

MENTAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION

Updates and Information from the Atlantic County Office

August is National Wellness Month



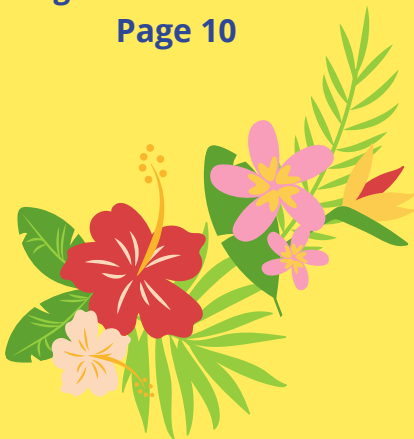
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MHA Atlantic sends 'Wellness' on an overdue vacation

Well, well, well...

You've certainly made something of yourself, Wellness. During the past two years, you really came into your own with big spotlights in the news about stress management and self-care.

You've worked hard, so during the month of August, we got you. We want you to take victory lap, maybe enjoy some quiet time, or try a new hobby. You've done a great deal to make sure the rest of us knew what to do year-round. Seeing as there are 8 dimensions of you, you're pretty busy.

The staff at Atlantic and some community partners will take it from here. The special section we put together shows others why you're important, how to achieve you, and ways to maintain wellness. No matter how much readers know about the topic, there's always something new to learn.

We hope readers discover a new idea for themselves or someone they love who is struggling with their mental health.

Maybe readers will focus on one dimension of wellness during the month of August or perhaps they'll try something new each week. We hope our local ideas, Wellness Bulletin Board, and the content in this newsletter carries you through the month and beyond.

If you're a family member, you'll likely find new ways to incorporate or introduce wellness in the life of your loved one. People with healthy habits feel better. Research shows that self-care helps improve self-esteem, boost creativity, and increase energy. Quality of life goes up and the risk of physical illness goes down.

Happy National Wellness Month to all! See you in September, Wellness!

Thank You



MHA Atlantic's Carolyn Quinn is pictured with two great Stockton students who are wrapping up their summer internship with us. They are Ryan Lindner and Beth Kramer.

Emotional

Wellness

is the ability to cope effectively with life and create satisfying relationships

Strategies for improving your emotional health

Build resilience with coping strategies

Reduce and relieve stress - 30 minutes of exercise, mindfulness, breathing exercises. Spend time outdoors.

Good sleep habits help people think more clearly and boost mood

Connection to a social network. Links to others (friends, family, neighbors) improves our emotional health and well-being. Take a class or join a club

Establish healthy boundaries

Set goals and recognize accomplishments. Builds self-esteem. Provides a target to work toward

Find meaning in life through a job, a volunteer position, or a pet

Ask for help



Contributed by
IFSS Staff



Financial Wellness

Satisfaction with
current and future
financial situation

Tip\$ to save money during this time of inflation

Making a few changes can reduce stress

Check into reducing the cell phone bill.
Because of WI-Fi, unlimited data may not be necessary

Grocery shop with a meal plan in mind.
Search online for "meals on a budget" for new ideas

Save on gas: run errands in batches, carpool, bike/walk short distances, work from home more often.
Look into a gas rewards credit card

Sell what you are not using: yard sale, Ebay, Facebook Marketplace.
Make purchases through those money-saving options

Look into a cashback credit card

Save on utilities: Turn off lights, use LED bulbs, be mindful not to waste water (run dishwasher only when full, turn off water while brushing teeth or shaving), change filters on AC/Heat unit

List essential expenses. List everything you can cut. Create a budget from there



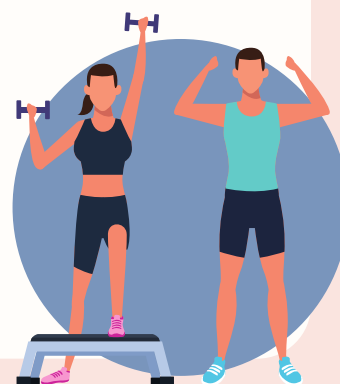
Physical Wellness:
Recognizing the need for physical activity, diet, sleep & nutrition

Let's Get Physical

In the hustle and bustle of life, fitting in specific time to move your body can be challenging. Here are a few tips you could incorporate them into your daily life

- Park your car furthest away from the building you are entering
- Walk or bike instead of driving short distances
- Consider walking and talking with a coworker or friend instead of sitting during a meeting or hanging out
- Skip the elevator & escalator and take the steps
- When waiting for something (i.e. microwave, kettle to boil) do a quick exercise, like squats, sit ups, jumping jacks
- Multi-task by reading emails or catching up on the next episode on Netflix while on the treadmill
- When spending quality time with family, friends, or your pets do something physical (go for a hike, swim, garden, build something)

And last but not least, be kind to yourself. Starting a new habit is hard. Keeping up with a new habit can feel impossible. There will be some days that despite your best effort you will be unable to fit in as much movement as you want. Start fresh the next day and remember something is better than nothing. Have fun & get moving!!!!



-Carolyn Quinn
Program Director

Intellectual Wellness:

Recognizing creative abilities and finding ways to expand knowledge and skills

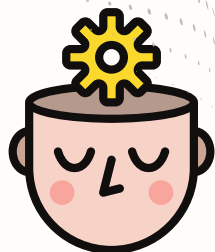
Jigsaw Puzzles - Exercises the left and right sides of the brain and acts as a mental-workout that improves problem-solving skills and attention span. This reinforces the connections between brain cells, improves mental speed and is an effective way to improve short term memory. Jigsaw puzzles also improve your visual-spatial reasoning. Jigsaw puzzles can also act as a meditation tool and stress reliever and can act just as meditation would, this is a good way of reducing blood pressure and heart rate.

Crossword Puzzles - Crossword puzzles are a form of mental exercise as the mental stimulation supports new connections between nerve cells and help develop plasticity in the brain that can help protect against future cell loss. Crossword puzzles can help preserve memory and cognitive functioning and has the ability to focus attention and improve executive functioning along with working memory. This can help in delaying the onset of cognitive decline (such as dementia). Crossword puzzles can also help relieve stress and improve mood.

Meditation - Meditation can help calm your body by slowing breathing and reducing stress and anxiety. Meditation can help improve focus along with creativity. This can also help improve memory and improves consolidation of new information. Meditation can also help your brain's ability to process information.

Walking/Exercise - Walking and exercising can increase oxygen flow to the brain and can also help the growth of new synapses and dendritic branches in the brain. The growth of new dendritic branches in the brain can indicate the process of learning new things. Walking encourages the brain to release endorphins which is a neurotransmitter that can help boost mental health. Walking can also help improve white matter which can help improve memory.

Doodling/Crafting - Doodling can help improve your attention as well as relieving stress and improving creativity.

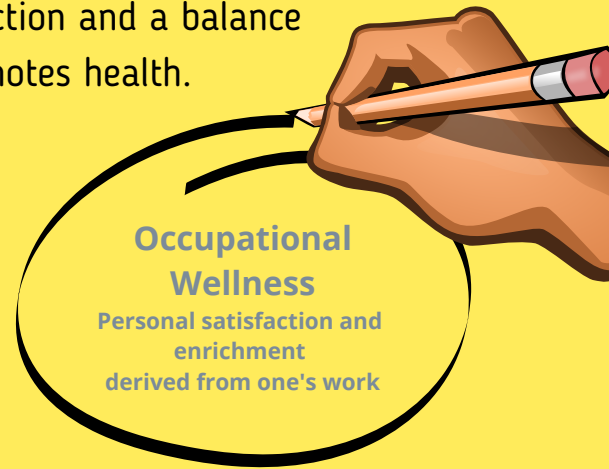


-Beth Kramer
Intern

Occupational Wellness focuses on being involved in work (paid or volunteer) that provides a sense of personal satisfaction and a balance between work and leisure in a way that promotes health.

Ways to increase your occupational wellness

- Identify the benefits and positives in your current job
- Create connections with co-workers
- Avoid over working yourself
- Create a work/life balance
- Write out your occupational goals
- Create a plan to reach each goal
- Start working toward achieving your goals



RESOURCES THAT SUPPORT OCCUPATIONAL WELLNESS:

Jewish Family Service of Atlantic County (JFS) at 609 822-1108 x 1

JFS offers programs that support young people with disabilities or those impacted by the opioid epidemic in getting job training and employment

Reach out to Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services at 609 813-3933

You may be eligible for support for work or school

Check out the Job Accommodation Network <https://askjan.org/>

There may be accommodations you can request at work that will support your wellness

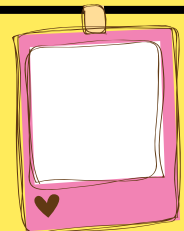
Contributed by Nina Stolzenberg
Director of Vocational Services
Jewish Family Service of Atlantic and Cape May County

Environmental Wellness

Good health by occupying pleasant, stimulating environments that support well-being

- Cut down on clutter. Add storage/donate/toss. Work on one room at a time
- Let in light - clean windows, open curtains
- Create an alone space as well as social spaces
- When possible, allow fresh air to come in
- Display a bowl of fresh fruit or vegetables
- Decorate with what means the most to you. Art, photos, mementos
- If you work at home, try to separate your work area from living space
- Freshen up a space with new paint
- An uncluttered, dark bedroom space can improve sleep. Turn off electronics 2 hours before bedtime.

*Studies estimate we spend two-thirds of our lives in our home.
Your living space affects your wellbeing!*





Social Wellness

**Developing a sense of community, belonging,
and a well-developed support system**

Social wellness focuses on connection, interactions, and support we count on in life. During the COVID-19 Pandemic, social wellness took on a new and different role: how can we stay connected when we must stay separated? With this question came confusion and loneliness, but soon we were able to find creative ways to create new connections. Some new and old ways to practice social wellness can include:

- **Attend virtual wellness support groups through the United by Wellness Center!
Register here: <http://www.mhaac.info/ubw-how-to-join.html>**
- **Go to community sponsored events such as recreational sports or bingo**
- **Safely walk on trails in public parks to meet like-minded people who enjoy similar activities**
- **Check out our monthly Wellness Bulletin Board and read the newspaper for ideas!**

**-Morgan Pfau
Interim Wellness and Recovery Manager**

Spiritual Wellness

Expanding our SENSE of purpose and meaning in life



Religion, faith, and spirituality can serve as protective factors against stress, as well as play a significant role in helping people cope with stress when it arises. Spiritual individuals often turn to their beliefs as a primary means of coping with trauma or disaster, particularly for people with serious mental illness. For many trauma survivors, adding a spiritual dimension to their healing and treatment plans – in accordance with their personal beliefs – is associated with increased resiliency and recovery. Emotional wellness and spiritual wellness do not have to compete. They can work together to help each individual reach the highest possible degree of wellness.

Ways for people to incorporate spirituality include communing with nature, volunteering, listening to inspirational music, creating art, and practicing yoga/meditation

**-La Verne Williams
Director of MHANJ PEWS Program**



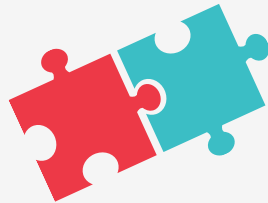
LOCAL connections for National Wellness Month



AtlantiCare Day Pass for the LifeCenter in EHT \$15 Try out the fitness center, swimming pool, classes, hot tub, steam room

ACCC

Community Education classes in language, jewelry making, photography, genealogy, flower arranging and more

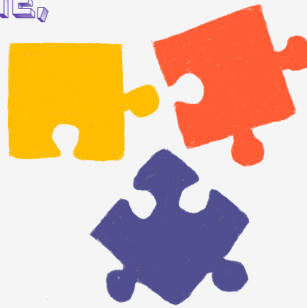


INSTRUMENT OR VOICE LESSONS...

LEARN A LANGUAGE...

TRY YOUR HAND AT ART.

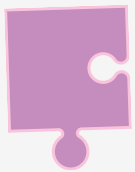
FIND A CLASS, LEARN ONLINE, OR CHECK OUT A BOOK



Meditation/Mindfulness

Start with as little as 5-10 minutes per day

In the moment 32920 with Naida Burgess on You Tube. She's from Galloway!

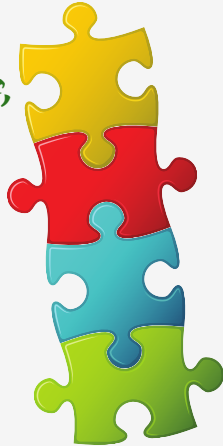


Noyes

artsgarageAC.com

Classes, lectures, open mic, exhibits

VolunteerMatch.org more than 2 dozen categories, interests. Local opportunities!



Try a new healthy eating habit or recipe

cfbnj.org/nutrition-education-videos/

Stretch, Exercise, Yoga, Walk
Discover any one of more than a dozen walking trails in Atlantic County

Learn the names of backyard birds or flowers in your neighborhood. Ask a librarian about resources

Jewish Family Service offers programs that support young people with disabilities and those impacted by the opioid epidemic in getting job training and employment
609-822-1108 ext. 1



New Employee Announcements

Welcome

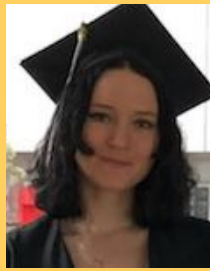
Emily McCall

Yvonne Tran

Ashleigh Zappala

As staff with Consumer Advocates/POST, they work one-on-one with consumers on goals related to wellness, coping skills, housing, employment, budgeting. They also connect individuals to resources.

All are also United By Wellness staff who facilitate groups



Though Emily McCall isn't entirely comfortable talking about herself, we are extremely proud to shine this staff spotlight on her and the great work she's doing at our office.

Emily currently works in Consumer Advocates/POST. She seamlessly transitioned from intern to staff recently after dazzling her supervisors with a natural ability to connect with consumers. Emily is known for being caring, understanding, and patient.

In addition to her work in the Atlantic Office, she is a facilitator for two groups offered through United By Wellness, Mind and Body (for those with a disability) and Too Much Stuff (for those with collecting/hoarding behaviors). Two more groups she runs are in the community --one at John Brooks called Mental Wellness and another at a boarding home, which is called Mental Milestones.

"What I enjoy most is watching the dynamics of how a group comes together – how they welcome new people...how a group member knows about a resource and shares that information," she said.

Her own experience with depression and anxiety as a young adult helped shape her interest in the field of mental health. Through her family's struggles, both she and her brother were selected by the Make- A-Wish Foundation. She chose a trip to Paris, which is one of her fondest memories and "the coolest thing" she's ever done.

Emily uses journaling, going to the gym, listening to music, spending time at the beach, and seeing a therapist to maintain her wellness. A unique hobby she enjoys is collecting Harry Potter wands. Given that interest, her fondness of fantasy follows through in her pop culture preferences, including the Netflix series Stranger Things and the Twilight novels and movie saga.

She is studying to take the licensing exam to earn her LSW this month.



The face of Ashleigh Zappala may be familiar because she was featured in June as part of our Pride coverage. Today we add a few more layers to this staff standout who started as an intern.

In addition to her role as a co-facilitator of the LGBTQIA+ group called Show Your True Colours, Ashleigh is working in Community Advocates/POST. Ashleigh also facilitates several groups through United By Wellness, the MHANJ statewide online wellness center, including Better Together, which is focused on physical and mental wellbeing, and Rediscovering You Through Vital Wellness that incorporates journaling, coping skills, and discussion.

"Through my experience with both POST and United By Wellness, I'm growing. I say each meeting, I'm learning from this as much as you are.' And it's true. I learn about other people's perspectives – someone will bring up a response I didn't expect or hadn't thought of," she said.

She will return to Stockton in the fall for her last semester. She's a psychology major with a concentration in mental health and empirical research.

Her interest in mental health comes from her own experience and desire to pay it forward. She said she had great help as a younger person along her wellness journey. She also observed family, friends, and her partner struggle with mental health.

"What makes a difference in the journey are the people who help you," she said. "I want to be one of those people."

If you meet Ashleigh in person, you might notice her daily accessories, crystals, which relate to her interest in crystal therapy and meditation. She's also known around the office and to her friends/family as a consummate reader who especially enjoys the fantasy genre. A newer interest of hers is Glamping.

After she graduates in December, Ashleigh plans to research master's programs for mental health counseling.



Having recently returned from a month-long dream road trip across the country to Arizona, Yvonne Tran joined the Atlantic feeling rested, renewed, and satisfied. (She visited Wyoming, the Grand Canyon, Yellowstone National Park, the East Coast, Texas, Louisiana, and Mississippi!)

Following a stellar stint as an intern here at the Atlantic Office, she was hired to assist on the Community Advocates/POST Team and Boarding Home Outreach. As she works toward her degree in psychology with a concentration in mental health,

she said the position here is a terrific opportunity to work with consumers living with mental health challenges.

In addition to her work at Atlantic, Yvonne provides a group through United By Wellness. She facilitates Meditation on Sunday nights. She credited Bern Trendler, former Wellness Director, with her style of moderating a group.

"The ease and calmness of her is what stands out to me," she said. "It is rewarding to me to see how members of the group feel after I guide them. I see the difference I make after 45 minutes."

Yvonne studies at Stockton where she is entering her senior year.

Outside work and school, she enjoys drawing/sketching in pencil.

MHANJ's
CallCenter is
pleased to serve as
one of the 988
responding partner
centers.



CALL | TEXT | CHAT
24/7/365

samhsa.gov/find-help/988/faqs



WHAT HAPPENS WHEN I CHAT VIA 988?

Chat (English only) is available through the Lifeline's website <https://suicidepreventionlifeline.org/chat>. People seeking chat services will be provided a pre-chat survey before connecting with a counselor that identifies the main area of concern. If there is a wait to chat with a crisis counselor, a wait-time message will appear. If demand is high, individuals can access the Lifeline's "helpful resources" while waiting or call 988. Once connected, a crisis counselor will listen to you, work to understand how your problem is affecting you, provide support, and share resources that may be helpful.



WHAT HAPPENS WHEN I TEXT 988?

When someone texts to 988, they will be responded to by a group of Lifeline crisis centers that respond to chat and text. Text is currently available in English only. Once connected, a crisis counselor will listen to you, work to understand how your problem is affecting you, provide support, and share resources that may be helpful.

WILL 988 ACCOMMODATE THOSE WHO ARE HARD OF HEARING OR BLIND?

The Lifeline currently serves TTY users either through their preferred relay service or by dialing 711 then 1-800-273-8255. Lifeline also offers services through chat and text. Lifeline is in the process of expanding to video phone service to better serve deaf or hard of hearing individuals seeking help through the Lifeline/988.

Need for 988

Too many people are experiencing suicidal crisis or mental health-related distress without the support and care they need, and sadly, the pandemic has only made a bad situation worse when it comes to mental health and wellness in America.

In 2020 alone, the U.S. had one death by suicide about every 11 minutes—and for people aged 10 - 34 years, suicide is a leading cause of death. Additionally, from April 2020 to 2021, over 100,000 individuals died from drug overdoses.

There is hope. The Lifeline works — providing 24/7, free and confidential support to people in suicidal crisis or mental health-related distress helps thousands of people overcome crisis situations every day.

FAQs

WILL 988 REPLACE THE LIFELINE?

Moving to 988 will not replace the Lifeline, rather it will be an easier way to access a strengthened and expanded network of crisis call centers. People can access the Lifeline via 988 or by the 10-digit number (which will not go away).

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN I CALL 988?

When calling 988, callers first hear a greeting message while their call is routed to the local Lifeline network crisis center (based on the caller's area code). A trained crisis counselor will answer the phone, listen to the caller, understand how their problem is affecting them, provide support, and share resources if needed.

Does someone in your family live with a mental health disorder?

Support and assistance are available for families with a loved one in crisis and in need of linkage to treatment and other services.

Acute Care Family Program

**7 days per week
Available 8 am to 8 pm
609 517-8614**

Our team engages families who are often navigating the mental health system for the first time.

Staff educate families about mental illness and offer resources and referrals that can help their loved one

Help is a phone call away



United by Wellness

United by Wellness (UBW) is a statewide virtual wellness center, sponsored by the Mental Health Association in New Jersey (MHANJ), where peers offer skills and tools for recovery to people living with mental health and/or substance use disorder(s).

- **Discover a sense of community in a virtual atmosphere**
- **Find support**
- **Peer-led groups for anyone and everyone**
- **80+ FREE groups, M-F and weekends**

How to Become a UBW Member:

Register at www.surveymonkey.com/r/8VXP2K8

Call: 609-652-3800 Email: wellnesscenter@mhanj.org



WWW.MHAAC.INFO/UBW



UNITEDBYWELLNESS@MHANJ.ORG

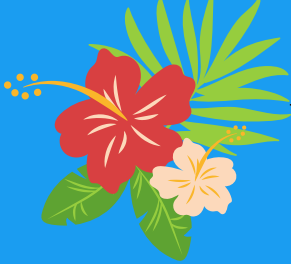


609-652-3800

Individuals Concerned in Effort
MHANJ- Atlantic County Office
4 East Jimmie Leeds Road Suite 8
Galloway NJ 08205
Phone: 609-652-3800
Fax: 609-652-3801

Journey to Wellness
MHANJ- Ocean County Office
25 South Shore Drive
Toms River, NJ 08753
Phone: 732-244-0940
Fax: 732-244-0948

Esperanza
MHANJ- Union County Office
673 Morris Ave. Ste. 100
Springfield, NJ 07081
Phone: 908-810-1001
Fax: 973-218-0636



Wellness Bulletin Board

Free Summer Concerts



Several communities host free concerts including:

Somers Point (Friday nights 7-9 pm
at William Morrow Beach)

Ventnor (Saturdays at 6 pm Newport Beach &
Wednesday nights 6 pm at Ski Beach)

Absecon (Sundays at 7 pm Heritage Park)

Atlantic City (Mondays 8 pm at Kennedy Plaza)

4-H Fair

Atlantic County Fairgrounds,
Mays Landing

Aug. 12 2 pm to 10 pm

Aug. 13 11 am to 10 pm

animals-horse shows -
exhibits-

food-pet parade- open mic -
vendors and more

13th Annual Elephant Talk Indie Music Festival

Friday, Aug. 5 5 pm to midnight

Saturday, Aug. 6 11 am to midnight

The Watering Hole

6494 Weymouth Rd., Mays Landing

\$10

Sunflower Festival

Sahl's Farm

420 W. Pestalozzi Ave., EHC

Aug. 5,6,12, 13 10 am to 7 pm

Music, vendors, food trucks, pony rides

\$15 admission at the door



Local Libraries

ADULT CRAFTS

Brigantine Branch August 11 at 5:30 pm

Absecon Branch Aug. 18 at 6 pm

Ventnor Branch Aug 16 at 2 pm

Ventnor Branch Aug. 10 5 pm Lights in a
bottle project

Poetry in the Park

Sunday, Aug. 7 at 6 pm
JFK Park in Somers Point
Bring a blanket or chair
*Music and poetry



AC AIR SHOW

Wednesday, Aug. 24 11 am to 2 pm

AC Boardwalk