

MENTAL HEALTH AMERICA OF SOUTHEAST FLORIDA

2019 ANNUAL REPORT

The recently completed fiscal period marked the 63rd year of MHA service to the community. This has been another great year for the MHA. Mental Health America renewed its CARF Accreditation in December of 2017. The monitoring went extremely well and CARF awarded the MHA a three-year reaccreditation which is the most that can be awarded. Our next reaccreditation will be 2020. We were awarded renewals of our contracts with BBHC (State of Florida), Broward County, Child Net and Children Services Council of Broward.

This report will outline many of the efforts and outcomes over the past year that Mental Health America 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

- 368 children were successfully paired to MH Mentors called Listeners. Listeners had a combined 6,350 thirty-minute meetings in the 2018-19 school year.
- 51 Broward County public schools participated in the Listen to Children (LTC) Program. Students from those schools were mentored by 109 trained MHA Listeners.
- 51 new volunteer mentors received training.
- Pre-Post Surveys were administered to teachers whose students had at least 10 meetings with their Listener. There was a 95% return rate on the surveys. The data showed that 72% of students improved in readiness to learn and 63% showed improved engagement in school activities. The surveys included numerous positive comments.
- 98% of School Counselors who returned feedback forms believed that participating students showed improvement in demeanor, behavior, effort, academics and social skills and 95% thought reported that students showed progress in academics.
- Thirty parents returned feedback forms; 100% of them felt that the Listener experience had a positive impact on their child.
- I'm Thumbody for Grade 2 classes was presented at 65 public schools in the 2018-19 school year. 7,399 second graders from 418 classes participated in this program for social emotional learning. Presenters introduced the concept of good mental health and taught the children to respect themselves, respect others, be responsible for their own behavior and know where to go for safe help.
- 971 kindergarten children from 9 Broward schools enjoyed Thumbody, Too. The same concepts were discussed at a level the little ones could understand.
- Thumbody's anti-bullying themes have reached over 400,000 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% of teachers who responded to I'm Thumbody long-term surveys felt the program was beneficial for children's self-esteem, 91% noted improvement in students' respect for others and 90% 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 8,684 youngsters gain resiliency skills including self-esteem, communication skills, problem solving and decision-making skills.

- Special thanks to Diane Johnson whose generosity through the AJ Johnson Foundation 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 Coral Springs, Tamarac and Lauderhill.
- The beneficial services MHA provides to children could not exist without the contributions of all our donors, and we thank you.

CONSUMER SUPPORT SERVICES:

- 3,707 individuals completed member applications and attended programs at 9Muses Art Center
- 19 different peer facilitated support groups are hosted at 9Muses weekly
- 217 members engaged in Wellness Recovery Action Planning (WRAP)
- 521 individuals participated in individual and group peer mentoring activities
- 7 six-week curricula covering diverse arts modalities have been executed by staff & members
- 935 members engaged in organized course work following the new curricula
- 36 unique weekly opportunities for member participation are executed by staff and members.
- 9,326 Adult Mentoring contact units were delivered
- 2798 empowerment and training hours were contributed to 9Muses Art Center by five (5) different Universities
- 946 unduplicated callers were supported by the SETH Line Warm Line
- 5,214+ calls were supported by 23 SETH Line volunteers
- More than 623 guests attended performances at the Creativity Café
- 331 individuals have been enrolled in the Power of Peers Program from In-Patient Mental Health facilities in Broward County.

PARENT-FAMILY SERVICES:

- 300 individuals participated in Child Net or Court directed parenting education classes or groups. 15 families have engaged in Child Parent Psychotherapy.
- 80 community-based families participated in parenting, co-parenting and anger management classes.
- 180 classes were conducted by trained educator/facilitators
- 100 parents earned certificates for course completion
- 150 parent behavioral observations were conducted
- 90% of ChildNet referred parents who completed the program had no indicators of abuse/neglect in the 12 months following their participation
- 1,000+ 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
- 40 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
- PEPS continues to offer an array of services, including anger management classes, supervised visitation, Child-Parent Psychotherapy (CPP) and classes for parents with development delay. Classes were offered in English, Spanish and Creole.
- MHA's two trained CPP therapists working in conjunction with Broward County's Early Childhood Court have completed their required training and have been rostered by the CPP Board and one has completed 12 months of the required 18 months of training needed to complete the certification.
- 75 Kinship families have been served in our 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.
- PEPS staff have received training in 24/7 Dad through Fatherhood Initiative and Nurturing Parenting. They are certified to teach these programs.

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*
- *To be proactive with my parenting.*

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!"*
- *Having someone who is there for me has made all the difference.*

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!"*
- *"Having someone to go with me to the lawyer to help me with the complicated legal issues that comes along with taking custody of my grandchild made all the difference to me."*

OUTREACH/EDUCATION:

- 13 Professional Education Seminars were hosted with 712 attendees confirmed
- 34,612 received training including staff training and CEU's
- 4,435 participants attended health fairs or resource fairs at which MHA services were featured
- 523,987 received e-mail outreach via Constant Contact (est)
- CEO elected to represent the community as the Chair of the Provider Advisory Council reporting directly to the BBHC Board.
- Multiple trainings offered by staff and peers in the community.
- Community boards and networks include, House of Hope Board, Broward Coalition on Aging, Pompano Beach Chamber of Commerce, Tobacco Free Partnership, BPHI, among many others.

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

- *"because of the Listen to Children, (Child) has been able to express his thoughts and feelings with a little more confidence."*
- *"(Child) always comes home and tells me how much he loves going to his Listener, and he says it helps his focus when he goes back to class."*
- *"It gave someone time to spend one-on-one with her. She had a tough time transitioning and this helped her talk about things"*

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

- *(Child's) behavior improved greatly. She is able to communicate her needs instead of getting angry or withdrawn. She makes friends. She works in groups without arguing. She follows directions and stays on task more often. She is now a new and improved person.*
- *"His tantrums have less frequent than before. Mom has stated that this program has really helped her child."*
- *"What an amazing Listener this child had this year. She was crucial to achieving all the improvements made this year".*
- *"(Child) has improved academically. He is respectful and gets along with others. He shows effort daily".*

TEACHER COMMENTS ON THUMBODY

- *"the program helps students identify feelings and verbally express emotions".*
- *"Excellent program! Teaching good mental health skills is important and essential I keeping our students safe and happy".*
- *"Great topic teaching responsibility, positive reinforcement, giving visual reminders, building student character/self esteem"*
- *"Such a wonderful program, Really gets students thinking about good mental health. This program is something we really need."*
- *"My students are making connections to what they learned in this program. It made a positive impact on them."*

CHILDRENS COMMENTS ON THUMBODY (Actual Comments as Written)

- *"It's always nice to treat others with respect and respect yourself"*
- *"I can be kind event tho (sic) somebody is different from me"*
- *"You don't have to do or say mean things to people when your (sic) mad"*
- *"To make good chocies (sic)".*
- *"To be respectful/helpful and not to be negative(sic) and be positive and they taught me to be kind every day"*
- *"You should talk to people about your fillings (sic)"*

CONSUMER VOICE AND EMPOWERMENT

- 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
- 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).
- The 9 MusesArtCenter was featured on a Claude Pepper Documentary in which the services offered were a feature piece about alternatives to incarceration.

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
- 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, Broward Children Services Council and Child Net. We continue to benefit from the support of local municipalities: Coral Springs, Tamarac and our home base of Lauderhill as examples.

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 2019 honorees. Without them, the event would not have been possible. Exceptional indeed are Allen and Gayle Geise, Michael Houghtaling, Hung Nguyen, MD, Rick Ricardardi, Senator Nan Rick and Claudia Vincencio. The event raised over \$9,000.

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.

MHA played a role in connecting much needed services to the Broward School System in support of community partners who were able to provide Trauma Based Support to teachers, students and other related personnel related to the Parkland School shooting in February 2018.

NEW INITIATIVES

MHA published about 5,000 Connections Guidebooks and these are being distributed now. The funding was through an additional grant from BBHC to produce the books.

The MHA has renewed its lease on our current property for another 5 years. As part of this renewal, new bathrooms, carpeting, painting and office moves will occur. .

The Children's Services Council of Broward has renewed the Kinship Grant for another year with a slight funding increase. The Child Net Contract has been signed with a rate increase with the expectation that MHA will be able to draw down the units associated with that grant. BBHC has renewed our award for the services associated with the Art Center.

The new Connections Guidebook is now available on line through the website 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.

MHA has been approached to sponsor a smaller community based agency providing Suicide support and intervention services in Broward County. MHA's role is to become the fiscal sponsor with a potential merger of that organization into MHA.

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 63nd 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!