



**BIRMINGHAM GROUP
Health Services, Inc.**

VSAAC

Valley Substance Abuse Action Council

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THE VSAAC VIEW

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SPECIAL PROGRAM TO BE HELD IN MAY

Join us on **Wednesday May 27th**

for a program for parents, caregivers, educators, police and social service providers:

THE STRANGER YOU KNOW- Child Sexual Abuse Prevention

Derby Town Hall, 1 Elizabeth Street —

Presented by Robert F. Kenary of the Children’s Trust Fund

The program is sponsored by the Valley Substance Abuse Action Council; Parent Child Resource Center; TEAM Family Resource Center, and the Derby Youth Services Bureau

Call VSAAC 736-8566 or TEAM 734-8609 ext. 14 for registration information.

Child Sexual Abuse and the Health of our Communities

The sexual abuse of children is a problem not talked about but one that undermines the well-being of thousands of Connecticut children.

‘Sexual abuse can forever alter a young child’s view of the world. It will color all of a child’s relationships. A child can become withdrawn, depressed or act out, causing trouble at home or school. A child is likely to be left with strong feelings of anger, fear, shame, hurt and disappointment. Boys are more likely to react with feelings of humiliation that may result in their becoming bullies. Girls are more likely to act out against themselves. Perhaps winding up with mental health problems. As they grow up, abused children may abuse alcohol or other drugs as a way of numbing out their feelings.’ www.smith-lawfirm.com

FAST FACTS

- ⇒ Only 1 to 10 percent of child sexual abuse cases are ever reported
- ⇒ Nearly 70% of all reported sexual assaults occur to children ages 17 and under.
- ⇒ The median age for reported abuse is 9 years old
- ⇒ 1 in every 7 victims is under the age of six
- ⇒ Nearly 70% of child sex offenders have between 1 and 9 victims
- ⇒ Only 10 –15% of child molesters use force or threats
- ⇒ Most child molesters offend against children they know and/or with whom they have a relationship
- ⇒ Cases of children making up stories are rare
- ⇒ There are an estimated 39 million survivors of childhood sexual abuse in the U.S. today
- ⇒ 70 to 80 % of sexual abuse survivors report excess drug and alcohol use

MAY IS NATIONAL MENTAL HEALTH MONTH

What is Mental Health

Mental health is a state of emotional and psychological well-being in which an individual is able to use his/her cognitive and emotional capabilities to function in society and meet ordinary demands of everyday life.

An estimated 26.2% of Americans 18 or older (about 1 in 4 adults) suffer from a diagnosable mental disorder.

The most common are:

- Anxiety disorders
- Mood disorders
- Psychotic disorders
- Eating disorders
- Personality disorders
- Impulse control disorders
- Addiction disorders

Our lives can be very stressful and for each of us the reasons can be very different.

The following are some proven and practical ways to help us all cope better:

- ⇒ Connect with others-
 - join a group or a class, spend time with friends
- ⇒ Stay positive
 - don't assume the worst, remember your achievements, keep a gratitude journal
- ⇒ Get physically active
 - join a gym or YMCA, work-out or walk with a friend, walk up stairs, park further from a store
- ⇒ Help others
 - volunteer, do something extra for a neighbor, friend, or family member
- ⇒ Get enough rest
 - sleep in a darkened room, follow a routine, limit the amount of caffeine intake
- ⇒ Create joy and satisfaction
 - watch a funny movie, list the high points of your day, do things that make you feel good
- ⇒ Eat well
 - eat healthy foods, limit fats and sugars, eat regular meals, eat fruit/nuts for snacks
- ⇒ Take care of your spirit
 - Develop a spiritual life; say no when necessary, prioritize workload
- ⇒ Deal better with hard times
 - work on solutions to problems, take one thing at a time, get support from friends/ family
- ⇒ Get professional help if you need it

Mental Health Month 2009 Calendar of Events

Birmingham Group Health Services, Inc. Information Displays at Area Libraries:

Week of May 4 – Plumb Memorial Library, 65 Wooster St., Shelton, CT

Week of May 12 – Seymour Public Library, 46 Church St., Seymour, CT

Week of May 19 – Ansonia Public Library, 53 South Cliff St., Ansonia, CT

Week of May 26 – Derby Neck Library, 307 Hawthorne Ave, Derby, CT

“The Snake Pit” This movie will be shown at the Valley Social Club, 285 Main Street, Ansonia - Monday, May 11, 2009 at 1:00 – 2:30 pm. Refreshments Served. Free and open to the public. Call Jim C. at (203) 736-2601, ext. 430, to reserve your seat.

Schizophrenic Anonymous (SA) Meeting: Tuesday, May 12, 2009, 1:00 – 1:45 pm @ Valley Social Club, 285 Main Street, Ansonia – Experience first hand a demonstration of a SA Meeting.

Anxiety Screening/Mental Health Fair: Wednesday, May 13, 2008, 12:00am – 1:30pm @ The W.E. Bassett Company, 100 Trap Falls Road Ext., Shelton, CT

Celebration, Part of Schizophrenia Awareness Week “A Day of Hope”: Wednesday, May 13, 12:00 noon, Malus Park, Ansonia. Rain date: Friday, May 15, 2009. Lunch at the Valley Social Club, 285 Main Street, Ansonia, immediately following the observance.

Enlightened Lunch: Thursday, May 14, 2009, 12:00 pm @ Holy Rosary Church Hall, Father Salemi Drive, Ansonia – Guest Speaker: Thomas A. Kirk, Ph.D., Commissioner, Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS). Free and Open to the Public. Social club and staff members of BGHS, Inc., Bridges and Harbor Health Services will be in attendance. Lunch Included.

NAMI Walk: Join Birmingham Group Health Services, Inc.'s team on Saturday, May 16, 2009, 10:00 am, Bushnell Park, Hartford, CT. For more info, or to participate, contact Jim C. at (203) 736-2601, ext. 430.

May is Mental Health Awareness Month Block Party – Thursday, May 28, 2009, 4:00 pm – 7:00 p.m. on the grounds of Birmingham Group Health Services, Inc. The community is invited to attend. The event will cap off a variety of month-long activities to promote the importance of good mental health and to celebrate the improved quality of life provided for thousands of individuals through BGHS' quality mental health services.