

Family Counseling Restores Balance

When one person has an addiction, the whole family suffers. Relationships become tested and strained. Some family members believe that it may be best to sever ties and allow their loved one to hit “rock bottom”. Others step in and protect their loved one from the consequences of their actions. These conflicts create additional friction within a family.

Family members may question whether the addiction is their fault and what they can do to help. Family members often feel hurt, anger, and frustration. As part of the recovery process, Horizon helps to address and resolve these issues through counseling.

Vicky Wideman Senior Clinical Specialist who leads our family treatment at Horizon Village has a unique perspective of these family dynamics. She says “It’s been my experience with families that they see themselves as enablers. The word enabler tends to have a negative tone. I explain to families that what they were doing was managing their loved ones as best as they could. It’s been my mission to educate the families on how to be good ‘family managers’. I explain that it can be confusing to know how to work with their loved one because ‘the addictive self’ and “‘the authentic self’ look alike and live in the same body, but, they are different people and you can only recognize them by their behaviors.”

Family treatment is an integral and valuable part of treatment at Horizon. Families can become hesitant to participate in treatment because they feel they will be blamed. While treatment may identify family traits



or behaviors that helped facilitate the addiction, the goal is not to take responsibility away from the client.

“This support allows the family to learn about the disease, as sometimes the family feels blind-sided. To make it manageable there needs to be education and time to discuss what is going on.” says Emily Reis,

Senior Counselor Boulevard Counseling Center. Family counseling can be a combination of family education groups,

parent support groups, one-on-one sessions with counselors, and family counseling sessions. Additionally, families can seek counseling even if their loved one who has the addiction chooses not to.

To learn more about services available to family members visit www.horizon-health.org

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www.horizon-health.org

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KELLY FOR KIDS GRANT AWARDED TO HORIZON



Hall of Fame Bills Quarterback Jim Kelly presents grant to Anne Constantino, Horizon President & CEO

On Tuesday January 10, 2012 the Kelly for Kids Foundation awarded 26 local organizations with grants to help fund programming geared towards helping the youth of Western New York. Horizon President and CEO Anne Constantino gratefully accepted \$2,500 on behalf of Health Management Group. The \$2,500 will be used to fund young adult programming at Horizon Village.

The foundation, which is celebrating its 25th Anniversary this year, hosted the award luncheon at Ilio DiPaolo's restaurant. Founder, and former Buffalo Bill, Jim Kelly was on hand to personally present these generous grants. Kelly for Kids is committed to serving disadvantaged and disabled youth in WNY through distribution of grant money raised throughout the year.

12 Step Support Groups Enhance Treatment



FUNDING WELLNESS PROVES INVALUABLE

Karl Shallowhorn
HHS Senior Counselor

Health care has been, and continues to be, a hot topic in America. Legislators on both sides of the aisle have their opinions regarding how it should be funded and specifically how much money should be spent on the many federally funded programs. The decisions politicians make affect the lives of each and every person in this country. These are not easy decisions to make by any means. However, there is much at stake.

For those seeking treatment for mental health and/or addictions this is especially true. In the area of mental health, recent studies have shown that the mentally ill live up to 15-20 years less than that of the general population in Denmark, Finland, and Sweden (British Journal of Psychiatry, Dec. 2011). Addicts have life expectancy issues as well. For both populations, medical expenses are "through the roof."

The primary population affected is the poor. Both those who are uninsured, as well as those without primary health services, are at risk. What we need to focus on is prevention. Millions of dollars can be saved every year by helping those who are in the lower economic strata into programs that promote wellness.

In the PROS (Personalized Recovery Oriented Services) program we devote a considerable amount of our programming to the area of physical health. We have groups that focus on everything from nutrition to preventative measures such as exercise and personal hygiene. While this is a daily challenge, our team has witnessed many of our consumers adopt healthier lifestyles, thereby keeping them out of the emergency rooms and hospitals.

In many ways, prevention serves to make so much sense in terms of cost savings. But its so much more than that. Good health is priceless.

When working towards recovery a client may sometimes seek support outside of their scheduled counseling or group sessions. At Horizon, we encourage our clients to do so by adding another support to their recovery by creating accountability to another group. Clients thereby increasing the number of weekdays on which they actively participate in recovery activities. More not less, is critical for recovery when dealing with the devastation of these illnesses.

Bill Bly, Senior Counselor, Horizon Village says "One way we can supplement the work we do is try to encourage our clients to experience 12-Step support groups. Fellowships such as Narcotics Anonymous and Alcoholics Anonymous have helped millions of individuals whose lives have been shattered by alcohol and drugs. They offer hope and shatter the stereotypes associated with addiction."

Clients can find many wonderful resources in the community for mental health and chemical dependency. Self-help and 12-Step groups such as Alcoholics Anonymous and Narcotics Anonymous help bridge the gap between day-to-day living and treatment. This is



done by offering a place where clients feel as though they belong and that they are not unique, thereby ending their isolation and loneliness. These groups also provide a feeling of hope and give clients faith in themselves and others. "Clients who follow the suggestions of self help group members have a much better chance of not relapsing. The principles of these programs can impact every aspect of life in a positive manner," says Joe Lapi, Addiction Counselor, Bailey LaSalle Counseling Center.

Self-help groups also exist for those dealing with issues related to a mental illness. The Mental Health Association of Erie County offers a variety of services including a support group for people in their 20's and support groups for persons with Obsessive Compulsive Disorder. Other resources include the Mental Health Peer Connection through WNY Independent Living that offers support groups and vocational services.

You can find more information about these programs on the internet. For information on the groups and services offered at Horizon Health Services visit www.horizon-health.org.

WE BELIEVE IN RECOVERY

Horizon Health Services employees are dedicated to our mission. Jeremy Hitt, Program Director at the Niagara Falls City Market Center, is no exception. Jeremy will be running the full Buffalo Marathon on May 27, 2012 to raise \$5,000 for Horizon Health Services.

Jeremy says "As counselors we ask our clients to challenge themselves all the time and step out of their comfort zone. A marathon is sort of like recovery or at least an example of goal setting and making personal change. When you ask someone if they would ever run a marathon the first thing they think of is 26.2 miles. Yet if we take one day at a time and just do what we can today, and add a little each day, after a while it doesn't seem like a big deal. This is the same concept taught in AA."

Jeremy has pledged this donation to the Horizon Village Young Adults Project. These and other funds raised will allow Horizon to construct a 25-bed residential facility for young adults. This new facility will provide treatment programming specifically designed to meet the unique needs of those aged 18-25 who suffer from addiction.



Jeremy Hitt

Please support Jeremy Hitt as he and others strive to make a difference for Horizon. Visit <http://www.horizon-health.org/contact-us/donation/jeremy-hitt-marathon/> and learn more about Jeremy and our cause.

Pathway to Recovery

Ben M.

A few years ago Ben M. didn't seem like someone you would meet in a treatment facility. Working for the Army in Counter Drug and Anti-Terrorism, Ben hurt his back and was taken to the local VA for treatment. They prescribed him Lortab for pain so he would be able to return to work. The injury was not properly healed, but the medicine made functioning possible. Soon Ben was back to work.

A few years later, Ben was out on maneuvers when his wife found several empty pill bottles. Further searches led to more. In a panic, she called his 1st Sergeant and informed him of her discovery. "I don't think she knew, but my guess is she suspected as much. She knew I was armed, and that was dangerous in itself," recalls Ben. An investigation was launched immediately, resulting in the discovery of more empty bottles. "That was when the bottom fell out of my world," says Ben. As investigators dug deeper they found that Ben had been going into numerous emergency rooms fraudulently obtaining prescriptions. Ben was brought up on federal charges, and served two years in prison before transferring to inpatient treatment.

Ben tried to get settled back into family life upon returning home, but the wounds created by his addiction and imprisonment left a lot of conflict. Soon Ben relapsed and found himself using with great frequency again. His parole officer gave him the choice to complete treatment again or return to jail. Ben chose treatment and was referred to Horizon Village.

At Horizon Village, Ben recognized that it was his last chance. He was finally ready to invest the time in himself and get healthy, not just for his family, but also for himself. Vicky Wideman, Senior Clinical Specialist, Horizon Village remembers "Ben came in prepared to fight. He didn't know what the battle against addiction entailed, but, he knew he had to stay in the war in order to win. He faced

Success Stories – Mother Shares Joy of Progress

Richard is a client in our Personalized Recovery Oriented Services (PROS). After a few weeks of attending the PROS program his mother saw such a difference in him that she was moved to share her gratitude with his counseling team.

Excerpt from a family letter

First of all thank you so much for meeting with us a few weeks ago. The PROS program has been a Godsend for Richard and an answer to our prayers. Richard is actually living a more normal life then he has in a long time. He likes learning things. I daresay his favorite part of the day is the groups with young people his own age. He is really enjoying them. There is no two ways about it, Richard is so much better since he came to PROS. It is this kind of program that all of us wanted to see him in. He has a great deal of potential and with work and a good program there is hope he will be able achieve his dreams. Please thank everyone for giving all of us but especially Richard the gift of your time and the PROS program. It means more than you can imagine.

P.S. I don't have to be an interfering mother anymore and it is a relief!

some very difficult obstacles; both personal and with his family, he was wounded but he didn't retreat. Ben did not let his past determine his future. He not only survived but he overcame."

"Ben did not let his past determine his future. He not only survived but he overcame."

Ben recalls "I always felt welcome by the counselors. They are really dedicated to their jobs. They really tried to guide you and show you it's more than the addiction, it's the behaviors and the lifestyle. I could walk into their offices and talk about anything, whether it was problems at home or HV. It was at Horizon Village that I started taking college classes. They helped me get into college and an amazing halfway house that supported my studies. When I was in both inpatient and outpatient treatment at Horizon my counselors never pulled punches. They were straightforward and honest with me. It made me be honest with myself.



Without them I would have gone to prison or worse. Horizon saved my life."

Ben and his wife attended family counseling through Horizon Village trying to repair the damage created from his disease. They have learned that they are better as friends and now have a healthy relationship where they continue to co-parent their son. Ben has also become closer to his parents. "My family couldn't be more proud, especially that I went back to school. They trust me now and reach out to me; it's not tough love anymore."

Ben adds "People shouldn't give up on themselves. At some point it may feel like everyone gave up on you. But it's not true, or important. It's you who should not give up on yourself. I didn't want to be 33 and another overdose statistic. Addiction is progressive and it will kill you. I lost a lot because of my addiction."

Ben is studying chemical dependency counseling and hopes to one day be employed by Horizon Village Veterans Facility. In his free time he enjoys spending time with his son and has taken up kick boxing as a positive way of dealing with stress. To learn more about Horizon Village please visit www.horizon-health.org

Your gift is appreciated!

Horizon Health Services is a Section 501 (c)(3) charitable organization that depends on your generosity to serve the recovery needs of the Western New York community. We're the largest provider of mental health and addiction treatment services, having served over 10,000 local individuals and families in the past year. Horizon truly appreciates your charitable gift.

- **By Mail:** Horizon Health Services, 3020 Bailey Avenue, Buffalo, NY, 14215.
- **By Phone:** Contact Sharon Oehler in Horizon's Finance Department at 716-831-1800 to donate over the phone.
- **By Website:** Visit www.horizon-health.org and select the "Make a Donation" box on the bottom of our home page to make a secure, on-line donation.

All donations are tax deductible within the full extent of the law.



Horizon is the largest and most comprehensive outpatient provider of integrated mental health, chemical dependency and medical services in WNY.

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INSIDE:
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