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The Center Connection

Learn & Earn... The Story of a Huge Success

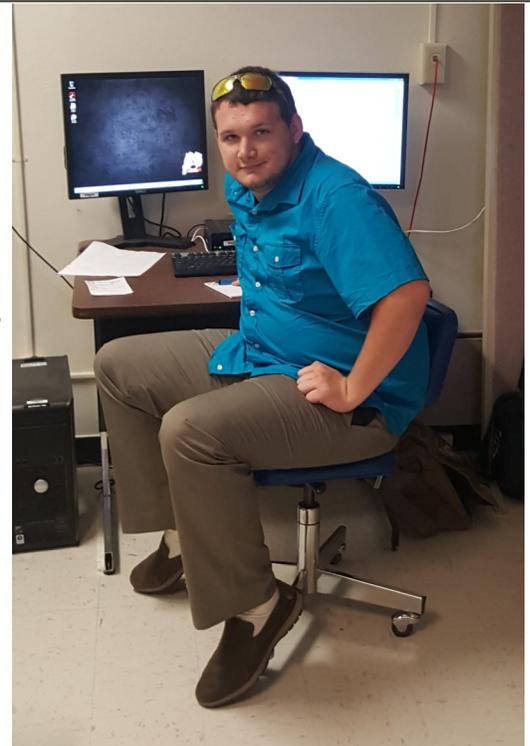
Submitted by Pamela Levy, Assistant Director

Finding and securing a job that matches your qualifications and career goals can be difficult. Now, add the fact that you are a transition-age youth with little or no experience...Enter Catskill Center for Independence!

The Center, some amazing students, their committed parents and several forward-thinking employers tackled and conquered this obstacle throughout the summer by participating in the Youth Employment Services (YES) program.

Each student began their journey by attending the Center's work readiness program which targeted soft skills, active listening, interpersonal abilities and interview techniques.

Upon completion, CCFI Employment Specialists assisted students in composing their resumes where they highlighted their strengths, transferable skills, personal career goals and hopes for future employment.



YES Participant, Dakota at his own desk at the Otsego County IT Department.



Above: YES Participant, Kevin (right) at the Learn & Earn Recognition Luncheon with his co-worker from Pete's Used Furniture Barn.



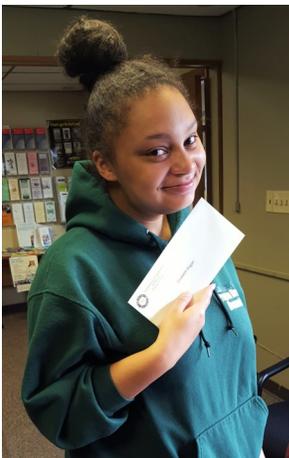
Top Left: Bradly picking up his first paycheck!

Top Right: The beginning stages of YES Participant, Bradly's project working with Richard Friedberg (Artist)

Several of our local employers, including the Butterfly Conservatory, Otsego County IT, Susquehanna Animal Shelter, Pete's Used Furniture Barn and artist, Richard Friedberg were eager to work with our youth and not only provided an authentic summer work experience, but have expressed an interest in continuing the students employment after the YES program ended.

In celebration of this very positive collaboration, all involved were treated to an end of summer luncheon at Brooks Barbeque where CCFI recognized program youth, their families and the employers for a "job very well done!"

So, how does the Catskill Center for Independence spell success? Passionate staff, engaged students, supportive parents and a local business community that was willing to invest in our youth today to ensure success for tomorrow and beyond.



Above: YES Participant, Liz, picking up her first paycheck!



Above: YES Participant, Adam (Far right) attending the Learn & Earn Recognition Luncheon with his parents.

Acts of Kindness

Statement and article provided by the Random Acts of Kindness Foundation

Submitted by Bruce Niles, Employment Specialist

We live in a world today that needs more kindness towards each other. Acts of kindness are uplifting for our lives and well being. I hope the following ideas taken from the Depression and Bipolar Support Alliance will be helpful to you and those around you. For more ideas for acts of kindness you can go to www.ActsofKindness.org

“The best known of the kindness groups in America is The Random Acts of Kindness Foundation, who believe that “as people tap into their own generous human spirit and share kindness with one another, they discover for themselves the power of kindness to effect positive change.” Adding kindness into our lives is a valuable part of wellness. Small acts of thoughtfulness can help us connect with the world, grow emotionally and improve others’ lives as well as our own. As people living with mood disorders, we spend a lot of time focused on our internal selves – our minds, our moods, and our emotions. We might not focus as often on our outward actions in the world. Doing small things to make the world a better place can bring us closer to wellness. Kindness includes many habits we know as simple good manners: saying “please” and “thank you,” waiting your turn, lending a helping hand, or cheering someone up with a smile. Kindness also means being generous with your presence and your time, and giving without expecting anything in return. When we show others the kindness we would like shown to us, we often find that it comes back into our own lives. Many people living with mood disorders know that relationships and community are a part of our recovery.

On the other hand, practicing kindness can be extremely difficult, especially when living with symptoms like irritability, anger, sadness and feelings of worthlessness. But acts of kindness may not require a lot of effort. Look for small ways you can make kindness part of your life, no matter how you feel.

- Was I selfish or unkind today?
- Do I owe an apology?
- Have I kept something to myself that I need to talk with someone about?
- Was I thinking of myself all day, or did I think of others?
- How can I be kinder tomorrow? What can I do? Take time to listen to someone else.
- Contact an old friend or family member you haven’t talked to in a while
- Open a door for someone.
- Help a new person at your job or support group
- Volunteer
- Compliment someone.
- Start with this list and add your own ideas.

If you want others to be happy, practice compassion.

If you want to be happy, practice compassion. — The Dalai Lama

Tips for the Caregiver

Submitted by Selena Granata, Service Coordinator

Article and Resources provided by Brain Injury Association of New York State

Being a caregiver is one of the most important roles one can have to keep their loved one at home. However, the caregiver needs “care” too. Here are some caregiver tips:

- **Take care of yourself**

You will need to sleep and eat to maintain your strength to support your loved one.

- **Delegate responsibilities**

For example, assign someone to stay with your loved one when you are not there or to oversee household responsibilities and child care. Remember, family and friends want to help you in any way they can.

- **Establish a communication chain**

Assign someone to contact family and friends with updates on status. Telephone or internet might work well.

- **Have someone with you when speaking to the doctor**

It will help to have another set of ears for clarification, or to write the information down to review at a later time. A tape recorder may also be useful.

- **Maintain a journal**

Record information about medical and rehabilitation updates, procedures, medications and the names of the medical team. Record questions to ask and the answers. Record your inner thoughts and feelings. A journal will become your best reference in the future for what has occurred.

- **Become an advocate for your loved one.**

Learn about the injury, ask questions of the healthcare team, be involved in the care, treatment and therapies. Information may help to alleviate your anxiety.

- **Allow yourself to grieve and express emotions**

You are not expected to always “be strong” or “hold it together.” It is normal and healthy to release your feelings.

- **Take a break**

It is okay not to be there every hour of every day.

When someone offers help or assistance

ACCEPT IT!

The following are some suggestions of ways that others can be helpful to you and your family:

- Grocery shopping
- Errands (pick up medications, equipment, cleaners, hardware)
- Laundry, cooking, and preparing meals
- Home repair, lawn maintenance
- Taking in the mail
- Helping sort through and organizing bills
- Reviewing insurance policies
- Cleaning the house
- Car maintenance
- Returning calls and sending cards
- Transportation
- Coming along on medical appointments
- Child care
- Staying with your loved one when you need to leave or take a break
- Providing companionship
- Emergency assistance

Visit www.bianys.org for more tips, support groups, and information about brain injury.



Navigator Program Updates and News

Submitted by Debbie Martin, IPA/Lead Navigator

Since open enrollment ended on January 31, 2016, we have been unusually busy in part due to the introduction of the new Essential Plan offered by the Marketplace.

Additionally, Center reps continue to spread the word throughout Schoharie County about the Center's free navigator services. In our first three years, we have helped over 700 individuals, businesses and families enroll in affordable healthcare plans.

Open enrollment for Qualified Health Plans (QHPs) for the 2017 benefit year will begin on November 1, 2016 for consumers enrolling in the Marketplace for the first time and on November 16, 2016 for those renewing their plans for the coming year. It is very important that all consumers with QHPs call no later than the middle of October to make an appointment so they can be assured of getting in to see us on time. Debbie Martin can be reached at 607-725-7256, Monday through Friday between 8-4, and our part-time Navigator, Carol Piechnik can be reached at 607-222-7832, to schedule your appointment. We can also be reached through our main office at 607-432-8000. While we accept walk-in appointments whenever possible, it is always better to call to arrange an appointment so that we are better able to devote the necessary time to your enrollment.

Please remember that we also provide assistance to individuals with Managed Medicaid, Child Health Plus, and Essential Plans year round. We are able to assist you by appointment at the following locations: the Workforce Solutions Office in Cobleskill, The Middleburgh Library, Schoharie County Office of Aging, The Gilboa Town Hall, The Inn at Cobleskill, and Catskill Center for Independence Office in Oneonta.

We look forward to seeing all of you in the coming year as we strive to provide a comfortable, understandable and stress-free experience as you make your health care decisions for 2017.

Resiliency

Submitted by Sara Keegan, Employment Specialist
"Excerpts taken from the American Psychological Association"

Resilience is the process of adapting well in the face of adversity, trauma, tragedy, threats or significant sources of stress.

Think back to a situation in your life that was difficult. How did you overcome this hardship? What steps or processes did you take to help yourself resolve the issue you were dealing with? Did you speak to a friend, co-worker, healthcare professional, or anyone that would listen? What techniques did you use to help yourself over this "bump in the road"?

Whatever approach you used, keep in mind it was a process that involved behaviors, thoughts and actions, all of which can be developed and learned by anyone.

The following is a list of suggested ways to help you build resilience:

- Make connections
- Avoid seeing crises as insurmountable problems
- Accept that change is part of living
- Move toward your goals
- Take decisive actions
- Look for opportunities for self-discovery
- Nurture a positive attitude
- Take care of yourself



You Can Best Help Yourself or Someone Else

Be More Resilient by:

- Communicating A "Resiliency Attitude": What is right with you is more powerful than anything wrong with you
- Focus on strengths more than problems and weaknesses asking, "How can these strengths be used to overcome this problem?"
- Have patience...successfully bouncing back from a significant trauma or crisis takes time.

Governor Cuomo Signs Legislation to Combat the Heroin and Opioid Crisis

Article and resources provided by www.governor.ny.gov

Submitted by Pamela Levy, Assistant Director

Governor Andrew M. Cuomo signed legislation to combat the heroin and opioid crisis in New York State. The comprehensive package of bills was passed as part of the 2016 Legislative Session and marks a major step forward in the fight to increase access to treatment, expand community prevention strategies, and limit the over-prescription of opioids in New York. The legislation includes several best practices and recommendations identified by the Governor's Heroin and Opioid Task Force, and builds on the state's aggressive efforts to break the cycle of heroin and opioid addiction and protect public health and safety. The comprehensive Legislative package limits Opioid prescriptions from 30 to 7 Days, requires mandatory prescriber education on pain management to stem the tide of addiction, and eliminates burdensome insurance barriers to treatment.

The FY 2017 Budget invests nearly \$200 million through the New York State Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Services (OASAS) to combat the heroin and opioid epidemic -- an 82 percent increase in state spending since 2011. This investment includes \$66 million for residential treatment beds, including counseling and support services for roughly 8,000 individuals; \$38 million to fund medication-assisted treatment programs that serve approximately 12,000 clients in residential or outpatient settings; \$25 million in funding for state-operated Addiction Treatment Centers; \$24 million for outpatient services that provide group and individual counseling; and \$8 million for crisis/detox programs to manage and treat withdrawal from heroin and opioids.

As part of the Governor's ongoing efforts to address this public health crisis, this funding will allow the addition of 270 treatment beds and 2,335 opioid treatment program slots across the state to help New Yorkers suffering from substance use disorder and to expand vital treatment and recovery resources.

"New York is leading the way forward in the fight against heroin and opioid addiction, and with this legislation, we are taking an affirmative stand for our families and communities who have suffered from this epidemic's debilitating effects." - Governor Cuomo

Awareness Ribbons Guide

We have a new logo at the Catskill Center which is comprised of many awareness ribbons. Each ribbon represents different disability groups. We will be featuring these ribbons in our newsletters with the specific group each represents.



(Lime Green)

- Lymphoma
- Lyme Disease
- Muscular Dystrophy
- Ivemark Syndrome
- Sandhoff Disease
- Mental Health



(Pink)

- Breast Cancer
- Cleft Palate



(Pink & Blue)

- Infertility
- Pregnancy Loss
- Loss of an Infant
- Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS)
- Male Breast Cancer



(Purple)

- ADD
- ADHD
- Alzheimer's Disease
- Antitrypsin Deficiency
- Chiari Malformation
- Colitis
- Crohn's Disease
- Cystic Fibrosis
- Fibromyalgia
- Leiomyosarcoma
- Lupus
- Pancreatic Cancer
- Sarcoidosis



(Red & Yellow)

- Hepatitis C
- HIV/HCV Co-Infection
- Substance Abuse



(Silver)

- Children with Disabilities
- Severe Depression
- Bipolar Disorder
- Schizophrenia
- Anxiety Disorders
- Parkinson's Disease
- Arachnoid Cyst
- Cortical Visual Impairment