

CSP Logo designed by
Chris Ford

Community Support Journal



Volume 11, Issue 123

June 2022

Montgomery County
Community Support Program Committee

Dave Eckert receives the Innovation Award - CSP Conference & Mental Awards May 24, 2022



L to R - Commissioner Joe Gale, Dave Eckert, Nancy Wieman, Commissioners Chair Dr. Val Arkoosh.

Dave Eckert was awarded the Nancy Wieman Award for Innovation at the 9th Annual CSP Conference & 44th Mental Health Awards Reception held at Martha’s Community Farm in Audubon.

Dave Eckert is a leader at Access Services in Montgomery County, PA. As an innovator in the area of mental health, he is a co-founding member of the Montgomery County Multi-Faith Coalition. He provides leadership to this organization as the Community Service Partner. He was a member of the team that established the mission and Core Principles of the Coalition.

Dave recognizes the importance of mental health in relation to Body, Mind, and Spirit. It is this faith component that is so critical to mental health with the purpose of providing resources to the greater Montgomery County community. There is great value in connecting the faith communities to service providers

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“People experiencing homelessness are as much a part of our community as those who are housed.”
#WEBELONG

Montgomery County, PA is experiencing a housing and homelessness crisis. We believe that everyone belongs in our community, and that the solutions to address the needs of those of us living outside lie within the community itself.

- [#WEBELONG](#) Community Page on Facebook



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to access real help and for the faith communities to articulate their needs for their faith community.

With Dave Eckert's leadership, mental health has been a central focus of what wellness represents and the collaboration with Montgomery County, Faith communities and Service Partners. This is an innovative and collaborative approach of wellness for the county. He has also established a national presence with his work. The Montgomery County Multi-Faith Coalition model can be a national template example, and Dave Eckert has the vision, leadership ability, and compassion for the community good particularly when it comes to mental health to be a person of the finest examples of innovative, community stewardship. What Dave is doing is so innovative, that the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) awarded a grant. SAMHSA has recently asked Dave (and some others at Access Services) to facilitate an 8-week training for people across the country.

Dave has given faith based communities the tools to cross walk crisis with their own beliefs in a way that centers grace and love, which goes a long way in destigmatizing help, saving lives, and providing meaningful support to loss survivors. For these reasons, Dave is the recipient of the 2022 Award for Innovation!

Other award winners:

CSP Ambassador Award

STACEY VOLZ

Montgomery County's Community Support Program presents this annual award to an honoree who embodies and promotes the principles of CSP: **empowerment, cultural competency, natural supports, flexibility, coordination, accountability, sensitivity to special needs, and a strengths based perspective.**

Recovery & Resiliency Awards

The Montgomery County Recovery and Resiliency Awards are intended to recognize **individuals, children, families, programs, and organizations** that exemplify Recovery and/or Resiliency Principles. These awards recognize effort and accomplishment of significant quality that extends beyond the typical expectations of job description, role, or position. These winners have either demonstrated exceptional personal accomplishment and resiliency, set positive examples for others, or shown outstanding dedication in their support of recovery for persons in pursuit of mental wellness.

Recovery & Resiliency Award Winners

DANIEL STEELE

FAMILYWORX

LORI WARREN

STACIE KENEFICK

THE FAMILY SATISFACTION TEAM

TONY SALVATORE

TY WILLIAMS

Recovery & Resiliency Honorable Mentions:

- Andrew Cambridge
- Autumn Walsh
- Halley Bauer-Moore
- Joanne Washington
- Karen Ortiz
- Lisa Petriello
- Robert Konzelman
- St. Luke's Penn Foundation Peer Support Team
- The REACH Program

Four-Part Trauma Training Series Completion

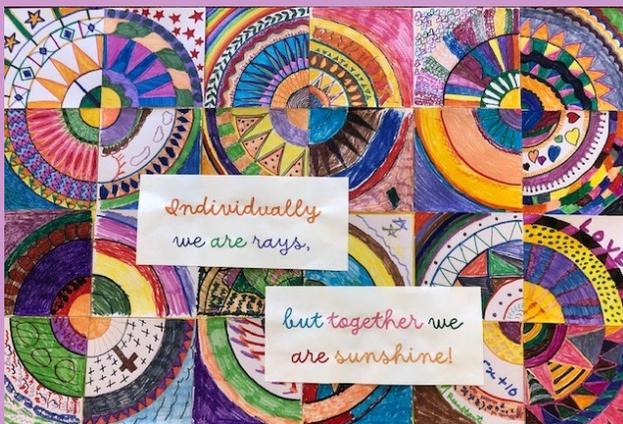
The Montgomery County Office of Mental Health/Developmental Disabilities/ Early Intervention would like to recognize the following individuals for their commitment to pursuing knowledge and skills, and for creating a recovery focused and trauma-informed system of care, as demonstrated by their completion of the four-part trauma training series hosted by the Montgomery County Behavioral Health Training Institute.

Dawn Grant – Valley Youth House

Briana Siegfried

Lynsey Trohoske – Circle Lodge

There are now over 700 individuals who have attended the trauma training series to date!



The CSP Virtual Art Contest Winner:

First Place Winner: “We are the Sunshine”

By: Forteniters

“This piece was created by 24 members of the Forteniters Club as individual rays. Together we make sunshine! We chose to submit a collaborative project for the theme *“Together We Thrive”*.”

To find out more about the award winners, please go to:

www.montcopacsp.org

[#WEBELONG](#) is a group in Montgomery County based on a simple premise; people experiencing homelessness are as much a part of our community as those who are housed. The group is striving to collaborate in direct action to resolve the growing crisis of homelessness in Montgomery County while knowing that every single community has someone living unhoused.

According to Mark Boorse, the administrator of the Facebook page and coordinator of the movement, the group banded together at the onset of the Pandemic to support people living outside and to assist others who were housed and living on low incomes, in keeping their homes.

And now, the only permanent shelter in the county, the Coordinated Homeless Outreach Center (CHOC) is being forced to move from its longtime location on the grounds of the Norristown State Hospital by July 1, as the land is being transferred to the Borough of Norristown.

“We are reaching a housing crisis in Montgomery County,” Boorse said. “You have this perfect storm of more people experiencing homelessness.”

While a new location is being sought for CHOC, there will be a gap in services and people who are homeless will have nowhere else to go except the street. Complicating the housing situation is the cost of rent which has been going up double digits and the rental assistance that individuals received during the Pandemic is coming to an end, Boorse said.

Another problem is the county has no legal, safe space for people to be. People have to hide and count on not being found which skews the numbers when providers are trying to provide accurate numbers of people living without housing. This also means that people are living without sanitation, running water, electricity, trash removal, recourse to the law. Eventually, they are discovered and told to move on.

The [#WEBELONG](#) movement has a three-part plan: 1) **Did you know?** Giving information about the scope of homelessness in Montgomery County; 2) **Come and See.** Interviewing individuals who are homeless or have been homeless and sharing their stories with the community; and 3) **You can help.** Asking people in the community to find space and/or offer space for people until CHOC can reopen.

Boorse said the group envisions the space or shelter as a church, organization or business that has extra space not being used. Providing space doesn't mean also providing services. Others could provide the services that people need while living there.

And, the group has pallet shelters - a 10 ft. by 10 ft. square pallet with a vinyl and metal framed pack that can be opened and closed and moved to different locations. The pallet shelters are weather impervious and can hold



two beds and have electricity, heat and air conditioning. The shelters, which cost \$5,000 each, have a door and a lock. Bathhouses and toilets can be purchased separately.

Boorse said 20 to 25 shelters could be placed at one spot or dispersed among the community with two or three on a property.

“They’re not invasive, not permanent and can be moved around,” Boorse said. “We’re not asking somebody to commit to permanent space.”

Boorse said the group is inviting everyone to join into the discussion about how this might be done in Montgomery County to address the growing need. To learn more about pallet shelters, go to:

<https://youtu.be/YAzn0x2m7pE>

Meanwhile, [#WEBELONG](#) is thinking of the next step: creating affordable housing at the community level. The way housing works now is through subsidies which are really paying for unaffordable housing, Boorse said.

So what’s affordable housing look like? Boorse said the next step could be tiny homes.

The group includes communities of faith, mental health and addiction services, community health and dental services from the Pottstown, Lansdale and Norristown areas.

If you are interested in learning more or have questions about the movement, contact Mark Boorse at mboorse@accessservices.org.

A person’s home...before and after Hurricane Ida.



FROM #WEBLONG Facebook Post on May 27, 2022

Did you know?

It is important to collectively reflect on the thoughts and ideas that are commonly formed about homelessness, if we are going to find an effective pathway forward to address this on a community level. Here are some:

1. **We underestimate the scale of homelessness.** A critical survival skill for a person experiencing homelessness is staying hidden as much as possible. This has 2 consequences: it is actually counterproductive to getting the necessary help to resolve the situation, and the community doesn't realize how many of its constituents live outside.
2. **We view homelessness as transient.** When we do see it, often people assume that the person moved into a neighborhood from an entirely different community. The fact is that individuals living outside have the same ties to the community that the rest of us have. Employment, friends and family, where we worship, where we shop and use services. One of the reasons that individuals decline going to a shelter is that it is miles away from all of these critical connections.
3. **We adopt a policy of "not here".** While it is not illegal per se to be homeless, there is no sanctioned place to be. This creates a context for problems; no access to the services the rest of us rely on, like sanitation, running water, electricity, trash removal, recourse to the law. Which then sets in motion a cycle of being discovered and told to move.
4. **We believe that services are sufficient to address the problem.** Often, we rely on the pathway of referring someone into the housing system with the expectation that it will very quickly and effectively resolve it. The fact is that there are waiting lists for all services, including emergency housing/shelter. And currently, those waitlists are getting longer.

When we see homelessness over time, we hold the person themselves, or the service system, responsible for the lack of resolution. Some times it will be said, "the person is choosing to be outside", or, "they don't want help". Other times, the service system is held to task for not meeting expectations in some way. The

reality is much more complex, and it is happening in a context of insufficient capacity.



There are things that can be done. In future posts, we can begin to unpack them. All of the pathways forward require a collaborative effort on the part of the entire community.

“Together We Thrive!”

2022 CSP Conference & Awards Reception

By: Kathie Mitchell, Newsletter Editor

Back in person again! It was two long years, a grueling Pandemic and a brand new venue, but that didn't stop over 200 people from attending the 9th Annual CSP Conference & 44th Annual Mental Health Awards Reception on May 24, 2022.

There were new faces and familiar ones. Mitch Goldfarb was back with his favorite Tai Chi class, the World Drums were humming with rhythm, sound and even silence, Philly Senior Stage gave a great performance of the play “Guys and Dolls”, the photo booth was back...

And then there was slime!

Central Behavioral Health hosted a Slime/Silly Putty Workshop that encouraged participants to play, get creative and relieve a little stress all at the same time. Sticky fingers - no way!

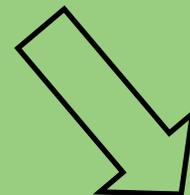
If you wanted some alone time, you could travel along the walking trail and explore wellness through movement and with nature. It all happened this year at Martha's Choice Marketplace and Community Farm in Audubon.

There was a Continental Breakfast in the morning and a delicious lunch provided by Mission Barbeque. While eating, guests could visit the Art Show and Award Winner Exhibit tables.

HopeWorx staff showed up the night before to set up tables and chairs and returned early the next morning to assist in parking cars, providing rides to and from the event, and making sure guests were enjoying themselves.

It was said, “A good time was had by all!”

See more conference photos on the next page.



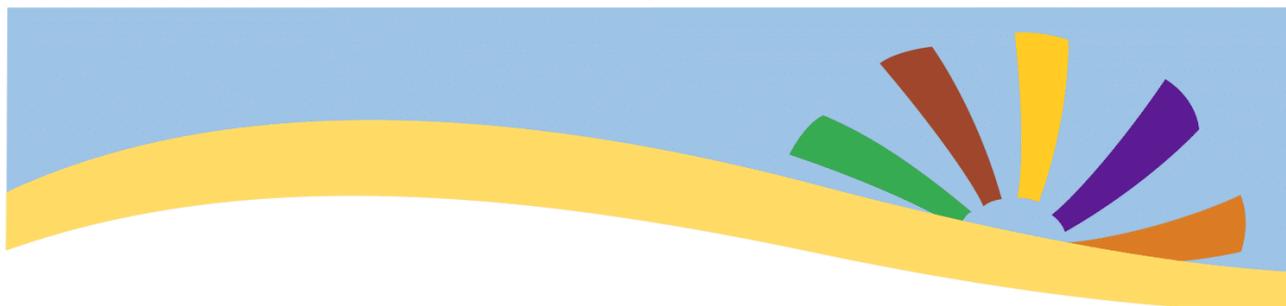


Friends
Fun
Drums
Tai Chi
BBQ
You!



2022 CSP Conference at
Martha's Community
Farm





Free Tai Chi Classes Online With Mitch Goldfarb



**FREE TAI CHI FLOW CLASSES: Every Monday from 11:30am
-12pm**

LINK & PASSWORD Please **Save These Credentials** and use them each week. <https://wcupa.zoom.us/j/479744664?pwd=QW00dmxvMFZ2Z0Y0ZExvcE9oZzduZz09> Password: 094735

Every Monday I offer Free Tai Chi Flow classes via Zoom. Classes will resume on **Monday, June 6th**, after the Memorial Day holiday. Below is the information. Feel free to share it with friends, family and co-workers who would like a little mindfulness pick-me-up to start the week off on the right foot. Every other week we do Tai Chi in a chair, which many seniors find beneficial.

Free Tai Chi Flow Classes Every Monday on Zoom Join Prof. Mitch Goldfarb, author of *Tai Chi and the Art of Mindfulness*, and start feeling energized now. Relieve your stress while building energy. Feel free to share this information and invite family and friends. The more the merrier. Enjoy a recharging and rejuvenating playful and easy class. There is nothing to learn and nothing to memorize. We just Go With The Flow!

The link will be active approximately 10 minutes before each class. Please log on before 11:30am so class can start on time.



Save the Date:
**Harvest,
Hope, &
Healing Day**

**CELEBRATING THE COMMUNITY
TOGETHER THROUGH HEALING, HOPE,
AND HARVEST
FAMILIES WELCOME!**

JULY
SUNDAY | **31** | 1-4 PM
2022

**NORRISTOWN FARM PARK
2500 UPPER FARM RD,
NORRISTOWN, PA 19403**

TAKING BACK OUR POWER

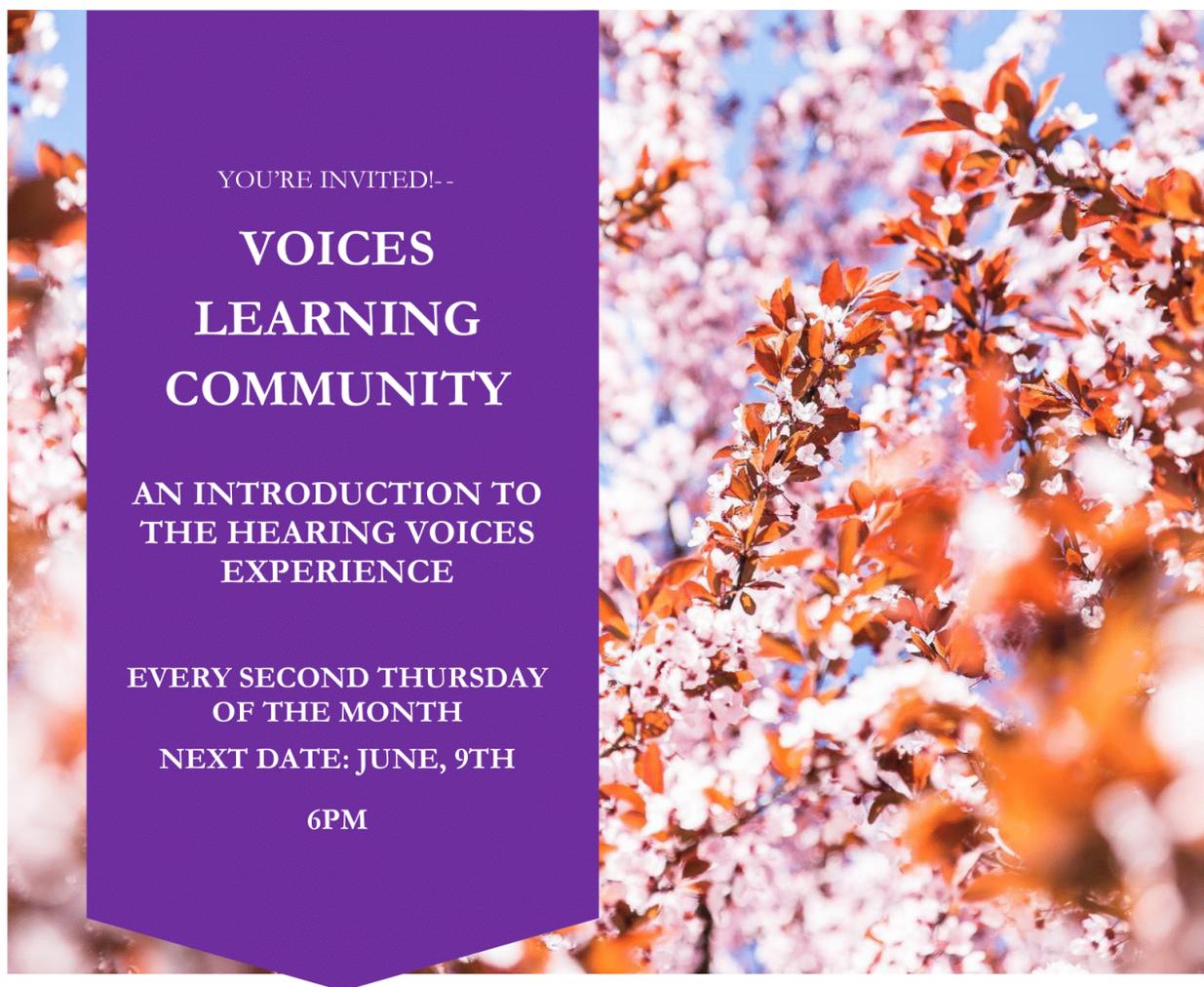
**AN IN-PERSON HEARING VOICES GROUP
EVERY TUESDAY, 3PM (EST)**



Join us for Taking Back Our Power hearing voices group. This group is open to anyone with the experience of hearing voices, or experiencing other sensory phenomena not shared by others. We offer a non-clinical, non-judgmental environment for free and open discussion away from traditional psychiatric treatments. If you hear, see, smell, or feel things that other people can't perceive, this group is for you. Everything that happens in the meeting is confidential.

**JOIN US AT
BRYN MAWR PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
625 MONTGOMERY AVE
2ND FLOOR, MIDDLETON CENTER
BRYN MAWR, PA 19401**

**FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:
ROBIN CAMPBELL
ROBIN.L.CAMPBELL@RHD.ORG**



Join us for a thought-provoking discussion to introduce the hearing voices experience. Many people have the experience of hearing voices, or experience other sensory phenomena not shared by others. If this sounds like you, or you are trying to support someone in your life who is struggling with these experiences, the Voices Learning Community will introduce you to a nonclinical environment where you will have the opportunity to speak with people with the hearing voices experience who live productive and fulfilling lives. Everyone is welcome, including family members, medical professionals, and anyone else interested in discovering an alternative viewpoint on the hearing voices experience.

For more information contact:

Robin Campbell : robin.l.campbell@rhd.org

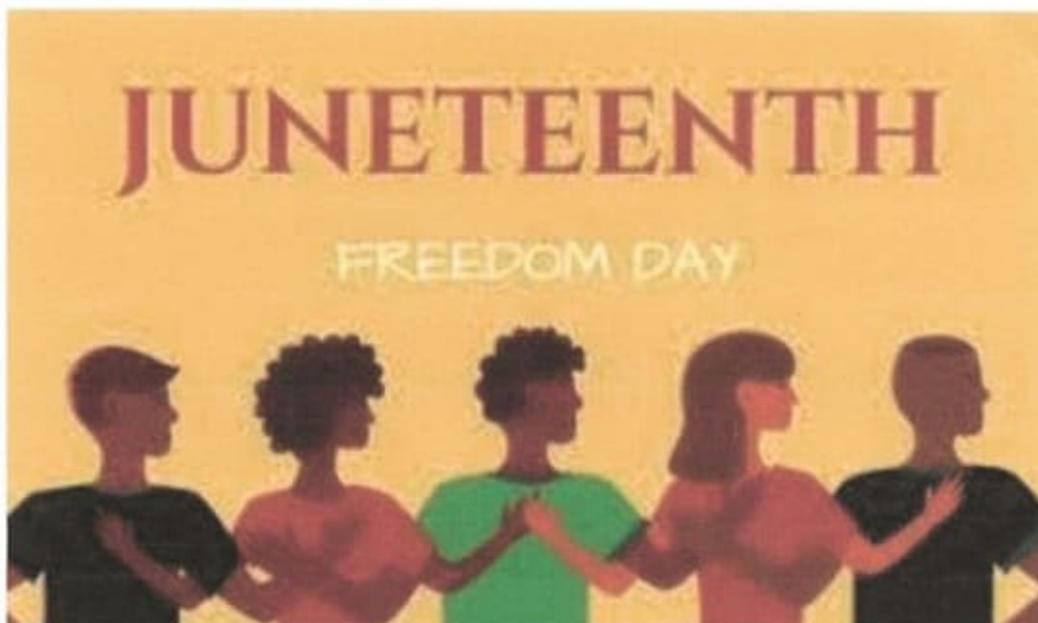
Or visit www.mchvn.org

Join Zoom Meeting
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81646904585>

Meeting ID: 816 4690 4585

Dial by your location
 +1 646 558 8656 US (New York)
 +1 301 715 8592 US (Germantown)





SAVE THE DATE!

Sunday, June 19, 2022

***The Pottstown Branch of the NAACP is
hosting its FIRST Juneteenth celebration
Our theme: Teach. Learn. Share. Serve.***

**WHERE: The Ricketts Center
658 Beech Street, Pottstown, PA 19464**

TIME: 3 p.m. to 6 p.m.

**Free fellowship * Free food * Free fun
Music * Dancers**

DON'T MISS IT!



Youth & Young Adults

Between the ages of 16 - 29

WELLNESS DAYS 2022

Evansburg State Park | Pavilion B

Activities Include (At No Cost)

- ✓ Self-Stigma Workshop
- ✓ Leadership & Teambuilding
- ✓ Art & Music
- ✓ Hiking & Fishing
- ✓ Food & More



Family Members, Caregivers, & Support Staff are welcome to attend



NAMI MAN will be there!



JUNE 21, 2022
10 AM - 4 PM

851 Mayhall Rd, Collegeville, PA 19426



[Register Here](#)

Contact us to be a sponsor or vendor for Wellness Days at ympe@youthmovepa.org

Pennsylvania Budget Advocacy

From Ameika Malcolm—

Hello CSP members – this is a very critical time for the budget in Harrisburg – the legislators are working on passing the budget right now, and now is the time to let your legislators know that it is important that they pass the Governor’s budget, to address the critical work force crisis and the long waiting lists for all kinds of services that are happening. Below is a link to a website that can help you to easily contact your legislators on this matter. If you want to advocate for the budget, please reach out to your legislators this week.

[PA LEGISLATORS: Support Adequate & Sustainable Funding for Community Mental Health Services - Action Network](#)



CSP MEETING CALENDER 2022

*Meetings are held every third
Thursday, monthly @
Norristown Public Library from
12: 00-2:30pm
The next meeting will be:*

June	16
July	21
August	18
September	15

*Until further notice, these meet-
ings are via Zoom.*

Montgomery County CSP Executive Committee

2021/2022 Tri-Chairs

Provider Member: Abby Grasso
Person in Recovery: Danny Kuchler
Family Member: Kathy Laws

2021/2022 Sub-Committee Chairs

Social/Media: Penny Johnson
Advocacy: Kim Renninger, Julie Whitmore
Conference: Erin Hewitt, Stacey Volz

2021/2022 Treasurer

Dion Despaigne, CST Specialist



Fiduciary - HopeWorx, Inc.

ABOUT CSP

CSP Principles

- * **Consumer Centered/
Consumer Empowered**
- * **Culturally competent**
- * **Able to Meet Special
Needs**
- * **Community Based with
Natural Supports**
- * **Flexible**
- * **Coordinated**
- * **Accountable**
- * **Strength Based**

**Join our
Mailing list!**

We have an e-mail list as well as a regular mailing, to join:

Send an e-mail to:
pjohnson@hopeworxinc.org
Or send your contact info to the mailing address below

Meetings:

12:00 p.m. to 2:30 p.m.

**3rd Thursday
of each month**

*Norristown
Public Library Community Room
1001 Powell St.
(at Swede St.)*

Kathie Mitchell, Newsletter Editor

**Montgomery County
Community Support Program**

1210 Stanbridge Street,
Suite 600
Norristown, PA 19401
610-270-3685

Website: www.montcopacsp.org

Mission Statement:

Montgomery County's Community Support Program (CSP) brings together individuals that receive mental health services, their family members, providers and the Department of Behavioral Health in an equal partnership to promote recovery and excellence in the delivery of community-based mental health services.

The committee strives to include a balance of people who use services, people who provide services, family members, and interested members of the community at large.

The CSP initiatives continue to grow state, regionally and county wide. As the involvement increases CSP has become a place that feedback can truly be given to the county from individuals that receive services and information can be given that suits the needs and requests of those that attend.

CSP Subcommittees:

- * **Advocacy Subcommittee**—Works on legislative, policy, communication, budget, voter education and other issues related to mental health services in the county, statewide and at the federal level when relevant. At the direction of the CSP Committee, the Advocacy Subcommittee gathers information on issues, plans advocacy events and creates a monthly newsletter to provide information to the stakeholder network as well as the community at large about the work of CSP. The newsletter also provides updates on new and changing mental health services provided in Montgomery County.
- * **Social/Media Subcommittee**—Works on facilitating opportunities for people in the CSP community to be more involved in the Montgomery County community. This includes implementing the Community Connections grants, which provide funding for people to participate in a variety of activities. The committee also implements transportation grants that provide gas cards and SEPTA day passes to CSP community members. The annual CSP Poster Art contest is also organized by this committee.
- * **Conference Sub-committee** – The conference subcommittee will plan and fundraise for the annual Montgomery County CSP Conference.
- * **Newsletter Subcommittee**—The newsletter subcommittee works to provide information to the public about CSP and mental health advocacy. The newsletter subcommittee is committed CSP recovery principles which is person centered and empowered by stakeholders. Our goal is to provide information through various media avenue and to create a quality newsletter that includes but is not limited to, legislative advocacy, events, services, personal recovery stories and creative writing such as poems. Please feel free to submit articles and stories to enrich our newsletter. Send to the editor: kathiemitchell8221@gmail.com.

Organizations who regularly send representatives to CSP:

- Central Behavioral Health
- Community Advocates of Montgomery Co.
- Consumer Satisfaction Team of Montgomery County
- Hedwig House
- Magellan Health Services
- Mental Health Partnerships
- Montgomery Co. Department of Behavioral Health
- Montgomery County Emergency Services (MCES)
- NAMI Montgomery County
- Norristown Vet Center
- Resources for Human Development
- Salisbury Behavioral Health

We invite all peers, family members and providers/professionals to attend.



If you can't attend the monthly CSP meetings but would like to give your feedback on topics we discuss, please email us at amalcolm@hopeworxinc.org