



The AMI is a non-profit Support Group for Family and Friends of persons who have a Neurological Disorder

Alliance for the Mentally Ill
Of Adams County
8931 Huron Street
Thornton, CO 80260

Contact Phone: (303) 853-3770

CRISIS LINE - - - - - (303) 853-3500

April 2005

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Becky Saitta, Treas. 452-4367 Ed Sedillos 452-8220

Mickey Shayne, Nwsltr 426-8406 All phone numbers are (303)

Dear AMI Family,

At our last family program we viewed a video that featured Sally Raphael speaking with Patty Duke and Dick Cavette. As she continues to do in all her current speeches to the mental health community, she offered hope and encouragement to consumers and their families. She noted that families also are both the unsung victims and heroes.

While still managing her career and her family, Patti suffered from both ends of bipolar disorder. While in mania, both her mind and mouth her were on constant overload and she could not slow them down; she spent money whether she had it or not, she had no sense of consequences. In one of her manic times, she got married but, thankfully, the marriage was annulled 13 days later. This quickly became fodder for the Hollywood magazines, and she persevered over them. Another time, she believed that she was building an ark. She is now successfully married to Michael and through a great deal of love and persevering, the marriage is still working. Following her manic episodes came the depression for 3-5 months. She would stay in bed, crying without knowing why, filled with emptiness and desolation, feeling nothing mattered. Either separation or loss can be the “triggers” for those with a predisposition for either bipolar or

schizophrenia. Many of the symptoms of bipolar and schizophrenia are the same. Proper diagnosis of the illness can lead to faster proper medication.

Her children wanted to know how they could help but she couldn’t tell them. Families should realize that many crises are part of normal living, not all members see the situation the same. She now tells families that they must let go of the guilt. Now there is much helpful information about how families can cope with both the depression and the mania. At the time of her illness, not much help was available. People with mental illness must reach the point of being able to forgive themselves in order to be able to “try again”. Also, families must be able to forgive the patient who caused the ensuing problems.

When the hostess asked Patty if acting served as an “escape” from her illness, she replied “definitely” – it gave her other roles to focus on. For a time, she was forced to ‘act’ as a normal person.

Patty stated that it is most important to go to a Doctor who is willing to look at the family tree, and find out if anyone shows a pattern of “unusual behaviors”.

Patty Duke’s book “An Unquiet Mind” is listed as a “must read” in all mental health arenas.

Following Patty, Dick Cavette, talk show host, told his story of battling depression. He managed much of his depression by being very good at “masking”; the external remains the same while the turmoil of rage is internal. One of his signs was wearing the same bathrobe and reading the same book for four weeks. He now manages his illness by the continued use of medications.



The Community Reach Center and AMI wish to thank Irene Patko for her donation of a set of twin beds that were put into immediate use at one of the houses. With Spring coming up, now is the perfect time to see if you have any duplicate, or just plain not used lately, items that can be put into our storage lockers for use by a consumer who needs them.



It has been noted that our membership renewal dues are quite below those received last year. If you need another form, please call the contact line. Thanks to those who have responded with their comments. These have been duly noted and we will be speaking with staff about them.



BHI NEWS

Richard Stepsay, Adult Peer Specialist Supervisor, is running two support groups at Community Connections, the Drop-in Center in Aurora. The Double Trouble group meets **every Thursday** at 10:00 AM, and the Schizophrenia Anonymous support group meets **every Thursday** at 11:30 AM. Community Connections is located at 1564 Elmira Street in Aurora. There are no fees for either of these groups.

For further information, call Richard at 720-748-9884 after 1:00 PM, Monday thru Friday.

NAMI NEWS

Book Advisory from NAMI

Fear is No Longer My Reality arrived in most bookstores in February. It is the story of Jamie Blyth, who gained nationwide attention when he appeared as one of the original final suitors on ABC-TV reality series “The Bachelorette” and disclosed his nine-year struggle with anxiety disorder.

Jamie has been a guest on “Oprah Winfrey” and “Good Morning America” and continues to speak out against stigma and for recovery, reaching millions through his celebrity. It’s an engaging, easily readable story that includes his high school and college years, and may especially inspire young people to ask for help if they need it. Interwoven among the chapters are comments from medical experts.

“Let’s fight together and for each other. Let’s throw away the shame and talk to one another without the facades so we can all know that none of us is ever alone,” Jamie writes. “Pain may unite us today, but triumph can be our everlasting prize if we help one another find our way out of the darkness.”



CRC NEWS

Early tax day: Community Reach Center and the Adams County Tax Counseling office joined forces once again for Tax Day. Fifty-eight consumers came for assistance with their forms as volunteers from the Tax Office prepared rent rebate forms, Federal and State forms. CRC staff provided assistance to consumers in the works for the next year!

Volunteer Office: On April 1st, Becky Chavez, who has headed the Volunteer Program for the past **13 years**, announced that she is ready for “retirement”. She noted that since she started at the Center on April 1st, she thought it appropriate that she chose that date to leave. While noting that the decision has been a long time coming, Becky said that she wants to be able to spend more time with her grandchildren as well as with her husband, Chris. Due to her full-time work schedule, she has never been able to attend any of her grandkids’ school activities. Also, she and Chris have waited a long time to be able to travel

without working around 3-day holidays and the extra work facing her upon her return.

Becky was honored at a luncheon held at the CRC Northglenn office. She did ask that more people call the Volunteer Office to offer especially to help with the Center's efforts during May Mental Health.

As everyone else who has "retired", Becky will continue to stay involved in other community activities such as AARP, for which she does their monthly newsletter.



Here's the Rainbow Center update for April

My name is Carol Stowell. I joined the Rainbow Center staff about a month ago. This is a super place! The clients and staff have a great rapport. There is something happening every week such as movie night, bowling, shopping and trips to the Planetarium.

There are crafts, a pool table, air hockey and ping-pong available for those who wish to partake. For information on upcoming events call 303-287-2902.

Artreach is a program that Community Reach is involved in and it is a super opportunity for mental health consumers to get FREE tickets to cultural events in the metro area.

Here is how it works: Every Tuesday morning there is an UPDATE for events coming up soon. You can call me at the Rainbow Center to see what's coming up. As the contact person for Community Reach, I call and request the tickets that you have chosen. Later that day I will receive an email from Artreach letting us know if the tickets are available. (It's first come-first served, so the sooner I have your request, the better chance you have of getting the tickets.) Then I call you and let you know, and we make arrangements for you to up the tickets.

Some of the tickets we have received are for: the zoo, botanical gardens, planetarium, I-max, the butterfly pavilion, various museums, etc. These are monthly passes and can be used on any one day during the designated month.

Other tickets that are available are plays, symphony, concerts, Rockies, circus, etc.

Please take advantage of the awesome opportunity!

If you want more information just call Gloria at the Rainbow center: 303-287-2902



The Center has been working long and hard to increase its image in the community. Their biggest effort yet will be shown during the month of May.

COMMUNITY REACH CELEBRATES MAY AS MENTAL HEALTH MONTH

Promotions:

Contact has been made and plans are proceeding to display banners from city-owned light poles or bridges, or posters in RTD bus enclosures in all 5 cities the Center is present. These banners and posters will display the Mental Health Month logo and graphic, the Center logo and phone number, for the purpose of raising community awareness about the benefits of mental health treatment.

* Community Reach Center and the Intergenerational Learning Center (ILC) will host El Dia de los Ninos Carnival Saturday, April 30, 1:00-4:00 pm at Kearney Middle School, 6160 Kearney Street, Commerce City. The carnival is free, open to the public and features games, giant inflatable activities, prizes, gift certificates from Boondocks and Avanza Supermarket, and snacks galore, such as free Meadowgold ice cream. The nationally acclaimed family band, Mariachi Vasquez, will perform. For more information, call 303-289-4396.

Free Anxiety/Depression Screens at Adams County Dept. of Social Services and at each of the 5 Community Reach Center's Multi-Service Offices.

Events in May will be:

Brown Bag (BB) Lectures Series will be promoted through paid advertisements in the Rock Mtn. News, Denver Post, and chosen Metro West newspapers for four weeks

* On Thursday, the 5th, there will be a (BB) forum from 12 PM – 1 PM at the Westminster Library. Karen Holland and Brooks Throughgood will be speaking on **How to help your child improve their behavior.**

*On Wednesday, the 12th, a BB lunch will be held from 12 PM to 11 PM at the Commerce City Library. **Subject not yet determined.**

*On Wednesday, May 18th, Dr, Lynne Battey, will hold another BB teaching on **Mental Health** at the Thornton Library from 12 PM – 1 PM.

*On Thursday, the 19th, a BB meeting from 12 PM to 1 PM will be held at the Borders Bookstore in Northglenn. The topic will be **How to communicate as a couple** with Dr. Trina Seefelt

* On Friday, a BB time 12 PM to 1 PM will be at the Northglenn Library, on the topic of **Love and Logic** by Blair Skinner

* On Tuesday, the 24th, the last BB lunch from 12 PM – 1 PM will be held at the Brighton Library on **Therapy as a Growth Process** by Dr, Jeremy Morris.

To top off the May festivities, on Wednesday, May 25th from 6:30 – 9:30 PM CRC has contracted with Northstar Bipolar Support Group to show movie **A Beautiful Mind** will be shown at the Northglenn office. There will be a panel from the MHC discussing the movie and answering questions.



The first annual **Bridges of Understanding** – Connecting the Mental Health and Faith Communities Conference was held March 3rd at Westminster’s DoubleTree Hotel. Community Reach Center collaborated with several other mental health centers in the planning and implementation of the conference. Over 100 people from a diverse array of faith-based organizations attended workshops on issues ranging from Suicide Prevention and intervention; Attention Deficit Disorder in children, mental health issues with older adults and boundaries to observe when establishing a counseling relationship. The purpose of this symposium was to open avenues of communication between the faith-based community and mental health providers, and to support them in the counseling of their congregants. The conference received an 80% approval rating from participants and is slated to convene again next year.



CASASTARTSM (Striving Together to Achieve Rewarding Tomorrows)

CASASTARTSM is a school-centered youth development program aimed at preventing substance abuse and delinquency among high-risk 8 to 13-year-olds and reducing drug-related crime in their neighborhoods. The model was developed by the Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse at Columbia University in New York.

CASASTARTSM aims to:

- Prevent substance abuse and delinquency
- Improve school performance and attendance
- Develop partnerships between the service agencies, schools and law enforcement in order to meet the needs of the youth and their families
- Improve communication between CASASTARTSM youth and their families
- Cultivate the involvement of families with schools and social service agencies
- Reduce drug sales and related crime in the community

CASASTARTSM brings together schools, health and social service agencies, and law enforcement to help keep these youth drug and violence free.

CASASTARTSM is an award-winning Model Program.

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services’ Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration and the U.S. Department of Justice Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention has designated CASASTARTSM a Model Program.

CASASTARTSM also is the only program for high-risk kids designated as an Exemplary Program by the U.S. Department of Education Expert Panel on Safe, Disciplined, and Drug-Free Schools.

The National Council of La Raza (NCLR) and the Annie E. Casey Foundation presented the CASASTART program run by the Mi Casa Resource Center for Women, Inc. in Denver, Colorado with a *Family Strengthening Award* which honors programs that have made a measurable impact on the lives of

Hispanic families through a holistic approach that addresses the education, housing, employment, health, and advocacy needs of the local community.

CASASTARTsm works

Studies have shown that children in the program have improved attachment to positive individuals and institutions, decreased bonds to deviant groups and increased opportunities to achieve positive goals.

As a result, student participants:

- Are significantly less likely to use gateway drugs like cigarettes, alcohol and marijuana which make them less likely to use harder drugs like heroin and cocaine later.
- Are more likely to be promoted to the next grade.
- Have reduced numbers of violent incidences, higher levels of positive peer influence, lower levels of association with delinquent peers and experience less peer pressure.

The CASASTARTsm Program

The Community Reach Center is the lead agency for the CASASTARTsm program in School District 14 located in Commerce City. The program currently provides services to 60+ students who attend Alsup Elementary and Adams City Middle School. The team is made up of six master level staff members and a graduate intern. One of these staff members is bilingual.

The program has been in School District 14 for the past four and half years. There is no charge to children and families for services received. The program is currently funded through grants from the Colorado Department of Education and Daniels Foundation.

The CASASTARTsm offers children a safe place to go to get the tools they need to succeed. Offices for the program are located in the school. The program is composed of eight core services: social support, family services which include individual, group and family therapy, education services such as tutoring/homework assistance, after-school/summer activities, mentoring, morale-building incentives, community policing and juvenile justice intervention. Each child enrolled in CASASTARTsm receives an individually tailored service plan featuring all eight-core services. Children have individual case coordinators who meet with them on a weekly basis or as needed. Case coordinators also meet with parents a minimum of once a month in which they provide

family therapy; provide case management services, and resource connection.

Three CASASTARTsm regularly-held meetings play an essential part in the program in order to keep communication among the partners flowing and to provide adequate program and policy guidance. Meeting participants include lead agency and program management staff, school personnel, police officers, guidance or social work personnel, business leaders, clergy, elected officials, community residents and parents/care givers of students, as appropriate. Meetings consist of:

- Case conferences – to discuss students new to the program, and review progress of those already enrolled.
- Administrative meetings – identify and resolve problems among the partner agencies or in the larger service system that inhibit the program's effectiveness.
- Advisory councils – review progress of the CASASTARTsm program and assess the practicality of creating more CASASTARTsm programs in additional schools.

Locations

CASASTARTsm is now in 59 schools in 19 cities and counties, the District of Columbia and two Native American reservations. In the Denver metro area there are 10 schools that have the CASASTARTsm program available.

For additional information regarding the CASASTARTsm program please contact Robyn Wertheimer at 303-853-3803.



Our next Family Meeting on Wed. April 27th will host Tom Patrizzo, Deputy Director of CRC. Our meetings are from 7-9 PM on the second floor of the Community Reach Mary Ciancio Memorial Bldg. located at 8931 Huron Street in Thornton. Anyone needing directions should call the AMI contact line shown above. This phone is answered daily.

Please join us at our family meeting on Wednesday, April 27th to give support to those families who are struggling.

s/ Mickey Shayne