



# Minding Your Health

## A New Partnership to Save Lives

Chester County  
Commissioners:  
Terence Farrell  
Kathi Cozzone  
Ryan Costello

If you or  
someone you  
know is in a  
mental health  
crisis call  
Valley Creek  
Crisis  
Intervention  
610-280-3270  
Or  
877-918-2100

Anyone who uses the social networking site, Facebook, has probably come across at least one post from a friend or family member that has been cause for concern. You may wonder, "Is this person showing signs of being suicidal?" and if so, "What can I do to help?"

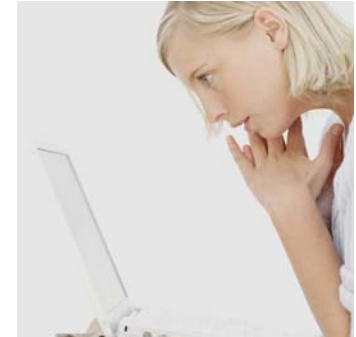
The answer just got easier because of a new service provided by a collaborative effort from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline, and Facebook. This new service enables Facebook users to report a suicidal comment they see either by using the "Report Suicidal Content" link or other report links available throughout Facebook. The person who posted the comment will then immediately receive an email

from Facebook encouraging them to call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-TALK (8255) or to click on a link to begin a confidential chat session with a crisis worker.

The Lifeline provides free and confidential crisis counseling to anyone in need 24/7 and has answered more than three million calls since it launched in 2005.

The Surgeon General, Regina M. Benjamin, MD, MBA, has commended the three collaborating groups for this new service, which addresses one of the nation's public health problems.

"Nearly 100 Americans die by suicide every day — 36,035 lives every year. For every person who is murdered, two die by suicide. These deaths are even more tragic because they are preventable. We have effective



treatments to help suicidal people regain hope and a desire to live, and we know how important personal connections and support can be," Dr. Benjamin said.

For more information on this first-of-a-kind service, visit SAMHSA at [www.samhsa.gov](http://www.samhsa.gov). For more information on suicide facts and signs, go to National Suicide Prevention Lifeline site at [www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org](http://www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org).

## Resolutions For A New Year



About half of all Americans make resolutions in the New Year, but of those, only about half are successful in reaching their goals. Despite these odds, many of us find the clean slate of a new calendar too enticing. It draws us in, motivates us to take stock and make positive changes. Members of Chester County's mental health community are no exception. Some even offered their own resolutions for 2012.

Dr. Caroline Smith, the Mental Health Deputy Administrator, has two simple, clearly stated goals: to make the early morning cup of tea at her house, and to start knitting the sweater for which

she bought yarn last summer.

Rob Chisholm, the Program Director for Chester County's Compeer, stated specifics as well. His resolution is that Compeer staff and volunteers will sustain 80 existing friendships with those in recovery, while seeking to grow the number of people matched in Compeer friendships. In addition, Chisholm resolves to grow awareness of the program using various tools, including their website: [www.compeerchesco.org](http://www.compeerchesco.org).

Studies show that these types of specific resolutions may provide the greatest measure of success, but sometimes simple

statements aren't able to adequately communicate goals or express our thoughts. Chester County CASSP Coordinator Gina Buckman had this simple but deep resolution for 2012: "To honor and develop my compassion for myself and others, and to appreciate the humanity in everyone that I meet."

Nick DeSantis, who manages Community Crossroads Peer Support Center, was more philosophical about New Year's resolutions in general, which he says he views in two different ways. The first, DeSantis said, is to take the stance that Jan. 1st is just another day to maintain his

### Inside this month:

- Administrator's Diary
- Spotlight on Luis Benites
- SAMHSA's new definition of Recovery

### Administrator's Diary:

Looking back at 2011, I'm pleased to note we have once again persevered, and continued to provide Chester County citizens with quality services and support in a very unstable and unpredictable economic climate.

I'm also pleased at our efforts to expand outreach and education in 2012, to help individuals understand mental health issues and to encourage people to get the help they need, despite the fact that so far the budget does not allow for such expansion. But this proactive approach also means that we must work together and voice our funding concerns to lawmakers.

I encourage everyone to contact their state representatives to let them know how important it is to keep the Mental Health budget in tact and strongly advocate for no additional cuts to funding. Use the link below to see local representatives.

[http://www.legis.state.pa.us/cfdocs/legis/home/findyourlegislator/county\\_list.cfm?CNTYLIST=CHESTER](http://www.legis.state.pa.us/cfdocs/legis/home/findyourlegislator/county_list.cfm?CNTYLIST=CHESTER)

Have a safe & healthy New Year — Gary Entrekin, Administrator, Chester County MH/IDD

#### Resolutions cont. from page 1—

attempts "To do my best to be honest, open minded and willing in what comes my way."

DeSantis described his second stance on resolutions this way: "January 1st represents a natural and new beginning in many ways. So there are many reasons why and how I would want to start anew on this day. It's a sort of self commitment to honor my efforts from the past year. To take inventory of where I was and where I am. To recognize that in moving forward we often take a step or two back. Those step back times can often be a new vantage point for shifting my direction. They can also be the backbone of any strength I gain along the way."

No matter how we state them, New Year's resolutions will always be a driving force — at least for about half of us.

### SAMHSA Announces Working Definition of RECOVERY

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) has just released a working definition of recovery. This new definition is the product of a year long effort involving many partners in the behavioral health community and others who responded to SAMHSA Feedback Forums and blog posts. The blog post received 259 comments, and the forums had over 1000 participants, nearly 500 ideas, and over 1,200 comments on the ideas.

The definition: *A process of change through which individuals improve their health and wellness, live a self-directed life, and strive to reach their full potential.*

For more information visit SAMHSA at [www.samhsa.gov](http://www.samhsa.gov).

### Did You Know?

Approximately 85% of individuals with autism also have a co-occurring disorder such as

- ADHD ▪ Anxiety
- Intellectual Disability ▪ Seizures
- Obsessive Compulsive Disorder
- Oppositional Defiant Disorder
- Depression

### Task Force Adds QPR Trainers

After sponsoring a day-long "Gatekeeper Training" last month, the Chester County Suicide Prevention Task Force has 10 newly certified trainers, qualified to present the suicide prevention program, QPR (Question, Persuade, Refer). The program is free to schools, businesses, church groups, or any Chester County organization.

QPR is an hour-long presentation that provides everyday people with skills to help someone who may be suicidal. It is based on the same principles as CPR (cardio-pulmonary resuscitation) and is through the QPR Institute — [www.qprinstitute.com](http://www.qprinstitute.com).

Call Gina Buckman at 610-344-6265 to schedule a free training for your group.

## Spotlight: Luis Benites, Latino Outreach

Luis Benites easily recalls the culture shock he felt when his family arrived in Kennett Square from Toluca, Mexico in 1997. Just 10 years old and knowing very little English at the time, Benites said he was also used to walking to school, rather than taking a bus. And then there were the school lunches...

"I didn't like the food they served at school. It was very different," said Benites.

Eventually Benites and his sister, Lucero, became connected in the Kennett Square community, participating in programs at the Garage Community and Youth Center, the local school district's "After the Bell" program, and others.

"Our family was very supportive of us becoming involved in the community," Benites said.

The experiences have served him well. Now a Prevention Specialist at Holcomb Behavioral

Health Systems, Benites, who has a degree in English from Millersville University, was also one of the original organizers of Chester County's Latino Advisory Board, implemented through Holcomb and funded through the Department of MH/IDD.

"After college, I realized that I knew some of the things that are important to Latino families, and I wanted to give back to the community," Benites said.

The Latino Advisory Board is involved in such projects as workforce development and mental health education and outreach for local Latino families. For more information, contact Benites at [LBenites2@holcombhhs.org](mailto:LBenites2@holcombhhs.org).



Luis Benites

### [www.parecovery.org](http://www.parecovery.org)

PA Recovery and Resiliency website from Pennsylvania's Office of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services (OMHSAS) has information and resources for all ages — from the basics on statewide initiatives to links for related associations.

Take a look!

### The 11th Annual CHADD Conference

West Chester University  
Saturday, Feb. 25, 2012  
9:00 am—1:00 pm

#### *ADHD at Home, at Work, and in the Classroom*

Speakers and sessions for parents, teachers, professionals, and adults with ADHD (Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder).

For more information go to the local CHADD site:

[www.chadd.net/222](http://www.chadd.net/222)



## Check Your Calendars for the New Year!

Chester County Mental Health is beginning work on a comprehensive MH community calendar for 2012!

How many times has your agency or organization tried to plan an event, only to find that one or more groups were planning something for the same date? The purpose of this inclusive planner is to ease these *calendar conflicts* for local happenings in the mental health community.

To ensure your meetings, activities and events are listed, send your information to: [tbehringer@chesco.org](mailto:tbehringer@chesco.org) with "**2012 MH Calendar addition**" in the subject line.

## Have you checked out Chester County's Refer Web?

Find resources on a wide range of services—from employment and financial services, to shelter and legal assistance. Check it out at [www.referweb.net/chesco](http://www.referweb.net/chesco).

- ◆ Every Thurs. — The Depression and Bipolar Alliance - 6:30- 7:30 pm at the Peer Support Center, 825 Paoli Pike, West Chester. For more info call 610-429-1702.
- ◆ Every Tues. & Thurs. — Double Trouble; for those recovering from addiction and mental health problems - 3:30- 5 pm at the Peer Support Center, 825 Paoli Pike, West Chester. For more info call 610-429-1702.
- ◆ Every Tues.— Recovery Works; a schizophrenia support group - 6:30 – 7:30 pm at the Peer Support Center, 825 Paoli Pike, West Chester. For more info call 610-429-1702.
- ◆ Every Tues. — Celebrate Recovery; for a faith-based support - 6pm-8:15pm at Hopewell UMC, 852 Hopewell Rd., Downingtown. For more info call 610-269-1545.
- ◆ 2nd Mon. — Adult MH Meeting - 5:30 - 7:30 pm at the Peer Support Center 825 Paoli Pike, West Chester. For more info call 610-344-6265.
- ◆ 2nd Tues. — Chester County Children's Committee 9:30 –11 am at Government Services Bldg., 601 Westtown Rd., West Chester. For more info call 610-344-6265.
- ◆ 1st Wed. — NAMI; West Chester Family Support Group - 7-9 pm at the Peer Support Center, 825 Paoli Pike, West Chester. For more info call 484-947-5643.
- ◆ 1st Wed. — CSP (Community Support Program) Meeting - Noon to 2 pm, the Peer Support Center, 825 Paoli Pike, West Chester. For more info call 484-239-0687.
- ◆ 1st Wed.— ADHD Support Group; for parents and caregivers of children with ADHD - West Goshen Municipal Bldg., West Chester. For more info go to [www.chestercountyhadd.org](http://www.chestercountyhadd.org).
- ◆ 2nd Wed. — Chester County Suicide Prevention Task Force - 3:30 – 5pm at COAD, 930 E. Lancaster Ave., Exton. For more info call 610-344-6265.
- ◆ 2nd Wed.— Survivors of Suicide (S.O.S.) - 7:30 pm in the Willistown Room of the Paoli Memorial Hospital in Paoli. For more info call 215-545-2242.
- ◆ 3rd Wed. — Participatory Dialogue Committee - Noon to 2pm at Peer Support Center, 825 Paoli Pike, West Chester. For more info contact Jamie Messersmith at [messersmithj@ccbh.com](mailto:messersmithj@ccbh.com).
- ◆ 4th Wed.—NAMI; Paoli Family Support Group - 7-9pm at the Daylesford Abby, 220 S. Valley Rd., Paoli. For more info call 484-947-5643.
- ◆ 1st Thurs. — NAMI; Kennett Square Family Support Group - 7:30-9 pm at Friends Meeting House, Rt. 82, Kennett Square. For more info call 484-947-5643.
- ◆ 2nd Thurs. — NAMI; Phoenixville Family Support Group - 7-8:30 pm at Penn Psychiatric Center, 601 Gay St., Suite 6, Phoenixville. For more info call 484-947-5643.
- ◆ 2nd Thurs. — NAMI; Grief & Loss Family Support Group - 7:30 - 9:30 pm in Downingtown. For location and more info call 610-269-3476.
- ◆ 3rd Thurs.— NAMI; PA Chester County General Meeting 7pm at Christ Memorial Lutheran Church in Malvern. For more info call 484-947-5643.
- ◆ 4th Thurs. — MH/IDD Advisory Board Quarterly Meeting - 6pm at the Government Services Bldg., 601 Westtown Rd., West Chester, Room 149. For more info call 610-344-6265. Next meeting is November 17.
- ◆ 4th Friday — Creative Expressions Coffee House—7-9pm at The HOOD, 530 E. Union St., West Chester. For more info, call 610-429-1702.

**To keep this calendar up-to-date, we need your feedback! If you know of changes to the above information, please let us know. Email: [tbehinger@chesco.org](mailto:tbehinger@chesco.org) or call 610-344-6265.**