



**Ravenwood Mental Health Center** provides community based services for adult, youth and children that are responsive to the mental health and addiction recovery needs of Geauga County. Outpatient counseling, psychiatric care, Intensive Home Based Services for families and children, culturally sensitive treatment for the Amish and African American communities in Geauga, One-on-One Program, Bridges partial hospitalization for children and youth, STOP treatment and outreach for victims of sexual abuse and their families, New Beginnings adult partial hospitalization, Assertive Community Treatment (ACT), Supportive Employment, Drug and Alcohol assessment and counseling, IOP (intensive group counseling for adolescents with drug and alcohol addiction), Therapeutic Group Home for Youth and the John Murray social recreation center.

Ravenwood (440)285-3568 Middlefield Office (440)632-5355  
South Street Office (440)286-1631 [www.ravenwoodmhc.org](http://www.ravenwoodmhc.org)

**WOMENSAFE, INC. WomenSafe, Inc.,** The Green House provides emergency shelter and support services for survivors of domestic violence throughout northeast Ohio. WomenSafe is a non-profit organization that offers 24-hour crisis management, shelter, court advocacy, hospital advocacy, counseling, art therapy, education, referrals and support to adults and children who are survivors of domestic violence. All services are provided free of charge.  
(440)286-7154 - [www.womensafe.org](http://www.womensafe.org)

**Gauga County Educational Service Center** - Teen Institute (TI) for the Prevention of Drug and Alcohol Abuse is a teen peer-prevention program. In this program, teens are taught about drug and alcohol abuse and how to do prevention projects in their schools and the community.  
(440)279-1700 - [www.geauga.org/teeninstitute.html](http://www.geauga.org/teeninstitute.html)

**Big Brothers Big Sisters of Northeast Ohio** makes meaningful, monitored matches between adult volunteers ("Bigs") and children ("Littles") between the ages of 6 and 15. Most children in Big Brothers Big Sisters programs are from single-parent households and significantly benefit from having the additional guidance and support of a one-on-one relationship by doing better in school, avoiding violent behaviors and illegal activities. (440)352-2526 - [www.bbbsneo.org](http://www.bbbsneo.org)



**NAMI Geauga County** provides education, advocacy and support for those living with mental illness, their families and friends. We offer free support groups and education courses to help everyone impacted by mental illness.  
(440)285-3945 - [www.mhageauga.org/NAMI.html](http://www.mhageauga.org/NAMI.html)



**Emergency - Copeline:**  
**1-888-285-5665**  
**24-Hour Crisis Management TDD/TTY Use Ohio Relay**  
**@ 1-800-750-0750**

**Lake-Geauga Recovery Centers** operates two Long Term Non-Medical Residential Treatment Facilities for persons whose lives are or have been affected by their own or another's use of alcohol or other drugs. Outpatient services include: alcohol and other drug assessment, crisis intervention, individual and group counseling, and dual diagnosis treatment. Lake-Geauga Recovery Centers also offers the Mike Link Driver Intervention Program and the Drug Free Safety Program. The Center's prevention services strive to educate and inform the community on issues related to tobacco, alcohol and other drugs. (440)285-9119 - [www.lgrc.us](http://www.lgrc.us)



**Catholic Charities Community Services of Geauga County** is dedicated to helping individuals and families heal, strengthen and enrich their relationships for effective and healthy living. Services provided include: Mental Health and Chemical Dependency Assessments and Counseling, Employment services for Adults and Youth, Family Violence Intervention, Older Adult Services, Volunteer Guardian Services, and Early Childhood Mental Health services (including Parent groups, Dina schools and in home services) for ages 0-9.  
(440)285-3537 Voice or TTY 1-800-242-9755 - [www.clevelandcatholiccharities.org](http://www.clevelandcatholiccharities.org)

**Mental Health Association in Geauga County** promotes services and programs that are responsive to the mental health and chemical dependency needs of the citizens of Geauga County. We offer the Teddy Bear Patrol, the Professional Workshop Series, Very Important Kid Program, ParenTalk Newsletter, Facilitator Newsletter, and assist with the Panorama Newsletter. We are proud partners with NAMI Geauga and the Suicide Prevention Coalition.  
(440)285-3945 TDD - [www.mhageauga.org](http://www.mhageauga.org)



**Services from Agencies Funded by the Geauga County Board of Mental Health and Recovery Services.**

Information in this newsletter is for general interest purposes only. Consult a professional regarding specific personal questions or concerns.

We are trying to reduce our costs. If you would like to receive the Facilitator Newsletter via email contact info@mhageauga.org or subscribe online at [www.mhageauga.org](http://www.mhageauga.org)

Michelle Doehring, Executive Director  
(440)285-3945  
Fax: (440)285-2756  
Email: [info@mhageauga.org](mailto:info@mhageauga.org)  
[www.mhageauga.org](http://www.mhageauga.org)

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# The Facilitator

Fall 2010

## Mental Health Needs Rise as Funding Falls

The economic downturn over the last few years has affected everyone. Government services have been impacted in every state, and Ohio is no exception. Mental Health in Ohio has taken a substantial hit, losing 38% of its funding in 2009. What makes this equation so distressing is that while state funding has been decreasing, the need for mental health services has been increasing, often directly related to losing a job, losing one's home, or other stressful life events brought on by adverse economic circumstances. Mental illness is closer to home than you may think. Currently, 1 out of 4 Ohioans have a diagnosable mental illness, and 63% of adult Ohioans have a friend or family member with mental illness.

First-time users of the mental health system in Geauga County have increased, especially psychiatric hospitalizations, the most expensive form of mental health treatment. Since 2008, the year the economic downturn started, psychiatric hospital admissions for Geauga County have increased by 60%.

Mental Health Emergency Services use has also increased since 2008. Emergency Services in Geauga County are provided by Ravenwood Mental Health Center, who report that face-to-face emergency service contacts have increased 30% and phone contacts 48% since 2008.

The Mental Health Association and NAMI Geauga County are joining other advocacy groups locally and across the state to advocate with our state legislators to stop cutting funding for mental health, and treat behavioral health care like the health care it is - as life saving as treatment for diabetes, cancer, or heart disease.

You can help by contacting your elected officials, regardless of your political affiliation, and urge them to stop cutting mental health funding. You can contact our office at 440-285-3945 or by emailing me at [mdoehring@mhageauga.org](mailto:mdoehring@mhageauga.org) for a list of our elected representatives and help in how to write a letter, send an email, or make a phone call to let our state officials know how much this issue means to you. Together, we can make a difference!

Michelle Doehring, Executive Director  
The Mental Health Association in Geauga County  
NAMI Geauga County

Mental Health Association in Geauga County's mission is to promote services and programs that are responsive to the mental health and chemical dependency needs of the citizens of Geauga County. In furtherance of this purpose, we shall: \* Provide individual and group educational opportunities. \* Research, evaluate and disseminate relevant information. \* Increase awareness of mental health and chemical dependency causes and issues. \* Address public perceptions of mental health and chemical dependency. \* Support and facilitate the programs, activities and services of public and private providers. \* Foster public visibility of the Association as well as other community agencies.

### One Woman's Story

*"In December of 2009 I was hospitalized at Geauga Hospital for five days during a manic episode. After discharge, I was still manic and having delusions. Ravenwood Mental Health Center came out and picked me up, enrolled me in their ACT (Assertive Community Treatment) program that day, and got me started in PHP (Partial Hospitalization Program), where I received group therapy, shared my problems with other folks with mental health and addiction problems, and learned ways to cope with what I was going through. I was permanently laid off from my job in February, but my case manager at Ravenwood helped me to apply for SSDI (Social Security Disability Insurance).*

*Ravenwood's Housing Assistance Program kept me in my apartment while I waited to be approved for SSDI, and the COPELine (24 hour mental health hotline) kept me linked to caring help when I felt suicidal. Ravenwood's Supported Employment program helped me find part-time work close to home to keep me active and connected. I have learned much from NAMI Geauga through the speaker meetings and peer support, and have enjoyed four years attending the NAMI Walk in Cleveland. Now I volunteer at the Dept of Aging, Friends of WomenSafe, and the church I attend regularly. I don't know where I could have turned if it were not for the generous services provided here through Geauga County's Mental Health Board and Ravenwood."*

### In Memoriam

The Mental Health Association lost two longtime friends this past year. On April 12, 2010, our office assistant, Anthony "Tony" Colitto passed away. Anyone who visited our office over the last 15 years will remember Tony's warmth and kindness.

On October 14, 2010, we lost Keith Brooks, the former president of the Mental Health Association in Geauga County's board. Keith served as a tireless volunteer on our board for 15 years.

Goodbye Tony and Keith-we miss you and were blessed to have had you as part of the MHA family.

# What are Anxiety Disorders?

**Have you ever gotten so worried about something that you can't think about anything else? Have you gone over and over a problem in your mind until it seems that there's no way to avoid "total disaster", only to find out later that the problem wasn't nearly as big as you thought? Have you felt overwhelming panic that sets your heart racing and immobilizes you, and you can't pinpoint a cause? If so, you may be experiencing an anxiety disorder.**

Anxiety disorders are the most diagnosed mental illnesses in this country today, affecting 40 million people each year. An anxiety disorder is NOT the kind of worry we all experience before a big test or speaking engagement - it involves irrational fear and an overpowering sense of dread that is not supported by the actual facts of a situation, or not related to any situation at all. Anxiety disorders are brain disorders, medical illnesses that affect the brain, and research into anxiety disorders is focusing on brain imaging technology and neurochemical techniques to determine what causes them and how best to treat them. Presently, research focuses on two areas of the brain - the amygdala (which interprets incoming signals to the brain and transmits "threat" responses) and the hippocampus (which creates memories from threatening events).



Doctors and therapists use the Diagnostic Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, published by the American Psychiatric Association, to diagnose anxiety disorders. The DSM-IV-TR, as the current version is called, is used by doctors and mental health professionals to diagnose their clients who are having mental health issues.

*"As my husband often says, if I don't have something to worry about I'll find some thing. I always knew I was a worrier. Oftentimes I couldn't relax and my worries would go on and on for days. It was normal for me to worry about the simplest things - the weather, what to eat, what to wear, what to say. I have GAD, Generalized Anxiety Disorder".*

Anxiety disorders are very treatable, with both medication and cognitive-behavioral psychotherapy (CBT) offering relief to those suffering from it. Medication particularly is helpful until therapy is effective in managing symptoms. CBT helps to change negative thinking patterns that cause anxious feelings and helps people change their behavior, which is a reaction to these negative thoughts and feelings. Specially targeted forms of CBT are used to treat different anxiety disorders. Support groups can also help. Below is a description of the most common anxiety disorders:

**Panic Disorder** affects about six

million adults in this country, and twice as many women are diagnosed with it as are men. Sudden panic attacks, which can include feelings of terror, heart-pounding, sweatiness, weakness, faintness and dizziness, happen with varying frequency depending on the person.

**Generalized Anxiety Disorder**, or GAD, affects about 6.8 million adults, again, affecting about twice as many women as men. Those with GAD worry excessively nearly all of the time, and can't stop worrying about their health, issues at work or at home, or money problems, even when others tell them their fears are exaggerated. This kind of worrying must be present for at least six months to be diagnosed as GAD.

**Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder**, or OCD, is an illness in which people develop rituals to control the anxiety caused by upsetting and persistent thoughts. This is more than running back into the house to make sure you turned off the coffeemaker - performing the rituals is unpleasant and interferes with the sufferer's ability to live a "normal" life. Men and women are equally afflicted with OCD, with 2.2 million Americans diagnosed. Treatment includes specific medications and exposure-based therapy, where people are exposed to their trigger in

a controlled situation and coached to handle the anxiety-stimulating situation in more effective ways.

**Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder**, or PTSD, occurs after people have experienced a traumatic event that involves an extreme threat to their safety or the safety of others. All of us have the "fight or flight" reaction to danger; those with PTSD continue to have this reaction long after the event. While more women develop PTSD than men, those in the armed services are especially vulnerable to this disorder. Symptoms include flashbacks or dreams of the original event, feelings of numbness and depression, or being "hyper vigilant" to any perceived danger. Approximately 7.7 million Americans suffer from Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder.

**Social Phobia**, or **Social Anxiety Disorder**, involves extreme self-consciousness that interferes significantly with daily activities. People with social phobia are intensely afraid of being watched and judged by others. The fear that they will do something embarrassing creates chronic worry over social situations. Men and women suffer equally from social phobia - about 15 million adult Americans. (Cont'd on next page)



**Support Meetings**  
**Chardon - Peer Support Group**  
 For persons with mental illness. Held on the first Thursday of each month at 7:00 p.m. at the Geauga County Board of Mental Health & Recovery Services, 13244 Ravenna Rd. Chardon, OH 44024.

**Chardon - Family and Friends Support Group**  
 For loved ones of persons with mental illness. Held on the second Thursday of each month at 7:00 p.m. at the Geauga County Board of Mental Health & Recovery Services, 13244 Ravenna Rd. Chardon, OH 44024.

**Middlefield - Two Groups On One Night**  
 Family and Friends Support Group and Peer Support Group both held on the fourth Tuesday of each month at 7:00 p.m. at the Middlefield Library, 16167 E. High Street, Middlefield, Ohio 44062.

**NAMI Crafters**  
 Meets for fun and friendship on the 1st and 3rd Wednesday of the month at 2:00 p.m. at Ravenwood's South Street Office, 695 South Street, Chardon. Call 285-3945 for details.

**NAMI Speaker Meeting** - November 18, 2010 - Deanna Brant, Emergency Services Director at Ravenwood Mental Health Center will present "Assisted Outpatient Treatment - Jason's Law," a discussion of pending mental health legislation in Ohio.

**December 16, 2010 - Annual NAMI Geauga Holiday Party**, 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. RSVP required - call our office at 440-285-3945 or email [lreed@mhageauga.org](mailto:lreed@mhageauga.org). Held at the Munson Community Center. Bring winter cheer to your family by attending our always popular potluck!


**Family-to-Family Education Course**  
 This FREE 12-class education course, taught by trained family members, provides in-depth basic education and skill training for families and friends with a loved one diagnosed with a severe mental illness (biologically-based brain disorder). Our next Family-to-Family class will be offered in the Spring of 2011.

**Hand-to-Hand Education Course**  
 A free 9 week education program designed to foster learning, healing and empowerment among parents and families of children with emotional / mental / neurobiological disorders. Hand-to-Hand addresses the diagnoses and medications, coping with social stigma, dealing with insurance companies and raising siblings that are well or may have problems of their own.

**Peer-to-Peer: Coming in the Spring of 2011**  
 Peer-to-Peer is a 10-week interactive learning program for people with any serious mental illness who are interested in establishing and maintaining their wellness and recovery. Participants create their own advance directive and a "relapse prevention plan" to help identify feelings, thoughts, behavior, or events that may warn of impending relapse and to plan for intervention.

**For more information call 440-285-3945 or email: [lreed@mhageauga.org](mailto:lreed@mhageauga.org)**

**Make a Donation to Mental Health Association in Geauga County**



Please include your check or money order and send to:

The Mental Health Association in Geauga County  
 11850 Mayfield Road Unit 1,  
 Chardon, Ohio 44024

Yes I would like to make a donation:

\$25  \$50  \$100  Over \$100

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*Thank You*

The Mental Health Association in Geauga County brings you the V.I.K. Program, Parentalk Newsletter, Facilitator Newsletter, the Professional Workshop Series and The Teddy Bear Patrol. Your tax deductible contribution will help us provide teddy bears to Geauga County children in traumatic situations and continue to provide mental health education to the Geauga County community. Become a SPONSOR by donating \$50 or more and your name or business will be listed in our next Facilitator Newsletter and on our website.

## What are Anxiety Disorders? (cont'd)

**Specific Phobias** are the most common anxiety disorders, with 19.2 million adults in this country being affected. People who experience a specific phobia are intensely afraid of something completely out of proportion to the actual threat, such as a fear of flying, heights, dogs, or closed-in places. Exposure-based therapy is especially effective for specific phobias.

Many people who have one anxiety disorder also suffer from depression, substance abuse, or another anxiety disorder. These co-occurring

disorders must also be treated to ensure a full recovery.

If you think you may be suffering from an anxiety disorder, contact a mental health professional. In Geauga County, Ravenwood Mental Health Center (440-285-3568) and Catholic Charities Community Services (440-285-3537) offer mental health screenings and treatment options that are available on a sliding fee scale for those without insurance. NAMI Geauga County offers free education classes and support groups for those living with mental illness and their families and friends.

[Healthyplace.com](http://Healthyplace.com) has online screening tests for some anxiety

disorders. You can access these at [www.healthyplace.com/psychological-tests/#Anxiety](http://www.healthyplace.com/psychological-tests/#Anxiety). However, an online screening is not sufficient for a diagnosis - please call a mental health professional for a full screening and treatment recommendations.

The National Institute of Mental Health [www.nimh.gov](http://www.nimh.gov), Mental Health America [www.nmha.org](http://www.nmha.org) and The National Alliance on Mental Illness [www.nami.org](http://www.nami.org) all have informative websites and were the sources of information for this article.

Michelle Doehring, Executive Director  
 The Mental Health Association in Geauga County & NAMI Geauga County