

# Mental Health & Recovery Board



OF PORTAGE COUNTY **NEWSLETTER**

A publication to increase awareness of mental health and substance abuse services in our community

**A Network of Care for All Generations!**

## ADDICTION GETS NO RESPECT

### Time to celebrate individuals who are recovering



By **Rob Young**

Outpatient Services Manager, Townhall II

"I get no respect!"

Many of us have laughed at this punch line from the late comic Rodney Dangerfield. However, when we're talking about addiction to alcohol or drugs, there's nothing funny about it.

If you or someone you know suffers from this disease, you know very well that addiction not only affects the person, but everyone else who cares for them.

So why does addiction "get no respect"? Since 1956 when the American Medical Association clearly defined alcoholism as a disease, research has only further confirmed this truth. In fact, we can now use PET scans and brain-mapping to observe exactly how chemicals alter the brain, and we can literally see how addiction develops. So why isn't addiction viewed like any other disease?

**Stigma.** The behaviors associated with the symptoms of addiction are serious and cause conflicts. The lying, cheating, arrests, anger, pain and fear, just to name a few, that accompany the consequences of abusive alcohol or drug use are not enjoyable for anyone. Other diseases, like diabetes, high blood pressure and heart disease also have unhealthy behaviors associated with their development or mismanagement.

The language that we use to describe the disease of addiction does not help reduce the stigma. The terms "addict,"

"alcoholic," or someone with a drinking or drug "problem" do not give the proper respect to the fact that we are talking about a disease. These terms really only label the person.

**A direct result of stigma.** Persons seeking treatment for this disease have traditionally wanted to maintain their anonymity. This is easy to understand because persons with this disease typically are looked down upon. There is real concern about retribution from family members or an employer if they find out the person is involved in substance addiction treatment. These fears are understandable but they also perpetuate the idea that no one can know that someone has developed this disease or that they are seeking treatment for it.

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## Grief recovery workshop set for April and May for survivors of suicide

For every person who ends his or her life, at least six close family members and friends enter a world of grief and pain. These survivors of a loved one's suicide are suddenly left behind to ask "Why" and "How will I survive this nightmare?"



Survivor **Iris Angle** of Aurora asked herself the same questions which led her on a healing journey. Now she helps others experiencing the same loss.

Angle will lead a grief recovery workshop for survivors on Wednesdays, April 21, April 28, May 5 and May 12 from 6:30 to 8 p.m. at the Mental Health and Recovery Board of Portage County, 155 E. Main St., Kent.

The workshop is being sponsored by the MHRB and the Portage County Suicide Prevention Coalition and is open to the community. This Coalition works to educate the public about suicide and to give information and support to survivors of suicide. For information and registration, please call 330-673-1756, ext. 201.

The program will offer support, information about "grief work," and moving into the future. Through writing and sharing, Angle presents the four tasks of grief: telling our stories, expressing emotions, finding meaning in personal loss and transitioning relationships from the physical to the symbolic.

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**April is Alcohol Awareness Month. May is National Mental Health Month.**

### ....Celebrate Continued from page 1

Because of anonymity, people don't realize that there are others out there effectively managing their disease and leading very productive and rewarding lives.

**An indirect result of stigma.** Because stigma leads to the desire to remain anonymous, there is not a lot of recognition in our society for people who are successfully managing or recovering from their addiction. We routinely celebrate individuals who are "disease-free" or cancer survivors, and we proudly display our support for the treatment of certain diseases with ribbons and races. These are certainly worthy causes. Why not adopt a symbol for addiction recovery and celebrate this amazing accomplishment?

Will individuals in recovery ever be able to openly share how proud they are? Will there ever be a color or a ribbon internationally recognized as being associated with the treatment of or recovery from addiction? Perhaps someday recovery from addiction to alcohol or drugs will get the proper respect it deserves.

### ....Grief Continued from page 1

Since the suicide of her son, Eric 17 years ago, Iris Llewellyn Angle has made it her mission to help others find comfort and healing by bringing those together who lost a loved one to suicide, the "survivors."

"My healing really began when I met another mother whose son completed suicide. As she shared her story with me, I knew she understood what I was feeling and going through. She seemed so normal. I thought if she could survive this, then I could, too," she remembered. Angle also discovered that whenever she shared her story, she healed a little more.

Through her grief work and journal writing Angle survived, healed and is now thriving. She shares her knowledge, experience and personal story with others. Angle is a member of the Portage County coalition and works with the group on awareness campaigns. In 2002-2003, Angle shared her story and made meaning of the suicide of her son by walking and bicycling from his birthplace in Chardon, Ohio, to where he died in Phoenix, Arizona. She has just finished writing a book about her healing journey and hopes to get it published in the near future.

- Over 30,000 people in the United States choose to end their lives, one every 15 minutes.
- Suicide is the second leading cause of death in college students and the third leading cause of death in 25-34-year-olds.
- Suicide rate for the elderly and veterans is rising.

## MHRB endorses Renewal Issue 12 for Children, Issue 13 for Health Department on May ballot

The Mental Health & Recovery Board has endorsed Children Services Renewal Issue 12 ([www.protectportagekids.com](http://www.protectportagekids.com)) and Issue 13 for the Portage County Health Department ([www.co.portage.oh.us/healthdepartment.htm](http://www.co.portage.oh.us/healthdepartment.htm)) both on the May 4 ballot.

Adequate funding of these county organizations benefits the mental health of Portage County residents and the prevention of substance abuse because of the work these organization do in preventing crises and responding to crises. Specifically, Children Services is dedicated to the prevention of abuse and neglect.



## Census 2010 Assistance Center located at MHRB until April 19

If you have questions about your census form or need a form, you can stop at the Mental Health & Recovery Board in Kent for assistance until April 19.

A Census representative will be at the board office on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. to help community members in person. No appointment is necessary.

The Board office at 155 East Main Street has been designated as a QAC or Questionnaire Assistance Center by the United States Census. The office is accessible to persons with disabilities.

The QAC representative will be available to assist those unable to read or understand the census form. For those with visual impairments, Language Assistance Guides will be available in large print and Braille. In addition to these options, Language Assistance Guides will be available in 59 languages.



## Talented young Kent speakers add their thoughts to NAACP event

Members of the Mental Health & Recovery Board of Portage County attended the Annual Martin Luther King Prayer Breakfast sponsored by the Portage County NAACP. The group had time to talk with some of the other participants including the talented young speakers from Kent Roosevelt High School. Seated left to right: MHRB Associate Director **Dr. Joel Mowrey**, Board members **Leona Brown** of Brimfield Township, **Barbara Evans** of Rootstown Township and **Bill Wisniewski** of Ravenna. Standing left to right, Kent Mayor **Jerry Fiala**, **Ellen McWilliams**, her daughter **Taylor McWilliams-Woods**, who was a youth presenter for the program, **Jason Bricker Thompson**, director of Youth Ministries at the Kent United Church of Christ, **Tieeasha Foreman**, who was also a speaker; and her mother, **Tracey Foreman**.





## Mental illness in your family? Do you need to know more? Free class through MHRB and NAMI Portage County

If you know the difficulties of having a family member or loved one with mental illness, you are not alone.

To help Portage County residents facing these challenges, the Mental Health & Recovery Board and NAMI Portage County sponsor the free Family-to-Family Education program. Participants find familiar stories and familiar problems among class members. They soon start sharing solutions and hope.

Registration is now being taken for the session June 2 to Aug. 18. The class will meet Wednesdays 6:30 to 9:30 p.m. at the Mental Health & Recovery Board office, 155 E Main St., Kent. To sign up, call 330-673-1756, ext. 201, or email [laurab@mental-health-recovery.org](mailto:laurab@mental-health-recovery.org). Deadline is May 28.

NAMI is the National Alliance on Mental Illness. The group of family members, consumers and advocates meets at 7 p.m. on the second and fourth Thursdays of the month at the MHRB office in Kent. All are welcome to attend for support and information. To learn more about Family-to-Family and NAMI, go to [www.nami.org](http://www.nami.org).

## Urge state officials to stop cuts in mental health and substance abuse treatment funds using MHRB Advocacy Tool Kit

State funds for services to adults and children with mental illness and addictions have taken some of the largest percentage cuts during the past year. These cutbacks are affecting local services and will mean less care available this year and next for residents who don't qualify for Medicaid benefits.

With pessimistic forecasts for state revenues, more cuts could be possible. Our local state legislative delegation and the leadership in the Ohio House of Representatives and the Ohio Senate need to hear your voice advocating against additional cuts.

The MHRB has developed a State Budget Advocacy Tool Kit to help you communicate effectively with state officials. Call 330-673-1756, ext. 207, for more information.

## OF-1-MIND: An education and advocacy campaign



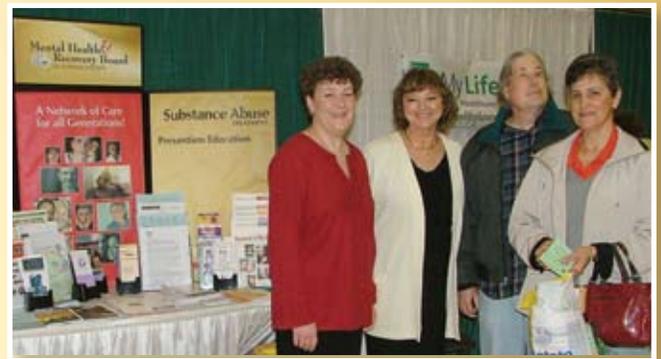
Ohioans with the diseases of mental illness and addiction continue to face discrimination when it comes to accessing healthcare in Ohio. Ohio continues to cut funding for behavioral (alcohol, drug addiction and mental illness) health. These cuts mean that thousands of Ohioans in need of life-saving behavioral health treatment do not have access to necessary treatment and recovery supports.

To achieve this goal, OF-1-MIND will educate all Ohio's citizens, **that treatment works . . . people recover**. OF-1-MIND will provide the tools for Ohioans to articulate and communicate that mental illness and addiction are diseases of the brain and that recovery is a fact for the majority of those who receive appropriate treatment.

Log onto [www.of-1-mind.org](http://www.of-1-mind.org) to get involved with the OF-1-MIND campaign.

## New Ohio survey results

- Three out of every five Ohioans knows someone with mental illness or substance abuse problems according to a new Ohio survey for OF-1-MIND, [www.of-1-mind.org](http://www.of-1-mind.org).
- 84% of Ohioans believe people with mental illness can recover with treatment and medication. (From the OF-1-MIND survey.)
- 96% of Ohioans believe that an alcoholic or addict who completes treatment can become a productive citizen. (From the OF-1-MIND survey.)
- 93% of Ohioans want health insurance to cover the cost of treating mental illness, alcoholism and drug addiction. (From the OF-1-MIND survey.)



## MHRB provides mental health and recovery information for Aurora event

The Mental Health & Recovery Board distributed information on adult depression, mental illness, child depression, suicide prevention and mental health services for veterans at the Aurora Expo organized by the Aurora Chamber of Commerce. The MHRB is a chamber member. Helping out at the booth were, left, Board member **Hilary Kane** of Mantua Township and volunteer **Iris Angle** of Aurora who is member of the Portage County Suicide Prevention Coalition. Visitors included **Jane Gwinn** of Kent, right, and MHRB member **Jeff Langstaff** of Kent, second from right, who is the juvenile counselor at the Kent Police Department.

Visit our website at [www.mental-health-recovery.org](http://www.mental-health-recovery.org)



### Web sites with behavioral health information

**Live Your Life Well** at [www.mentalhealthamerica.net](http://www.mentalhealthamerica.net). Find out about the Live Happy App!

**OF-1-MIND** at [www.of-1-mind.org](http://www.of-1-mind.org) empowers individuals and professionals to become active in the fight against stigma and to promote access and funding for alcohol, drug addiction and mental health services and supports.

### Register now for crisis intervention training for school personnel

The Crisis Intervention Team Education Collaboration (CITEC) training is a five-day, 40-hour program developed specifically for school personnel including teachers, administrators, guidance counselors, psychologists, bus drivers and other school employees. The goal of the program is to increase awareness of mental health problems and to learn how to prevent and manage crisis situations.

Organized by the Mental Health & Recovery Board of Portage County, the CITEC training is scheduled for June 21-25, 2010 at the Streetsboro Police Department. The cost of the training is \$100 for the week. Two graduate credits in education (cost not included) are also available through either Kent State or Ashland University. Registration deadline is June 1.

For more information, call **Joel Mowrey**, Ph.D., associate director of the Mental Health & Recovery Board of Portage County, 330-673-1756, ext. 203, or email him at [joelm@mental-health-recovery.org](mailto:joelm@mental-health-recovery.org).

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### What is the MHRB?

The Mental Health & Recovery Board supports healthy communities by investing in services to help residents of all ages who need treatment for mental health or substance abuse dependence problems and to provide prevention education, especially for youths at risk for substance abuse. The Board's funds also support 24-hour emergency services to help residents in crisis and to provide assistance when communities experience crisis incidents. Supported in part by local levies, the Board funds services through a network of community-based agencies. Services help thousands of children, teens, families, adults and seniors each year. The network includes: Coleman Professional Services, Townhall II, Children's Advantage, Family and Community Services and its Safer Futures program, The Bair Foundation and Compass Recovery.