



Our mission is to encourage, enable and empower the voice of consumers in the mental health system

The Rights Stuff

Summer 2013

June • July • August 2013

Canada Summer Jobs

Mental Health Rights Coalition has once again been approved for a grant by the Government of Canada to provide a job to a post secondary student.

This student can come from any background and program. Lived experience of mental illness or addiction is the key.

Our past summer students have helped plan events, organize community resources, create documents and design publications. They have been involved in many aspects of the

daily operations of the drop-in centre.

We are very grateful to the Government of Canada for this grant and to our summer students past and future for being an integral part of the Mental Health Rights Coalition.

The selection is now underway and you will meet our new student soon!



That's a WRAP!

WRAP®: Wellness Recovery Action Plan®



WRAP® -Wellness Recovery Action Plan® is a system to help individuals work through mental health challenges or life issues. It is adaptable to any situation.
<http://www.mentalhealthrecovery.com/>

We have been privileged to have offered a number WRAP groups in Hamilton and Niagara regions as part of a study sponsored by The Ontario Trillium Foundation. We are glad we connected with so many of you in the process.

The research portion of the grant is still underway. We look forward to sharing the information gathered from this research in the near future.

We also look forward to applying again for a grant to continue this valuable project.

Thank you for letting us be a part of your wellness journey and for joining us in this very successful project!



Inside this issue:

From the Executive Director & Editor	2
Simple Principles for Weight Management <i>Terry Booth, RN</i>	3
Gardening at MHRC	3
Wednesdays at Whitehern	3
Take Leaps and Bounds until you Soar <i>Brooke Hamilton</i>	4
Calendar Highlights	4
ADD?OK! ADHD Peer Support Group	5
Hamilton Fringe Festival A Little Too Close to Home	6
Hamilton Mad Pride & Mad Students Society	7
Calendars	8-10

The Rights Stuff is published quarterly by Mental Health Rights Coalition. Submissions of 250 words or less are welcome and are due the 15th of the month prior to publication.

Printing dates are June 1, Sept 1, Dec 1, Mar 1.

Views and opinions expressed in this newsletter are not necessarily those of Mental Health Rights Coalition.



Executive Director:

Frances V. Jewell

mhrced@bellnet.ca

The recent media attention around Douglas Brown's treatment at Joseph Brant¹ and the inquest into the death of Ashley Smith² bring to light the fact that stigma, discrimination, torture, abuse and total disregard for people with mental illness is not a thing of the past. We read in horror about abuse in faraway countries and say "Thank goodness that doesn't happen here," but it does. The question is how do we stop this now? What will it take for people to realize mental illness is just like any other illness, it's treatable? The per-

son with the illness is valuable and must be treated with dignity. What I hear from people is "that weirdo" or "that woman on the scooter" doesn't deserve treatment, they brought it on themselves.

At the Breakfast *A Mental Health Morning* sponsored by St. Joseph's Healthcare Valerie Pringle and her daughter Katherine talked about one of them being crazy and the other not and that they didn't really fit into category of people with mental health issues. That has to be one of the most stigmatizing com-

ments I've heard. The interesting thing was at the end of the Pringle duo's talk no one stood up to applaud them. They didn't have anything ground breaking to offer, no real take-home insight. However they proved the fact that stigma around mental illness is deep rooted. Only when we see people as our mother, father, auntie, uncle, sister, brother and children will we recognize that the "them" "those people" are really us. We are family.

1 <http://www.thespec.com/news-story/2550588-judge-slams-police-for-tasing-man/>

2 <http://fullcomment.nationalpost.com/2013/05/27/christie-blatchford-guards-fought-order-to-not-interviene-with-ashley-smith-until-they-lost-their-voice/>



From the Editor

Amanda Carey

mhrprograms@bellnet.ca

I am very excited at this time of the year. I love the weather, the produce, nature and outdoor activities. These are so rejuvenating.

There is another reason I'm excited right now. It's time for peer support training. I am privileged to provide this training to 10 eager potential peer supporters. I truly wish I could take even more of those interested in taking the course as the demand is so high. I dream of a time when the resources are available to provide peer support and peer support training to everyone who is interested in it.

I interviewed many eager candidates. They didn't all make it into the class. I am reminded of having to

interview for a volunteer position lately myself. I too didn't get it. It made me consider: What did I do in the interview that I could have done better? What is lacking from my resume? How can I improve for next time? Yes, I was a little crushed at first, and now I have used that as fire to further increase my knowledge and skills to do better next time. I have already started a course related to the position I was applying for (Nutrition for Public Health, if you were curious).

As peer support workers we are dedicated to working together with our peers to meet their goals. We are equals, not people "helping them". There is no "them" versus "us," just as Frances mentioned.

There is just "us". We are dedicated to empowerment and recovery. We do not "help people" though people have said that peer support helps. Helping people implies "doing for" or "doing to." We "do with". We walk alongside people on this very important journey in life.

Peer support workers must develop strong boundaries, which can be even more difficult because of this connection and similar experience. It is easy to become friends with our peers and bond over similar experience. If we are in a supporter role, we must find balance. These are the skills one must develop as a peer supporter.

It is never too late to try something new, to set a new goal, to learn a new skill or pick up a new hobby. Each and every thing I do can help me grow or it can keep me from growing. Which will you choose?

Simple Principles to Lose Weight



By Terry Booth, RN, CDE

Hello again everyone! As I poke my head out the door this morning, trying to think spring, I receive a blast of cold, wet wind. Regardless, it is time to get moving and lose those 'few'

pounds we may have gained over the winter. I picked up an empowering little book recently called Simple Principles To Eat Smart and Lose Weight, by Alex Lluch and Sarah Jang. I thought for this article, I would share with you a few ideas from the book.

1. Expect to lose weight over time: weight loss is not instantaneous. You may have heard me say, "You didn't gain this weight overnight, so you can't expect to lose it overnight, it takes time." Use your common sense and slowly cut back on the 'not so healthy' food choices you may be making and increase your exercise. Did you know, that by cutting out just one can of pop per day you can lose ten pounds in a year?

Did You Know?

By cutting out one can of pop per day you can lose ten pounds in one year.

2. Stay hydrated: Water is an important factor in aiding your weight loss. "It the main component in your body and is essential to good health and body function. Water enables your body to work effectively at burning stored fat, it supports kidney function which increases the liver's ability to process fat." When your stomach is sending hunger signals to your brain (growl, growl), try drinking a glass of water first. Sometimes when you think hungry, we are really just thirsty or dehydrated. Of course, if it is time to eat, a glass of water will help you to feel fuller when drank with a meal.

Hope these ideas are helpful. We can share more ideas if you attend the Healthy Lifestyle sessions at the Coalition office. Check your calendar for dates. See you soon.

Public health nurse, Terry Booth, RNCDE, runs two healthy living groups every month at MHRC. Terry is the Diabetes Educator for St. Joseph's Hospital.

Something is growing at MHRC

We are excited to be in our new location for many reasons. One of them is having a place to start a garden. We will be planting flowers in front of our property as well as building a raised vegetable bed. Members are needed on a daily basis to help care for the gardens. For your efforts you will get a beautiful place to call your own as well as some yummy things to eat! Cool drinks, hats and sunscreen will also be available. Frances and Terry Booth will help us along the way. Please stop by Friday June 7th for garden planning and planting and then each morning at 11 am. You will be able to contribute at other times as well, so come and join us for planning and let us know how you can help.



Wednesdays at Whitehern

We have enjoyed several years of music in the beautiful gardens at Whitehern. Sadly we cannot walk over to Whitehern every day for lunch from our new location, though we are pleased to include monthly trips to Whitehern on Wednesdays in the summer. Enjoy music and tea or lemonade in the beautiful garden. Bring your lunch, if you wish. Meet us there at 12 pm or walk over from our location (25 min). Leave at 11:30 am. Seats are limited. You may wish to bring a folding chair, stool, blanket or "sit-upon"

June 26—Ruth Sutherland, Celtic Harp

July 24—Mike Daley, Swing guitar

Aug 21—Henry Strong, Jazz



How to make leaps and bounds until you soar. *By Brooke Hamilton*

My name is Brooke Hamilton. I am currently a Communications student at McMaster and part-time Creative Writing student at Mohawk. I first became acquainted with the Mental Health Rights Coalition when I applied for their summer student position and was lucky enough to meet some of the wonderfully friendly people who spend their time there. It is my hope that by involving myself with this community I can become closer to achieving a career in community service."

I am no stranger to ambition. I've many a pipe dream. Since the day I saw Conan O'Brien on television and laughed 'til my gut hurt, I knew that I wanted to be as grand, as beautiful and as enchanting as he was. As I grew older, my dreams began to pile up and I began to waver under their weight. I burnt out and I burnt out hard. I started working at a factory, developed a drinking problem and resigned myself to living in my parents' basement for the rest of my life.

It wasn't until I broke down all my goals into smaller goals that I actually started to take steps forward. Since I have gotten on the path of recovery I have blossomed. And everyone agrees. I often get asked questions like "What kind of pills are you on?" and "Where can I get some?" People ask these questions because they want to get their life in order – not because they want to escape from it. The problem is, they seem to be under the impression that I took a pill and it magically cured me of all my problems. But that wasn't the case at all.

**A journey of a
thousand miles
begins with
a single step.**

iIiketoquote.com

While antipsychotics and antidepressants have helped to stabilize my symptoms, that is only part of recovery. I have spent hours calling up restaurants and asking about nut allergies so I could practice my telephone manner. I have spent months searching job boards up and down, pounding pavement and handing out resumes, networking with everyone I've ever met, and undergoing career counselling just so I could have a chance at an interview. I have called up ex-friends and apologized for the multiple times that I yelled at them, swore at them, and accused them of trying to ship me off to some secret underground slave ring. I was able to do these things was not just because I was on medication, but because I worked at it.

Every day I gave myself one achievable goal, one tiny step that I could take that very day. And bit by bit, my pace quickened and my steps became leaps and bounds until I began to soar. Today I am a full-time student, loving and supportive friend, and part time comedian-in-training. I have never felt better.

Calendar Highlights

This summer we look forward to holding several activities in the community:

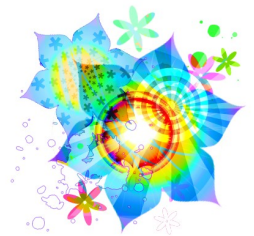
Gage Park Tropical Greenhouse and gardens June 12 at 12 pm at the greenhouse or meet at MHRC at 11:30 am.



Jackson Square Rooftop Concert July 11 at 12 pm at Jackson Square or walk from MHRC (25 minutes) leaving at 11:30 am.

Walk the Rail Trail—This is just down the street from us (up Wentworth) Leave at 1 pm from MHRC.

Picnic in the Park—Explore Princess Point and the Bayfront. Pre-registration will be required. More details and sign-up will be available in July.



Calendar activities subject to change without notice. We will make every effort to inform members of changes as they occur, on location at MHRC 20 Emerald St S and at mentalhealthrights.ca though no guarantees are made. Please call ahead if you have any question about the day's calendar activities. 905-545-2525

ADD?OK!

Hamilton Adult ADHD

Peer Support Group

Do you have or suspect you have Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder? Are you struggling with your professional, personal or family life as a result? If so, we are pleased to announce the formation of a peer support group in Hamilton especially designed to address issues surrounding Adult ADHD.

The Adult ADHD Experience

ADHD or ADD has long been recognized by the medical and mental health communities, and has been most often associated with school age children or teens. As a result, there are many resources and materials available for parents and teachers on how to handle and treat ADHD in children. But the reality is that ADHD in adults is very prevalent. Because it is a relatively new disorder, only having been clearly understood in the last decade, there are many adults who are affected by it and don't know it or have been misdiagnosed or simply regarded as dysfunctional by their peers. Research seems to indicate that 5% of adults are living with ADHD, although it is entirely possible that this number is larger since many people do not actively seek help for the problems ADHD can cause in their lives.

People with ADHD are often misunderstood and stigmatized as a result of some of the behaviours associated with it. Friends, family and colleagues may observe them and judge that they are lazy, disorganized, chaotic, inconsiderate, argumentative or even stupid. As a result, many people with ADHD struggle with depression, anxiety, low self-esteem. They may have difficulty getting or maintaining employment. They frequently have marriage or family problems. They may experience problems with alcoholism, drug abuse and reckless behaviour.

We now know enough about ADHD to tear down these misconceptions and begin to learn how to cope with and treat it effectively. This is one of the goals of the ADD?OK! Peer Support Group.

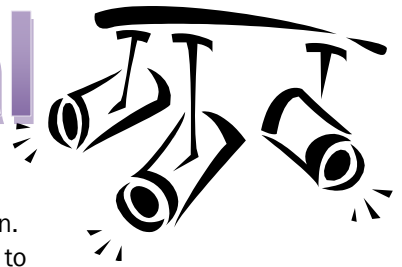
About The Group

The mission of the ADD?OK! Peer Support Group is to gather together and share information, skills and kinship among adults living with ADHD. It is a 'peer' group in that its founding members will also be individuals in the community who have been diagnosed with ADHD. We know that realizing, accepting and dealing with an ADHD diagnosis is very difficult and that changing your lifestyle and moving forward effectively can be a complex affair. While medical and mental health professionals are certainly a vital part of treatment, as peers we are in a unique position to help and support each other on a different level, and so our group will be run by us for us.

Our group is open to men and women over the age of 18 who have or suspect they have ADHD. Thanks to the generous assistance and enthusiasm of the Mental Health Right Coalition, we will be holding the meetings at their site. As this is a new venture, we have not decided on the details of how often and when the meetings will eventually take place, but we are holding a general information session **on June 24 at 2 pm** in order to start the organization of this group. Anyone who would like to attend and help the startup process can email addokhamilton@gmail.com and register for the meeting.



Fringe Festival



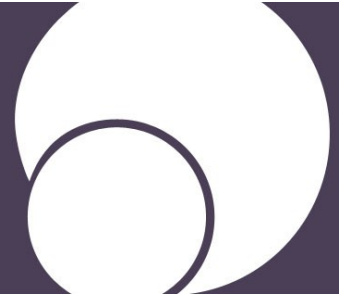
This summer marks the 10th anniversary of the well known Hamilton Fringe Festival, a theatre festival where companies from across Canada and The United States come together to display their work from July 18th to the 28th in different theatres across Hamilton. This festival provides opportunities for both emerging and established Theatre Companies to perform original work.

By Luke Reece

Little Black Afro Productions, was founded in June of 2012 by Luke Reece and Ryan Ovas. Since then we have staged four different plays and been involved with charities such as the CP24 CHUM Christmas Wish in Toronto and the Eden Food Bank in Mississauga. For the Hamilton Fringe Festival we have now created a piece around the topic of OCD and Anxiety Disorders titled 'A Little Too Close To Home'. The play is about a painter who has OCD and its impact on his life and relationships with his wife and son. It shows the journey of the family as they learn how challenging it can be and that they are all there to support each other. The cast and crew is entirely made up of York University Theatre Majors who are all dedicated to the topic.

Little Black Afro
THEATRE COMPANY

Check us out on
littleblackafro.com



We chose to explore OCD and Anxiety Disorder because everyone who is a part of the cast and crew has a personal connection to the topic. It is something that we feel has not been explored enough in theatre and we want to use the piece to create awareness and show the realities of living with the disorders. The title 'A Little Too Close To Home' comes from the fact that the topic is so closely tied to everyone involved and we hope to bring this connection to the audience as well. Many hours have been spent researching and conducting interviews with loved ones, and others who have been affected by OCD and Anxiety Disorders in the attempt to get a solid grasp on the topic.

With this serious and important project we really want to make a difference in the way people see 'mental illness'. In order to make an even greater difference, and to help out the local community, 20% of all proceeds from ticket sales will be going to support the Mental Health Rights Coalition in Hamilton. We are excited to be supporting such a great organization.

Tickets are 10 dollars and can be purchased at the door or through the festival. www.hamiltonfringe.ca

A Little Too Close to Home will be performed in the Theatre Aquarius Studio (190 King William Street, Hamilton, ON).

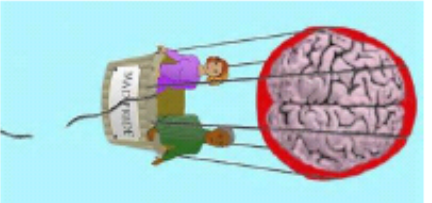
Dates and performance times are as follows:

Fri, July 19 11:00 pm
Sat, July 20 8:00 pm
Mon, July 22 6:30 pm
Tues, July 23 9:30 pm
Thu, July 25 6:00 pm
Sat, July 27 11:00 pm
Sun, July 28 2:30 pm

Editor's note: Perhaps a group from MHRC would like to co-ordinate a time to attend together. Let us know. We can create a sign up sheet and be central place for you to contact others.



Mad Pride Hamilton – July 2013



Are you a:

- ✓ mental health consumer/survivor
- ✓ person with lived experience
- ✓ person who has been labelled with a “mental illness”
- ✓ Mad person

Do you live, work, study, use services, or spend time in Hamilton?

Submit to our zine!

- | | | |
|---------------------|-------------------|-------------------------|
| ✓ Advice | ✓ Pictures | ✓ Visions |
| ✓ Artwork | ✓ Poetry | ✓ Wellness Tools |
| ✓ Blog Posts | ✓ Questions | ✓ What Needs to Change |
| ✓ Comics | ✓ Rants | ✓ What You're Proud Of |
| ✓ Emails | ✓ Recommendations | ✓ What You've Learned |
| ✓ How You Celebrate | ✓ Resources | ✓ What You Want to Know |
| ✓ Letters | ✓ Short Stories | ✓ Wish Lists |
| ✓ Lyrics | ✓ Sketches | |
| ✓ Photographs | ✓ Tips | |

DEADLINE: June 15, 2013

EMAIL: mad.pride.hamilton@gmail.com

PHONE: 647-931-7563

Use (part of) your name, an alias, or be anonymous.

We plan to sell the zine as a fundraiser for Mad Pride Hamilton.

All contributors will receive a free copy.

Like us on Facebook: Mad Pride Hamilton!

For further information on the philosophy, history, and events of Mad Pride Toronto (July 8-14, 2013), visit www.madpridetoronto.com.













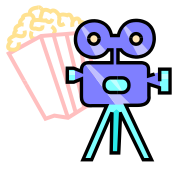









Mad Pride Hamilton is a group of consumer/survivors, people with lived experience, people in recovery, and self-identifying Mad (as in madness) people as well as our allies and supporters. We are starting to meet to organize a Mad Pride event in Hamilton for July 2013. Mad Pride is an opportunity for us as a people to celebrate our lives. We don't want to celebrate the suffering we endure - but rather our strengths, skills, contributions, art, music, crafts, writing, humour, ideas, knowledge, recovery, friendships, and the community we form in the city of Hamilton through the Mental Health Rights Coalition and other peer support groups and drop-ins. If you're interested in learning more or getting involved, please email us at mad.pride.hamilton@gmail.com or leave a voice-mail message at 647-931-7563 and we'll call you back. We'll be sure to tell you what we have planned for July (when we know!) so that you can attend. Further info is available at www.facebook.com/MadPrideHamilton.

One thing we know we are doing for Mad Pride Hamilton is making a zine (a do-it-yourself magazine). Send us your stuff (art, writing, etc.)! For more information, ask Mental Health Rights Coalition staff to print off a copy of our zine Call for Submissions or visit www.facebook.com/events/248509838623904. Email your submissions to mad.pride.hamilton@gmail.com by June 15th or contact us to arrange other drop-off options (eg. leaving your work at MHRC for us to pick up).

If you're a student at any school or planning to go back to school, consider attending a Mad Students Society peer support meeting or joining our 24/7 private email discussion listserve. We meet monthly in Hamilton. Our next meeting is on June 6th at McMaster University. Check out www.madstudentsociety.com. Email outreach@madstudentsociety.com or phone 647-931-7563 for location details/to join.










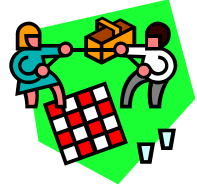












June 2013

Sun	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Sat
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
	Air hockey 	Crazy Eights 	Neighbourhood Walk 	Current Events 	Music 	
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
	Euchre 	Healthy Living 	Tropical Greenhouse Gage Park 12:00 	Karaoke 	Cards 	
16	17	18	19	20	 21	22
	Birthday Party Karaoke 	Movie 	Skip-bo 	Bingo 	Summer Solstice Healthy Living 	
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
	Members' meeting  ADD?OK! 2pm	Crafts & make sit-upons 	12pm Whitehern details p3 	Dictionary game 	Board Games 	
30						
<p>Calendar Activities begin at 1 p.m. unless otherwise stated.</p> <p>Walking/Exercise activities are dependent on weather.</p> <p>Please wear appropriate shoes and clothing.</p>				<p>MENTAL HEALTH RIGHTS COALITION</p> 		

July 2013

Sun	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Sat
	1	2	3	4	5	6
	Canada Day 	Karaoke 	Air Hockey 	Backgammon and Dominoes 	Neighbourhood Walk 	
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
		Healthy Living 	Pictureka 	12:00 pm Jackson Square rooftop concert 	Music 	
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
	Walk the Rail Trail 	Crafts 	Karaoke 	Movie 	Healthy Living 	
	Hamilton Fringe Festival Jul 18-28 (see p 6)					
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
	Knit and Crochet 	Bingo 	12pm Whitehern Wednesday 	Members' Meeting  Come enjoy a popsicle on us!	Music 	
28	29	30	31	<p>Calendar Activities begin at 1 p.m. unless otherwise stated. Walking/ Exercise activities are dependent on weather. Please wear appropriate shoes and clothing.</p> <p>MENTAL HEALTH RIGHTS COALITION</p> 		
	Skip-bo 	Birthday Party 	Cribbage & cards 			

August 2013

Sun	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Sat
				1	2	3
Calendar Activities begin at 1 p.m. unless otherwise stated. Walking/Exercise activities are depend- ent on weather. Please wear appropriate shoes and clothing.				Jenga 	Current Events 	
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
	Civic Holiday 	Cards 	Trivial Pursuit 	Air hockey 	Picnic In the Park 	
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
	Board Games 	Healthy Living 	Karaoke 	Members' Meeting 	Healthy Living 	
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
	Euchre 	Crafts 	12pm Whitehern Wednesday 	Bingo 	Music 	
25	26	27	28	29	30	31
	Birthday Party 	Karaoke 	Monopoly Deal Scrabble Slam Card games 	Crazy Eights 	Movies 