

Feedback Wanted

In an effort to improve local services, the Mental Health Recovery Services of Warren and Clinton Counties (MHRS) is seeking feedback via a brief online survey.

The survey seeks information regarding gaps in services, unmet needs, access issues, overall satisfaction and additional service-based questions.

- Family Members
- Consumers
- Referral Sources and;
- Community Members are invited to complete this anonymous survey.

Thank you.



For more information logon to
www.mhrsonline.org
or contact MHRS at 513-695-1695



www.mhrsonline.org

212 Cook Road
Lebanon, OH 45036



NEWS FROM Mental Health Recovery Services

Mental Health Recovery Services of Warren & Clinton Counties (MHRS) is pleased to send you our newsletter. This publication is designed to update Warren and Clinton County residents regarding the issues of mental health and substance abuse prevention, and the services available. MHRS funds, plans, monitors and evaluates services and programs for residents with mental and emotional disorders and/or substance addictions.

We hope you find the information useful.

—Brent Lawyer, Executive Director

A Mother's Story

by Erin Keaton

If you had asked me to describe myself three years ago the words I would have used may have been: loving mom, devoted wife, caring daughter, or hard-working student. Unfortunately, things have changed drastically over the last few years. Today the words that best describe me are: non-offending parent of a sexually abused child.

I was completely unprepared for the day my daughter told me that she had been sexually abused by her father. Listening to incredibly graphic sexual details from the mouth of my four-year-old child was such a shock that I knew there had to be some thread of truth to it. Her pediatrician and the psychologist who interviewed us eventually confirmed my fears. Although a physical exam didn't produce immediate signs of sexual abuse, the information she shared about what had happened to her couldn't be denied. Someone had raped my daughter.

While she was adamant that her father was the offender, my heart cried out and rejected the idea that the man I loved, my husband of five years, could possibly hurt his own child. He was a good husband and an even better dad.

This didn't happen to people like us, middle-class Americans with college educations, successful careers and loving, supportive families. However, six months later, the DNA evidence proved otherwise and my husband was sentenced to nine years in prison.

He lost his freedom and we lost our home, savings and all of our financial support.

An employee from the Warren County Rape and Abuse Crisis Center suggested I give the

Children's Advocacy Center of Warren County (CACWC) a call in order to determine whether or not my daughter would need psychological treatment to help her overcome everything she had been through. My first instinct was to ignore the whole thing and hope that she would eventually forget it, but the CACWC helped me understand the importance of counseling for both my daughter and myself.

Through individual counseling, my child learned how to protect herself from sexual abuse and most importantly, how to voice her emotions. Counseling provided me with the tools needed to parent a sexually abused child, helped me overcome the shame and come to the realization that it wasn't my fault. Together we participated in the Parents and Children Together (PACT) program where we were both able to find comfort with groups of our peers who had also experienced the trauma of sexual abuse.

Today my children and I are doing much better than we were two years ago. We are even better than we were two months ago, and I have the CACWC to thank for that. Without their encouragement and support, I wouldn't be able to share my story today. It is my greatest hope that other families facing the horror of sexual abuse hear our story and realize that help is available and there is no shame in asking for it.

Our children deserve it.

Editor's Note: The Child Advocacy Center of Warren County and the PACT program, provided through Solutions Community Counseling and Recovery Centers, are part of the MHRS funded system.



Keeping Our Promise *to the Community*

At a time when it seems our state and federal governments are struggling to deliver on their commitments, MHRS has continued to provide valuable services and lived within its means.

The following are but a few examples of how MHRS fully understands the challenges facing our community and has responded.

- According to a recent survey, local residents believe the biggest problem is addressing the emotional problems experienced by individuals due to loss of jobs and poor economy. MHRS supports employment services, including vocational training, job coaching and other job-related programs to help residents during these troubling times.
- Despite flat funding from 2003-2008 and state cuts in 2009 and 2010 MHRS has been able to increase specific services for both counties and increase the number of consumers served for each consecutive year. MHRS had a 75% increase in the number of “unique” individuals who are receiving treatment.
- The largest percentage of clients seen in our behavioral health care system receive short-term counseling services.
- Local utilization of state hospital beds has been reduced by 48% in the last three years – this translates into a savings of \$1,719,029 in our local system.

- MHRS supports school-based therapists to address needs of our kids in 92% of area public schools. Over 1,500 youth were provided behavioral health services through MHRS funds last school year.

- A significant reduction has been seen in out of home placement for children. This means more children are receiving the care they need though community-based services keeping families together while keeping down cost.

- Due to the increase in the abuse of prescription drugs and opiates, MHRS has begun a Medication-Assisted Treatment program using a newly approved FDA medication.

- In collaboration with local law enforcement personnel, MHRS has initiated the development and implementation of a Crisis Intervention Team to better serve the community in need of immediate assistance.

- By consolidating providers, reducing overlap and streamlining services, residents of Warren and Clinton Counties are able to access vital community services.

These and other types of improvement changes initiated by MHRS not only show we are good stewards of our taxpayer funds, but also that our ability to meet the needs of our growing communities has not been jeopardized. Even with significant state revenue reductions, no funding cuts have been forwarded or passed on to the provider agencies. The cuts in state revenue are being absorbed at the administrative level.

Mini-Grant *Recipients*

In Fiscal Year 2011, MHRS awarded several mini-grants as a way to increase community partnerships and to further invest in the community at-large. The goal is to positively affect mental health and/or prevent substance abuse in Warren and Clinton Counties. The following mini-grants were awarded:

Big Brothers/Big Sisters of Warren & Clinton Counties
Community Based Mentoring Program

Cancer Family Care
Psychosocial Counseling for Cancer Patients and Their Families

Mary Haven Youth Center/Warren County Juvenile Court
Moving Beyond Trauma

River of Hope Ranch
Reins of Hope

Springboro Junior High School
Steps to Success

Violence Free Coalition/Abuse and Rape Crisis Shelter (ARCS)
Re Do Challenge Days

Warren County Educational Service Center
Voices: A Program of Self-Discovery and Empowerment for Girls at Mason High School

Warren County Educational Service Center
Strengthening School Crisis Response

More information about these projects can be found at www.MHRSONline.org

Providers *of Care*

Solutions Community Counseling and Recovery Centers

Solutions Community Counseling and Recovery Centers (Solutions) offer alcoholism, drug addiction and mental health services to residents living in communities throughout Warren and Clinton Counties.

Lebanon: 204 Cook Rd. (513) 695-1357
975 A Kingsview Dr. (513) 228-7800

Mason: 201 Reading Rd. (513) 398-2551

Springboro: 50 Greenwood Ln. (937) 746-1154

Wilmington: 953 S. South St. (937) 383-4441

New Housing Ohio

New Housing Ohio (NHO) offers individuals in recovery from mental illness and/or substance addiction a variety of supportive housing.

Lebanon: 603 F Norgal Drive (513) 228-1801

National Alliance on Mental Illness - Warren County

The National Alliance for Mental Illness (NAMI) Warren County supports local individuals and families affected by mental illness. A variety of support groups and courses are offered to members including Hand-2-Hand and Family-2-Family training.

Lebanon: 910 North Broadway (513) 695-3650

Mental Health America of Southwest Ohio, Inc.

Mental Health America of Southwest Ohio, Inc. (MHA), offers a Compeer Program in both Warren and Clinton Counties which matches volunteers with individuals recovering from mental illness. These volunteers become great friends and confidantes who assist with things like running errands, getting to appointments, and even just going to lunch, dinner or a movie.

Cincinnati: 2400 Reading Rd., Suite 412 (513) 721-2910

Women's Recovery Center

Women's Recovery Center (WRC) is a highly respected non-medical residential and outpatient treatment facility for alcohol, tobacco and other drug dependent women. WRC serves women ages 18 and older.

Xenia: 515 Martin Drive (937) 352-2906

Talbert House: Warren Outpatient Services

Talbert House's Warren Outpatient Services offers accessible and affordable Adult and Adolescent Outpatient Alcohol and Drug Addiction Services to residents living in communities throughout Warren County.

Lebanon: 759 Columbus Avenue (513) 932-4337

For more information about MHRS funded services logon to www.MHRSONline.org. or contact MHRS to sign up for our eNewsletter.

*P*erseverance

For Gwen Cameron finding her own path to recovery has been a unique experience. Diagnosed with borderline personality disorder, suffering from traumatic childhood experiences, as well as her battle with alcoholism led Gwen on a decades-long journey that can best be described as “perseverance.”

“It can be hard for people to be motivated to leave the system and the ‘disability’ mentality. But, for me it has been about making the best with what I have,” Gwen said.

Gwen's journey began in southwest Ohio and led her to South Carolina. While in South Carolina she saw that mental health services were incredibly disjointed. For example there was significant distrust between the public system and faith-based services with each not recognizing strengths of each other's approach. While incredibly frustrating it also made Gwen know that her recovery was truly dependent on her own ability to seek services and her own attitude to assist in her recovery.

When she moved back to Ohio in 2009 she told her therapist that no one would work harder than her. “I've done all kinds of therapy and realize what may work for me may not work for someone else. Everyone needs to find what works for themselves and not be afraid to keep working until you find it,” Gwen said.

Gwen has taken photography classes at Miami University. Her photographs and poetry have both been published. She began volunteering for the local National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) and that experience led to her being asked to serve on the Mental Health and Recovery Services Board – a position she believes comes with great responsibility. “I bring a different perspective to MHRS,” said Gwen. “I believe I can contribute about the type of services we need to fund and give consumers a choice – but after that it's up to consumers to work hard. Our services should be tools not a lifestyle.”

After 23 years sober and still undergoing therapy Gwen appreciates where her life has taken her. On the day she was sworn in to the MHRS board she wrote a poem on her web page titled COTILLION about her nervousness. Anyone who knows Gwen knows that nervousness was short-lived and she has quickly become an important voice for those struggling with behavioral health issues.