What’s New at MHA?

Check out this latest edition of the Update to find out more about our new and continued programs, including our wellness groups, training and events!

Make sure to save the date for our upcoming Empowering Community Wellness Symposium (formerly the Community Mental Health Conference) which will take place on May 5th, from 9AM to noon, at the Riverfront Events Center. This is the first of two events this year that celebrate the 21st year of this important conference.

On the following pages you will also find information about our MHA Chats series, which takes place monthly on Zoom Webinar, bringing information on a variety of topics related to mental health and MHA.

Flyers posted in the following pages link to virtual AND in-person suicide prevention training opportunities and provide zoom information for new groups developed during this time of social distancing. We are also providing in-person wellness groups, so make sure to check out that information as well! Groups include general depression and anxiety groups as well as specialty groups like survivors of suicide group, women’s group, men’s group, BIPOC wellness group, and even a virtual karaoke group on Friday nights!

Read about the success of E-Racing the Blues, our annual fundraising walk that takes place in October. We were pleased to raise over $30,000 this year, and had a great time doing it!

We continue to offer virtual training for peer specialists, including Peer Certification Training, and a variety of CEU opportunities for those working in the peer recovery field.

We continue to offer online screening for depression, anxiety, substance use disorders, and a host of other common and treatable disorders. You can find the screening tool linked on our homepage, mhainde.org.

As always, we want to say thank you to our hardworking and dedicated staff, our caring and supportive board members, our faithful and helpful volunteers, our generous sponsors and funders, and all of our friends and supporters in the community who have allowed us to continue to serve Delaware during this time, by executing our mission of advocacy, education and support!
Dear Friends and Supporters,

Here at MHA Delaware, we work with individuals and families to educate, raise awareness and provide support around mental health. Over the years we have received commonly asked questions from the public, and we wanted to include some of the answers to these frequently asked questions here.

**What does your agency do?**
MHA supports the mental health of Delawareans through education, support, and advocacy. Some examples of our education include Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training, Peer 101, and our biannual Empowering Community Wellness Symposium. Support includes services such as free wellness groups throughout the state, and providing peer mentoring to those involved in the criminal justice system through mental health court. Our advocacy includes involvement in a variety of committees and consortiums working on strengthening the mental health system in Delaware, and preventing suicide.

**Can I come in for an evaluation/treatment?**
While MHA does not provide evaluation or treatment, we will be happy to help you find the services you need. The first thing we will probably ask is about your insurance, since we want to make sure you are not turned away from a treatment facility, or billed for a service that should be covered. If you are insured, you can call the number on your insurance card to find treatment options near you. If you don’t have insurance, you may be eligible for services through the state Division of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Eligibility and Enrollment Unit.

**I am worried about a loved one. How do I talk to them about their mental health?**
Be honest, direct, empathetic and open. Choose a convenient, private time and place. Have plenty of time to actively listen, and some ideas for connecting your loved one to resources that can help. You can find a resource guide on our website [here](#).

**My child or other loved one is having a crisis. What should I do?**
If your loved one is a child under the age of 18, you can call Child Priority Response at 800-969-HELP (4357). If your loved one is an adult, you can call Crisis Intervention Services.

**I have been through my own struggles with mental illness, and I want to help others. How do I get involved?**
It is a wonderful thing to be able to use a difficult experience to help others, and we are thankful to our many supporters who have done exactly that. If you are interested in volunteering, please email information@mhai-de.org, with your areas of interest. Another way to give back is to join a wellness group, where sharing your experiences may be a lifeline to another person going through similar struggles. If you are interested in making this type of peer support a career, we offer classes on gaining professional peer certification, with more information on page 4.

To find the answers to more FAQ’s, you can [click here](#). As always, we thank you for your interest in MHA Delaware!

Warmly,

Emily Vera
Check Out our MHA Chat Series

MHA Chats is a series of conversations with community partners, organizations, and individuals who are committed to improving mental wellness and access to resources. We encourage participants to interact with our guests in real time as we chat with them about new initiatives, programs, and events.

In response to the pandemic, we wanted to provide extra opportunities for connection and education in our new virtual landscape, which led to the development of this excellent series. Please subscribe to our mailing list so you do not miss these upcoming sessions.

Hosted by Jason Coleman

If you are interested in being part of a chat, contact Jason Coleman at jcoleman@mhainde.org.

Join us for our next chat on February 23rd at 11:00am with Dr. Edward Swanton, the Medical Director at the Hunt Valley, Bel Air and Owings Mills locations for Greenbrook TMS NeuroHealth Centers. Find out more about transcranial magnetic stimulation (TMS) therapy and its benefits for mental health conditions.

Register here!

You can find our past chats on our website here.

Conversations have included topics such as maintaining health and hope as a caregiver, autism and mental health, and media influence on mental health. We have highlighted agencies such as Sean’s House, the Delaware Coalition Against Gun Violence, and the Human Hug project. We have also highlighted MHA programs such as mental health court peer mentoring, peer education, suicide prevention education and more.
Upcoming Training

At MHA, we provide a variety of evidence based and research based courses to assist participants in learning about mental health, suicide prevention, peer services and other important topics.

**ASIST** is a two-day, in-person, intensive training for any adult who wants to learn more about suicide prevention. It stands for Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training, and will teach practical skills you can use with someone who is at risk of suicide, including how to ask about suicide, engage with the person at risk, and help develop a plan for safety. Our next ASIST training will take place on February 22 and 23 at the Community Services Building in Wilmington. [Click here to register.](https://mhainde.org)

Check out our home page for a calendar of upcoming trainings at mhainde.org. For more information about suicide prevention training, contact Jennifer Smolowitz at jsmolowitz@mhainde.org.

**Wellness Recovery Action Planning (W.R.A.P.)** is an evidenced based practice that helps people discover and practice the things that keep them well and on their road to recovery. In this workshop, we will develop personal WRAPs and explore ways to incorporate into our every day lives. WRAP allows participants to identify what wellness looks like in their lives and plan ways to bring that vision of wellness to fruition. It helps people discover their triggers and signs of un-wellness, develop methods to get back to wellness, and avoid crisis. Our next WRAP: Seminar 1 will take place Tuesday, February 22 - Thursday February 24 9:00 am - 4:00 pm. [Register here!](https://mhainde.org)

**Peer Certification Training** is for people currently working in peer support who want to become a Certified Peer Recovery Specialist in the state of Delaware. This course provides participants with all of the information needed to take the Certified Peer Recovery Specialist exam. Additionally, participants will gain knowledge and practice skills to strengthen their abilities as peer supporters. [Register Here!](https://mhainde.org) For more information about peer training and services, email kdirnardo@mhainde.org.

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[ADVOCATE EDUCATE SUPPORT]
Community Inclusion and Recovery: How Community Inclusion Helped Me

Join MHA Peer Educator Natalie Klaus-Rogers for a webinar presentation about community inclusion as she talks about how employment helped her live a fulfilling and purposeful life after spending many years on disability. Community Inclusion doesn’t just help strengthen a peer’s recovery journey or help them to better maintain their recovery, it prevents mental health challenges and is essential to a person’s well-being. Sometimes stigma, community mental health care, and lack of self-confidence can make community participation more challenging for folks with mental health struggles. However, community inclusion is key to being well, getting well, and staying well.

Using my personal journey of working my way off my disability benefits after 20 years for permanent full-time employment, I would like to discuss the importance of community inclusion for peers with mental health challenges. After briefly defining community inclusion, I will make the case that it is something that should be present in every Peer’s life throughout every phase of their recovery.

Learning Objectives:

- What is Community Inclusion?
- Community Inclusion should include everyone, including community members with disabilities.
- Community Inclusion is not something just for “well” people or people in recovery
- Obstacles to Community Inclusion
- Community Inclusion can be essential to a peer’s recovery.

Register here!

Natalie Klaus-Rogers grew up in central Ohio surrounded by her large German and African American families. She spent both her junior years of high school and college studying abroad in Germany on scholarship. She earned a BA from The University of Cincinnati in German Languages and Literature.

After battling mental illness for her entire adult life, Natalie was introduced to Peer Support when she was hired to work on a Peer run Warm Line in Cincinnati, Ohio. Upon moving to Delaware, she continued her 15 year journey in professional Peer Support at the Mental Health Association in Delaware.

Natalie lives in Wilmington with her husband and two small children. She is an Advanced Level WRAP Facilitator, facilitates Digital Peer Support trainings, and is a Mental Health First Aid Instructor. She loves to read and has one cat too many.
For more information about wellness group offerings, click here

The Disability Haven Wellness Group is an inclusive, peer-led group that brings individuals with disabilities together in a safe environment to share life experiences and receive support.

To register, email Golda Duncan at g.duncan@mhainde.org or Jennifer Wendell at specialprojects@mhainde.org
To view our schedule of wellness groups and register, click here

A COMMUNITY OF SUPPORT AWAITS YOU

Depression & Anxiety Support Group

Wednesdays 6pm-7pm

Callers welcome: 1646 876 9923
Zoom Meeting ID: 363 573 9664

Contact Rochelle at rbalan@mhainde.org
or Shynia at (302) 597-8130 for more information
E-Racing the Blues North

E-Racing the Blues North took place on Saturday, October 2 at Glasgow Park.

This was our first live fundraising event since the start of the pandemic, and we were fortunate to have a beautiful sunny morning. We were so excited to be able to come together again with our wonderful supportive community and walk together in person.

There were 33 sponsors, 6 teams and 90 participants. Our final net income from event was $31,618. We are grateful to all of those who provided sponsorships, donations of refreshments, money, and time, and to all those who participated to create a wonderful event. Thank you to our Development Manager, Roberta Fishgold, who oversaw the event and myriad details that made it successful.

Thank you to all who helped us meet our fundraising goal which allows us to further our mission of advocacy, education and support for the mental health of E-Racing the Blues North.

Thank you!

BY SUPPORTING E-RACING THE BLUES FOR MENTAL HEALTH YOU HELPED RAISE OVER $30,000 FOR THE MHA!
5 Action Steps for Helping Someone in Emotional Pain

Suicide is a major public health concern and a leading cause of death in the United States. Suicide affects people of all ages, genders, races, and ethnicities.

Suicide is complicated and tragic, but it can be preventable. Knowing the warning signs for suicide and how to get help can help save lives.

Here are 5 steps you can take to #BeThe1To help someone in emotional pain:

1. **ASK:**
   “Are you thinking about killing yourself?” It’s not an easy question but studies show that asking at-risk individuals if they are suicidal does not increase suicides or suicidal thoughts.

2. **KEEP THEM SAFE:**
   Reducing a suicidal person’s access to highly lethal items or places is an important part of suicide prevention. While this is not always easy, asking if the at-risk person has a plan and removing or disabling the lethal means can make a difference.

3. **BE THERE:**
   Listen carefully and learn what the individual is thinking and feeling. Research suggests acknowledging and talking about suicide may in fact reduce rather than increase suicidal thoughts.

4. **HELP THEM CONNECT:**
   Save the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline number (1-800-273-TALK) and the Crisis Text Line (741741) in your phone so they’re there if you need them. You can also help make a connection with a trusted individual like a family member, friend, spiritual advisor, or mental health professional.

5. **STAY CONNECTED:**
   Staying in touch after a crisis or after being discharged from care can make a difference. Studies have shown the number of suicide deaths goes down when someone follows up with the at-risk person.

For more information on suicide prevention:
www.nimh.nih.gov/suicideprevention
www.bethe1to.com

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ADVOCATE EDUCATE SUPPORT
Take a Mental Health Screening Online.

If you are feeling sad, anxious or overwhelmed, take a free, anonymous mental health self-assessment from our homepage—
www.mhainde.org.

Mission:
The Mental Health Association in Delaware promotes improved mental well being for all individuals and families in Delaware through education, support and advocacy.

In pursuit of our Mission, we strive to:

• Improve the community’s understanding of mental health and the mind-body connection between mental and physical health.

• Provide education and opportunities for individuals to identify early warning signs of mental illness and subsequently provide programs and an environment that supports recovery and improves resilience for these individuals.

• Assure that those who request information and need mental health care referral have confidential access to the appropriate information and know how to obtain care.

• Advocate for improved support and treatment particularly at the state and federal levels, especially where reform is needed.