Recovery Works!

The mission of Chester County Department of Drug and Alcohol Services is to ensure that quality alcohol and other drug intervention and treatment, as well as alcohol, tobacco, and other drug prevention programs are provided for citizens in an efficient and cost-effective manner.

Maintain your recovery and take care of yourself and loved ones in the New Year by engaging with your local recovery and support communities, seeking out resources, and practicing self-care.

Please check out the resources below:

- Chester County Family Help Book
- El libro de ayuda para la familia
- Be a Part of the Conversation Parent Support
- Find a Meeting:
  - Find an AA Meeting
  - Find an NA Meeting
  - Find a MA Meeting
  - Find an Al-Anon Meeting
  - Find a Nar-Anon Meeting
  - Find a Mar-Anon Meeting
Valentine’s Day can be an emotional time for many people, for many different reasons. Instead of dwelling on strained relationships or painful memories, take this day for self-love and self-care. Self-care means taking the time to do things that help you live well and improve both your physical and mental health. When it comes to your mental health, self-care can help you manage stress, lower your risk of illness, and increase your energy. Even small acts of self-care in your daily life can have a big impact. The emotional toll of February 14th can challenge your recovery goals, but there are plenty of ways to stay focused on your sobriety and health.

- **Prioritize yourself** - Remember that this is a day to celebrate love of all kinds, including the love you have for yourself. Getting sober is an act of love and a gift for you and your loved ones. Celebrate this achievement by spoiling yourself with your favorite things, whether that’s chocolate, a new book, getting outside, or delicious takeout.
- **Exercise** - Just 30 minutes of walking every day can help boost your mood and improve your health. Small amounts of exercise add up, so don’t be discouraged if you can’t do 30 minutes at one time.
- **Eat healthy, regular meals and stay hydrated** - A balanced diet and plenty of water can improve your energy and focus throughout the day.
- **Make sleep a priority** - Stick to a schedule, and make sure you’re getting at least 7 to 9 hours of sleep per night.
- **Try a relaxing activity** - Explore relaxation programs or apps, which may incorporate meditation, muscle relaxation, or breathing exercises. Schedule regular times for these and other healthy activities you enjoy.
- **Write a love letter to your recovery** - Use the day as a chance to list out all the qualities you love and appreciate about yourself.
- **Practice gratitude** - Remind yourself daily of things you are grateful for. Be specific. Write them down at night, or replay them in your mind.
- **Go to a meeting** - If you’re lamenting a lost relationship on Valentine’s Day, make it a sober holiday by going to a meeting. One of the most important parts of recovery is knowing when you need extra support, admitting it, and reaching out to get that help.
- **Opt out** - It’s perfectly fine to ignore Valentine’s Day entirely. If you’re stressed out by Valentine’s Day, ignore it. Don’t engage with this trigger. Avoid the traditions that do not serve your new goals and establish new traditions that do.
- **Remember that it's just one day** - Valentine’s Day, like all those other challenging holidays, is just one day of the year. If you need to, think about February 15th. How do you want to wake up the day after Valentine’s Day? Hopefully well-rested, not hungover, and feeling good.
- **Ask for help if you need it** - You might find that Valentine’s Day is harder than you thought and that’s okay. If you’re finding it tough, don’t battle through miserably on your own. Instead, talk to someone. That might be your friends and family, or it might be your physician or local support group. Visit the Chester County Family Help Book to find out what’s available nearby.

Self-care looks different for everyone, and it is important to find what you need and enjoy. It may take trial and error to discover what works best for you. Understanding what causes or triggers your symptoms and what coping techniques work for you can help manage your mental health.

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**Our Partners are Doing Great Things!**

In Chester County, prevention services consist of age-appropriate, school-based, and community-based programs; education and awareness on Alcohol, Tobacco, and Other Drug (ATOD) topics; identification and referral of students at risk; and information and referral services related to prevention, treatment, and recovery services for community members.
The Chester County Department of Drug and Alcohol Services funds several providers in the County, who provide services and programs all free of charge.

Coatesville Youth Initiative (CYI) has begun offering free youth mental health screenings. Have you noticed your child behaving differently? Has your child lost interest in activities they used to enjoy? If you answered 'yes' to either question, then CYI is here to help. Scan the QR code or visit here to fill out a mental health screening form. CYI will review it, score it, and provide personalized recommendations for you and your child. Contact Jaionna for more information at jaionna@coatesvilleyouthinitiative.org

Downingtown Communities that Care is thrilled to announce their third annual Snowball Shuffle 5K Run & 1 Mile Walk, which will take place on Saturday, March 2nd. The event will be held at Eagleview Town Center, with registration opening at 8AM and the run/walk starting at 9AM. Registration includes an event sweatshirt, access to the hot chocolate bar & sweets stations, and more! Prizes will be given for Best Costume, Most Money Raised, and Most Team Spirit. Chase away your winter blues and walk or run with friends and family to help create a healthy, supportive, and engaged Downingtown community where all youth are empowered to achieve their full potential. To learn more or register, please visit here.

West Chester Communities that Care launched their new marketing campaign: Connection is Key. This campaign emphasizes the importance of connections to improve mental health. Interested in sharing this message? Visit their website here to download the campaign and select one or more to post on your social media and communication channels. Downloads contain messages in both English and Spanish.

Holcomb's Project Sticker Shock partners with youth to take a proactive stand against underage drinking. This year, youth worked with Limoncello in Chester Springs to promote Project Sticker Shock by displaying stickers on their pizza boxes, which depict a warning message about the penalties for providing alcohol to anyone under 21.
Registration is now open for Compass Mark’s annual Positive Change Virtual Conference, taking place on April 3rd and 4th from 8AM - 12:30PM. The Positive Change Conference is an annual event designed to offer practical tools, as well as inspiration and encouragement, to those working in helping professions where addiction & mental health disorders are present. To learn more or register for the conference, please visit here.

Be a Part of the Conversation is streaming Screenagers: Under the Influence for free from February 20th through March 5th. This is the third feature documentary in the Screenagers trilogy and delves into how the tech revolution has reshaped adolescence and its effects on substance use. The film debunks myths and depicts strategies parents and schools can use to encourage healthy decision making, support teen mental health, set limits, and create healthy home environments. The film also includes many ways young people are using their wisdom and strength to help each other and themselves through this complicated terrain around substance use. A Panel Discussion will be streamed live on February 29th from 7 - 8PM. To learn more or watch the trailer, please visit here.
Code Blue: Extreme Weather Emergency Shelter

A Code Blue is declared when winter weather conditions pose a threat of severe harm or death to people without shelter. Chester County residents who need shelter from the cold should call 2-1-1 for immediate assistance. For more info, go to chesco.org/codeblue or view the Extreme Weather Emergency Shelter Policy.

Learn more about resources available in Chester County.

Community Resource Guide
Chester County Dept. of Drug & Alcohol Services is Hiring!

The Chester County Health Department has flu vaccine clinics to protect you, your family, and your community.

Flu & COVID vaccines are available for free to all Chester County residents. Make an appointment or learn more here.

Upcoming Events & Trainings
siblings

Understanding and supporting siblings impacted by addiction.

Tuesday, February 27, 2024
from 7 to 8:30 pm EST | [ ] on Zoom!

Register to attend: convo.zone/siblings

Families are dramatically impacted when a member has a substance use disorder (SUD). While we are getting better at addressing parents’ needs, we sometimes overlook the siblings’ needs and experiences. Quite naturally, siblings may feel resentment and anger. They may begin to want to ignore their addicted sibling, or they may resist or disconnect from them. The sibling’s emotional well-being can be impacted negatively.

We’ll hear from professionals who work closely with family systems and also share their experiences as family members.

Meet Our Speakers:

- Holly Lahti, Director of Education
  - Lahti Consulting, LLC
  - Bloomington, IL

- Sandy Chudaj, Vice President, Clinical Services
  - The Wellness Center

- Lisa Teitel, Program Director, CHEC
  - Engineering Services, CHEC

Hosted by:
The Chester County Department of Drug & Alcohol Services

Presented by:
Be a Part of the Conversation:
conversation.zone

The Help4Hearing Project
Used Hearing Aids Collection

If you or someone you know are no longer using a hearing aid and would like to donate it to a person in need, please contact Helen Morris at 610-945-9077.

This hearing aid collection is in collaboration with HLA Chester County, West Chester, PA 19380.

Hearing Aid Collection:
- P. O. Box 1371
- West Chester, PA 19380
- Contact information: 610-945-9077
- Email: helena@ccatalog.com

Website: www.help4hearing.org

This hearing aid collection is in alignment with the Community Hearing Center of America, a charitable organization. If you need hearing aids and believe you may qualify, please submit a form on the website:
- Hearing Aids of America
  - https://www.hearingaidsofamerica.org
- Hearing the Call
  - https://www.hearingthecall.org

NAMI Family-to-Family
Feb 28-April 17 | 6:30-9pm

NAMI Family-to-Family is a free, 8-session educational program for family, significant others and friends of people with mental health conditions. It is a designated evidenced-based program. This means that research shows that the program significantly improves the coping and problem-solving abilities of the people closest to a person with a mental health condition. Click here to register.
**U P C O M I N G  T R A I N I N G S**

**WINTER 2024**

**QUESTION, PERSUADE, REFER (QPR)**

Question, Persuade, Refer – 3 simple steps anyone can learn to help save a life from suicide. Just as people trained in CPR and the Heimlich Maneuver help save thousands of lives each year, people trained in QPR learn how to recognize the warning signs of a suicide crisis and how to get them the help they need.

**MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AID (MHFA)**

An evidence-based public education program which teaches how to recognize, understand, and respond to mental health challenges and crises, including suicide among youth and adults.

[Chester County Suicide Prevention Website]

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**GRIEF SUPPORT**

**for loss to suicide**

You are not alone. There are people who want to help.

- Join a supportive community with trained facilitators
- Connect with others who have experienced this loss
- Find strength in sharing
- Rekindle hope
- Learn about helpful local resources

4th Wednesday of every month
6:30 – 8:00 PM
Chester County NAMI
317 Exton Commons
Exton, PA 19341

Visit the Chester County Suicide Prevention Task Force website at chestercountysuicideprevention.com to register, or use the QR code.

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**WE’VE GOT YOUR BACK**

**NAMI Connection**

Recovery Peer Support Group
Virtual Biweekly meetings
2nd & 4th Mondays, 6 pm - 7 pm
Register here: https://bit.ly/49mnxCz
Information Opportunity
Did you know...

There are several other county departments who send out community newsletters and announcements just like this one. If you're interested, sign up here.

If you would like your information included in our newsletters, please contact Laura Wiechecki at lwiechecki@chesco.org
The next newsletter will be released in March.