



MENTAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION OF COLORADO

It's About Time. It's About You.

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Mission

The Mental Health Association of Colorado is the recognized leader, collaborating to promote mental health, expand access to services and transform systems of healthcare.



The story behind the Mental Health Bell [click here](#)

Vision

Our dream for Colorado envisions a cure for all mental illness and a state where all people are empowered to pursue their highest quality of life.

MHAC History

In 2003, MHAC celebrated its 50th Anniversary. Take a look at our [story...](#)

Advocacy Program

The Public Policy & Advocacy program works to increase access to quality mental health treatment in both the public and private sector. Community-based systems of care and early intervention are emphasized. MHAC advocates on a policy, systems and individual level on behalf of consumers, families, and providers, as appropriate. Legislative Education Day and the Mental Health/Substance Abuse Summit are key program events.

Please visit our [Public Policy and Advocacy Page](#) for more information or contact:

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Consumer Empowerment

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Education & Health Fairs

MHAC's education program teaches the public, professionals, and businesses about mental disorders and mental health treatment through health fairs, media campaigns, speakers bureau and resource distribution.

During the year we receive several requests to participate in school, community, or corporate fairs. For elementary school students we focus on feelings and how to use them appropriately, middle school students receive information on bullying and high school students are educated on positive and negative stressors that affect their life. Health fairs allow us to educate the community on mental disorders and help spread the word that mental disorders are real, common and treatable.

For more information or to request our attendance at your upcoming fair please contact:

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Pro Bono Mental Health Program

Provides free mental health services to low-income youth, families, older adults and people who are homeless.

To reach these populations, licensed and/or certified mental health professionals and Master's-level candidates for licensure volunteer at over 30 community host site agencies where people are already receiving non-mental health services.

Volunteers can provide services directly to clients in the form of individual, group and family psychotherapy, as well as psychological and psychiatric evaluations, and/or indirectly through case consultation with host site staff, program consultation and staff training. Volunteers help staff to recognize the symptoms of and treatments for mental illnesses and to better understand the needs of their clients with mental illnesses.

Since the program's inception in 1986, over \$8 million worth of free mental health services have been donated.

[Click Here](#) to see a list of **Pro Bono Mental Health Program Host Site Agencies**

For more information about the Pro Bono Mental Health Program or if you would like to volunteer professional mental health services please contact:

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Pro Bono Mental Health Program Host Sites

- **[Big Brothers Big Sisters of Colorado](#)**: provides one-to-one mentoring relationships between volunteers and children throughout the state, with outlying offices in Pueblo and Colorado Springs
- **[Boys Hope of Colorado](#)**: provides a family-like home and college preparatory educational program for capable and at-risk youth
- **[Brandon Center \(Volunteers of America\)](#)**: provides shelter for women who are homeless or in a domestic violence situation
- **[Bridgeway Homes for Pregnant Teens](#)**: provides a home for pregnant teens and young mothers
- **[Cole Middle School](#)**: a Denver Public School (DPS) Middle School
- **[Colorado Youth at Risk](#)**: provides mentoring and tutoring for at-risk youth at PS1 Charter School
- **[Curtis Park Community Center](#)**: provides comprehensive services for members of the Curtis Park community
- **[East High School](#)**: a DPS high school located at Colfax and Detroit
- **[Forest Manor Apartments \(Colorado Coalition for the Homeless\)](#)**: provides housing and support to adults with chronic mental illnesses
- **[Guardian Angels](#)**: a Catholic Elementary School; SUN (Schools in Urban Neighborhoods) school
- **[Human Services, Inc.](#)**: provides a transitional housing program for young families and a Young Fathers Program for fathers ages 16-26.
- **[I Have A Dream Foundation of Boulder County](#)**: provides long-term educational/support services for youth and their families
- **[Inner City Health Center](#)**: provides low cost health and mental health services for 5 Points and Cole neighborhood
- **[Jeffco Action Center/Estes Street Clinic](#)**: an Outreach center and clinic for low-income and homeless people of Jefferson County
- **[La Casa Quigg Newton Family Counseling Center \(Colorado Coalition for the Homeless\)](#)**: a counseling center for residents of the Quigg Newton and Sunnyside neighborhoods.
- **[Morning Star Adult Day Care](#)**: an adult day care facility located on the Lowry Campus
- **[Presentation of Our Lady](#)**: a Catholic elementary SUN (Schools in Urban Neighborhoods) school
- **[Project WISE](#)**: provides counseling and support to assist women to be self-sufficient
- **[Rainbow Alley](#)**: a drop-in center for gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgendered youth up to age 22.
- **[Rainbow House \(Volunteers of America\)](#)**: a preschool for children who are affected and/or infected by HIV/AIDS
- **[Renaissance Children's Center \(Colorado Coalition for the Homeless\)](#)**: a day care for children whose families are in transitional housing
- **[SafeHouse Denver](#)**: a shelter for women and children who are in domestic violence situations
- **[Saint Catherine of Siena Catholic School](#)**: a Catholic school for K-8 th grades
- **[Saint Francis Center](#)**: a day drop-in center for people who are homeless, primarily men and housing programs for seniors and people with chronic mental illness
- **[Samaritan House \(Catholic Charities\)](#)**: an overnight shelter for men, women and families who are homeless
- **[Seniors' Resource Center](#)**: a center for older adults in Evergreen
- **[Senior Support Services](#)**: a day shelter for older adults
- **[Stout Street Bridges \(Colorado Coalition for the Homeless\)](#)**: provides case management to people who are homeless and have a mental illness
- **[Stout Street Clinic \(Colorado Coalition for the Homeless\)](#)**: a medical and mental health clinic for people who are homeless
- **[The Gathering Place](#)**: a day drop-in center for women and their children in Capitol Hill
- **[The Inn Between](#)**: a transitional housing program offering supportive services to help diverse homeless individuals and families achieve self-sufficiency
- **[Warren Village](#)**: a self-sufficiency program for single parents and their children

For more information about the Pro Bono Mental Health Program or if you would like to volunteer professional mental health services please contact:

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[Go to the Pro Bono Volunteer section](#)

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Speakers Bureau

MHAC's Speakers Bureau program provides the community with free speaking events to educate and raise awareness of mental disorders. Topics cover mental health issues in children, adolescents/teenagers, adults and older adults. Our volunteers provide information on mental illness and mental wellness to all audiences.

Unique to this program is our consumer volunteers who discuss what it is like to live with a mental disorder and the stigma society places on mental health. Their stories can be inspirational and enlightening to audiences open to hearing subjective accounts of what it feels like to deal with, and recover from, emotional and psychological disorders. These volunteers bring valuable insight to the mysterious world of mental disorders.

Our volunteers are frequently requested to speak for church groups, non-profit agencies, parents, community based human service organizations, schools, etc. The audiences range from school aged children to senior citizens, from consumers to mental health professionals. Our services are available to any group looking for a speaker. Volunteers are willing to present throughout the day including staff meetings, over lunch, or after work. Through the use of our speakers, you are joining us in our mission of educating the community about mental health issues that touch lives.

[View a list of Speakers Bureau Topics](#)

For more information, to become a Speakers Bureau volunteer or to request a Speakers Bureau presentation for your organization, please contact:

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Speakers Bureau Topic List

Addictions

Gambling
Sexual Addiction
(See *Substance Abuse for Abuse of Alcohol and Other Drugs*)

Aging/Caring for Aging Parents

Differentiating Depression From Dementia
Geriatrics and Depression
The Sandwich Generation

Anxiety Disorders

Obsessive Compulsive Disorder
Panic Attacks
Phobias
(See *Trauma for PTSD*)

Attention Deficit Disorder/Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder

Adults with ADD/ADHD
Coaching
Pharmacological Treatments Available
Art Therapy

Addictions

Anxiety Disorders
Trauma

Biofeedback**Bipolar Disorders****Bully Proofing****Children/Adolescents**

Conduct Disorder
Developmental Disabilities
How to Recognize When Something is Wrong
Learning Disorders
Self Esteem
Substance Abuse
Use of Medication
Youth Violence

Child Sexual Abuse

Causes of Child Abuse
Counseling Strategies
Rape and Incest
Sexual Deviation and Perpetration
Signs and Symptoms

Depression

Children and Depression
Co-Occurrence with Physical Illness (Cancer, Diabetes, Stroke)
Mood Disorders
Older Adults and Depression
Seasonal Affect Disorder
Teens and Depression
Treatment
Women and Depression

Divorce

Alternatives to Litigation
Effects on Children
High Conflict
Legal, Financial, Emotional Aspects
Protecting the Child

Domestic Violence

Prevention and Treatment of Family Violence

Eating Disorders**Gay, Lesbian and Bisexual Issues****Grief**

Bereaved Parents
Life Transitions
Loss
Terminal Illness
HIV/AIDS

Living with a Chronic Illness**Mental Health and Wellness**

Meditation
Neuropsychological Rehabilitation
Wellness Recovery Action Plan (WRAP)

Mediation

Parenting

Bully Proofing
Communication
Emotional Coaching
Family Health and Dynamics
Keeping Your Child Safe
Limit Setting
Non-Violent Discipline Techniques
Skills Training

Psychotherapy

Choosing a Mental Health Professional
Evaluating Therapy
How Therapy Works
How to Know If You Need Help

Relationship & Family Issues

Co-Dependency
Communication
Family Spirituality
Family Systems
Sexuality

Schizophrenia

Impact on the Family
Signs and Symptoms
Support Groups
Treatment

Stress Management

Dealing with Change
Holiday Stress
Life Balancing

Substance Abuse

Alcohol and Other Drugs

Suicide

Signs and Risk Factors
Teens and Suicide

Trauma

Assessment and Treatment
Long Term Effects
Man-made and Natural Disasters
Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)

Women's Issues

Empowerment

Work Related Issues

Conflict Resolution
Ethics
Team Building

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Voter Empowerment

The Voter Empowerment Project was created in 1994 as a result of one consumer's quest to aid his own recovery, as well as that of others living with mental illness. Over the next six years, he encouraged over 30,000 mental health consumers to register to vote, and he delivered as many as 25,000 of them to the polls. That consumer, Kenneth Steele, began a powerful and empowering project in New York City that soon spread across the nation thanks to our National Mental Health Association's added efforts. MHAC continues this effort here in Colorado by conducting ballot trainings in your community. At these ballot trainings, we register voters and educate them on ballot issues and candidates. As a non-profit organization, we provide accurate, up-to-date information in a non-partisan fashion.

A voter empowerment campaign is about much more than registering consumers to vote. It is about creating a mental health constituency that is educated on relevant policy issues; mobilized to help get out the vote; and documented as a voting force. Through the project, we can impact policy and legislation that affects mental health consumers and their families.

If you would like more information on the project, or to schedule a ballot training, please contact:

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Bully Proofing Your Schools

The Mental Health Association coordinated the BullyProofing Your Schools Program as a model intervention program in the Sheridan school district that reduces bullying behaviors and increases students' sense of safety in school through student, staff and parent education. *Bully-Proofing Your School* is a comprehensive program that offers a systems approach for handling bully/victim problems through the creation of a "caring majority" of students who take the lead in establishing and maintaining a safe and caring school community. The program focuses on converting the silent majority of students into a caring majority by teaching them strategies to both avoid victimization and to take a stand for a bully-free school.

During the 1992-93 school year professionals (teacher, therapist, social worker and psychologist) began a pilot program called Bully-Proofing Your School in the Cherry Creek School District. Since that time, Bully-Proofing Your School has become a nationally recognized violence-prevention program implemented in school districts throughout Colorado, as well as in other states and Canada. Established as a 501(c)(3) in 2001, *Creating Caring Communities* now develops, promotes and delivers the Bully-Proofing program.

Creating Caring Communities was conceived by professionals in the field of public education who share a common concern for the children with whom they were in contact. Children were reporting to these professionals their very real fears and worries about being bullied and harassed at school, and their concern that adults were not listening to them or taking their safety needs seriously.



Find out more about Creating Caring Communities and *Bully-Proofing your School* at <http://www.creatingcaringcommunities.org>.

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Campaign for America's Mental Health

Provides public education on the symptoms of and treatments for depression and anxiety. Depression and anxiety screenings, presentations and training is available on-site to community agencies, businesses, churches, schools and other interested parties. Suicide recognition and prevention is a component of this program

Please check our [calendar](#) for educational events near you.

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Colorado LINK Teen Violence & Suicide Prevention Project

2003 marked the third and final year of *Colorado Link - Teen Violence and Suicide Prevention Program* a pilot project that provided education, screening and treatment to high school and middle school aged youth suffering from depression and suicidal ideation in selected Denver public schools and youth homeless shelters.

Youth served from 2001-2003 are as follows:

- Over 8,800 youth, teachers, and staff were educated on the risk factors and warning signs of suicide and how to ask for help.
- Over 350 youth were screened for depression and suicidal risk using Columbia University's TeenScreen and DISC screening and evaluation tools. In the high school setting over 50% of screened youth were at risk of suicide and 37% had a history of suicidal ideation.
- At the youth homeless shelter, 71% of the youth screened presented positive results for a psychiatric disorder(s).
- Free mental health treatment services such as individual and/or family counseling from Colorado Link was provided to over 100 youth.

An Evaluation of the 3-year pilot program suggests that the program had a positive effect on the students. Results showed statistically significant change before and after educational presentations in student's perception that they would know who to go to for help if a friend was having suicidal thoughts. Statistically significant outcomes observed at the conclusion of treatment showed decreases in pessimism, suicidal thoughts or wishes, measures of depressive symptoms and overall depression severity.

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Family Nexus

Family Nexus is a collaborative plan, funded by the Colorado Division of Criminal Justice Office of Juvenile Justice, and developed by The Mental Health Association of Colorado, the Federation of Families for Children's Mental Health—Colorado Chapter, and The National Alliance for the Mentally Ill—Colorado to address youth with co-occurring mental disorders and substance abuse issues who are, or are at risk of entering the juvenile justice system.

The collaboration will work together on a plan to better educate and empower families who have children with mental disorders who are involved, or at risk of being involved in the juvenile justice system; and to increase awareness and understanding in communities and local agencies involved with these children.

[Family NEXUS Enriched Support Group Curriculum](#) is available online.

For more information on Family Nexus please contact:

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Preventing Suicide in Colorado Initiative

What began as a study over two years ago has evolved into a unique statewide suicide prevention project reaching over half the counties in Colorado.

The Mental Health Association of Colorado (MHAC) and the Center for Public-Private Sector Cooperation at the University of Colorado at Denver (The Center) serve as the Coordinating Agency for The Colorado Trust's **Preventing Suicide in Colorado Initiative**. The goal of the three year, \$2.55 million initiative is to address the devastating problem of suicide in Colorado. Currently, Colorado ranks 5 th in the nation for suicide rates. The initiative comes in response to *Suicide in Colorado*, a comprehensive report (which can be found at www.coloradotrust.org) released in February 2002 by The Colorado Trust that identifies existing suicide-prevention resources and gaps to be addressed statewide. The initiative is the only statewide suicide-prevention effort supported by a foundation in the U.S.

The initiative began in 2003 with a competitive process that chose ten community organization grantees (listed below) from more than 50 applicants. The grantees, serving 32 Colorado counties, will use the grants to support new, improved or expanded suicide prevention programs designed to best meet the needs of their communities.

The Coordinating Agency facilitated a strategic planning process with the ten grantees that began last fall and will wrap-up in April 2004. Passionate, dedicated community stakeholders from each of the ten grantee communities participated, some traveling long distances from neighboring counties. Their commitment to the process and to the issues of suicide prevention has been extraordinary! And the diversity of the stakeholders has been key – we've had coroners, sheriffs, police, school teachers and administrators, bankers, social services, clergy, district attorneys, victim advocates, hospitals, mental health professionals, survivors of suicide, youth and journalists to name a few!

After the strategic planning process, grantees will begin program implementation. Programs will have components that address education/awareness, screening, risk assessment, referral, treatment services, follow-up or postvention. MHAC and The Centers will continue working with the grantees, reviewing program progress and providing various technical assistance to ensure the success of the project. The Preventing Suicide in Colorado Initiative will encourage people at risk of attempting suicide to seek care, improve the care at-risk individuals receive, and promote policies that help to reduce the alarmingly high risk of suicide in Colorado.

- Colorado West Regional Mental Health – *Moffat and Routt counties*
- Jefferson Center for Mental Health – *Jefferson, Gilpin and Clear Creek counties*
- Mental Health Corporation of Denver – *west Denver*
- Mesa County Suicide Prevention Coalition – *Mesa county*
- Midwestern Colorado Mental Health Center – *Montrose, Delta, Ouray, San Miguel, Gunnison and Hinsdale counties*
- Northeast Colorado Health and Human Services Planning Consortium/Rural Solutions – *Washington, Morgan, Logan, Kit Carson, Lincoln, Sedgwick, Phillips and Yuma counties*
- The Pinon Project – *Montezuma and Dolores counties*
- Southeast Mental Health Services – *Baca, Bent, Crowley, Kiowa, Otero and Prowers counties*
- Suicide Education and Support Services – *Weld county*

- Suicide Prevention Partnership Pikes Peak Region – *El Paso and Teller counties*.

For more information on the Preventing Suicide in Colorado Initiative contact:

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