



Unity Family Services

Newsletter

Fall 2017

Raising the bar in mental health services™

Issue 2

Unity Family Services, Inc. is a Pennsylvania licensed mental health provider. We participate in the federally mandated health-care program, Health Choices, which allows consumers the freedom to choose their own health-care provider because we believe that having a choice, matters!

We have been providing community-based mental health services to adults, children, adolescents and families in Armstrong, Butler, Indiana and Westmoreland Counties since 2000 when our Executive Director, Michelle S. Gould MSW, LCSW, founded Unity Family Services, Inc.

We offer a wide range of mental health programs to ensure that we meet our clients' needs. Our services include:

- In-Home Family-Based Therapy
- Outpatient Services
- Peer Support Services

Our Mission at Unity Family Services, Inc. is to provide outstanding advocacy, mental health care, and support to the adults, children and families that we serve in Western Pennsylvania.



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Suicide

DID YOU KNOW?

- Suicide is the 10th leading cause of death in the United States.
- It is the second leading cause of death for 15-24 year old's.
- There is 1 completed suicide in every 12.8 minutes in the U.S.
- For each completed suicide there are 25 attempts taking place.
- Suicide takes the lives of 38,000 Americans every year.

GENDER DISPARITIES

- Suicide among males is 4x's higher than among females.
- Firearms are the most commonly used method of suicide among males.
- Females attempt suicide 3x's as often as males.
- Poisoning is the most common method of suicide for females.

WORLDWIDE

- Over 800,000 people die by suicide every year.
- There is one death by suicide in the world every 40 seconds.
- Suicide is the 3rd leading cause of death in the world for ages 15-44 years.

Sources - Center for Disease Control; World Health Organization; National Institute of Mental Health.

Overview of Family Based Mental Health Services

Family Based Mental Health (FBMH) services have some distinct differences among the other services that may be sought. First, FBMH has a systemic or holistic approach; meaning that each person in the family is an active part of the treatment and is important for the understanding of the issues that the family may be facing. This is fundamentally different from an outpatient therapist which would typically just be focused on one individual client in an office setting. FBMH therapists have a great deal of versatility in regards to how they may approach a case and enter your family's life. If there are problems with a family member in regards to the school system, a FBMH therapist can work with the school and even, with permission, enter the school to get a better idea of what is going on with that particular family member. Despite the large versatility that the FBMH team has, the majority of the therapy would of course take place inside of the family's home. In the home a clinician can get a better idea of the family dynamics and where interventions need to take place.

Family Based Mental Health services are considered to be an intensive service. The service will last for an estimate of 8 months and would be several days per week during those 8 months. While Family Based by its name and nature is a

service aimed at the entire family, they are contracted by insurance to work with a child in the family (usually, but not always, under the age of 18). FBMH's primary goal is to make sure families stay together as a unit which means it is often the service that is sought after a child had entered some sort of placement and is about to be transitioned back to living in the home. FBMH is also the treatment model that is sought after if a child is displaying behaviors that will very likely lead to him/her being removed from the household. Finally, Family Based services will always engage in finding additional services for a family if needed. In cases such as someone needing drug and alcohol treatment or specialized trauma therapy, the Family based team can help the family find those additional resources to ensure that the family is given every opportunity that is available to them.



What is OCPD?

OCPD stands for Obsessive Compulsive Personality Disorder. Personality disorders are long term functioning behaviors. Although OCPD sounds similar to OCD (Obsessive Compulsive Disorder), they are quite different in nature. OCPD presents a person with the preoccupation of perfectionism, orderliness, control, excessively devoted to work and the inability to connect emotionally.

An individual who is combating OCD, with good to fair insight, recognizes that their obsessions and/or compulsions are not of sociological norm. However, with OCPD, the individual does not identify the traits as being a problem.

One of the most difficult issues for loved ones dealing with those having OCPD is the lack of emotional connection. The person with OCPD

can feel emotion, but is not connected to persons they interact with. For example, the spouse of one who is afflicted with OCPD may not feel a validation of being loved, experiencing healthy communication and/or emotional expression.

The promising news is that there is treatment for OCPD. Treatments can include Psychotherapy, Cognitive behavioral therapy and or anti-anxiety drugs or antidepressant medications.



When Butterflies Become Unbearable

We all know that feeling. The feeling you get in the pit of your stomach when you trip and fall in public, begin to take a test, or stand up to speak in front of a crowd. Or how about when you swerve to miss a deer on these Western Pennsylvanian back roads? Most of those who experience these uncomfortable feelings have them pass in a matter of seconds or minutes. But what do we do when they persist to the level of dreading everyday situations for fear that something bad will happen?

Anxiety is actually a normal reaction to stress and can be beneficial, even motivating at times. However, when anxiety becomes excessive and interferes with your everyday life, then you may have one of the most common mental illnesses in the United States that affect 40 million adults, or 18% of the population, and 25.1% of children ages 13-18 (National Institute of Mental Health). No reason to worry though, because anxiety disorders are

highly treatable, even though only about one-third of those suffering receive treatment. The most prevalent anxiety disorders are Generalized Anxiety Disorder in which individuals experience excessive worry across a variety of settings for several months, Panic Disorder in which people have sudden periods of intense fear called panic attacks, and Social Anxiety Disorder in which someone has a specific fear surrounding social and performance situations. Women are 60% more likely to experience an anxiety disorder in their lifetime than men, however this is not the only risk factor.

Anxiety disorders are highly treatable with counseling, medication, and/or both (National Institute of Mental Health). Cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT) is one of the most popular and evidenced-based treatments at this time and includes teaching individuals to think, behave, and react in different ways that challenge their preexisting

anxiety. However, you can start using stress management techniques, also called "coping skills" or "self-care" right now from home to help reduce your anxiety. Some of these might include reducing your caffeine intake, exercising, getting adequate sleep, taking deep breaths, tensing and relaxing your muscles, listening to soothing music, or talking about your worries with another person you trust for support. Anxiety is one of the most common conditions treated by clinicians, so you are likely to find a variety of therapists in your area ready to help you reduce anxiety and take back your life.



Domestic Violence

Domestic violence can happen to anyone, any gender, race, religion, age, sexual orientation, socioeconomic background, education level; couples who are married, living together, or dating. Domestic violence is abuse; emotional, physical, sexual, verbal. Abuse is a repetitive pattern of behaviors in order to maintain power over someone else, in this case an intimate partner. Some of these things may include:

- Telling someone they never do anything right.
- Being jealous of their partner spending time with friends without them.
- Controlling all the money.
- Threatening to hurt your pets, or get rid of them.

- Pressuring you to have sex when you do not want to.

If you or someone you know is questioning if their relationship is safe the National Domestic Violence Hotline (1-800-799-7233) is a nationwide, 24/7, 365 days a year place to reach out to. They have trained advocates who will answer any questions, provide one-on-one support, crisis interventions, and options for the next step. With 5,000 agencies country wide, and 170+ different languages spoken, anyone is able to call and get help. The National Domestic Violence Hotline also has a program for teens who may be in abusive relationships; Loveisrespect (1-866-331-9474) or text "22522" to speak with an advocate. They can help teens learn what healthy dating is, and how to stay safe in the cyber world.

The Blackburn Center (724-836-1122 or 1-888-832-2272) is a more local agency specializing in domestic violence. They can help by providing services which include; the 24/7 crisis hotline, emergency shelter, counseling and therapy, support groups, medical advocacy, and legal system support. Their services are available for adults, teens, and children. For more information (including information in this article) explore www.thehotline.org and www.blackburncenter.org.



Elder Abuse

In the next 40 years the number of people 65 and older will double while those over 85 will increase fourfold. With this increase of older adults it is very important that everyone be educated on the types of elder abuse.

There are six types of elder abuse that you need to be aware of:

1. *Physical Abuse*: Probably the first thing that pops into anyone's head when the word abuse is mentioned. Physical abuse is the use of force that may result in bodily harm, pain, or impairment. Examples include beating, punching, kicking, pushing, pinching, and inappropriate use of drugs.

2. *Sexual Abuse*: Is nonconsensual sexual contact of any kind. Sexual contact with anyone incapable of giving consent is also sexual abuse. This can include rape, coerced nudity, and sexually explicit photographing.

3. *Psychological Abuse*: This is defined as inflicting pain, anguish or distress through verbal and nonverbal acts. This can take the form of verbal assaults, humiliation, isolation from friends and family, or given the person the silent treatment.



4. *Financial Exploitation*: Defined as the improper or illegal use of a person's assets, or funds. This may look like cashing someone's check without permission, forging signatures, stealing, or deceiving the older person into signing wills or contracts.

5. *Neglect*: Failure or refusal to give the older person what they need to survive. This may be not providing an older adult necessities such as food, clothes, or shelter.

6. *Abandonment*: Desertion by an individual tasked with the responsibility for providing care of the older person. It is important to keep in mind that these types of abuse can happen to anyone of any age, but the elderly are a group especially at risk.

If you or someone you know is a victim of elder abuse you can contact your local police or adult protective services office for help.



Family-Based Program

Peer Support Services

Outpatient Services

Serving Armstrong, Butler, Indiana, and Westmoreland Counties

1001 S Leechburg Hill Road
Leechburg, PA 15656

118 Market Street
Kittanning, PA 16201

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