

**MENTAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION OF BROWARD COUNTY, Inc.**  
**d.b.a. MENTAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION OF SOUTHEAST FLORIDA**

**2017 ANNUAL REPORT**

The recently completed fiscal period marked the 60<sup>th</sup> year of MHA service to the community. This has been another year of great transition for the MHA. The Mental Health Association is in its renewal year for CARF Accreditation in December of 2017. The original CARF Accreditation was granted for three years which is the longest time frame available in December 2014.

This report will outline many of the efforts and outcomes over the past year that the Mental Health Association has been proud to produce. The efforts of the Board and staff have been tremendous in supporting the mission. **The Mission is to promote mental health and victory over mental illnesses and related challenges through education, prevention, advocacy, research and empowerment.**

While the Board continues to guide the organization's goals and future, the staff and volunteers work tirelessly to bring the vision to life. We are proud of their achievements and the impact that their efforts have made in advancing the mission.

**MHA – SERVICE BY THE NUMBERS**

**CHILDREN'S PREVENTION:** Listen to Children, I'm Thumbody and Thumbody, Too

- 300 children were successfully paired to Listener Mentors
- 54 public and charter schools were served by 114 trained, supervised MHA volunteers
- 49 new volunteer mentors were trained
- Analysis of LTC Pre-Post Surveys were administered to teachers whose students had at least 10 meetings with their Listener. There was an 88% return rate on the surveys. The data showed that 80% of students improved in readiness to learn and 72% showed improved engagement in school activities. The surveys included numerous positive, subjective comments as well.
- A total of 36 School Counselors (67%) returned feedback forms, and the results were extremely encouraging. 86% believed that participating students showed improvement in all of the following areas: demeanor, behavior, effort, academics and social skills
- 98% of parents surveyed felt that the Listener experience had a positive impact on their child.
- I'm Thumbody for Grade 2 classes was presented at 61 public schools and 1 community site; 6,949 second graders from 378 classes learned the value of self-respect, respect for others, responsible behavior and resources for safe help.
- 1,339 kindergarten children from 15 schools in 84 classes participated in Thumbody, Too
- Thumbody's anti-bullying themes have reached over 380,000 local children since MHA began the Thumbody programs in 1983. MHA was ahead of the times when the program began and remains relevant today
- 99.6% of teachers who responded to I'm Thumbody long-term surveys felt the program was beneficial for children's self-esteem, 93.5% noted improvement in students' respect for others and 93% observed an increase in level of responsibility and improved self-control.
- Overall the Children Services Department enjoyed a successful year helping to provide services to over 8,522 youngsters gain resiliency skills including self-esteem, communication skills, problem solving and decision-making skills.
- Thanks to the generosity of the AJ Johnson Foundation and specifically Diane Johnson for her support in providing over \$30,000 last year in funding we have been able to continue this program.
- Other financial support is derived from cities such as Pompano Beach, Coral Springs, Tamarac and Lauderhill.

## **CONSUMER SUPPORT SERVICES:**

- Over 3,230 individuals completed member applications and attended programs at 9Muses Art Center
- 21 different peer facilitated support groups are hosted at 9Muses weekly
- 517 individuals participated in individual and group peer mentoring activities
- 7 six-week curricula covering diverse arts modalities have been executed by staff & members
- 863 members engaged in organized course work following the new curricula
- 7,231 Adult Mentoring contact units were delivered
- 3,146 empowerment and training hours were contributed to 9Muses Art Center by five (5) different Universities
- 863 unduplicated callers were supported by the SETH Line Warm Line
- 4,500+ calls were supported by 27 SETH Line volunteers
- More than 1,200 guests attended performances at the Creativity Café

## **PARENT-FAMILY SERVICES:**

- 278 individuals participated in ChildNet or Court directed parenting education classes or groups
- 100 community-based families participated in parenting, co-parenting and anger management classes.
- 253 classes were conducted by trained educator/facilitators
- 209 parents earned certificates for course completion
- 230 parent behavioral observations were conducted
- 99% of ChildNet referred parents who completed the program had no indicators of abuse/neglect in the 12 months following their participation
- 2,000+ inmates in Broward's jails have participated in MHA facilitated life skills workshops to help them to better engage with their children and families upon their release
- 250 parents were served at BARC and Susan B Anthony Center in the area of parenting and parent support
- PEPS educators have collectively logged in over 300 hours of professional training to enhance their ability to deliver quality services
- 150 families of children with mental illnesses were paired to Family Support Partners
- 100% of participating parents who completed surveys reported the program helpful to them in addressing needs of their children
- PEPS has added to their array of services, now offering anger management classes, supervised visitation and classes for parents with development delay
- MHA's two trained CPP therapists working in conjunction with Broward County's Early Childhood Court have completed one year of the required 18 month of training needed to complete their certification.
- 28 Kinship families have been served in our newest funded program that supports families raising children who are not their own. Families receive a vast array of services such as case management, in-home parenting, legal assistance and respite care. They also attend family building events and bi-monthly activities at no cost to the family thanks to this grant from the Children Services Council.

### **Parenting client comments in response to parenting classes:**

- *"I am extremely grateful that I found this class and instructor. She always had the time and patience to listen to us and gave the best ways to look at our current situations. Thank you-this has opened my eyes to move forward in my future as a mother."*
- *"My teacher taught me a lot. She really took the time to help me master the new skills"*
- *"I received help and support from parenting that was so helpful at a time when I felt judged and misunderstood by everyone. My instructor explained things clearly to me and I was treated with respect"*
- *"My teacher was my only sanity during this time; she really helped me to understand my children better. I learned so much!"*

### **Parenting Responses after receiving Parenting Classes:**

- *That there are different styles of parenting and the styles affect how our kids act*
- *To accept my child for whom they are*
- *How to cope with my children's behavior and how to give them options and how to talk to them instead of being angry with them*
- *Spending time with your child is the best way to build a bond with them*
- *Physical discipline is not the answer*

- *That I want to raise my children differently than I was raised*
- *Consistency and routines make sense for kids*
- *I learned there is always more to learn*

**Family Voices responses:**

- *"I am so thankful for you being sent my way...I appreciate you and everything you do to help me"*
- *My Peer Advocate's help has been invaluable in getting the services I needed for my child! Thank you for being there!"*

**Kinship Responses:**

- *"Thank you so much for having a program that supports me as a grandparent! I've felt so isolated and scared about being there for my young grandson as he grows. Now I know that I am not alone."*
- *"Having activities and support have made all the difference to me! I have more hope for the future having these kind and caring people in my life!"*

**OUTREACH/EDUCATION:**

**7,000 Connections Guidebooks were printed and distributed at no cost to consumers and families**

- 14 Professional Education Seminars were hosted with 1,120 attendees confirmed
- 38,409 received training including staff training and CEU's
- 4,813 participants attended health fairs or resource fairs at which MHA services were featured
- 365,000 received e-mail outreach via Constant Contact (est)
- 19,487 received support or mentoring
- 16,500 contacts have been logged on MHA'S Constant Contact list with the number growing daily
- Other outreach events reached 7,050 individuals
- 31,755 hits on the mobile [www.browardconnections.org](http://www.browardconnections.org) site
- Power of Peers Presentation at county wide United Way Commission on Substance Abuse and BBHC Prevention Conference

**MHA SERVICE IMPACT**

Numbers tell only a part of the story. Far more important is the impact of our efforts on those we serve. Here are but a few examples:

**COMMENTS-TEACHERS WHOSE STUDENTS HAD LISTENERS**

- *(This child) faces an exceedingly challenging life situation-I don't know how he would have made it without his listener.*
- *(This boy) has made a lot of progress with his behavior. He has improved how he communicates when he is getting frustrated. He seems happier.*
- *(This boy) made nice progress this year. He loved going with his Listener and the day he met with her were usually his best days. He showed improvement with social skills with both peers and adults.*
- *The change in (this girl's) attitude and manners is amazing. She now feels better about herself; she is making great choices about her behavior and relationships.*
- *(This boy) has shown academic and social growth as he interacts with his peers.*

**COMMENTS –CHILDREN WITH LISTENER MENTORS (Actual comments as written)**

- *She always listens to me and she has never been mean to me and she will never break my heart.*
- *He is a lot like me and I feel better about myself when I talk to him.*
- *My Listener helps me by providing me someone to express my feelings to me in different problems. Someone to say what I think on a problem. I really like her. She helps me understand things I didn't understand at first. She doesn't scold me when I do things wrong. She sit with me and we talk about it.*

**TEACHER COMMENTS ON THUMBODY**

- *It should be continued and expanded to other grades because we are educating the total child! Emotional and mental behaviors count!*
- *The program helps students understand that everyone is different but special in some way.*
- *I love this program because it teaches mental health. Healthy mind, healthy self-esteem!*
- *I think the program was great! It helps teach the kids to not only be nice to others but to themselves as well.*

- *This program has left a very positive impact on my students. They use many lessons taught by this program daily.*

#### **CHILDRENS COMMENTS ON THUMBODY (Actual Comments as Written)**

- *To be kind to yourself and others.*
- *I am special person even though I am difrent*
- *I should think good about myself and to treat people the way I want to be treated.*
- *I should be kind to others. And I should show respect.*
- *I should be posotive and not negative.*
- *I lerned to be kind and make good choices to not do mean staf. To not give up.*

#### **CONSUMER VOICE AND EMPOWERMENT**

- \$3,161 was received from the public for 9Muses artist's works.
- Themed exhibits included:
  - Playing with a full deck
  - Wellness Boxes
  - The Orchid Show
- 9Muses artwork has been exhibited as part of the leased art work program at locations such as Correct Care/South Florida State Hospital, Dania Medical Center, Gulf Coast Jewish Family Services and Henderson Behavioral Health, NOVA University and Magellan Health.
- 9MusesArtCenter hosts a mobile site for the Connections Behavioral Health Guidebook. [www.browardconnections.org](http://www.browardconnections.org)
- 9MusesArtCenter peers have been selected by BBHC to provide peer support through natural linkages to individuals who have been discharged from the State Hospital, Broward Health Inpatient Unit and the Henderson CSU to ensure that people are successfully integrated into the community. This is through the Power of Peers Program (POPS).

#### **In their own voice, 9Muses and PROSPER participants offer the following comments:**

- *It really is a wonderful, safe place to come and socialize. The peer support meetings are something I look forward to every week.*
- *9Muses helps me stay busy. This is a place where I can come every day and get a lot of support and help when I need it.*
- *I always admired the work of painters but thought this was something I could not do. After attending classes at 9Muses, I can see the progress I have made and I continue to improve.*
- *It has improved my confidence. I have also learned to be more patient with those around me.*
- *The class was well orchestrated and very informative.*
- *I have learned a lot of things such as how to organize my house, keep track of my appointments and how important it is not to isolate.*
- *I have always struggled with water color but I have learned more how to control it.*
- *9Muses allowed me to be of help to others.*

Medical providers who exhibit the works of 9Muses artists at their facilities report it as a tool to easily include mental health and wellness in their everyday language. Hospitals that exhibit 9Muses work in their psychiatric units report it as a bridge to community opportunity for individuals in treatment. Those patients say that the work is a reminder that there is something to look forward to in their journey to recovery.

#### **REPRESENTING INTERESTS OF THE COMMUNITY**

**LOCALLY:** MHA staff and volunteers are actively engaged in numerous community boards and committees addressing services and issues that cross the lifespan. They include:

- BBHC Consumer Advisory Council
- Broward County Disability Expo
- Community Solutions
- Gulf Coast Jewish Family and Community Services Advisory Board
- Broward Coalition on Aging
- Alliance for Aging Advisory Council

- Broward Partnership for the Homeless Program Committee
- Correct Care/South Florida State Hospital Governing Board
- BBHC Board of Directors
- House of Hope Board of Directors
- State Hospital Discharge Committee

**NATIONALLY & BEYOND:** Mental Health America and World Federation for Mental Health provide resources and resource opportunities that expand our vision. MHA was again approved as the NIMH Outreach Partner for Florida providing us with a wealth of free materials and resources that we share locally and with affiliate partners statewide. The free materials distributed by MHA are valued in the thousands of dollars, a benefit to our community and a gift to those we serve.

#### **LOCAL UNIVERSITY COLLABORATIVE PROJECTS**

The Mental Health Association established increased visibility in its work with local Universities offering training and intern placement opportunities. Those include:

- Keiser University
- Nova Southeastern University
- South University
- Broward College
- Chamberlain College

#### **THIS YEAR'S HIGHLIGHTS**

MHA is appreciative for the broad support that allows us to provide our programs and services. Our diverse funding sources have allowed us to be creative and responsive to emerging needs. We value the positive relationships that we have evolved with our primary funders, the Broward Behavioral Health Coalition, Broward County and Child Net. We developed a new funding tract this year through our application and award of our Kinship Care Program funded by the Broward Children Services Council. We continue to benefit from the support of local municipalities: Coral Springs, Pompano Beach, Tamarac and our home base of Lauderhill as examples.

Special thanks go to Board members Denise Thompson and Rossana Narvaez for their co-leadership of the 22<sup>nd</sup> Annual EPIC Awards. Working together with the staff of each of the MHA Departments and dozens of enthusiastic Muse members, the EPIC event was praised as a great event. EPIC is known for its recognition of people who go “above and beyond” in making a difference for the community. The EPIC team should be commended for doing just that! It is fitting that we also acknowledge the sponsors and donors who invested in EPIC so generously. We thank our 2017 honorees. Without them, the event would not have been possible. Exceptional indeed are Martella T. Burris, Legal Aid, David Freedman, Community Partnership, Debra Futterman, Henderson, and Sandra Huff, Correct Care . The event raised over \$15,000.

Our end of the year appeal this past year raised over \$10,000 and we expect to improve upon that number in the upcoming year. There were various fundraising opportunities throughout this year which were successful and we need to continue to build upon those opportunities.

## **NEW INITIATIVES**

The MHA applied for and was awarded a much needed infrastructure grant this year from Health Foundation of South Florida. The award paid for new work stations throughout the entire agency along with upgrades to all the software and a new larger, more secure server. Additional improvements included computers available to the 9Muses Members for use at no charge for social connections and other computer related activities. This project has been overwhelmingly well received by staff and members alike. The total grant award was \$50,000.

The Parent Education Program was awarded a program that provides therapeutic intervention for parents of children under the age of 5. This Child Psychotherapy Program (CPP) required extensive training of two staff who are still in the process of completing this 18 month curriculum and has added a much needed intervention to parents and children who need to learn the process of appropriate bonding with a child.

The Power of Peers program has been expanded once again so that there are now 3 full time peer staff who provide much needed services to individuals being discharged from the state hospital to now include individuals in the Henderson CSU and the North Broward Hospital In-Patient unit.

The new Connections Guidebook is now available on line through the website [www.browardconnections.org](http://www.browardconnections.org) and is free of charge. It has all the information available in the Connections Guidebook but offers direct links to agencies listed and is updated annually to ensure the information is up to date.

## **FROM THE CEO**

The staff here at the Mental Health Association are incredibly dedicated and committed to the mission. They continually step up whenever requested and regularly go above and beyond the expected call of duty. I am proud to be associated with this organization and envision our future as being bright and the opportunities endless.

The Board of Directors continues to be an active partner with the staff and persons served to ensure that services are delivered in a caring and reasonable fashion. The Board has been a tremendous asset to the organization and I thank them for their time and expertise.

We continue to work with all the behavioral health providers in the county in a highly collaborative manner fostering the commitment to those people we serve. The MHA has been in the forefront in the development of exciting new peer opportunities and we look forward to an exciting year in developing even more programming around this initiative.

MHA's commitment to the community remains strong and I am proud to be part of this commitment as we move forward at a very challenging time. Early Intervention is the key to mitigating the devastation that mental illness can significantly impact an individual's life. Stigma still remains a constant battle to overcome and while we have made strides we continue to find challenges, we remain resolute in our mission and look forward to another year with your support.

As MHA celebrates its 60<sup>th</sup> year of operation in Broward County we continue to be a vibrant and ever changing agency ensuring our future and the future of the many individuals who have come to rely on our

services over the years. I continue to be amazed at the hard working individuals who help keep our agency providing these vital services to our community. Our volunteer corps of Listen to Children and I'm Thumbody and Seth Line volunteers continue to sustain these two programs who have existed for many years due to the selfless duty to community. An agency like the MHA cannot survive without the contributions of these volunteers as well as the dedicated staff who have provided many years of expertise and devotion to this work. Our Board deserves recognition for their years of dedicated service as well. There are a number of Board members who have served for many years and value the contributions of the organization and remain committed to the mission.

Thank you all for your dedication and service!