

Partners in Recovery



Volume 9, Issue 1 ■ March 2019 ■ Mental Health & Recovery Board News for Clark, Greene & Madison Counties ■ Providing help, healing, and hope.

MHRB hosts events for First Responder Appreciation Week

Ohio behavioral health boards will be honoring and thanking first responders for their service across the state April 29 through May 3, 2019. The week-long event is sponsored by The Ohio Governor's Office, Office of Ohio's Attorney General, and the Ohio Association of County Behavioral Health Authorities (OACBHA). Locally, the Mental Health & Recovery Board of Clark, Greene & Madison Counties (MHRB) will celebrate with:

1. A social media campaign that:
 - emphasizes the importance of first responders;
 - thanks them for their service; and,
 - shares resources and information to help link first responders with services that can help them cope with trauma and compassion fatigue

Follow the campaign at: [facebook.com/MentalHealthRecoveryBoard](https://www.facebook.com/MentalHealthRecoveryBoard).

2. Free, regional drop-in lunch events that celebrate first responders. Locations and dates are as follows:
 - **Clark County:** Monday, April 29, 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. in Springfield Regional Medical Center's Mental Health Room, 100 Medical Center Drive, Springfield, OH 45504
 - **Madison County:** Wednesday, May 1, 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. at Madison Health, 201 N. Main Street, London, OH 43140
 - **Greene County:** Tuesday, April 30, 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. at Greene Memorial Hospital and Soin Medical Center in the EMS rooms
3. Free **Question, Persuade, Refer (QPR)** suicide prevention training for first responders. The training will be held Tuesday, March 26 from 12 to 1:30 p.m. at McKinley Hall, 2624 Lexington Avenue, Springfield, OH 45505. All first responders from Clark, Greene, and Madison counties are welcome to attend.



FIRST RESPONDER APPRECIATION WEEK

APRIL 29 - MAY 3, 2019

Please sign up online at:
<https://firstresponderqpr.eventbrite.com>.

For more information, contact **Adriane Miller**, assistant director of treatment, prevention, and support at adriane@mhrb.org or **937-322-0648 ext. 106**, or **Jennifer Brown**, administrative assistant at jennifer@mhrb.org or **937-322-0648 ext. 116**.

Information about other activities to celebrate First Responder Appreciation Week will be posted on our Facebook page at: [facebook.com/MentalHealthRecoveryBoard](https://www.facebook.com/MentalHealthRecoveryBoard).

Q&A with first responder Jenny Redish

In preparation for First Responder Appreciation Week, the Mental Health & Recovery Board (MHRB) talked with Lieutenant **Jenny Redish** about her experiences.

Q: How long have you been a first responder?

A: I have been in emergency medical services (EMS) since 2004, and in fire since 2003. I am currently a paramedic and volunteer firefighter in Clark County and I work in Madison County as well.

Q: What has your experience been like?

A: It's kind of like a roller coaster ride. Some days are slow, while others are nonstop. No

two calls are the same, which has taught me to always be alert, because there are times when routine calls turn into something very serious at a moment's notice.

Q: What have you noticed about first responders and compassion fatigue, or secondary trauma?

A: There is a lot of compassion fatigue. It's rough because at times you feel like you're surrounded by death, and it wears you down. It's hard, and everybody has their breaking point. There are several people that deny they are suffering from it, but unfortunately, it's an aspect of the career that we all must deal with at some point or another. The seasoned first responders are dealing with such an enormous burden of years of squad runs that may have ended poorly for reasons outside of our control, and it's that burden of guilt that perhaps we didn't do enough that weighs so heavily on our minds. Or it's the repeated runs we have, to the same location, the same patient, for the same situation, and we get programmed to desensitize ourselves because if we don't, it'll be too much to deal with.

Q: Wow, that sounds traumatic. What does the trauma look like among other first responders?

A: Anything can be considered trauma when it affects you to the point that you're deviating from your normal schedule, and what I mean by that is that it affects your sleeping, eating, or thinking. The common layperson thinks that trauma must be about the gory details of a run, but it's not just that—it's everything involved. It may be the sight of something, the sounds, or the smells that trigger an emotional response. "Why is my brain rehashing that particular call? Why can't I forget that scene? Why can't I forget the way that patient looked?" The trauma among first responders may not be consistent from person to person, but being able to discuss our concerns is crucial, whether it be through a Critical Incident Debriefing (CID), or just a conversation with someone you

Q&A with first responder Jenny Redish continued on page 2...

**24-HOUR
CRISIS
HOTLINES:**

**National Suicide
Prevention Lifeline**
Toll-free:
1-800-273-TALK

Crisis Text Line
Send a text message
to a trained crisis counselor:
text **4hope** to **741741**

**Clark County
Mental Health
Services**
(937) 399-9500

**Greene County
TCN Behavioral
Health Services, Inc.**
(937) 376-8701

**Madison County
Mental Health
Services**
(740) 852-6256



FIRST RESPONDER APPRECIATION WEEK

Q&A with first responder Jenny Redish continued from page 1...

can talk to and express yourself with, without fear of condemnation.

Q: What other protective factors or self-care techniques would you recommend?

A: Self-protective measures...that's a difficult question to answer because it starts with the individual and their employer. Individuals must first recognize when a problem exists, and they need the tools to address the issue and to maintain positive mental health. Employers must also recognize there's a concern and have the measures in place to assist their first responders before the matter spirals out of control. It may be talking to a

member of the clergy, going to regular counseling, or having a conversation with a coworker to 'blow off some steam' and clear one's mind. Some people take up exercise, yoga, competitive sports, etc., as a form of self-care as well.

Q: How can someone who cares about suicide prevention get involved to lessen the burden on first responders?

A: That's a good question because we have people available but first we need recognition that there's a problem. The mental health crisis needs to be addressed, and first responders need

to accept that we are all subject to developing post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) due to the nature of our jobs. Among those that I work with, there are quite a few that say, "I know that I have PTSD."

Some of the younger ones don't realize that there's a problem, and it is still somewhat taboo. But we need to become comfortable with saying, "Yeah, I do have mental health issues because I've seen so much trauma that it's hard to compute sometimes."

Stressed? Eat this (not that)

We've all heard that tiresome phrase: "You are what you eat." While a nutrient-packed diet can't remove your life stressors, it can arm you with the tools (and the nutrients) to better cope with them.

The problem with this tried and proven formula? It can be all too tempting to reach for high calorie, sugary foods when you're stressed. Enter these anti-stress chocolate chip cookies. They taste great but are packed with foods that fight stress instead of fuel it.

According to an article about nutrition and stress management in the *Journal of Nutrition & Food Sciences*, there are several key

nutrients when it comes to stress management, including: complex carbohydrates, protein, vitamins B and C, magnesium, and selenium. Complex carbohydrates, like oats, help regenerate serotonin, a neurotransmitter that calms us. The omega 3 fatty acids in flax seed also promote serotonin production. Stress hormones can decrease magnesium levels—but walnuts replenish it. The vitamin-C packed cranberries in these cookies help the body better cope with stress. And even the dark chocolate is helpful; studies demonstrate that antioxidants in chocolate can reduce levels of cortisol, a hormone associated with stress.

Don't believe us? Try it (and thank us later).



Holistic Health Recipes

Anti-Stress Chocolate Chip Cookies



Ingredients:

- 2 Tbs ground flax seed
- 6 Tbs water
- 1/4 c softened coconut oil
- 1/2 c unsweetened applesauce
- 1/2 c coconut palm sugar
- 2 Tbs maple syrup
- 2 tsp vanilla
- 2-1/4 c quick or old-fashioned oats
- 1/2 tsp cinnamon
- 1/2 tsp baking soda
- 1/2 tsp salt
- 1/4 tsp baking powder
- another 1/4 c quick or old-fashioned oats
- 1 c dried cranberries
- 1 c walnut pieces
- 1-1/4 c dark chocolate chips

Instructions:

1. Heat oven to 350°. Line two cookie sheets with parchment paper.
2. Combine the flax seed and water in a cup and set aside
3. In a large bowl, use an electric mixer to beat the coconut oil, applesauce, coconut palm sugar, and maple syrup together
4. Beat in the vanilla and gelled flax seed
5. Grind 2-1/2 c oats into a fine flour in a food processor, about 2 minutes
6. Transfer the oat flour to a bowl and stir in the cinnamon, soda, salt, and baking powder
7. Gradually add the dry ingredients into the wet and beat until well combined, about 1 minute
8. Stir in 1/4 c oats and the cranberries, walnuts, and chocolate chips
9. Use a 2 Tbs cookie scoop or roll the batter into 2 Tbs balls and place 12 cookies on one sheet. They spread very little as they bake, so flatten them slightly. Press a few extra cranberries, chips or walnuts on top if you like.
10. Let them stand for a few minutes on the sheet before moving to a cooling rack



MHRB builds pathways for trauma-informed treatment

Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing (EMDR) is an evidence-based practice used to treat individuals who have experienced trauma—including first responders like firefighters and police men and women. Through EMDR, individuals reprocess traumatic or difficult memories so that they are less invasive and psychologically disruptive.

“EMDR allows individuals to process trauma in healthy ways and to develop coping skills,” said **Adriane Miller**, assistant director of treatment, prevention, and support at MHRB. “This is critical, because untreated trauma can adversely affect relationships and contribute to mental health issues like substance use and domestic violence.” In the case of first responders, it also can lead to compassion fatigue, which is also known as secondary trauma.

Last November, 29 licensed mental health clinicians from Clark, Greene, and Madison Counties completed the first of two training sessions to become certified in EMDR therapy. Prior to the second EMDR training session, which will be held Friday, April 5 through Sunday, April 7, clinicians must complete several hours of supervised practice.

Nathania Dallas, licensed independent social worker (LISW) at Mental Health Services, already has seen positive effects during these practice sessions. “I have gotten to the reprocessing phase with four of my clients and I feel completely awed. I feel like I have something so powerful to offer my clients and it has been amazing to see them benefit from it,” said Dallas. “I have one client who was in an abusive relationship for many years in which her husband would sit and interrogate her for hours. She has left the marriage but is still experiencing residual trauma. After her first session of reprocessing she said, ‘It’s over; I never have to be in that situation again. And if I am, I can just get up and walk away’ with the conviction of something that she could feel in her bones, not just something she was thinking in her head.”

MHRB funded the training, with additional support from a Victims of Crimes Act (VOCA) grant administered through the **Family Violence Prevention Center** of Greene County.

The training is part of MHRB’s larger mission to increase capacity for delivering trauma-informed care in Clark, Greene, and Madison Counties by building pathways to effective treatment for first responders and other populations that are particularly affected by trauma.

“Addressing trauma before it escalates is critical—and as a community we need to invest in and advocate for trauma-sensitive care,” said **Greta Mayer**, chief executive officer at MHRB. “EMDR training will equip our local workforce to better treat trauma and facilitate a supportive, healthy community. We hope that, as a result, individuals—including first responders—are better able to seek treatment.”

MHRB supports trauma-informed care through other initiatives as well: by funding agencies that address domestic violence and child abuse and neglect, through Coalition work, by hosting a Trauma Steering Committee, and through partnerships with local law enforcement, fire, and emergency medical services to address trauma of first responders.

2070+ individuals trained in suicide prevention intervention

CPR isn’t the only way to save a life. Similar to CPR, **Question, Persuade, Refer (QPR)** is an emergency mental health intervention used for suicide prevention that anyone can learn in just 90 minutes. Individuals trained in QPR learn to recognize the warning signs of suicide—and how to act swiftly to help save lives.

Since 2016, MHRB staff and partners have hosted more than 68 QPR events and trained more than 2,070 individuals in the QPR curriculum. Attendees include high school and college students, inmates, law enforcement, firefighters, church parishioners, council members, library-goers, guidance counselors, and teachers—to name a few.

To meet the rising demand for QPR trainings, MHRB sponsored an eight-hour “train the trainer” certification course last fall. **As a result, Clark, Greene, and Madison counties now have 28 more QPR trainers, for about 50 trainers in the region.** The newest trainers include nine law enforcement officials and first responders, and representatives from faith-based, educational, and public health organizations.



First responder **Jenny Redish** and her husband, South Charleston Police Chief **Brian Redish** were among those certified.

“Years ago, we didn’t even acknowledge suicide. It was a taboo thing, so you didn’t ask questions,” said Jenny Redish. “What I like about QPR is that it acknowledges the problem and teaches people how to address it. It teaches them that it’s okay to approach somebody and ask them, ‘Are you ok? Are you depressed, are you suicidal?’” She went on to say, “We get called for lots of mental health issues—including suicidal ideation, attempted suicide, or completed suicide. These are people that are hurting, these are people that have hit the bottom of the barrel, that need help, and we as first responders need to address that because it needs to start with us.”

First responders themselves are at an increased risk of suicide compared to the general population. In fact, they are more likely to die by suicide than in the line of duty, according to a 2018 report. The Clark County Suicide Prevention Coalition recently received a \$1,660 mini-grant from Ohio Suicide Prevention Foundation to deliver three QPR trainings specifically for first responders. The trainings will be held this spring.

“First responders often are the first on scene after suicides, so it’s vitally important that they have resources and self-care tactics on hand,” said **Dottie McNeil**, clinical director at McKinley Hall and chair of the Clark County Suicide Prevention Coalition. “It’s okay to not be okay today—and that applies to first responders, too.”

Inmates are another vulnerable population, because they, too, are likely to have experienced trauma.

“The amount of trauma that many of our incarcerated individuals carry is alarming and also devastating to their treatment,” said Lieutenant **Michael Young**, jail administrator at the Clark County Sheriff’s Office.

“Providing QPR training to inmates has provided an outlet for many to have discussions about trauma they have experienced. I spoke with one group of inmates and they were so thankful for the training. One inmate opened up about his past suicide attempts and felt that all inmates should get this training to be prepared and to recognize indicators in others,” explained Young.

In 2018, 71 Clark County Jail inmates received QPR training. “QPR has afforded the jail a chance to have people better equipped to see the signs or indicators of someone considering suicide as an option,” said Young.

The jail plans to continue QPR training for its staff and inmates in 2019.

Most recently, MHRB has placed an emphasis on training Clark County employees in QPR. County

2070+ individuals trained in suicide prevention intervention
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Community Corner

Oesterlen Services For Youth, Inc., established in 1903, operates an array of residential and community-based programs focused on healing emotionally, behaviorally, and psychologically troubled youth, and their families.

The Oesterlen Life Skills Center incorporates elements of everyday life assisting youth in recovery from trauma, while developing nourishing practices essential for a fruitful life. Skills gained in each program seek to enrich youth, infusing a sense of dignity and clarity of thought for those struggling to cope with life's challenges.

Youth discover within themselves a desire and propensity for woodworking, horticulture, animal husbandry, and forestry. These introductory skills can be taken with them, providing the opportunity to pursue vocations with more clarity and focus. The Life Skills Center provides therapeutic, experiential, and practice-based learning, teaching youth social, vocational, and relational skills needed for self-care and success in future work environments.

For more information about Oesterlen, please contact **Amanda Nicol** at anicol@oesterlen.org or **937-399-6101 ext. 114**.



MHRB welcomed **Springfield City Fire Chief Brian Miller** (pictured above, right) as its newest Clark County board member January 15. Clark County Commissioner **Lowell McGlothlin** (left) performed the swearing in ceremony, which was attended by MHRB CEO **Greta Mayer** (middle) and other board members.

"I am happy to join MHRB as a board member and assist with a mission I believe in. I have years of professional experience dealing with mental health issues and addiction problems as well as some exposure to people in my private life that have been impacted by those same concerns. This is a great opportunity to make Springfield/Clark County and surrounding communities a stronger and better place to live," said Miller.

February 19, MHRB welcomed two additional board members: **Christina Hoffman** representing Greene County, and **Katherine Brinkman** representing Madison County. "I look forward to



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serving on the Mental Health & Recovery Board. I see a great need for more mental health services for both children and adults. Additionally, I want to work to ensure these services are easily accessible for everyone," said Hoffman.

MHRB Connection



MHRB unveils workplace e-blast

In 2016, MHRB was chosen as one of 18 communities in Ohio to participate in the **Working Partners® Drug-Free Workforce Community Initiative**, which aimed to: increase an employable, drug-free workforce in Ohio; build healthier, more productive and economically sound workplaces; and to create systems to educate employees to prevent drug use now and in the future.

Now, more than ever—with medical marijuana being sold in Ohio, rising rates of drug use, and employers sharing that they struggle to find a viable workforce—this programming is necessary.

To that end, this month, MHRB is unveiling an e-blast for business-minded individuals. The

monthly newsletter will share resources and events and highlight information that businesses need to know about all mental health and addiction issues in the workplace.

For more information or to receive the e-blast, contact **Brianna Wilson** at brianna@mhrb.org.

2070+ individuals trained in suicide prevention intervention
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employees were invited to attend one of six, 90-minute QPR trainings between February 19 and March 1. Five sessions were hosted at Clark County Job & Family Services, and one at Springfield Government Center. In Madison County, employees at the Board of Developmental Disabilities and WinCup were recently trained.

Anyone can learn QPR. By delivering QPR trainings often and broadly, MHRB hopes to empower not just anyone, but everyone in Clark, Greene, and Madison Counties with the information they need to save a life.

Individuals or groups who are interested in becoming trained in QPR or in becoming a QPR trainer can contact **Adriane Miller**, assistant director of treatment, prevention, and support at adriane@mhrb.org or **937-322-0648 ext. 106**, or **Jennifer Brown**, administrative assistant at jennifer@mhrb.org or **937-322-0648 ext. 116** for more information.