

# Issues and Insights

Mental Health Association of Wells County

Volume 4

Issue 12

## *A Message*

*from our .....*

August 2007

### "Seeking Next Generation of Leaders"

I am proud of the leadership initiatives our association has made these past several years on issues of mental health. Certainly, more could have been done, and much is left to do. New needs arise daily. Our organization remains committed to addressing the mental health needs of Wells County.

Given the busy schedules of many of our volunteers, we often lack the greatest resource we have: time. Our business meetings are held in a 50 minute block of time during the lunch hour so to minimize time from our families in the evening and work during the business hours. I am thankful for our volunteers that travel from outside Bluffton to attend, and for the employers that permit them some time off work. These people attend both business meetings and committee meetings, then help set up events at schools, nursing homes, and elsewhere. We are truly blessed for these helping hands.

Recognizing our packed schedules and too few hours in a day to get everything done, I will be working on reviewing and revising our strategic plan. We demonstrated great enthusiasm a couple years ago by outlining the potential of our Association. Many great plans were made as a result of that plan, but as with many things in life, we forget and lose that enthusiasm.

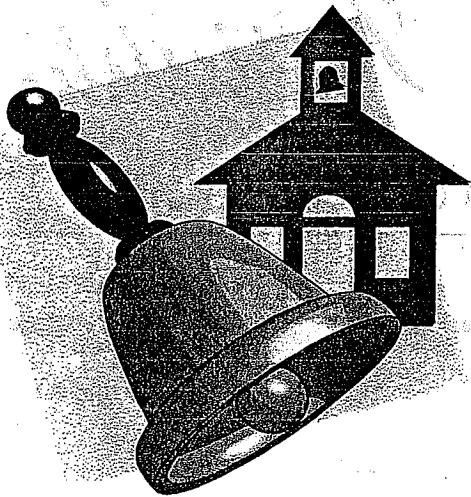
Therefore, as time permits me in the next couple months, I plan to meet with various people in our community about the needs of Wells County in the area of mental health. The purpose of this meeting is to identify what needs exist in our community regarding mental health. The Mental Health Association of Wells County has limited resources to address all needs, but identifying all the needs is a first step. The second step is to prioritize the needs. Finally, we need to determine how to address those needs.

This can be an arduous process, but it is one that needs to be done. I am asking everyone reading this to either consider being a part of the work, or identify someone that is willing and/or able to participate. We need everyone's help to make better mental health in Wells County.

We need you to be a leader!

Greg Werich, President

Mental Health Association of Wells County



## School Time Tips

By: Jean Reef

Once again it's almost that time of the year. What time is that? **School time!** With mid-August rapidly approaching ~~the vacation days of summer are fading and all students,~~ kindergarten through college, plus teachers and professors are preparing for the 2007-2008 year.

This year will be a new experience for students entering kindergarten since most school systems have adopted a full day program. Some students may be going to a different building to further their education. Wherever the students go, help them make the most and best of it!

Now is the time to begin preparing for those days. Going to bed early and getting up early is probably one of the hardest tasks to achieve. Work on the tasks and set a goal to achieve both several days before school begins. You may decide to layout the clothes for tomorrow, later when school begins have the book bag and other necessities in a spot by the door for easy pick up. **Try!**

Eating breakfast is also important. Breakfast doesn't mean a glass of juice or milk and some pretzels. Eat real food. This helps students (as well as adults) prepare themselves for a successful day.

I'm sure you have received a list of supplies each student needs. Get the shopping done early and get only what's on the list. (I was in Wal-Mart in mid-July and already the shelves were being stocked with school supplies—the early shopper gets the necessary supplies.)

As parents, grandparents, guardians or care providers before and after school our role is a constantly changing one. We should be sure we know where our child's school is located (also the entry and exit doors). School hours are important, too. If he/she rides a bus know where to get on and off the bus and the number of the bus.

Lunchtime at school is short — only about one-half hour. Remind kids to eat quickly and don't mess around with your food. You only get one chance each day. Bathroom breaks are also at designated times so plan ahead.

If your child has any food allergies, takes medication, or has special needs let the school know immediately. They will gladly work with you to ensure that your child's need(s) is met. Some participation on your part may be necessary.

Please make your child's year a good one by being the positive reinforcement tool. When they arrive home discuss the day's events (both good and bad) and what needs to be done for tomorrow i.e. homework.

If problems arise, contact the teacher, principal or guidance. Help is available.

If you, as an adult, intend to volunteer to assist with anything at school be willing to undergo a background check. This is a safety precaution for the school and is in no way a slam on you but is now necessary since much had happened at various schools throughout the U.S. Volunteer early!

Make this year a happy and enjoyable one for students and parents!

## **Alzheimer/Dementia:**

### *"Graying of the Baby Boom Generation"*

With the ever growing number of the baby boom generation reaching senior status, there are also many mental health issues that will arise. One such problem is Alzheimer/Dementia disease. How do we address these problems? Listed below are some questions you should ask a professional.

- How do we take care of the increase medical cost?
- What are some of the legalities confronting care providers and/or families?
- What about relief or respite for care providers?
- Is institutionalizing these patients the only recourse?

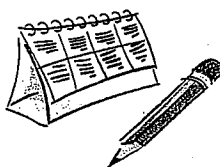
Here is another question that address geriatric assessment. (This article appeared in the AARP Bulletin-July-August 2007 Issue).

Question: My mother has developed alzheimer/dementia disease. I think she needs a geriatric assessment. Where can I get help?

Answer: A geriatric assessment-conducted by a team of health and social services workers-would evaluate your mother's physical and mental health, level of independence, living situation and ability to perform daily activities. It also would take into account her access to support services, as well as, the needs of caregivers and would result in a care plan. Consult with her doctor on this. If he or she is unable to suggest a geriatrician in your area, these groups may be able to help: Alzheimer's Association at [www.alz.org](http://www.alz.org) (1-800-272-3900); American Geriatrics Society Foundation for Health in Aging at [www.healthinaging.org](http://www.healthinaging.org) (1-800-563-4916); your local Area Agency on Aging (1-800-677-1116); your local Area Agency on Aging (1-800-677-1116);

and the National Association of Professional Geriatric Care Managers at [www.FindACareManager.org](http://www.FindACareManager.org).

**NOTICE OF EVENT: November is Alzheimer/Dementia Month see the enclosed flyer for details to answer some of your concerns. This presentation is called: "2007 Alzheimer/Dementia: Learning, Loving, and Living."**



## **COMING EVENTS**

August 6, 2007- Parent to Parent, Bluffton Library, 6:30 p.m.

### **MONTH OF SEPTEMBER:**

Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder

### **MONTH OF OCTOBER:**

Domestic Violence Awareness Month

Child Health Month

Month of the Young Adolescent

### **MONTH OF NOVEMBER:**

November 3, 2007 - Health Fair, Bluffton Junior High, 7:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

November 8, 2007 - Alzheimer/Dementia: Learning, Loving, & Living (see flyer for more details)

American Education Week-Nov.16 - 22

November 20, 2007 National Parent Involvement Day

National Alzheimer's Disease

National Family Caregivers Month

National Home Care

National Hospice Month

# 2007 "Alzheimer/Dementia: Learning, Loving & Living"

*"Addressing caregivers' legal concerns and issues confronting them."*

Presented by:  
Alzheimer/Dementia Support Group  
Mental Health Association of Wells County

At

Bi-County Service's Multi-Purpose Room  
425 E. Harrison Street  
(across from Scott's Food Store-now Kroger)

Thursday, November 8, 2007 from 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.

## Special Keynote Speaker

*Derek Paris, PsyD.-Harvest Counseling*

## Panel Guest Speakers

*Ted Ramsey, CSW-Psychiatric Care*

*Keith Huffman, Attorney*

*Jim & Joyce Phillabaum, Facilitators-Alzheimer/Dementia Support Group*

**Open to the public free of charge**  
**Light Refreshments and free handouts**

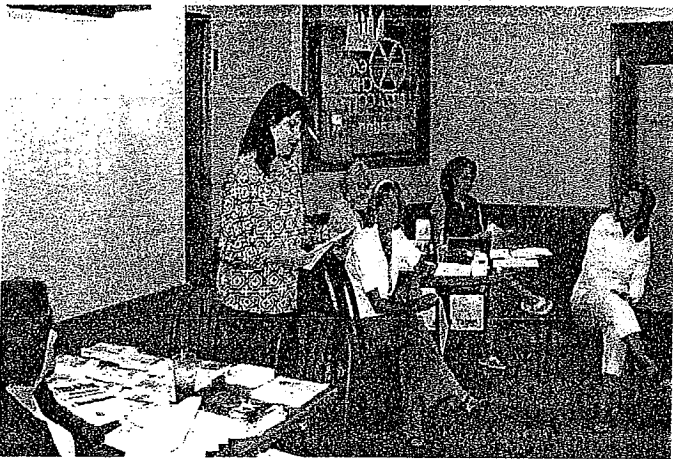
**RESERVE SEATING: CALL 260-824-1514**

(Please leave message on the answering machine  
and how many persons will be attending with you)

## PARENT TO PARENT

Each month since the start of 2007, Parent to Parent integrated into their group sessions professionals, who presented varied topics geared toward understanding current issues that confront students in their daily life.

One such session was called "Parents Nite Out." On Monday, May 7, 2007, Mental Health Association in Wells County and the Wells County Foundation provided an educational night out for parents at East Chicago Pizza-Bluffton.



Pictured above: Jenny Taskkos, Grace Baumgartner, Kathy Thompson, and Ashley Stinson (in the foreground) and Pat Trant and Suzanne Feedback (in the background).

Counselors Ashley Stinson and Pat Trant, of Southern Wells Community School presented topics on children's self-esteem, stress management, and learning styles. Kathy Thompson, Counselor of Lancaster Elementary School presented "Effects of Bullying" and how children can prevent being victimized by using certain coping skills. Many questions were directed to Jenny Tsakkos, Director of Wells County Child Services along with Grace Baumgartner, Attorney addressing legal concerns, child abuse, and referrals. Suzanne Feedback, Facilitator was on hand to lend support on any matter pertaining to Parent to Parent.

A free buffet was enjoyed by all and handouts were given for quick reference.

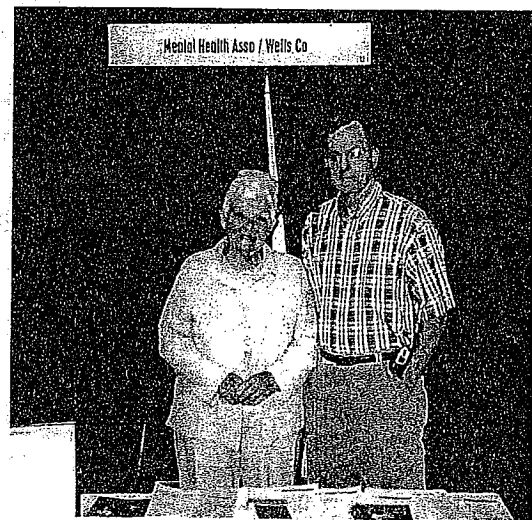
On Monday, August 6, 2007, 6:30 p.m. at the Bluffton Library (Parent to Parent meet every first Monday of each month unless, specified otherwise), Parent to Parent will start another session of interesting suggested topics such as, step-parenting, sibling rivalry, childhood stress, learning styles, and homework support just to name a few.

If you have any questions or further suggestions for the educational needs or concerns for parents, please contact Ashley Stinson at 1-765-728-2121 or the Mental Health Association office at 260-824-1514.

## 9th ANNUAL SENIOR CITIZEN EXPO.

On May 3, 2007, the Senior Citizen Expo was a great success with over 50 booths and 900 patrons attending. The senior citizens were treated to a free continental breakfast, lunch, door prizes and handouts.

The Mental Health Association of Wells County and its members volunteered to inform the public of our commitment to good mental wellness by providing free informative resource materials and answering questions.



Volunteer members from MHAWC attending were Nancy Bonham and Hans Manges pictured above and Melba Cole and Sharon McMillan.

**MENTAL HEALTH  
ASSOCIATION OF  
WELLS COUNTY**

**223 W. Washington Street  
Bluffton, Indiana 46714**

**www.mentalhealth@wellscounty.org**

**260.824.1514**

**Mental Health Association of Wells  
County Web Site.**

Check it out! Can you believe it; MHAWC has stepped into the 21st Century. Did you know our web site is chock-full of information? Interested?

Click on: [www.wellscounty.org](http://www.wellscounty.org) and click on government.

**Mail Your Membership Contribution TODAY!!!!**

**Mental Health Association of Wells County  
223 W. Washington, Bluffton, IN 46714**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Township \_\_\_\_\_

- New Membership     Renewal Membership
- \$250.00     \$100.00     \$50.00
- \$25.00     \$10.00     Other     Please call for Volunteer Work

Some of my interests include \_\_\_\_\_  
If you desire to be a Member, Board Member, or serve on the Education Comm. Call Greg Werich 260.824.6496 or MHAWC office 260.824.1514