



**COMMUNITY
SUPPORT
SERVICES**

LIFE CHAT

A publication spotlighting CSS clients

January 2024

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Child & teen services



Survey participation



Tips for new year's changes



Art of Recovery date



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Invitation to join RAC



We want to hear from you!

For details about the Recovery Advisory Council (RAC) or to contribute your artwork or recovery story to *Life Chat*, call 330-253-9388 and dial 407 for Michelle Mace or 133 for Tina Lanzy.

CSS begins services for youth

Children, teens to be seen in 'Well-Being Hub'

In the fall of 2022, Community Support Services (CSS) received a \$4 million federal grant to transform CSS into a Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinic (CCBHC). The goal of a CCBHC is to provide coordinated, comprehensive health care to those with mental illness and substance use disorders, regardless of their ability to pay, place of residence or age. This new direction has prompted CSS to start providing services for children and adolescents.

In the past, CSS would refer children and teens to other community partners who provided youth services. Now, CSS is able to provide basic mental health care for youth who are experiencing mild depression or anxiety or who may lack the coping skills to deal with emotional challenges. Services that are available for youth at CSS include psychiatry, counseling and limited case management.

"CSS is excited to begin offering mental health support for children and adolescents as we know there are many young people who are struggling with anxiety and depression," said Kim Meals, CCBHC director and compliance officer for CSS.

CSS has created a special space dedicated to the care of youth clients: The CSS Well-Being Hub for Children and Teens. The space is calm and welcoming, with subdued shades of green, blue and purple.

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The new CSS Well-Being Hub for Children and Teens includes a couch, several chairs and pillows for seating, along with cubbies with games and an area for activities.



The CSS Well-Being Hub for Children and Teens.

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Those who are bringing a child or adolescent to an appointment at CSS are encouraged to park at the 150 Cross St. entrance that faces Cross Street, which is labeled for the Well-Being Hub. This entrance and lobby are not linked to the main entrance, and parking for Well-Being Hub visitors and clients is available just outside the entrance. Child and teen clients are escorted by CSS staff down the hall to the Well-Being Hub.

To begin services for a person younger than 18, the parent or guardian may contact the CSS intake line at 330-996-9130. Typically, services for children and teens will be provided in the late afternoon. Some appointments may be available on Tuesday evenings.

If a child or adolescent is already connected to services at other agencies, the young person is encouraged to remain with that provider to avoid any disruption of services. CSS also works collaboratively with Child Guidance & Family Solutions. If a child who is referred to CSS would benefit from services from Child Guidance, CSS will work together with them to ensure a smooth transition.

Art of Recovery scheduled

This year's Art of Recovery event is set for 5:30 to 8 p.m. March 19 at Akron Art Museum. More than 45 works of art will be up for bids. Viewing will begin online prior to the event; the auction will begin March 15. Visit www.cssbh.org/art-of-recovery-2024 for updates!

**ART OF
RECOVERY**

We want to hear from you!

CSS depends on client feedback to learn what we're doing right and find out where we can improve.

You can make your voice heard by taking a client survey. The surveys are anonymous and provide the opportunity to offer suggestions.

If you are a CSS client, please take a moment to fill out our satisfaction survey at www.surveymonkey.com/r/qrcode2024, or scan the QR code with your phone, and you'll be taken to the website where you can fill out the survey.

We appreciate your feedback!



Small changes, big impact



Did you vow to make some changes in the new year but aren't sure where to start? Sometimes taking small steps can lead to big improvements. Here are some suggestions:

- **Practice gratitude.**
- **Commit to kind self-talk.** Don't be too hard on yourself. Remind yourself you may make mistakes, and that's OK.
- **Seek moments of silence.** Turn off all of life's noise. Try not to get caught up in the past or future. Enjoy the present moment.
- **Prioritize happiness.** Find meaning and joy in the small things. Relax and enjoy life.
- **Be open to asking for help.** Being successful often means relying on others or reaching out when you feel like life is overwhelming. And if you're struggling with your mental health and support from loved ones isn't enough, seeking out professional help is one of the kindest things you can do for yourself.

Source: Mind Springs Foundation

Programs provide help with utility bills, more

Winter can bring more challenges than just cold and snow. Low temperatures bring higher heating bills. If you live in the city of Akron, the new year also brings an increase in water bills. Most Akron residents will be looking at a \$10 to \$12 monthly increase.

Fortunately, a number of area organizations offer programs that can help area residents who are struggling to pay their bills, whether it's utility bills, internet costs, housing, tax preparation or other bills. In some cases, one agency can provide help in more than one area.

Here's a look at some of what's available:



UTILITY BILL ASSISTANCE

- **Community Action Akron Summit** provides several programs to help income-eligible Summit County residents with utility bills, mortgages, tax preparation and other needs. Some programs offer utility bill assistance for renters as well as homeowners. For details, visit www.ca-akron.org. Call **330-436-0261** to schedule an appointment for the Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP).
- **The City of Akron Utility Bill Assistance Program** (Akron Cares 2.0) is an ongoing, monthly assistance program for Akron residents (homeowners and tenants) with a household income at or below 175% of the federal poverty guidelines. Residents eligible for the program will receive a 40% discount on the drinking water portion of their Akron Utility bill. For details, visit <http://tinyurl.com/36fxunh9>.
- The **United Way of Summit and Medina Counties** offers an array of assistance through its helpline. Call 2-1-1 or visit www.211summit.org.
- The **Public Utilities Commission of Ohio** has a list of assistance programs for electric, natural gas, phone and water bills. Find it at <http://tinyurl.com/5y8t3z3u> or visit puco.ohio.gov.
- The **Ohio Department of Development** has a list of energy assistance programs at development.ohio.gov/individual/energy-assistance.

INTERNET COST HELP

The Affordable Connectivity Program is a federal program that can help with internet costs and connected devices for eligible consumers. Program benefits include a service discount up to \$30 per month and a device discount up to \$100 for a laptop, tablet or desktop computer (with a copayment of more than \$10 but less than \$50). Act quick; enrollments end Feb. 7. Details available at www.affordableconnectivity.gov.



TAX-PREPARATION HELP

- **Community Action Akron Summit** promotes and supports free tax preparation service for the underserved. Appointment can be made by calling **234-206-3170**. For more details, visit www.ca-akron.org.
- The **Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA)** program offers free tax preparation for working families and individuals. Schedule an appointment by calling 2-1-1. For more details, visit <http://tinyurl.com/bjytznwc>.
- **AARP Foundation Tax-Aide** offers free tax assistance, with a focus on older adults with low to moderate income. Access to different types of taxpayer assistance varies by location. For more details, use the Tax-Aide site locator at www.aarp.org/money/taxes/aarp_taxaide.





COMMUNITY SUPPORT SERVICES

150 CROSS ST., AKRON, OH 44311

We want your feedback!

Would you like to share your ideas about how CSS can improve? Join the **Recovery Advisory Council (RAC)**!

Clients and clients' family members are invited to become RAC members and share their feedback about CSS' services, identify areas where CSS can improve, help guide changes, contribute to *Life Chat*, and interact with other clients and family members.

The group meets from 10:30 a.m. to noon six times per year at our offices at 150 Cross St., Akron. The next meeting is on Feb. 8.

If you're interested in joining, call 330-996-9141 and ask for Michelle Mace (ext. 407) or Tina Lanzy (ext. 133).

We'd love to have you join!



Mission Statement

Community Support Services: Helping you achieve a healthy mind and body while supporting you to live and work in your community.

Recovery Definition

Recovery is the continuous process of empowering an individual so he or she may live a satisfying and contributing life. It is a shared responsibility among the individual, the treatment staff, family, friends, and the community to:

- Discover or rediscover strengths and abilities
- Pursue personal goals
- Develop a sense of self-identity that allows the person to grow beyond his or her diagnosis

The Recovery Advisory Council is a collaborative effort with clients & family members to continuously improve the satisfaction of services for all Community Support Services clients.

