

Support group for people with depression and manic depression, their families and friends.

BRAIN HEALTHY SNACKS FOR CHILDREN (and adults, too!)

- yogurt with sliced banana and blueberries
- fresh cherry tomatoes
- dried apricots and orange sections
- tahini with whole wheat crackers
- baked sweet potato
- trail mix with walnuts, raisins, carob, chopped figs and dried cranberries (go for organic ingredients if available)
- frozen blueberries
- fresh fruit salad
- pumpkin seeds and sunflower seeds



Brain Foods for Kids: Over 100 Recipes to Boost Your Child's Intelligence (2005).

upcoming meetings

Thursday, September 2, 2008

Open Discussion

Thursday, October 23, 2008

Gordon MacPherson, Family Support

Thursday, November 22, 2008

Open Discussion

December 2008

Sorry, no meetings in December.

Thursday, January 24, 2009

Open Discussion

where

Centennial Public Library (Downtown)
54 Church Street, St. Catharines
7-9 pm

emergency phone numbers

**Community Crisis Centre
(Regional)**
(905) 684-7271 ext. 43230

Distress Centre
(905) 688-3711

**Mental Health Service
Information Ontario**
1-866-531-2600



We Need Your Help!

We are updating our mailing list. Please let us know if your address has changed or if you want to be added (or deleted) from the mailing list.

If you receive the newsletter by mail, please respond by using the **RSVP** form included with this newsletter. Deadline is November 1, 2008.

REMINDER: this newsletter is available online at www.NiagaraMoodDisorders.com.

Canada spends less on mental illness

Canada lags behind most developed countries in the amount it spends to treat mental illness, with Ontario and Saskatchewan spending the least, according to a major study of mental health spending in this country. In 2003-04, Canada spent \$6.6 billion on mental health, representing just 4.8 per cent. That puts Canada, along with Italy, at the bottom of the list in mental health spending by developed countries. As a share of the total health budget, Britain spent the most (12.1 per cent), followed by Germany (10), the Netherlands (8), Denmark (8), the U.S. (7.5), Ireland (6.8) and Australia (6.7).

Many Canadians stigmatize mentally ill, poll finds

Many Canadians hold negative attitudes towards people with mental health issues, says a new poll released Monday by the Canadian Medical Association.

The poll, which was part of the CMA's 2008 National Report Card, showed 46 per cent of Canadians think people use the term "mental illness" as an excuse for bad behaviour.

One of four Canadians in the survey said they were scared to be around someone with a mental illness.

The poll also showed only 50 per cent of Canadians would tell a friend that a family member had a mental illness -- compared to 72 per cent who would talk about a cancer diagnosis.

Family Therapy Helps Relieve Depression Symptoms In Bipolar Teens

Family-focused therapy, when combined with medication, appears effective in stabilizing symptoms of depression among teens with bipolar disorder, according to a new report.

Between one-half and two-thirds of patients with bipolar disorder develop the condition before age 18, according to a new study, *Family-Focused Treatment for Adolescents With Bipolar Disorder*.

The authors suggest a therapy program with emphasis on "reducing conflict in family relationships, enhancing social supports and teaching interpersonal skills" that underlie the stronger effects of bipolar depression.

Low vitamin D levels linked to depression in older people

Older people who have low levels of Vitamin D may be at a higher risk of depression. A new study has found that people who had both major and minor depression, vitamin D levels were 14 per cent lower than in people who did not suffer from depression.

Researchers estimate that 13 per cent of all people over 65 are depressed.

Mom's Mood, Baby's Sleep: What's The Connection?

If there's one thing that everyone knows about newborn babies, it's that they don't sleep through the

night, and neither do their parents.

Babies whose mothers experienced depression any time before they became pregnant, or developed mood problems while they were pregnant, are much more prone to having chaotic sleep patterns in the first half-year of life than babies born to non-depressed moms, the team has found.

But this doesn't mean that babies born to depressed moms are doomed to follow in their mothers' shoes, even though depression does tend to run in families. It means that all parents – especially ones with a history of depression – must pay close attention to the conditions they create for their infant's sleep, right from birth.

Sources: CBC Health News,
Science Daily.

Signs of the Times

At an Optometrist's Office:

'If you don't see what you're looking for, you've come to the right place.'

Outside a Muffler Shop:

'No appointment necessary. We hear you coming.'

On an Electrician's truck:

'Let us remove your shorts.'

Suicide Help: A guide from CMHA

How would I know if someone is feeling suicidal?

Most people who consider suicide are not determined to die. They are undecided about whether to live or die. Warning signs may be their way of asking for help or revealing the seriousness of their situation.

Signs to watch for:

- a previous suicide attempt
- general talk of death or suicide
- talking about a specific suicide plan, including the method, date, location
- making a plan (e.g. drawing up a will, talking about final wishes)
- signs of depression or other mental illness
- writing or drawing about suicide
- giving away valued possessions
- sudden change in behaviour (for better or worse)
- withdrawal from friends and activities
- increased use of alcohol or other drugs
- recent loss (such as death, loss of a job, or loss of a relationship)
- feelings of hopelessness or helplessness.

Thoughts of suicide are a common symptom of mood disorders.

Remember, there is no ultimate list of warning signs. Any one of these signs by itself does not necessarily mean a person is suicidal, but the more of these signs that are present, the greater the risk of suicidal behaviour. On the other hand, a suicidal person may not display the signs on this list. It may be right to be concerned simply because someone's behaviour is out of character. Sudden shifts in actions or attitude may alert friends to potential problems.

How you can help

- Ask directly if the person is thinking about suicide. Talking openly about suicide does not increase the risk. In fact, it can bring relief to someone who has been afraid to confide their suicidal thoughts.
- Talk to the person in a non-judgmental way, and listen to them without becoming upset. Let the person know you care and want to help.
- Believe what the person says, and take all threats seriously.
- Look into community resources, such as crisis lines and counselling services that you can suggest to the person.
- Never keep someone's suicidal feelings a secret. Tell someone who can help.
- Take action if you feel someone is at immediate risk. If necessary, make contact with the police, emergency services or a hospital to ensure the person's safety.

NIAGARA DISTRESS CENTRES

St. Catharines, Niagara Falls & Area:	905-688-3711
Port Colborne, Wainfleet & Area:	905-734-1212
Fort Erie & Area:	905-382-0689
Grimsby, West Lincoln & Area:	905-563-6674

Mental Illness Awareness Week: October 5-11, 2008



Nearly one in five Canadians is affected by mental illness, yet a persistent stigma prevents millions from getting the help they need. The continuing theme of Mental Illness Awareness Week - Face Mental Illness - is designed to change that.

Meet **Sue Batson Feuer**. Sue is a talented visual artist from **Niagara-on-the-Lake** and a strong and loving mother to her nine-year-old son. Being a parent motivates her battle to overcome chronic depression and anxiety. Following her diagnosis 16 years ago, Sue struggled to find the right balance of health care providers and medications that would allow her to pursue a career in the arts. Now she has the respect, compassion and professional health care she needs. Sue knows she is well when she creates, and her use of art as therapy has been featured in local media. Having a mental illness is a cultural taboo in many minority groups, but she refuses to be ashamed and lives openly with her illness. Sue shares her experiences

because she believes when people with a mental illness are empowered to seek help, they can create the quality of life they truly want and deserve. Sue proves it is possible not only to cope, but to thrive. Recovery is Possible. (www.miaw-ssmm.ca)

Support Groups Help People (Like You and Me)

We come because we need the structure. We come to be heard and understood and we come to release ourselves from the burden of an isolated, disconnected life. Support groups ease the burden of feeling alone with a mental illness. There is a unique strength in group membership which can help a person mobilize his energies and attain a sense of well-being.

Support groups facilitate the sharing of information that makes sense and comes from people who have really "been there, done that." Everyone sitting in the circle of our support groups counts on one simple fact: that the person you are sitting across from, or beside, has experienced similar symptoms and situations. We learn we are not alone in feeling crazy or sad or on top of the world.

When we first come to the group we're usually nervous and afraid to tell our stories: sometimes we just listen and take it all in. Sometimes we get to the group and are bursting with our news or our situations or our insights; at a support group we can talk about it all. No matter what and how we feel, we can be assured that someone else in that room has experienced similar feelings and thoughts.

When we leave the group often it feels like a weight has been lifted. Our fear is reduced, our panic is managed and our hopelessness eases off a bit; we have found a safe, welcoming space to just take a deep breath and be ourselves. (*Mood Disorders Association of B.C.*)

contact information

Mood Disorders Support Group of the Niagara Region
PO Box 29056
125 Carlton St. St. Catharines, ON, L2R 7P9

(905) 687-6897
(recorded message describing upcoming meeting)

Email: info@niagaramooddisorders.com

Your Corner

Do you have a story, poem or work of art that you would like to share with everyone?

Or maybe you would like to share an idea or tip of how you deal with mania or depression?

Please email or mail your submission by December 1st.