

DIRECTIONS

EAST BAY CENTER, INC.



December 2008

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REPRESENTATIVE PATRICK KENNEDY VISITS EAST BAY CENTER

Representative Patrick Kennedy visited East Bay Center and met with the Center's Senior Leadership Team, as well as guests representing local school systems. His main purpose was to visit the Center to thank staff for their continued hard work in serving clients with mental illness and addictions. He also came to discuss critical issues impacting all Rhode Islanders, such as parity legislation, veterans returning from Iraq and Afghanistan, and the dwindling state and federal reimbursement for key services.

Due to the Congressman's leadership, Congress passed, and President Bush signed, the Paul Wellstone and Pete Domenici Mental Health Parity and Addiction Equity Act on October 3, 2008. This legislation, a dozen years in the making, will guarantee that Rhode Islanders with health insurance will not see discriminatory provisions in their mental health and substance abuse coverage that fall short of their benefits for other health conditions. It takes an important step in sending the message to these individuals that they are no longer considered second-class consumers in the insurance system.

The State's economy and its impact on services were discussed at length. The Center has faced financial reductions from the State to critically needed services and programs in an effort by the State to balance its budget. One of the most dramatic reductions involved services to children who have been diagnosed with severe behavior disorder, and/or serious emotional disturbance, and who are also at-risk for hospitalization. Patricia Beauchemin, a school social worker in the Barrington school system, validated that it is evident, even in her community that psychological stressors for children are on the rise, especially with children of deployed servicemen and women.

Many of our State's men and women have valiantly entered the Iraq/Afghanistan War as members of the National Guard, enduring multiple deployments, physical and mental injuries, and even death. Should a RI soldier or family member need to seek behavioral health services, the soldier is eligible for services at the Veterans' Administration (VA), but services to the family are limited. Unless the family has private insurance through an

employer, many family members go without service at all. CEO Robert Crossley and Congressman Kennedy discussed the potential of federal monies being made available for collaboration between the VA and local community mental health centers to ensure that family members received necessary treatment on a variety of critical issues.

EBC and other community mental health centers stand ready to meet this challenge and have worked closely with their trade organization, the RI Council of Community Mental Health Organizations, to create a comprehensive training module to assist staff members with the complex and unique issues facing these soldiers and soldiers of previous actions.

Congressman Kennedy concluded his visit by meeting and speaking with Center staff such as Michelle Matrone of the Mobile Treatment Team. Michelle spoke about her work and personified for the Congressman why the work that is done by East Bay Center and its community partners is so critical, especially during this time of financial crisis.



Congressman Kennedy and EBC Leadership Staff



Congressman Kennedy meets Michelle Matrone of EBC's Mobile Treatment Team

SILENT/LIVE AUCTION FUNDRAISER



Board Member Jean Melucci and her mother await the start of the auction

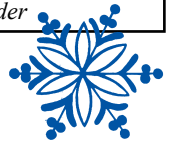


For the second consecutive year, the Board of Directors, staff, friends, and community partners, came together to support East Bay Center's silent and live auction fundraising event.

Once again, Linden Place, considered the "crown jewel of Bristol RI's historic waterfront district", generously opened its doors, allowing attendees to experience the same stylish atmosphere enjoyed by presidents and movie stars of the past. In the ballroom, Fran O'Donnell's Development Committee Team displayed the many items donated by staff, family members, and businesses located within the East Bay region, and when the doors opened at 6:30, bidders entered with enthusiasm.



Chef Donald Fitting serves up delicious pasta to order



EB CAP President Dennis Roy and Board Member Bob Rock enjoy a light moment

Throughout the evening, bidders enjoyed the smooth sounds of jazz provided by Ken Patterson and his three-member ensemble. The fresh aroma of garlic was also in the air, as Donald Fitting, Sous Chef for Roger Williams University, and Franjelica Gaynor, owner of Franjelica's Catering (401-573-7315) prepared delicious pasta dishes to order. Provided with soothing music and outstanding food, attendees took part in good-natured silent bidding. It soon became apparent that the Coach handbags and the sports memorabilia would be the "hot ticket items" of the evening, and bidding became even more exciting as the deadline approached.



Ken Patterson and the Band



President Tim Chapman with Barbara and Dennis Dobbyn

As the evening came to a close, a professional auctioneer engaged bidders into some entertaining competition for beautiful works of art, local vacation packages, and the ever-popular Patriots football tickets.

The Center's Second Annual Fundraising event was successful and could only have happened with the hard work and dedication by the Center's Board of Directors and the generous donors committed to making the mission of the organization a success. Thank you to all who participated, as we look forward to next year's event!



Board Secretary Joanne Koppel



HAVE A HOLLY, JOLLY, BUT SOBER HOLIDAY

What comes to mind when you think of the holidays? Too much food? Too much shopping? Too much of everything? Does that include alcohol or other substances? For some it may. It seems as though our holiday rituals have become synonymous with excess and this excess may include an unhealthy use of substances, especially alcohol. If you or someone you know is concerned with trying to moderate alcohol use during the holidays here are a few things to think about:

The past does not have to equal the future. Just because your celebrations may have included alcohol last year does not mean that they have to this year. The National Institute for Drugs and Alcohol (NIDA) says that approximately one (1) out of five (5) adults use alcohol in a problematic manner. If you have a party of (20) twenty people at your house, then odds are that (4) four of them will be problem users of alcohol. This is a tremendous risk for you as well as them, especially if they drink and drive. Consider having non-alcoholic refreshments such as cider, punch and egg nog.

If you feel you still want to serve alcohol, then be sure to have plenty of alcohol-free alternatives as well as food. Remember that alcohol is digested by the liver at the rate of (1) one drink per hour. If someone drinks more than that, the excess alcohol goes directly into the bloodstream and this quickly leads to intoxication. Also keep in mind that the legal limit of alcohol consumption is typically (2) two drinks for the average male and (1) one for the average female. This will vary if the person takes medication or has other health issues.

People do not have to look drunk to be drunk. Blood alcohol levels continue to increase in the blood stream even after drinking stops so someone can look fine and within a few minutes to an hour be intoxicated or worse. If you choose to serve alcohol, consider

having designated drivers who do not drink alcohol or a taxi service drive your guests to and from your party. It is better to be safe than sorry.

You should also consider the children who will be present at these parties or who will observe adults who attend them. It is hard to demand abstinence from them if their role models do not demonstrate it themselves. Do you want to set the example that enjoying oneself means using alcohol? Young people will follow an adult's example so if they observe us having a fun time without alcohol they will learn it is possible for them to do the same. Remember that under no circumstances is it legal to serve alcohol to minors.

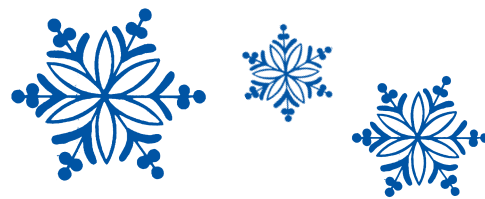
Young people have lots of time off from school at the holidays and this could mean unsupervised time, parties, and spontaneous get-togethers. Ask lots of questions about where your young person will be, whom they will be with, what they will be doing, and who will be supervising. Call the parents of the friend they will be visiting. If you help them plan their time off in advance there will be less chance of them getting into a problematic situation.

If you are a person in recovery, give thought to stepping up your own support network at this time. There are a lot of potential relapse triggers during the holidays and an increase in your own self help may make the holidays more enjoyable by giving you a little more peace of mind. Extra support may also help you to deal with the emotions that may still linger from your pre-recovery holidays.

The Adult Mental Health and Addictions Outpatient Department of East Bay Center Inc., may be able to help. You can also check local listings for AA, Al-ANON & AL-A-TEEN numbers. Be prepared – and enjoy a safe and sober holiday season!



You can help combat stigma. Support those with mental illnesses in their efforts to obtain housing and jobs and respond to false statements about mental illness or people with mental illnesses. Many people have wrong and damaging ideas on the subject. Accurate facts and information may help change both their ideas and actions. For more information please visit us at www.eastbay.org



ANNOUNCING NEW PROGRAMS!

East Bay Center Inc., is pleased to announce the opening of its Intensive Outpatient Program (IOP) and Partial Hospitalization Program (PHP) both utilizing Dialectical Behavioral Therapy (DBT), for adults and adolescents. Frances Bradshaw, Division Director of Family Outreach and Outpatient Services is responsible for the creation and implementation of these programs.

DBT is a skills-focused program, which targets behaviors through processes and symptom management, while enhancing skill capabilities, which result in decreased symptoms and improved over-all functioning. The skills are taught in modules, which address emotion regulation, distress tolerance, interpersonal effectiveness, and mindfulness.

Since adults and adolescents are different in how they understand and manage their symptoms and issues, East Bay Center has purposefully separated this therapy modality into two distinct programs, ensuring the most appropriate levels of care and treatment.

The Intensive Outpatient Program (IOP) and the Partial Hospitalization Program (PHP) utilize similar therapy and treatment models, but are conducted in varying degrees of intensity and duration, depending upon the individual client. Both programs are considered “short term treatment” – usually three (3) weeks or less and are focused on stabilization, skill acquisition, and crises management. PHP operates five (5) days per week, Monday through Friday, from 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. IOP operates three (3) days per week, from 9:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

Services available in these programs include: daily crisis planning, individual counseling, intensive skills groups, psychopharmacology services, family education and family sessions (as appropriate), case management, psychological testing (as appropriate), vocational services (as appropriate), discharge planning, relapse prevention skills, high risk behavior education, medication and nutrition education, and substance abuse evaluation.

If you or someone you know would benefit from these services, please contact our Intake Specialist at 401-246-1195.

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HELPING CHILDREN COPE WITH HOLIDAY STRESS



For many families, the holidays are enjoyable and exciting times. Children have a break from school and have a chance to visit with friends and relatives. However, according to the American Psychiatric Association (APA), the holidays may also be very stressful for some children as family plans and celebrations may be complicated by divorce, separation, or remarriage. The holidays may also be a difficult time for children who have lost a parent, sibling, or close relative, as well as for children who are separated from parents due to ongoing military service.

According to Dr. David Fassler, APA trustee-at-large and a Vermont Child Psychiatrist, “the holidays often remind children of what has changed and what is now different. For example, a child from a divorced family may feel sad on some level because he misses the “intact” family he used to have, or a child may feel it is particularly unfair that her father or mother needs to be away in Iraq over the holidays.

The following tips may help parents help their children during the holidays:



1. Discuss holiday plans well in advance, and include the children in the planning process. Children need some degree of control and predictability, and constantly changing plans, or last minute decisions can all increase stress.
2. Make sure children get plenty of rest. Lack of sleep leads to increased irritability.
3. Encourage physical activity and interaction with peers – limit alone time with the TV/video games.
4. Don't promise things you can't produce. For example – don't promise that a parent will be home for the holidays if the decision is really out of your control.
5. Don't try and compensate for an absent family member with lots of gifts. What most children really want more is your time and attention.
6. Uphold and maintain family traditions even if a parent is absent. These events can help children stay grounded.
7. As the adult – TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF. Try to avoid getting overloaded with obligations. The more you are stressed, the more your children will be stressed.



Most children, even those dealing with loss or family transitions, do enjoy the holidays. However, preparation, patience, and honesty can help prevent conflict, reduce stress, and enhance the holiday season for the entire family.”