reform**
- * Promote volunteerism**
- * Promote interagency collaboration**

For additional information call: (800) 745-5067

Web Site: <http://www.mha-nc.org>

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What is Mental Illness?

A mental illness is a disease that causes mild to severe disturbances in thought and/or behavior, resulting in an inability to cope with life's ordinary demands and routines. There are more than 200 classified forms of mental illnesses. Some of the more common disorders are: depression, bipolar disorders, dementias, schizophrenia and anxiety disorders.

Warning Signs of Mental Illness in Adults:

- confused thinking
- prolonged depression (sadness or irritability)
- feelings of extreme highs and lows
- social withdrawal
- dramatic changes in eating or sleeping habits
- delusions or hallucinations
- growing inability to cope with daily problems and activities
- suicidal thoughts
- denial of obvious problems
- numerous unexplained physical ailments
- substance abuse

Warning signs of Mental Illness in Younger Children:

- changes in school performance
- poor grades despite strong efforts
- excessive worry or anxiety (i.e., refusing to go to bed or school)
- persistent nightmares
- persistent disobedience or aggression
- frequent temper tantrums

Warning signs of Mental Illness in Older Children and Pre-Adolescents:

- substance abuse
- inability to cope with problems and daily activities
- change in sleeping and/or eating habits
- excessive complaints of physical ailments
- defiance of authority, truancy, theft, and/or vandalism
- prolonged negative mood, poor appetite, thoughts of death
- frequent outbursts of anger

Most Common Forms of Mental Illness

Addiction / Substance Abuse

Substance Abuse is the compulsive overuse of a habit-forming substance such as drugs or alcohol. Addiction is the compulsive physiological and psychological need for such a habit-forming substance. According to recent statistics, nearly 30% of those with an SMI (Serious Mental Illness) had used an illicit drug within the past year (SAMHSA – Substance Abuse Mental Health Services Administration). Substance Abuse and addiction have always had a substantial tie to mental illness.

Anxiety Disorders

Anxiety Disorders include: Generalized Anxiety Disorder, Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder, Panic Disorder, Phobias, Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder. Anxiety Disorders are the most common and most successfully treated forms of mental illness. They are often related to the biological makeup and life experiences of the individual and they frequently run in families. Having anxiety in life is natural. However, when anxiety becomes so serious that it interferes with your life, leads you to avoid certain situations or prevents you from doing what you enjoy, then you may be experiencing a disorder.

Attention Deficit / Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)

ADHD is more likely to appear in boys than girls and has symptoms which interfere with a person's ability to function normally in academic, work and social settings. These symptoms include being easily distracted, poor ability to sustain attention, excessive activity and physical restlessness, finds it hard to finish a project, talks excessively and often interrupts others, acts without thinking, disorganized, poor ability to plan ahead, and easily frustrated.

Bipolar Disorder

Mood changes are a normal part of life. But the roller coaster highs and lows of bipolar disorder are not normal. The moods of a person with bipolar disorder, which has also been called manic depression, swing from periods of intense elation to periods of intense sadness. Bipolar disorder typically begins in adolescence or early adulthood and continues throughout life.

Dementia

Dementia is impairment of brain functions such as memory, reasoning, and judgment so severe that it affects a person's ability to function at his or her usual level. Memory loss is the most common symptom of dementia. People also may have difficulty using or understanding words or become lost in previously familiar places. They may have difficulty performing tasks that require organization, such as balancing a checkbook or making a grocery list and going shopping. Dementia also can cause depression, irritability, or other behavior and personality changes.

Most Common Forms of Mental Illness

Major Depression

We all have bad times and get down occasionally. However, a person may have major depression if she or he feels down for several weeks at a time or finds it difficult to function in daily life. A person with major depression often experiences loss of energy and motivation; finds it difficult to concentrate and make decisions; persistently feels sad, anxious or empty.

Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)

PTSD is a debilitating condition that can develop following a terrifying event. Often, people with PTSD have persistent frightening thoughts and memories of their ordeal and feel emotionally numb, especially with people they were once close to. The event that triggers PTSD may be something that threatened the person's life or the life of someone close to him or her. Or it could be something witnessed, such as massive death and destruction after a building is bombed or a plane crashes.

Schizophrenia

Schizophrenia is a serious biological brain disorder that affects how a person thinks, feels and acts. Someone with Schizophrenia may have difficulty distinguishing between what is real and what is imaginary; is often unresponsive or withdrawn; and may have difficulty expressing normal emotion in social situations. Symptoms of schizophrenia may include: Distorted perception of reality, hallucinations, illusions, delusions and fractured / scattered thinking.

Who To Call

1. The Durham Center

The Durham Center
501 Willard Street
Durham, NC 27701
Crisis Hotline Number: (800) 510-9132
PH: (919) 560-7100

2. Support Groups

A support group can be a valuable tool for recovery. Meeting on a regular basis with those in similar circumstances to your own can be a source of encouragement, help and stability. To find out what local support groups are available, contact the United Way 211 Resource and Referral Line by dialing: 211.

3. Your family doctor.

Your family doctor can help you with information and direction based on your symptoms and situation.

4. The Mental Health Association in Durham County: 1 (800) 745-5067

The MHA in Durham County can provide information on mental disorders and illnesses as well as direct you to local resources. The vision of the Mental Health Association in Durham County is: Everyone will receive adequate mental health services without discrimination in Durham County.

5. Local counselor, psychologist or psychiatrist

Mental health professionals can help you assess your mental health then provide direct assistance in providing treatment. You can find these professionals in your phone book yellow pages.

Who To Call (Con't)

6. In case of emergency dial 911

Finally, in a situation where a person poses a danger to themselves or to others you may need to get the local authorities involved. Should such a situation arise, the information below and on the next page may be helpful.

1. Local law enforcement

Law enforcement can be called to help diffuse a situation. Police officers are trained to help in volatile situations and also know options as to 'what to do next'.

2. Commitment

Occasionally, people may need to be hospitalized which may mean commitment. A person can be voluntarily admitted or involuntarily committed.

For a voluntary admission a person voluntarily goes and is admitted to a psychiatric facility.

For an involuntary commitment a concerned individual has another person committed by following a set procedure. This procedure is outlined on the following page. Involuntary commitment is typically done only when a person is deemed a danger to themselves or to others.

Summary of Involuntary Commitment Process

1. Affidavit is executed:

When anyone – including a law enforcement officer – has knowledge of an individual who is mentally ill and/or a substance abuser and is an immediate danger to their self or others, he or she can appear before a clerk of superior court or the magistrate and execute an affidavit. This form is called the “Affidavit and Petition for Involuntary Commitment” and should contain the facts of the situation.

2. Order is issued by clerk or magistrate:

If the clerk or magistrate finds reasonable grounds to believe that the facts in the affidavit are true, he or she shall issue an order to a law enforcement officer or any authorized person to take the individual (called a “respondent”) into custody for examination by a physician or eligible psychologist in an area facility. This order is called “Findings and Custody Order Involuntary Commitment”.

3. Person is taken into custody (not arrested) and transported to facility:

A law enforcement officer shall take the respondent into custody within 24 hours after order is signed and transport him or her to the specified facility, which is usually a local hospital.

In providing transportation, the transporting agency shall have an officer typically of the same sex as the respondent provide the transportation. The officer may use reasonable force to restrain the respondent if it appears necessary to protect himself, the respondent or others. The respondent is not under arrest and the officer, to the extent possible, shall advise the respondent of this and further explain that he or she is being transported to receive further evaluation for possible treatment for their own safety and for the safety of others.

4. Person is examined and a decision is made:

Upon examination at the facility, one of three decisions will be made:

1. In-patient commitment: The person will be transported to another facility for further evaluation and treatment.
2. Out-patient commitment: The person will be transported home or to the home of a consenting adult and a hearing will be held to determine if person meets criteria for outpatient commitment.
3. No commitment: The person will be transported to his / her home or the home of a consenting adult.

Things You Can Do For Your Mental And Emotional Health

Read a book	Go biking
Blow bubbles	Draw
Write a story / Journal	Laugh
Take a walk	Meditate
Have breakfast in bed	Do a crossword puzzle
Make homemade bread	Feed the ducks
Watch the clouds	Read to someone
Go to a new park	Learn a new word
Sing a song	Listen to the birds
Watch a sunset	Watch a sunrise
Write a thank you note	Listen to an old song
Call an old friend	Dance
Do someone a favor	Surprise a friend
Watch a funny movie	Go see a play
Go for a swim	Play some tennis
Take a nap	Give someone a hug
Stop watching the news	Treat yourself to a nice dinner
Volunteer	Send a funny card to a friend
List all you are thankful for	See a high school sporting event