



Hannah's House News

2019 - 2020



Hannah's House News

A Vermont Nonprofit Dedicated to Promoting Mental Health 2019-2020

HOW TO HELP:

By Check:
Hannah's House Inc
PO Box 217
Waitsfield, VT 05673

By Credit Card:
HannahsHouseVT.org
Click Donate

By Volunteering:
Contact us today!

Hannah's House is a
VT 501c(3) nonprofit.
Your donation is tax
deductible.



The Harwood Girls Hockey team honored Hannah's House at their Community Awareness Game in January, raising over \$800 for mental health. These fine athletes played hard and won our gratitude for their efforts, contribution, and lovely note: "Thank you for all you have done for us and our community. We are proud to wear your name on our jersey and represent you tonight. Thank you, Harwood Girls Hockey."

WHAT YOUR DONATIONS DO:

- Provide therapy to clients of all ages & financial situations
- Attain qualified therapists
- Allow quick response time - usually within 48 hours
- Connect the public with other local resources
- Provide office space for therapy in Waitsfield & Waterbury
- Provide on-site counseling at local schools
- Bring in experts on mental health issues to share knowledge
- Raise awareness of mental health & reduce stigma

SERVING OUR COMMUNITY FOR 10 YEARS

Hannah's House will celebrate its 10th year in 2020. What was once a vision for local access to mental health information and therapy is now



an established community resource just a phone call away. Thanks to your consistent and generous support and donations over these past years, Hannah's House has been able to serve so many in our community with professional assistance, information and referrals, therapy services, workshops and expert presentations, regardless of one's ability to pay. We welcome your experience, input and participation

as we continue to grow, addressing the mental health needs in our community. Consider serving on Hannah's House Board of Directors or volunteer to be on one of our committees. Share how Hannah's House has helped you or someone you care about. Call with ideas for programming, a group or services we could offer. We are deeply appreciative of your help in making local community-supported mental health services available and sustainable in our rural area. Hannah's House couldn't have been built without you!

Barbara Christie - Garvin
Executive Director

MEETING OUR COMMUNITY'S NEEDS IN 2019

182 Local Clients Served per month

393 Counseling Sessions Provided per month

574 Requests for information and services this year

4700 Hours of Counseling Provided this year

\$9000+ In Financial Aid for mental health services this year

BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

Cynthia Carr
Joan Crossen
Alvan Carr
Lisa Jenison
Chris Jernigan
Charlie Hosford
David Caterino
Susan McKnight
Robin Jackson
Deirdre Fennelly



On July 9, Team Hannah braved the daunting Mad Marathon course to raise funds for Hannah's House and exceeded their goal for the 9th straight year. Heartfelt thanks to you, our amazing volunteers, major sponsors JA McDonald, Kingsbury Companies, Jamieson Insurance, Meheuron's, Irasville Country Store, and Dori & Ian for this great event!

DID YOU KNOW?

We offer financial assistance, prompt response and multiple service locations

Approximately half of our clients are adults over the age of 25.

WELCOMING MOOSE - OUR THERAPY DOG IN TRAINING

Moose is an 8-month-old Bernese Mountain Dog currently training to be a therapy dog. He will be attending the Therapy Dogs of Vermont Certification Prep Clinic in November 2019 and will continue to train until he is old enough to be tested for the certification in the spring of 2020. During his training he has already become a warm and comforting presence at Hannah's House. Moose has the ideal temperament of a therapy dog and he is always happy to see people of any age. This large puppy usually snoozes through the session after an enthusiastic greeting, but he has also been known to

provide physical comfort to clients in emotional distress. The act of petting activates an automatic relaxation response which can be very useful when an individual gets flooded by an overwhelming emotion. Heidi has witnessed firsthand that Moose puts her clients at ease and helps them stay present in the moment. Engaging with him creates opportunities to practice new ways of regulating emotions. Moose makes therapy a more inviting, relaxed, and rewarding environment for many individuals receiving services at Hannah's House. We are excited to see him grow and learn ways to help!



Moose brings a calming presence to his counseling sessions with his partner, therapist Heidi Robbins.

HannahsHouseVT.org
(802) 496-9715

Waterbury, VT
141 South Main St.

PO Box 217
Waitsfield, VT 05673



Waitsfield: MRV Health Center
859 Old County Rd.



OUTREACH AND EDUCATION



We are proud to partner with local schools and libraries to provide free resources and events to equip our community with timely, relevant topics and information regarding prevention and mental health. We welcomed Dr. Michael Ungar, author, therapist and Research Director of the Resilience Research Center at Dalhousie University for an evening presentation where he used examples

from his research that are proven to help children and adults succeed and thrive (see box). HH events include free childcare and - when permitted - are recorded by Mad River TV and linked to our website and Facebook, so everyone has access, even if they could not attend. Our Education Committee uses input from middle and high school student reps, school support staff, the therapists, the Board, and community members to guide our offerings. Check our website and Facebook page for this workshop and 2020 events.

LOOKING AHEAD TO THE NEXT TEN YEARS

The Board of Directors, therapists and staff gathered at our annual retreat this fall to share their perspectives and goals for launching Hannah's House into the next ten years. Facilitator Janis Cooper split participants into small groups and discussions were lively and passionate, culminating in a thoughtful, full group meeting to consolidate ideas. Priorities to increase community involvement included stronger outreach with a more interactive website, easier-to-access resources, expanded staff to increase capacity,



Charlie Hosford, Dave Caterino, Joan Cossen, Deirdre Fennelly, and Chrissy Rivers participate in one of the small group sessions.

and increased volunteer opportunities for the community and Harwood students. Throughout the event, I was struck by the dedication of all who participated, as well as all who have contributed to the idea of Hannah's House from the

Nine Things ALL Children Need

By Dr. Michael Ungar

1. Structure
2. Consequences
3. Parent-Child Connections
4. Lots & Lots of Strong Relationships
5. A Powerful Identity
6. A Sense of Control
7. A Sense of Belonging / Life Purpose
8. Rights & Responsibilities
9. Safety & Support

beginning. This retreat at the McKnight/ Bransfield home was especially poignant as Susan & Michael also hosted the first kickoff fundraiser in 2009 that launched Hannah's House. I am very grateful to the many people supporting mental health for our community, and especially to our executive director, Barb Christie-Garvin, for her extraordinary dedication and guidance.

Cindy Carr
President and Founder

MAKE A HABIT OF POSITIVE REINFORCEMENT

By Hayley Hamilton, LICSW, LADC
Hannah's House Therapist



Positive reinforcement is an essential - and often underutilized - tool to help people believe that they matter. Kids eat this up from their parents (even adult children), workers need this from bosses, and spouses need it from their mates. If you aren't doing it, ask yourself why. Could it be that you are not filled up enough? Are you not getting enough of what you need - unconditional love and praise? Begin that work on yourself and then give it away! In addition to setting it as a daily intention to let people know they are appreciated in some special way, make a commitment to parent your inner child that may have suffered. You have all you need within to give yourself and those around you unconditional love. Therapy rule #1: Never beat up on you! This equals depression. You can essentially reframe any negative thought.

You choose which thoughts to focus on. Be curious about a negative emotion - then get up and distract yourself. Practice being an observer, as if you are watching your ego chatter or emotional dialogue on a video. What's in your toolbox for a tough day? Music? Exercise? Friends? Make sure you know those tools well and practice them. Remember that what is familiar will always feel safe, no matter how destructive, so give yourself a lot of love and reassurance that small baby steps of change are ok and will eventually feel really good - and normal. Take good care of you - you deserve it! Even though we are separated by houses and doors, there is a loving universe of humanity all around you, struggling with basically the same things. So smile at the grocery store, reach out to someone who might be feeling alone. We are all in this together, after all. EVERYONE is special and EVERYONE MATTERS. Let's try to help ourselves, our loved ones and yes, even strangers feel that way!

NEUROFEEDBACK SERVICES NOW AVAILABLE

In March 2019, Heidi completed her Basic Certification in NeuroOptimal and is now providing NeuroOptimal neurofeedback sessions for children, teens and adults. NeuroOptimal is a unique brain training program that provides moment-by-moment feedback to help clients work towards sustaining a balanced mental state. Clients have reported positive changes ranging from improved mood and sleep to decreased anxiety and behavior prob-

lems in children. Neurofeedback is sometimes used as an alternative to medication for mental health challenges including insomnia, ADHD, anxiety and more. NeuroOptimal can also be used for improving focus and athletic performance. If you would like to learn more about neurofeedback offered at Hannah's House, contact Heidi Robbins at Heidi.Robbins-VT@gmail.com

ADDING TO OUR TEAM: CHRISSEY RIVERS



Chrissy serves as Promotions and Communications Specialist.

I've been an advocate of counseling and mental health throughout my adult years. In 2007, I was diagnosed with postpartum depression after the birth of my first child. From that point on, the benefits of therapy have been life-changing for me. I have been blessed with finding extremely insightful therapists over the years, including a gifted family counselor at Hannah's House. Being open about seeing a therapist has, at times, resulted in questions from curious friends. At other times, friends have quietly sought my help in finding a therapist for themselves or a family member. In my view, mental health care isn't just for people who have mental health crisis or have experienced severe trauma - it's helpful for everyone! Incorporating counseling at different stages in my life has helped me navigate many challenges and is a vital part of my overall wellness. The more openly we speak about mental health care, the more we can reduce the stigma once associated with seeking care.