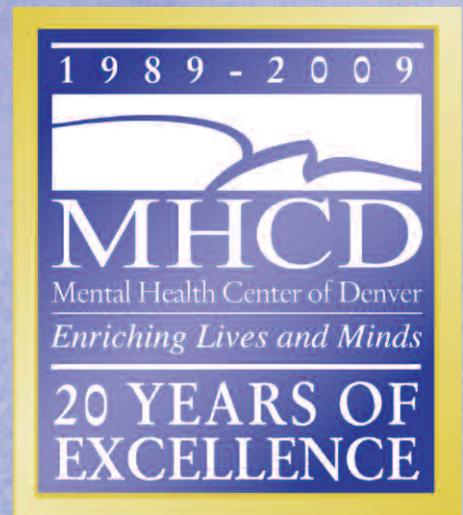


*MHCD  
Makes a  
Lasting  
Impression*



MENTAL HEALTH CENTER OF DENVER | 2009: REPORT TO THE COMMUNITY

DEAR FRIENDS OF MHCD,

What a memorable year it has been for the Mental Health Center of Denver (MHCD). We celebrated our 20th Anniversary of providing the best mental health treatment in the nation to the community of Denver. Even in the face of uncertain economic times, we were able to improve services, serve more people and be more efficient through the hard work and creativity of our employees, board of directors and volunteers.

With one in five families affected by mental illness, the work of MHCD is essential to the strength and well-being of our community. The unmet need for services in Denver is double the amount of services currently provided. Along with this enormous need comes a great responsibility—for us to expand to bring hope and recovery to more people.

CONTINUED ON INSIDE

# The Mental Health Center of Denver is...

## HAVING A POSITIVE IMPACT ON OUR KIDS

This year MHCD enhanced its community-based child and family services to promote healthier social and emotional development of our community's children, youth and families.

One in five youth is affected by emotional disorders severe enough to keep them from learning or developing properly. They may have been a victim of or witnessed an assault or been exposed to violence. Left untreated, such exposure can cause significant physical or emotional harm and have a serious impact on a child's overall health and development, often leading to more severe mental health problems as well as grave personal and social consequences later in life.

MHCD recognizes that developmentally appropriate mental health services can protect young lives touched by trauma or violence; therefore, we added even more supports and services for high-needs and



vulnerable populations like the very young, parents, adolescents, and young adults ages 16-24-years old.

Our comprehensive services are in many accessible community locations, including 17 Denver public schools and intensive in-home therapy. MHCD offers assessment, family, individual and group therapy, animal assisted therapy, crisis intervention, child psychiatry, and a full-day educational and therapeutic school for students needing additional support.

## Enhanced services:

- Added centrally located clinics for community-based teams
- A new infant mental health program that focuses on parents and promotes healthy attachment, plus an early intervention and prevention program for children birth to five years old
- Increased case management for adolescents
- HIKE (Health Intervention Knowledge Education) program for young adults ages 16-24 at risk from HIV/AIDS
- Expanded services for Spanish-speaking children, adolescents and adults
- Improved capacity for deaf and hard of hearing; a team of dedicated ASL-fluent therapists and interpreters work with young children and families statewide.

## RESOURCE CENTERS

MHCD operates two resource centers where consumers can find needed items like clothing, furniture, and household necessities, free of charge.

Your donations support both resource centers.

To make a tax-deductible donation to either resource center call:

- A New Day Family Resource Center at 303-504-1550
- Wishing Well Resource Center for adults at 303-892-5594.

Or visit [www.mhcd.org](http://www.mhcd.org).



## CREATING HOPEFUL FUTURES

With HIV on the rise and alcohol-and drug-related deaths twice the national rate, the statistics paint a challenging

picture for many of Denver's youth who are at risk due to homelessness, mental illness or substance abuse. With the help of HIKE (Health Intervention Knowledge Education), a project focused on reducing HIV, sexually transmitted diseases and substance abuse among 16-to-24-year-olds, more of Denver's young people now have the chance to beat the odds.

One of these is Megan, an intelligent, articulate young woman whose sparkling

eyes show her excitement for a life that is now moving toward hope. This wasn't always the case.

Megan's late teen years were marked by alcohol addiction, depression and anxiety. After her release from an alcohol treatment program a year ago, Megan was jobless, on probation and in an unstable living situation. After turning to MHCD for help, Megan was referred to HIKE, where she receives the counseling and support she needs.

"Being involved with HIKE helps me to stay sober—to manage my symptoms and ask for help if I need it," Megan explains. Through HIKE, Megan receives weekly one-on-one counseling and medication, free of charge. HIKE also provided her with warm clothing and food until she could get on her feet. Megan now has a job, an apartment and she is supporting herself.

"Megan's involvement with HIKE offered her the structure to re-establish her life," says Megan's HIKE counselor, MHCD

clinical case manager Nick Citriglia. "HIKE focuses on reducing high risk behaviors and helping youth get off the street, but we also help with resources for housing and food," he explains. "By partnering with other agencies, we are able to reach more young people like Megan."

Megan says she might have given up on her recovery. "I know I wouldn't be where I am today," she says. "HIKE helps people who wouldn't be able to get help otherwise. It has kept me going."

MHCD partners with Urban Peak and The Council on Substance Abuse and Mental Health on HIKE.

## Since HIKE Began In October 2008, The Project Has Seen:

- 70 Youth
- 25% Decline in Injection Drug Use
- 30% Reduction in Unprotected Sex
- 30% Increase in Housing Stability
- 112% Increase in the Number of Days Consumers Abstain from Drug Use

## HELPING CHANGE PERSPECTIVES

*2Succeed is a recovery center that helps consumers re-connect and contribute to the community. 2Succeed in Employment, which placed 88 consumers in 2009, is a supportive employment program that helps consumers find jobs. 2Succeed in Education provides academic, career and personal development to consumers. Currently 40 people are enrolled in college through this program.*

As an employment specialist with MHCD's 2Succeed in Employment program, Sarah Shaw approaches her work with eager exuberance and a can-do attitude that makes things happen.

Sarah works one-on-one with consumers on everything from assessing employment

interests and strengths to on-the-job coaching. She also creates relationships with employers in the community and seeks out job opportunities. Sometimes helping shift perspectives is required for both tasks.

"Part of my job is to educate—to help change employers' perspectives on working with consumers," explains Sarah. "At the same time, consumers change their own perspectives. They start to see themselves as people and not define themselves by their symptoms."

According to Linda Miller, program supervisor, Sarah always goes the extra mile and she helped 23 consumers find jobs in 2009.

"Sarah helps us to think about where we want to be in the future and how we can help people promote their own recovery," says Miller.

Sarah modestly attributes her job satisfaction to teamwork.

"We form partnerships with consumers — they do a lot of the work," she says. "The most gratifying part of my job is to see

someone gain the confidence and tools to be successful, productive and independent."



**Employers can receive tax incentives for hiring MHCD consumers. For more information, call 303-504-1716.**

## LEAVING OUR HANDPRINT ON THE COMMUNITY

Every person we serve has access to our full range of services. That's why our recovery rates are over 70%. Recovery means many things to many people but to us it means a person with a mental health problem is living a healthy, productive life.

Within the Mental Health Center of Denver programs and services are coordinated so that a person can move from homelessness into treatment, find a doctor, a therapist, a place to live, and go back to work or to school.

MHCD is far ahead of other mental health

centers in measuring recovery outcomes. We developed reliable measurement tools to indicate the appropriate levels of service for each person. We also track the person's progress in recovery from multiple perspectives. These tools tell us that at least 85% of our consumers are maintaining or improving their levels of recovery and getting healthier.

Also, our data tells us it takes 18 months on average for a consumer to improve and move up in their level of treatment allowing MHCD to better manage resources and the needs of our consumers. There is also ample evidence to show that mental health treatment is cost effective in reducing the use of public funds, where non-treatment

can result in much higher costs to us all.

Because of our innovative approach, MHCD is recognized as a national leader of excellence in mental healthcare. And, we are very proud to serve Denver.

MHCD provides services in 37 locations, has therapists in 17 public schools and clinical staff in 3 homeless shelters and 3 youth centers. Last year we served 13,600 adults, children, and families, an increase of 18% from the previous year.

Our mission of *enriching lives and minds by focusing on strengths and recovery* comes to life each day as we work alongside our consumers and our community partners to create lasting opportunities for recovery,

## USING YOUR GIFTS WISELY

Gifts and donations to MHCD from individuals, corporations, and foundations provided:

- Gifts for 2000 children and adults through our Gifts of Joy holiday gift drive
- Hope for recovery for more consumers



## VOLUNTEERS

MHCD needs volunteers from all walks of life. Visit [www.mhcd.org](http://www.mhcd.org) for information on how to donate or volunteer.

## CONTINUED FROM COVER

We know treatment for youth and families can set the stage for the rest of their lives, so we have expanded our services for



children, families and at-risk youth. We know the financial and societal costs of untreated mental illness, so we remain focused on programs that provide people access to services instead of housing them in jail, reduce hospitaliza-

tions and help prevent homelessness. As always, the efficiency and accountability that are hallmarks of MHCD show that our work is saving public funds while making a difference for people of all ages.

As we remain committed to meeting the growing needs of individuals and families affected by mental illness, we are grateful to you, our donors, supporters, volunteers and community partners for being a part of this important work – work that endures and will make a lasting impression on our community for years to come.

*Carl Clark MD*

**Dr. Carl Clark, Chief Executive Officer**



## PAYING RECOVERY FORWARD

When you first meet Paul, a good-natured 43-year old man with a mischievous smile and twinkling eyes, you would never guess that he was

homeless most of his adult life.

*I'm excited about life now. My life is evolving and I'm in a good place because of MHCD.*

If not for the Mental Health Center of Denver (MHCD), Paul says he would be one of those disheveled homeless men you see mumbling to himself and panhandling on the street corner.

Until he came to MHCD, Paul lived a life

of uncertainty, going from one mental health crisis to the next and wandering to one city after another. For years, he drank and used drugs to try to make life on the streets manageable. When he finally ended up hospitalized because of his mental illness, he was referred to MHCD.

"I'm enjoying life now. MHCD can make you as healthy as you can be," says Paul, who feels a sense of peace. "They stabilized me in three months. My MHCD case manager is essential to my recovery. She helped me find a home and the other MHCD services have helped me see my potential and understand my illness."

Working as a Peer Mentor at MHCD's 2Succeed in Education and Employment program, Paul mentors others working toward recovery.

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Learn about more about us. Join us for an Enriching Lives and Minds Open House. Visit [www.mhcd.org](http://www.mhcd.org) or call 303-504-6500



**Environmental Leadership**  
MHCD's Together Green Team was named for its commitment to environmental leadership earning a Bronze Award in the Colorado Environmental Leadership Program.

**Efficient Systems**  
Our Process Improvement Project resulted in giving 187 additional people access to services without increasing staff or expenses.

**Effective Programs**  
Our GROW program for homeless women with histories of mental illness, trauma, and substance abuse received the 2009 Science to Service Award from The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMSHA) for its effectiveness.

LEAVING A LASTING IMPRESSION



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