

NEWSLETTER

Coalition News

Vol IV, #9

Coalition Coordinator : Al Bashevkin 664-4511 x519; 802 442-5200.
The Northern Berkshire Health and Human Services Coalition is supported by
the Berkshire Area Health Education Center with funding from UMASS
Medical School. The Coalition is hosted by North Adams State College.

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May 1990
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May Coalition Meeting : Note New Location

First Baptist Church of North Adams 131 Main St. No Adams
Please Enter via Eagle St Entrance

Friday May 11th 10 AM to Noon

Meeting Agenda

- I. Welcome
 - II. Introduction of Participants : **Who's Who of Who-Man Services**
 - III. Coalition Topic : **What's up with the Council of Human Service Providers : *Discussion with John McManus, Director of Mass Council of Human Service Providers***
 - IV. What's Happening : **Announcements by Coalition Membership of interest to all**
 - V. Coalition Topic: **Mental Health Month: The Stigma of Mental Illness *Discussion with providers and community residents***
 - VI. Other Business
 - VII. Adjournment and Conclusion
- Bring a Friend to the Meeting : **Βινηγα Φιενδ το τηε Μετηνυ**

Coalition News is the newsletter of the Northern Berkshire Health and Human Services Coalition. Its function is to keep the mailing list informed of what's happening around the Northern Berkshire area. It's a service to the entire COALITION mailing list (about 300). Announcements submitted to the newsletter will reach our entire mailing list. So, take advantage of this unique, free mechanism for informing our friends of news important to all. Please submit these announcements to Al Bashevkin, Coalition Coordinator, P.O. Box 1417, Bennington, VT 05201. For insertion into the June newsletter, news should reach Al Bashevkin by May 25.

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What's Happening!

- April's Events

April Coalition Meeting

A well attended April Coalition meeting elicited discussion on a variety of issues. Miguel Arce, Western Mass Coordinator for EOHS (Executive Office of Human Services) came to the meeting with alarming statistics about substance abuse in North County. Representative Sherwood Guernsey talked with Coalitioners about the status of Universal Health Care in Massachusetts. Volunteers of North County talked about their work and plans for the coming year.

Substance abuse data brought to the meeting by Miguel Arce showed North County, on a per-capita basis, leading Western Mass communities in the areas of DUII arrests, substance use related deaths, and liquor licenses issued. North County ranked second in substance use related hospital cases. There has been considerable debate over the methodology used (which also stated that there are no AA or NA programs in North County), and some of these questions might have merit. (See letter from Francesca Speicher later in newsletter for further comment). Despite controversy about the data, there was agreement among Coalitioners at the April meeting that substance abuse is an issue that warrants further attention. A Substance Abuse Task Force has been formed with its first meeting scheduled for Tuesday, May 8 at 2:30 at the office of Northern Berkshire United Way.

Thanks to Representative Sherwood Guernsey for talking with the Coalition meeting about Universal Health Care. Sherwood was encouraging about the status of this important legislation. Presently, the unemployed and all students are receiving health care coverage as the result of the legislation. We will look for pilot programs (maybe even in North County?) to offer coverage to the uninsured starting in July as a means to test out the true costs of Universal Health Care. The big test for Universal Health Care will be in 1993 when businesses who employ more than six persons will be mandated to provide health insurance for their employees.

Many thanks to all the volunteers who shared their information about the status of volunteerism. Joan Cooper, Chair of the Berkshire County Volunteer Coalition (P.O. Box 4074, Pittsfield 01201), talked about her organization, its mission, and a seminar for volunteers they held on April 27. The Commonwealth Service Corps who provide the backbone of the staff at Northern Berkshire Community Action were saluted for the countless hours they provide to Community Action. Unfortunately, that program has closed due to the State budget problems. There is legislation, sponsored by Dan Bosley, trying to bring back the CSC. Peter Wells, a member of the Steering Committee for Habitat for Humanity, spoke about volunteerism through the programs of Habitat. Northern Berkshire Habitat for Humanity (P.O. Box 391 North Adams 01247) is moving forward and is working to become an affiliate of the national organization. Steve Green (664-4511) talked about volunteers from North Adams State College, both as student interns in agencies and as group volunteers for community projects. Lastly, Stanley O'Connor talked about SCORE (Service Corps of Retired Executives) and how they help new businesses develop realistic business plans.

Looking Ahead

May is Mental Health Month and there are a host of activities planned county-wide to honor the month. See later in newsletter for a listing of the activities. The Coalition's 4th Annual Meeting is scheduled for June 15 from noon until 2 PM at North Adams State College Pub. This will be the most memorable Annual Meeting yet. Look for the Announcement in this edition of Coalition News. Also, please send in your nominations for a Coalition Peer Recognition Award. See note later in newsletter.

Parenting Issues Task Force

The Task Force meeting of Thurs. Apr 5, at Louison House was a real energizer for all interested in pursuing programs about parenting. Berkshire Center for Families and Children is moving ahead on their plans for a Parenting Center in North County. They are presently recruiting members for a North County McInerney Advisory Committee. Space for the Parent Center and volunteers are also being sought. Wanna help? Contact Carolyn Burns at 448-8281. BCFC has taken up Bob Ronnow on his offer of use of Louison House as a site for parenting workshops. The task force also discussed the increased mental health problems that parents are presenting, and Northern Berkshire Mental Health has increased their hours of the Family Treatment Project (664-4541). The task force looked at preventive programming for parents and the need for a parenting center, and also interventive programming with the need for increased involvement of area schools. The Parenting Issues Task Force will adjourn until the fall, when a meeting with area schools will be sought.



BERKSHIRE COUNCIL on ALCOHOLISM and ADDICTIONS
69 MAIN STREET NORTH ADAMS, MA 01247 TELEPHONE (413) 664-1067

April 27, 1990

To All Coalition Members:

Berkshire Council on Alcoholism and Addictions wants to respond briefly to the Dept. of Public Health Study on Substance Abuse published in April 1990. In that report D.P.H. identified North Adams as having four times the state "average" of deaths due to alcohol.

The importance of this study to our community may be that Northern Berkshire is in trouble with substance abuse including alcohol and other drugs. Is this News? We who treat families know that our area has had a defined problem with alcoholism. Saying this does not mean that it is a bad place or we are bad people - just that alcoholism is often a family illness and we have seen it surface in families generationally.

Alcoholism is an illness with symptoms and treatment. Help is available through substance services such as B.C.A.A., through the self help meetings of Alcoholic Anonymous and Narcotics Anonymous, and rehabilitation centers such as Hillcrest Hospital and Brattleboro. Thus, our Northern Berkshire Community has resources to get needed help.

However, the stigma remains and many in need of counseling for their own problems or around family issues do not seek help. We need to continue to see community attitudes change so that we no longer think "bad" things about those in need of these services.

Children need prevention programs, adolescents often need to be involved in support groups to change patterns of behavior and adults may need individual and group counseling. All these services and the A.A. fellowship can be mustered to turn around a community health problem that is now identified but should not be stigmatized.

For more information please call B.C.A.A., 69 Main Street, North Adams, Ma. at Tel #664-1067.

Francesca Speicher
Executive Director

Nancy Iacussa
North County Director

MENTAL HEALTH MONTH ACTIVITIES

As major leaguers and little leaguers get out their bats and balls, a "new team" prepares to strike out the stigma associated with mental illness. The "new team" includes mental health consumers, their families, mental health professionals and community friends. The highlight of this year's Mental Health Month's activities is a Softball Jamboree scheduled for May 12. This is an opportunity for the "new team" to play ball together and raise money for the Alliance for the Mentally Ill. With Met organization behind this event and Blue Stars and Crockett McGarrity making music, this should be a fun event for the whole family. Teams can enter by mailing \$25 to Alliance for the Mentally Ill, P.O. Box 3144, Pittsfield, MA 01201.

Through community education programs like the Overcoming Stigma Conference on May 15 at the First Baptist Church, Family Education with Joel Kanter on May 3 at 333 East St at 7:15 PM, and the professional education at the Berkshire Medical Center Symposium of May 21, it is hoped to look at the changing image of the mental health consumer. The NBMHA and FACT program on Family Issues in Suicide and Depression on May 16, will be a training open to the public on a vital issue. Other programs include the two day conference on child abuse sponsored by the Citizens Against Child Abuse. Northern Berkshire Mental Health Association will be on the WNAW (1230AM) radio opinion call in show at 8:30 AM on May 9, 14, 24, and 30. Northern Berkshire Tonight's May show will be on mental health with guests from Northern Berkshire Mental Health Association. The month's activities will culminate with the Berkshire Area Board's Annual Dinner at Westwood's, Hamlin St, Pittsfield. Dinner reservations can be made by sending \$6 to DMH, Berkshire Area Office, 333 East St, Pittsfield, MA 01201. **For more info on events for Mental Health Month, Contact Meg LeRay (NBMHA), 664-4541, or Marge Cohen (DMH) at 447-7381.**

May 1990

MENTAL HEALTH MONTH EVENTS

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
		1	2 Allison - 12:00pm Art - Dore Kumpinski, 4011 St. Mt. Vernon St. Pittsfield, MA	3 10:00am Address Meeting with Joel Kanter 333 East St, Pittsfield, MA	4 Allison - 12:00pm Int'l Consumer Meeting with Families Woods Inn, Oakley, MA	5 Allison - 12:00pm Introduction Introduction Panel Dis- cuss
6	7 Allison - 12:00pm Introduction Introduction Panel Dis- cuss High St, Jamaica, MA Allison - 12:00pm Introduction Introduction Panel Dis- cuss High St, Jamaica, MA	8 10:00am - 12:00pm Program - Consumer in School	9 Allison - 12:00pm Introduction Introduction Panel Dis- cuss	10 Allison - 12:00pm Introduction Introduction Panel Dis- cuss High St, Jamaica, MA Allison - 12:00pm Introduction Introduction Panel Dis- cuss High St, Jamaica, MA	11 Allison - 12:00pm Introduction Introduction Panel Dis- cuss High St, Jamaica, MA Allison - 12:00pm Introduction Introduction Panel Dis- cuss High St, Jamaica, MA	12 12:00pm - 1:00pm Introduction Introduction Panel Dis- cuss High St, Jamaica, MA Allison - 12:00pm Introduction Introduction Panel Dis- cuss High St, Jamaica, MA
13	14 9:00am - 12:00pm Introduction Introduction Panel Dis- cuss High St, Jamaica, MA Allison - 12:00pm Introduction Introduction Panel Dis- cuss High St, Jamaica, MA	15 Allison - 12:00pm Introduction Introduction Panel Dis- cuss High St, Jamaica, MA Allison - 12:00pm Introduction Introduction Panel Dis- cuss High St, Jamaica, MA	16 Allison - 12:00pm Introduction Introduction Panel Dis- cuss High St, Jamaica, MA Allison - 12:00pm Introduction Introduction Panel Dis- cuss High St, Jamaica, MA	17	18	19
20	21 1:00pm - 2:00pm Introduction Introduction Panel Dis- cuss High St, Jamaica, MA Allison - 12:00pm Introduction Introduction Panel Dis- cuss High St, Jamaica, MA	22	23 Allison - 12:00pm Introduction Introduction Panel Dis- cuss High St, Jamaica, MA Allison - 12:00pm Introduction Introduction Panel Dis- cuss High St, Jamaica, MA	24 12:00pm - 1:00pm Introduction Introduction Panel Dis- cuss High St, Jamaica, MA Allison - 12:00pm Introduction Introduction Panel Dis- cuss High St, Jamaica, MA	25	26
27	28	29	30 Allison - 12:00pm Introduction Introduction Panel Dis- cuss High St, Jamaica, MA Allison - 12:00pm Introduction Introduction Panel Dis- cuss High St, Jamaica, MA	31		

NEWS AND VIEWS

*** *And Now, Here's Ken!* **Northern Berkshire Tonight**, the talk show of the Coalition will be airing its May show, **Monday, May 7 at 7:30** and repeating **Friday, May 11 at 8 PM**. The May show will be featuring guests from Northern Berkshire Mental Health Association including Gavin Behrens, Director of the South Forty Program; Dr William Goodman, Director of the Counseling Center, and Betsy Levensen, Co-Director of the Canal Street Center who will discuss the complexities of dual diagnosis, treating people with a combination of mental health and substance abuse issues. Join thousands of others who watch the Coalition on TV and enjoy the opportunity to watch Northern Berkshire Tonight on channel 7, Northern Berkshire's local access channel.

*** *Wanna help Parent's Anonymous?* . . . Parent's Anonymous is looking for volunteers to provide child care for parents who attend the Parent's Anonymous meetings. If you are willing to volunteer some time to watch children, the meetings are held Tuesdays from 9:30 - 11:30 AM and Mon's from 7 - 9 PM. Interested? Call Crystal Scholtz at 664-8300.

*** *FACT and NBMHA* . . . The Northern Berkshire Mental Health Association will hold a conference on "Family Issues in Suicide and Depression" on Wednesday, May 16 from 9 AM to noon at the Williams Inn in Williamstown. The conference which is co-sponsored by FACT (Family and Children's Team), is the second quarterly meeting aimed at suicide prevention led by NBMHA.

The Conference is open to the public and will feature a keynote presentation by Dr Michael Murphy and a panel discussion. Panelists include: Gavin Behrens, LICSW, Director of the South Forty Adolescent Program; Joseph Gustafson, LICSW; Dr Susan Yates, OB-GYN; and school psychologist Marilyn Grande, of Parsons Child and Family Center in Albany.

For further information, contact Meg LeRay, Director of Education and Development at NBMHA, at 664-4541. CEU's will be offered for this training.

*** *News from Northern Berkshire Support Services!* Northern Berkshire Support Services is sponsoring a dance at the **VFW, 573 Mohawk Trail, on May 18th**. Admission is free of charge. The dance is dedicated to Sam Mazza, a parent and longtime advocate for the developmentally disabled. Entertainment will be provided from 8 PM to 10:30 PM by Mark Denning. All are urged to attend this fun time.

*** *Questions about Benefits??* Public benefits for families with special health care needs or disabilities. Overview of SSI, CommonHealth for

Disabled Children, and Kaileigh Mulligan Home Care Program, by Gail Havelick, Policy Office, Mass Dep't of Public Health, Wednesday June 6 at 7 PM. The meeting will be at Berkshire Unlimited, 10 Lyman St, Pittsfield. The meeting is sponsored by ASK (Advocacy for Special Kids). There is no charge for the program and free on-site respite will be provided. For more information, contact Paula at NBSS, 664-9345.

***** Drug-Free Children . . .** The Northern Berkshire United Way is offering at no charge, use of a 30-minute videotape, "How to Raise a Drug-Free Child", a widely acclaimed HBO production. Hosted by Mary Tyler Moore, the program contains questions and information that can help adults understand the problem, identify commonly used drugs and paraphernalia, recognize symptoms of drug use, and implement a plan to help keep children drug-free. An accompanying guide serves as a tool for group or family discussions. The program with additional guides and brochures can be purchased at a minimal cost if a business, organization, or group wishes to do so. For more info, contact the NB United Way, 85 Main St, North Adams, 663-9062.

***** Green Thumb ?** One organization that was not able to make the April Coalition Meeting to discuss Volunteerism was Green Thumb of New England. Green Thumb is a volunteer organization for older Americans and they have many volunteers in Northern Berkshire. To find out more about being a host site for a Green Thumb volunteer, call Brent Winters at (508) 249-9783.

***** SSI Outreach Grant . . .** Are you interested in applying for an SSI Outreach Grant from HHS ? If interested, call 301 965-9798 for more info.

***** Beyond the Bottom Line II . . .** is an analysis of the Governor's budget proposal for FY 91 in the areas of cash assistance programs, child and family support services, elder services, health, higher education, housing, local aid (including the public schools), and programs affecting people with disabilities. It is written for Berkshire County by the Community Services Coalition of South/Central Berkshire. "It's a masterpiece, easy to read with lots of information, that everyone involved in Berkshire advocacy should read". For a copy, contact the Community Services Coalition of South/Central Berkshire at P.O. Box 3901, Pittsfield, or call Women's Services in Pittsfield or Berkshire SANE/FREEZE in Williamstown.

***** Interested In Growing a Business ?** Then expand your horizons with the CRC's Entrepreneur's Seminars. Sessions are free and intended to be both informational and inspirational. Each session begins with a 1/2 hour from the "Growing a Business" series by Paul Hawkins and is followed by a one hour panel including Northern Berkshire entrepreneurs. The dates are

May 7, 10/14, 15, 17/ 21, 22, 24 from 7 to 9 PM at Sullivan Lounge, NASC.
Contact Antoinette Edmunds at 664-1024 for more information.

***** One more time In the Spirit of Coalitioning . . .** The Family Life Support Center is seeking to work with social service agencies and other members of the Northern Berkshire community to provide life skills education programming for homeless and at-risk families and individuals at Louison House. Their goal is to create a community center where can develop independent living skills and find support. They hope to engage the expertise that other service providers have already developed in areas such as: tenant rights and responsibilities, budgeting and money management, employment search and career development, health care and nutrition, family dynamics and parenting, problem-solving and conflict resolution.

The Family Life Support Center is able to provide a large space and home-like environment, transportation for families and individuals to Louison House, volunteer staff assistance, and access to their client population through their mailing list and eventual newsletter. **If you are interested in exploring new approaches to inter-agency cooperation and life skills education, please contact Bob Ronnow at 743-7957.**

***** POWER Lunch Schedule . . .** The Power Lunch Program at the Shipper's Room at Heritage State Park is moving along. Bring your own Brown Bag. **Be Important Be Seen at the Power Lunches.** The following is the itinerary for the Power Lunches through the end of May :

May 3rd	HelpLine, in celebration of 20 years
May 10th	Supported Employment at NBMHA featuring Betsy Levensen, Co-Director of the Canal St Center
May 17th	Open discussion
May 24th	Citizen Advocacy of Northern Berkshire, CommonGround

***** Stuffings . . .** Anyone interested in the Shared Service Model as presented by Tom Wolff in last month's edition of the News? It would be a means to group purchase benefits, equipment, supplies, etc. and may be of great assistance to some of the smaller agencies. If people would like to talk about this, contact Al Bashevkin, (802 442-5200) who can set up a planning meeting. . . Greetings have been sent from an old time Coalitioner, Kevin O'Connor, former director of HelpLine, who will be graduating with his MSW on May 30. To contact Kevin, his address is 3129 Kingsbridge Terrace, Bronx, NY 10463 . . . A speedy recovery and warm wishes goes out to Debbie Weinstein, Director of the Mass Human Services Coalition, and guru of statewide advocacy who is recuperating from an auto accident.

**NORTHERN BERKSHIRE
HEALTH AND
HUMAN SERVICES
COALITION**

PRESENTS :

Coalition's 4th Annual Meeting

Date : Friday June 15, 1990
Time : Noon (sharp) to 2 PM
Place : North Adams State College, "The Pub"
Cost : \$10 Door Prizes for those who register early
Catering : Hot meal catered by ARA Food Services
Program : Coalition Year in Review
Peer Recognition Awards
Panel Entitled :
The Life and Death Struggle of Human Services
- B. Anderson,
- J. Williams

Guaranteed to be the most Memorable Annual Meeting Yet !

Coalition Lunch Registration :

Name : _____ Phone : _____

Address _____ Coalition Supporter ?
Yes ___ Not yet ___

Make check out to : AHEC Coalition Lunch **Early reg by May 25**
Mail by June 4

Mail To : Berkshire AHEC, Inc.
725 North St Pittsfield, MA 01201

Coalition Peer Recognition Awards

It's time again to consider who you would like to nominate for the Fourth Annual Coalition Peer Recognition Awards. This is your chance to give recognition to someone who deserves it. Awards will be given out at the Coalition's Annual Meeting. The following are guidelines to follow for the recognition awards :

- * All interested in the area's health and human services are eligible
- * Nominees must not be in health and human services management
- * Nominees should exemplify the Coalition's goals of "working together"
- * Award winners will be chosen by the Coalition Steering Committee
- * **Nominations must be in by May 16** (so don't delay !)

Nominee _____

Your Name _____

Reason for Nomination : (attach extra sheet if necessary)

Mail nominations to : Northern Berkshire Health and Human Services Coalition, PO. Box 931, North Adams, MA 01247

Each year, we look at the mailing list (over 300 names) to be sure we are as streamlined as we can possibly be. Those who are Coalition supporters have helped us to finance this publication. If you have not sent in your support and plan to do so, please send it in as soon as possible.

If you are not a Coalition Supporter and want to continue to receive your monthly issue of Coalition News, please return the following to : Northern Berkshire Health and Human Services Coalition, PO. Box 931, North Adams, MA 01247.

NAME _____ PHONE _____

ADDRESS _____

Please Continue to send me
Coalition News

1989 - 90 COALITION SUPPORTERS :

ORGANIZATIONS

NB Committee on Mental Retardation
Pregnant Adolescent Support System (PASS)
American Red Cross
Berkshire Council on Alcohol and Addictions
Williamstown Housing Authority
Northern Berkshire Support Services
United Cerebral Palsy
Mass Society for Prevention Cruelty to Children
Northern Berkshire United Way
Berkshire Sane/Freeze
AdLib, Inc.
Northern Berkshire Community Action
Visiting Nurse Association of Northern Berkshire
Northern Berkshire Mental Health Association
Williamstown Council on Aging
AdLib North
Child Care of the Berkshires
Mass Department of Employment and Training
Helpline, Inc.
North Adams Regional Hospital
Women's Services Center
Hospice of Northern Berkshire, inc.
Adams Housing Authority
Town of Adams Community Development Dep't
Berkshire Food Project
Williams College
Berkshire Center for Families and Children
Rape Crisis Center of Berkshire County

INDIVIDUALS

John Howland, MD
Al Nelson
Pamela Knisley
Al Bashevkin
Steve Green
Suzanne Walker
Len Radin
Diane Balduzy
Michele Ethier
Karen Forni Austin
Kayte Miller
Anthony J Siracusa
Bob Ronnow
Trish Kelly
Judith Alden
Art and June Rock
Bill Garrison
Lisa Jarisch
Mort Broch
Margaret Campbell

YES, SIGN ME UP AS A COALITION SUPPORTER for 1989-90 !

Name _____
Organization _____
Address _____
Phone _____

- Ind (\$10)
 Sm Org (\$25)
(< \$100,000 budget)
 Lg Org (\$50)
(> \$100,000 budget)

Checks payable to AHEC/NBHHSC. Mail to Berkshire AHEC 725 North St
Pittsfield MA 01201

Areas of Interest :

Are you willing to be listed as Coalition Supporter Yes No

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- May 2** - **FACT Meeting**: Haskins Community Center Noon
- May 7** - **Northern Berkshire Tonight**: Mental Health Month
Channel 7 7:30 PM
- May 8** - **Substance Abuse Task Force**: NB United Way 85
Main St. North Adams 2:30 PM
- May 11** - **Northern Berkshire Tonight**: Mental Health Month
Channel 7 8 PM
- May 11** - **All Coalition Meeting**: John McManus, Mental Health
Month 1st Baptist Church of North Adams
Corner Eagle and Main St (enter on Eagle) 10 AM to Noon.
- May 12** - **Helpline's 20th Anniversary Celebration**
- May 16** - **Training on Suicide and Depression by NBMHA
and FACT** Williams Inn 9 - 12 AM
- May 17** - **Steering Committee** NA City Hall 1:30 PM
- May 23** - **PUTTING COMMUNITY BACK INTO HUMAN
SERVICES: *Still crazy after all these years* Third
Annual AHEC Coalition Conference** Sturbridge, MA
All Day Register by May 11 Call 253-2646 for more
info
- June 7** - **Family Life Support Center Advisory Board**
Louison House 2:30 PM
- June 15** - 4th Coalition Annual Meeting

**BE IMPORTANT BE SEEN AT THE COALITION POWER LUNCH
HERITAGE PARK SHIPPERS LOUNGE**

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|-----------------|---|
| May 3rd | Helpline, in celebration of 20 years |
| May 10th | Supported Employment at NBMHA featuring Betsy
Lebensen, Co-Director of the Canal St Center |
| May 17th | Open discussion |
| May 24th | Citizen Advocacy of Northern Berkshire, CommonGround |