



# MENTAL HEALTH *Matters*

Canadian Mental Health Association — Victoria County

Volume 7, No 1

May 2006

*The CMHA envisions a society which values human dignity and enhances mental and emotional well-being for all.*

**May 1- 7, Mental Health Week 2006**

## Take control, take care

**Take control of your health, take care of your mind:** that is the slogan for this year's Mental Health Week, tying in with last year's "Mind and Body Fitness".

In last fall's issue, in an editorial piece entitled *Grey Matter and Mental Health*, we considered the interconnectedness, indeed the equivalence, of mind and body. Not so the world around us. These days, the world at large seems to be focused on the body.

I am struck by the fact that there is not a waking hour in our day when we are not bombarded by messages extolling physical fitness and telling us how to do it: "Exercise!" "Eat this!" "Don't eat that!" "Lose weight!" And similar messages about how to get all our ostensibly obese children to do it too.

The message of Mental Health Week 2006 calls on us to recognize that being fit covers not only physical muscle and bodily health but also the "muscle" and health of mind, emotions and spirit. One underlies the other, one feeds the other.

A healthy mind gives us the clarity of thought, the impetus and discipline to maintain a healthy life style. A



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healthy body maintained allows the psyche to grow and flourish. It works both ways.

I recall in the absolute depths of one of my depressions, a therapist I genuinely trusted instructed me to sign up for some exercise classes. Instructed? Blackmailed would be a better word. She said if I didn't, she was not going to treat me. She even connected me with another patient of hers who, she said, needed it worse than I did. I admit, I was not inclined to go, but the other woman wouldn't have gone without me, and, after all, I'm a nice person even when I am depressed. So we went. Twice a week for twelve weeks.

At the end of the program, my therapist asked me, "How did you enjoy the exercise classes?"

"I HATED every minute of it!" I snapped.

Naresh James, Executive Director

## **New office -- Move to Kent Street**

We grew and moved from 31 Peel St. Then we grew again and had to move from 64 Lindsay St. South. While the rest of the community was focused on preparing for last Christmas, the Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA) Victoria County Branch was busily relocating their office to 2 Kent St. W., upstairs. Formerly the home of Community Counselling (which is now located at at Ross Memorial Hospital), this location provides space for the growing CMHA, Victoria County Branch services. The downtown location has been well received by the public.

As the dust from renovations settles, 2 Kent St. W. offers a Board Room -- from which staff can run the many programs that are free to clients and the community -- as well as a resource area, space for the consumer/volunteer-run food bank, and offices for each staff member.

"And did it help?" she asked, mildly.

Realizing that, indeed, the fog was beginning to clear, the world was looking brighter, I growled, "Yes, dammit."

Indeed, it does help. And, again: it works the other way as well. Supported also by therapy and medication, I am back in the swing of life, I find it easier to exercise the discipline and control I need to keep my body in shape.

It is a circle, one feeds the other, mind feeds body, body feeds mind. When that circle is broken, it takes a huge amount of effort to reconnect it, but the effort is well worth it. Not just for me, but for all the people around me, and for all the good I can do when I am not turned exclusively and unhealthily inward, when I have the physical and emotional strength to concentrate on the world around me.



*Káča Henley, Volunteer Editor*



Queried about accessibility of the second floor office, Executive Director Naresh James was reassuring. "We are committed to making our services accessible to everyone." Explaining that individuals' ability to access CMHA services may be restrained for multiple reasons, like physical disability, distance, lack of transportation, debilitating anxiety etc., James explained that agency staff will continue to ensure that, through their outreach initiative, all support services are brought to those who need them, in their own home environment.

Staff are looking forward to a having a different perspective (from the second floor) and invite you to stop in. We are planning an open house on May 4 (see page 18 of this newsletter), but we welcome interested visitors during office hours -- Monday to Friday 8:30 to 4:30 -- to check out our new home. Phone numbers and email contact information remain the same (see page 13 ).

Melanie Jackson, Public Education/FCN Coordinator

## Mark Your Calendar

CMHA-VCB

### Annual General Meeting

5-8 pm, Wednesday, June 21, 2006

Victoria Manor Auditorium

220 Angeline St. S., Lindsay

Program: **The DREAM TEAM**

Securing a permanent home can be one of the many challenges faced by people suffering from a mental illness. The Dream Team has realized the dream of living productive lives through safe, se-

cure, affordable, supportive housing. They now work tirelessly to make it a reality for others. Come and listen as they share their story.

### Double the Fun!

Tuesday, June 6, in Minden

Wednesday, June 7, in Lindsay

(For details, see poster on page 16)

Two dynamic presenters reach out to the community. **Brian Thwait's** is an immensely entertaining "brain trainer". We're proud to bring Brian, who boasts an international client list, to these two venues. Come and learn how "your brain has *everything* to do with *everything* you do."

Roar with laughter at the ways we can make ourselves crazy. **Trisha Hasenclever**, a local gal, will present on "Stress is Funny". Don't miss this winner on the funny side of stress!

The cost of this joint CMHA and HKPR Health Unit event is \$25 for both speakers and lunch. CMHA clients interested in attending are invited to speak to their Community Support Workers about subsidized spots.

Our **Family Member Support Group** seems to grow at every monthly meeting. More and more caregivers are discovering how helpful it is to join others who face the daily challenges of living with someone with a mental illness. If you find your knees buckling under the "burden of caregiving", come laugh and share with us at 6:30-8:30 on the second Tuesday of every month at CMHA office, 2 Kent St. W.

# Who's Who at CMHA-VCB:

Káča Henley, Volunteer Editor

## Tammy Claridge: Board Secretary Treasurer and Teacher

Today, our community-conscious Tammy Claridge combines a number of activities with her business and her family life. In addition to having been elected Treasurer and Secretary of the Board of Directors of CMHA-VCB, she leads a program for caregivers and family members, and volunteers with the Food Source as well.

Tammy has always lived in the area. Born in Oshawa, she came to Lindsay by way of Caesarea, and Bowmanville. “Well, actually, we live in Downeyville,” she corrects herself. She remarks that she had a hard time adjusting to living in the country, from her life in more urban settings. “I still do, sometimes,” she admits wryly. After years working in the metalworking industry, Tammy and her husband run their own business in Lindsay.

A number of members of Tammy's family had serious mental health issues, in particular, her mother was diagnosed with schizophrenia early on. Her mother was and still is a responsible, loving parent, but sometimes the pressures of life's obstacles can be a little overwhelming and hard for her to handle, even with medication. The love her parents have for each other has been the key to their ability to overcome

some of the difficulties surrounding mental illness. So while Tammy grew up aware of the illness, and the stresses and uncertainties that come with it, her youth consisted for the most part of a normal day-to-day life. Tammy and her sister are aware of the stigma that surrounds mental illness and it is one of Tammy's goals now to educate others to reduce that stigma.

Four or five years ago, when one of Tammy's daughters was starting her required forty hours of community work, Tammy decided to support her by volunteering as well, and – partly because of her encounters with the stigma and the puzzlement of mental illness as a child and youth – chose the Lindsay office of CMHA. Today, she has advanced to the executive of the Board of Directors, and, in addition to that volunteer role, she also teaches a course for families and caregivers.

How did she find herself teaching? Tammy relates that after being asked to join the Board, she was invited by Executive Director Naresh James to attend his suicide prevention program. “He is such a great presenter,” she enthuses, “it got me hooked on mental health.”

Her association with Victoria County CMHA brought her the opportunity to attend a



course aimed at the families of people with a mental illness and caregivers, from the National Association for the Mentally Ill (NAMI), a US-based program. She found it informative and quite helpful and was asked to attend a weekend course for teachers of the NAMI course, and then to present the twelve-week, once weekly program to local families. She decided to give it a try. “A try” turned into two years of teaching the course, side by side, she explains, “with a wonderful co-teacher, Benita Kitchen of Fenelon Falls”. Two years of teaching — and learning, she says. And that was just the beginning.

They were asked if they would like to switch to a Canadian program called Strengthening Families Together (SFT), a ten-week course that meets once a week, and indeed, that has become a major one of Tammy’s focuses these days.

The participants in the course are those who are in immediate contact with people with a mental illness: spouses, parents, siblings, or other caregivers. Tammy describes the helplessness of not understanding, not knowing, and the immense relief of learning the how, why and what of their loved one’s mental illness, and the role they can play in his or her life.

The aim of the group is educational, an opportunity to learn about mental illness and how it affects the way people function in their world and the impacts it can have on those who care about them. The program content is laid out, so there is a definite framework for the course, but there is a lot of interactivity, and part of this is the sharing of experiences and the reassuring

discovery that one is not alone in one’s observations, feelings, reactions.

While the program is not a support group or a therapy group, it is a supportive and informative environment, and Tammy says she herself has benefited from it immensely. “You get much more than you give, teaching this course. It has been a huge learning experience,” she says. “I learn from teaching, and as time passes, I understand so much better . . .”

The other benefit from her teaching, and it is no small benefit, is the gratification that comes with helping people see their situation in a different light, to change their point of view to one that is not as scary, one that they can deal with. “Even the best person has difficulties sometimes, and it is so helpful to know you are not alone,” explains Tammy. “Of course,” she concludes, “we all know that knowledge is power.”



**FAMILY CAREGIVER  
NETWORK**

Káča Henley, Volunteer Editor

## A chance to focus

How do the people at CMHA-VCB find out how well their agency is fulfilling its mandate to serve the community and its citizens with mental health issues and concerns? By holding a focus group.

How does this focus group work? All right, I'll paint you a picture: imagine a large basement room, at the front a flip chart, and facing it a number of people waiting expectantly, sitting around four long tables.

Executive Director Naresh James walks up to stand by the flip chart and explain the purpose of gathering staff and clients of the local mental health association. "The purpose of this meeting," he explains, "is to talk about the services we supply, to find out how well we did, and to get ideas and feedback about what we can do differently, better, what services are lacking."

First, each table gets a large sheet of paper, and the task of setting down what the agency does for its clients. The sheets fill up rapidly, and soon one person from each table is called upon to report to the whole group what has been written down.

The list is long, starting with specific programs, such as the social and recreational program (and the dozens of things it comprises, for example sports, picnics, crafts, entertainment, trips etc.), and residential programs (like Harrison House). The list proceeds with exam-

ples of the immense range of help supplied by support workers, such as, for example, assistance with daily living, building a variety skills to prepare them for independent living and socializing, various referrals, physical and emotional support, educational opportunities, housing supports, employment search, transportation, advocacy. And in among them, the list recognizes, on a very specific personal level, the helping hand, the listening ear, the encouragement, the building of self respect, and much much more.

Then, the question is asked: what do people like about the services they receive, and what they would like to see changed.

On the positive side, people start out by praising the staff: "They do a wonderful job," says one person. Another: "I think people forget to give them the thanks they deserve." Yet another: "Every time I go to the office, I get courtesy and respect." They also speak highly of the opportunities they are given to socialize, the skills they learn, the recreational events — including the food.

As to what could be improved, a number of agency-related issues are brought up as well as some broader social ones. People would like staff to have more time to spend with them, more social and recreational opportunities, longer-term supportive housing, separate support groups for men and women. On a broader scale, they suggest that it would be good if they had



someone to speak for them on municipal council, and they also cite a need for better access to transportation and higher rent subsidies.

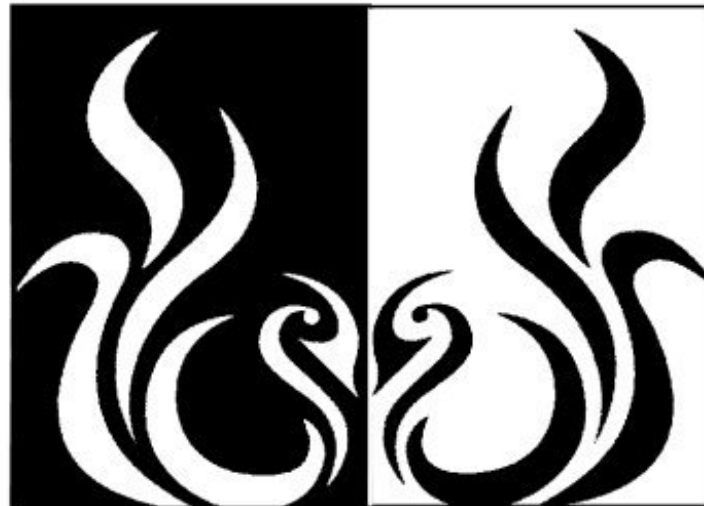
After an hour or so, the director -- pleased and gratified -- indicates that each and every one of the issues brought up will be considered, and thanks everyone for their thoughtful input.

Then, with a broad smile, he invites one and all to partake of several huge pizzas and

drinks. Lunch turns into a friendly social event, mingling staff and clients, chatting and enjoying one another's unofficial company.

And that's what a CMHA-VCB Focus Group looks like.

Asked whether she thinks this was worthwhile, one individual says, knowledgeably, "Well, they certainly listen. I suppose it depends on money, like everything always does." ❏



**Emerging into Light**

Naresh James, Executive Director

## Local Health Integration Networks (LHIN)

The Local Health System Integration Act 2006 passed its third and final reading on March 1st, 2006 and will formally become law after receiving Royal Assent.

Before third reading, we made a submission to the Standing Committee on Social Policy on behalf of our rural community and its community mental health programs. In summary, we asked the government for a better definition of “integration”, “local” and “Public Interest” and we recommended that appropriate measures be developed to protect rural community mental health programs. We also recommended that LHINs engage in extensive consultation with the public, consumers of mental health services and their families, before making any decisions / orders.

As a result of submissions made by a large number of people and organizations, a number of amendments have been made to improve the Local Health System Integration Act. Some of the more notable changes to the legislation include:

The government will be committed to the promotion and delivery of mental health services by non-profit organizations to the principles of the “Canada Health Act.”

LHINs will consult the public health service providers, employees of the health system, patients and organizations dealing with aborigi-

nals, First Nations and French language health issues.

With some exceptions, LHIN meetings will be open to the public. The Minister of Health and all the LHINs will post on their websites any information they are obligated to make public, including accountability agreements between the Minister and the LHIN, and between the LHIN and service providers. This is in addition to the Minister and LHINs making the information available at their offices.

Under the Act, the LHIN or the Minister will provide at least 30 days’ notice of the intention to issue a decision or order. This will allow any person or organizations to make their submissions with respect to the proposed decision / order to integrate, merge or cease to exist. After receiving Royal Assent, the Local Health System Integration Act, 2006, will give the 14 LHINs in the province the power to plan, integrate and fund local health services - including hospitals, Community Care Access Centres, Community Health Centres as well as home care, long term care, mental health, addiction and community support services for the their specific geographic area.

According to the Health and Long Term Care Minister, George Smitherman, “LHIN will break down the barriers faced by patients trying to find the health care services they need, because those services will be better coordinated.” The initiative is part of the McGuinty government’s plan to build a health care system that delivers on three priorities - keeping Ontarians healthy, reducing wait times and providing better access to doctors and nurses.



## New programs can be a life saver

As a result of the Jonathan Yeo Inquest in the early 1990s, it became clear that Jonathan had slipped through the cracks in service delivery between the Health and Justice systems, with resulting tragic events including murder, and his ultimate suicide.

The Ministry of Health and Long Term Care has taken the lead role in helping people with mental illness stay out of the criminal justice and correctional system by investing in community mental health services. Here, individuals with mental illness and addictions could receive the treatment and community-based supports such as housing, voluntary trusteeship, life skills education, emotional supports and treatment.

Having a mental illness is not a crime, but a shortage of the sort of community-based supports provided by CMHA has resulted in individuals committing offences, in many cases, non-violent ones. For too long people with mental illness and addictions have had no option other than incarceration. However, with the inception of the Court Support and Diversion Program in our community, coupled with supported housing and crisis support services, many individuals in the City of Kawartha Lakes are able to live a meaningful life in the community.


### **The Court Diversion Program can:**

- Provide assistance for individuals with mental illness or symptoms of mental illness who are in conflict with the law.
- Facilitate a diversion plan as a suitable alternative to proceeding within the criminal justice system.

- Work collaboratively with community partners including court officials, police, Crown Attorney, legal counsel, mental health agencies, social services and other professionals.
- Ensure appropriate mental health supports and follow-up as needed.

### **Intensive Case Management (for mentally ill offenders) can:**

- Provide intensive case management support services to people with mental illness who are also in conflict with the law
- Ensure appropriate linkages with other mental health services as well as criminal justice, corrections, social services, in order to improve service coordination and support.
- Provide supportive outreach and client identification, comprehensive individualized assessment and planning
- Provide assistance with accessing and maintenance of psychiatric services, systemic advocacy and coordination, to provide support to people to manage crises.

These are the newest programs offered at CMHA, Victoria County Branch, beginning in the summer of 2005. Both programs have been very well received and are already oversubscribed with referrals. For more information regarding the above programs please contact Cinnamon Tousignant at 328-2704 ext. 35. 

**Consumer's Corner:****A Good Day**

When I woke up this morning, I thought, I am going to stay in bed all day because there is nothing to do all day. Then nature said you had better get up now or your bed will be really wet. So up I got. Then I looked out the window. What a mistake that was because old man winter was still here. So I put on the coffee pot and got my pills ready to take.

While I was drinking my coffee, I looked in the mirror, and the person looking back at me had the worst hair day I have ever seen. I guess that means I need a shower and wash my hair before the mice find it and think it's their nest.

After my shower I noticed my dirty clothes were piling up in the basket, so I'd better get some laundry done. Wow, when I took the dirty clothes out of the bedroom it made it look a lot bigger and brighter.

Now for that sink full of dishes I've been promising myself to do. It was kind of fun doing my dishes and playing with the bubbles in the sink. Now my kitchen looks bigger. Is it my apartment? It looks great.

When I sat on the couch to watch a bit of TV, I noticed my coffee table had a lot of junk on it, so before I knew it I had cleaned it off too. Now that had made my rug look like it had crumbs all over it. So out came the vacuum cleaner. I had to hurry as my favourite program was coming on in 10 minutes. After I finished with the vacuum and put it away, I had just enough time to pour myself another cup of coffee and watch my show. After the show was over, I started to feel hungry so I remembered that I had been shopping and picked up some soup on sale. I only buy things that are on sale, as it allows me to buy more groceries on my monthly allowance.

After lunch I felt a bit sluggish, so I looked out the window and saw that it was snowing. Walking in the snow is peaceful and quiet. On went the hat, coat, boots and mitts, making sure that there were tissues and keys in my pocket.

It is such a beautiful day as the sun is trying to come out. Maybe today I may walk west for a change. After fifteen minutes walking west, turn around to return home. A thirty minute walk will do for today. I said hi to several people on my walk, and they were happy to say hi back.

When opening my apartment door, I couldn't believe my eyes, was I in the right apartment? It looked so clean and tidy. Being a bit tired after my walk, a nap seemed to be a good idea. After dinner I'll watch a bit of TV, then call it a night.

Today was fun, I think I will do the same tomorrow.

*by chatterbox*

## Taking Care

I have been asked to write about taking care of yourself. The reason is that I work on ways to improve myself daily. Sometimes there can be a lot all at once, but keeping track of things that need to be done without delay let me worry less and move on with the next thing I need to do.


There are a lot of methods I find helpful in living a life that is not as uncomfortable or difficult. These are some things that work for me.

To start, I have found that thinking positive about things no matter if it is a good day or bad, helps to enjoy the moments I have. Even on the days like cold winters, rain, and cloudy grey days that sometimes keep me inside, it helps to remember that another good memory is around the corner.

Another thing I find helpful is eating healthy food and taking a multivitamin daily. I find that finances, (money), can be a struggle. One way to stay out of debt is to pay all bills first. Then, to stretch the shopping budget, read the newspapers to look for sales and make a list of what is important. If it is possible, try to buy

things that are needed regularly in multi-packs and bulk. It can also cost a lot less to cook your own food. It is much cheaper than prepared food, and also tastes better. Fast food and take-out costs in taxes and possibly deliveries that add up quickly. Planning ahead how much is needed until the next shopping budget arrives helps decide what can be bought while not going into debt. Watching a budget this way there is more food, and it is better for your health. After a while some treats become affordable.

While working on eating better, remember to exercise. Once a daily routine gets easier, going for a daily walk can help build confidence and give time to think. If it is difficult to do, it may help to decide on a time, have a map to plan the streets and parks that are in the area. It may also help to decide on a length of time (even if it is not long). If you're a pet person, that can help with a reason to go for a walk. There are a lot of people to talk to that have the same interests.

Another method of building self confidence is bathing / showering, (every day if possible, as difficult as it might be at times). Brush teeth, clean clothes, living space, and any other things to feel positive. 

## Consumer's Corner (continued):

The last (and definitely not least), thing you may like to do is hobbies, reading, or consider taking a course that you're interested in. Some are sponsored by the government. The best way to find out how to go about it is to ask for advice from someone you know, or look in the phone book.

In closing, I find that being active and positive, asking questions about new things, helps to discover ways to keep

healthy. I hope this is helpful, even if it's only a small bit. There are a lot of television programs that cover ways to take care of yourself. Be sure to always talk to a doctor before making any changes to be sure it is safe. This also includes suggestions I have made in this article.

Most people return a smile, as long as you remember to keep taking care of yourself, and keep smiling.

*Dan C.*

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## Mental Illness

Mental illness is not an easy thing to be diagnosed with it is also not an easy thing to admit to having. Unless you can admit to having a mental problem to yourself you can get all sorts of counselling and it is not going to do you a bit of good.

I'm not a perfect angel I've been there and done most of what other people have drug alcoholism and mental and physical abuse. The mental abuse part I took for quite sometime before I realized that there was help out there for me or that I didn't have to put up with it

afterwards I still didn't go for counselling unfortunate for me as I then turned to a lot of other things not so healthy. I was miss know-it-all and didn't need this help: wrong after five marriages and a huge amount of lows in my life and a very good friend I finally got the help that I needed so badly.

If anyone out in this world of to-day thinks that they have a mental disorder I'd advise you to seek the help you need it will do you a world of good it has changed my life around completely and you would be surprised at what you find out about yourself.

*Frances G. A.*


Naresh James, Executive Director

## 2006 Provincial Budget

The local Branch of the Canadian Mental Health Association is pleased with the Provincial Budget in the sense that the budget continues to commit funding to improve the lives of people with mental illness and addiction. We are encouraged by the Government's commitment to transforming and improving the mental health system in Ontario. The budget follows through on the government's long-needed earlier commitment to improve the community mental health and addictions programs to ensure that services and supports are easily accessible across the province. The Liberal Government is continuing its progress toward correcting years of underfunding.

People with disabilities have long identified a problem with the low rate of Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP). Responding to this need, the government has also committed to an increase in basic needs and shelter allowance. The increase may not be as much as we may have anticipated, however, we hope that this new increase sets the stage for further ODSP increases.

Feedback from our consumers, families, friends, community partners and our program statistics confirm that when the services like those provided by the Canadian Mental Health Association are available, people experience a lower incidence of crisis, hospitalization and incarceration. With new investments, we believe

that more and more people with mental health and addiction issues will be able to find appropriate and timely help in maintaining their health and well being. 

### MENTAL HEALTH *Matters*

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## Voluntary Financial Planning and Monitoring Program

This program works to establish a formal voluntary financial planning assistance agreement with consumers. The agreement is voluntary in relation to participation and is based on the principles of collaboration, self-determination, and client-centered rehabilitation.

The program works collaboratively with the client and with the local income support office and provides advocacy with creditors. Financial assistance and management goals are established with an emphasis on developing independent financial management skills.

### A client in the program writes:

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*I have been participating in the Voluntary Financial Planning and Monitoring Program with CMHA for several years.*

*When I first entered the program, I was behind in my utilities and never seemed to have enough money to buy groceries. Now that I have the assistance to prepare a monthly budget, I always know that I will have a grocery cheque every week, as well as a little bit of spending money. I sometimes look at my bank account and see that I have lots of money, sometimes in excess of \$500.00. Although I know that this money has been put aside to pay for water, hydro, cable and bell Canada, if I did not have the control of the financial planning program in place, I would spend this money and then not be able to pay for utility bills when they came in. I sleep much better at night knowing that I will always be able to pay my bills.*

*I believe that I have gained a significant amount of confidence in myself while participating in this program.*

*I am writing this letter to let you know how important this program has been to me. I am hoping that the skills I learn through this program will be reflected in how my children will manage their funds when they are independent.*

*Name withheld by request*

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## “Friends in Motion” Celebrate Christmas 2005

Last year’s culmination of our Canadian Mental Health Association’s Social and Recreational Program -- which goes by the apt name of “Friends in Motion”, and is run primarily by Dan Cooper and Janice Cooper -- was also a high point of the Christmas season. It was their much anticipated Christmas Dinner Party for clients last December 19.

At the festively decorated Knights of Columbus Hall, it was agency staff who joined forces to help serve the holiday meal to everyone.

To the delight of all, the Executive Director took on the role of Santa Claus.



**Community Support Workers Dan Cooper and Brandon Riopka, part of the staff contingent that waited on the guests at the Christmas feast.**



**Executive Director Naresh James became the jolly old elf himself, though it must be noted with a smile that the disguise fooled no one at all.**

## Brain Booster/Stress Buster Workplace Wellness Workshop

Laugh and learn with a dynamic duo... for the health of it!

### Train Your Brain with Brian Thwait's

Brian is an award-winning educator and acclaimed "brain trainer" who offers ideas on enhancing learning potential and trying new approaches to cope with life



### Stress is Funny with Tricia Hasenclever

Tricia is a renowned speaker, humourist, and author who uses a lighter approach to teach ways to relieve daily stress

## Join Us!

### Minden

Tuesday June 6

8:30 am to 3 pm

Haliburton Highlands Health  
Services (Main Auditorium)  
6 McPherson Street

### Lindsay

Wednesday June 7

8:30 am to 3 pm

Lindsay Inn  
354 Lindsay Street South

**Cost: \$25 per person (lunch included)**

Plus doorprizes and refreshments

**Register today!**

Call 324-3569, ext 231 or toll-free at 1-866-888-4577

E-mail [dwilson@lindsay.hkpr.on.ca](mailto:dwilson@lindsay.hkpr.on.ca)

(Registration deadline is May 26, 2006)

Presented by:



**Health for Life**  
Promoting mental health

and




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## Reports from CMHA-Ontario

# New provincial funding for people with mental health issues and developmental disabilities

The Ontario Government announced on March 2, 2006, that they will create 90 new specialized residential spaces over two years for people living in the community and who have a dual diagnosis of developmental disability and a mental health issue or challenging behaviour.


The new funding is part of a \$41 million dollar plan to support community based services for adults with developmental disabilities who require specialized care. This is the latest announcement from the Ontario Government on their plan to transform the developmental services sector. According to the press release from the Government, some people with developmental disabilities often need extra support to help them cope with eating disorders, psychiatric illness or behaviour that leads them to hurt themselves or others.

The other elements of the recently announced funding include the development of four new Community Networks of Specialized Care, for southern, central, eastern and northern Ontario. These are teams of professionals, such as social workers, nurses and psychologists, who will work in partnership with other services in their region, including community agencies, hospitals, police and mental health units. 

## Urge province to increase ODSP and welfare rates -- CMHA Ottawa

Prior to the budget announcement in March, CMHA, Ottawa Branch developed a postcard for people to sign and mail to Premier McGuinty, calling for increases in social assistance rates for people with disabilities and children.

The postcard urged the Ontario Government in their upcoming 2006 budget to significantly increase social assistance rates, commit to ongoing cost-of-living increases and end the practice of clawing back federal child benefits. It was developed by the Financial Assistance Committee of CMHA, Ottawa.

The branch encouraged Ontarians to send the card in time for it to reach Government before the budget finalizes its announcement on March 23, 2006. The postcard was available in French and English from the CMHA, Ottawa website [www.cmhaottawa.ca](http://www.cmhaottawa.ca). 

## The Canadian Mental Health Association Victoria County Branch

Invites you to a celebration

# OPEN HOUSE

Date: Thursday May 4, 2006

Time: 10 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Location: 2 Kent St. W. Upstairs

(Light refreshments will be served)

- √ Tour our new office space.
- √ Cast a vote for your favorite entry from a selection of poster presentations by clients, volunteers and staff.

### **Be present at 1:00 p.m. for the day's highlight...**

- √ Short address about the CMHA, 'ribbon-cutting' and group photo will all take place at our new front door.

**All Welcome!**