



NACS NEWS

A Tradition
of Caring!

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Native American Community Services of Erie & Niagara Counties, Inc.

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Stress Awareness!

submitted by Star Wheeler, Director of Health & Wellness

What is stress?

We are all familiar with the word "stress." It's synonymous with change. Anything that causes a change in your life can cause stress, regardless of whether it is a positive or negative change. Getting a promotion or being terminated can both cause stress. If it is a change in your life, it is stress as far as your body is concerned. However, stress can help or hinder us depending on how we react to it. Positive stress can help propel us into action. Negative stress can result in health problems, such as high blood pressure, heart disease, and chronic migraines.

Symptoms of stress

According to the American Academy of Family Physicians, stress can cause health problems or make problems worse if you don't learn appropriate and healthy ways to deal with it. Talk with a qualified health professional if you have any of the symptoms below. It's important to first make sure that your symptoms aren't caused by other health problems:

- ▶ Anxiety

- ▶ Back pain
- ▶ Constipation or diarrhea
- ▶ Depression
- ▶ Fatigue
- ▶ Headaches
- ▶ High blood pressure
- ▶ Insomnia
- ▶ Problems with relationships
- ▶ Shortness of breath
- ▶ Stiff neck
- ▶ Upset stomach
- ▶ Weight gain or loss

Stress reducers

According to the American Academy of Family Physicians, you first need to recognize when you're feeling stressed. Early warning signs of stress include tension in your shoulders and neck or clenching your hands into fists.

The next step is to choose a way to deal with your stress. One way is to avoid the event or thing that leads to your stress - but often this is not possible. A second way is to change how you react to stress. This is often the better way.

Other suggestions for reducing stress include avoiding

caffeine, which can increase heart rate, anxiety, and adrenaline rush; trying cooperation instead of confrontation when frustrated with someone, scheduling recreation, which is essential for good physical and mental health; taking a hot bath and allowing the heat to reduce muscle tension.

Coping skills

There are different kinds of coping skills, some good and some bad. Constructive coping mechanisms help us. They allow us to use stress toward something productive. Examples include exercise, reading, relaxing, cooking, playing, outdoor activities, listening to music, and not worrying about things we can't control, such as the weather. Destructive coping mechanisms hinder us. Not only are they negative health habits, but also they usually make us feel bad afterwards, and that makes us more susceptible to stress. Examples include smoking, drinking, violence, and eating poorly.



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If you are planning on moving or changing your address, please contact NACS so we may update our mailing list. Call (716) 874-2797, ext. 378 or send an email to: gghosen@nacswny.org



May is Mental Health Awareness Month

*submitted by Star Wheeler, Director of
Health & Wellness*

What is Wellness?

Wellness is defined as “an active process of becoming aware of and making choices towards a more successful existence.” Because living a “successful existence” means something different to each individual, wellness can be many things, but it generally includes the pursuit of health, defined as “a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity” and working towards achieving one’s full potential.

Your pathway to wellness can be:

- Good health
- Saving more money
- Healthy relationships
- Being good to yourself
- Showing gratitude
- Keeping good friends close
- Taking care of your community
- Eating one less cookie
- Looking for a new job
- Learning how to let go
- Walking instead of driving
- Playing with your pet
- A day at the spa
- Eating fresh fruit from your own garden
- Mastering a difficult yoga pose

Did you know?

- Connecting with others can help you to enjoy the times when you are alone.
- Staying positive can improve

your mood and your health.

- If you quit smoking now, in 20 minutes your heart rate drops, and in 12 hours the carbon monoxide (a gas that can be toxic) in your blood drops to normal.
- Exercising in “spurts” can be just as effective as continuous exercise.
- Helping others may help you experience less depression.
- Drinking beverages with caffeine should be stopped 6-8 hours before bed to ensure a more restful sleep.
- Creating joy and satisfaction can be easy with little things such as making a gourmet meal while listening to your favorite music, treating yourself to a massage, or even taking a few moments to admire nature.
- What you drink is just as important as what you eat.
- Spirituality can give you a sense of purpose and meaning.
- Writing down your problems can help shift your thinking about the issue and ultimately improve your mood.
- It is essential to choose a provider who understands the importance of the both of you working collaboratively regarding your health care.
- Stress management techniques are important because chronic (long-lasting) stress can change your brain and the way you function.

4 Simple Steps to Wellness

Taking good care of your body and mind can make a difference in how well you do in your day-to-day life and how well you manage change. Exercising, eating right, getting enough rest and relaxing will not

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only set you on the right path to wellness, but also help you achieve and enjoy daily activities more and improve how you deal with life's challenges. Caring for yourself may take a little extra time, but you will feel better and more successful. Here's what you need and why it helps:

A healthy diet:

- ★ Improves your ability to learn.
- ★ Means eating a nutritious breakfast everyday. Skipping meals leads to a lack of energy.
- ★ Includes eating something nutritious every time you have a meal. Try substituting processed foods with a salad or swapping something fried for a piece of fruit.
- ★ Requires limiting your alcohol intake.
- ★ Avoids excessive amounts of caffeine. Caffeine dehydrates you. Drink at least 8 glasses of water a day to prevent dehydration.

Plenty of rest:

- ★ Means getting at least 7-9 hours of sleep. This is essential and will make you more attentive and active. Inadequate sleep can lead to mood changes and lowered resistance to illness.
- ★ Provides the physical and psychological resources to cope with everyday life. Without it, you have to work harder to get daily tasks done and you have less energy.
- ★ Includes cutting back on alcohol consumption because it can disturb your sleep. Though you might fall asleep faster, your body will not be as rested.

Relaxation:

- ★ Means taking time each day to unwind, especially before sleeping. Listen to music, read or do whatever you enjoy. Alcohol or drugs are not the way to go.

- ★ Offers a distraction from problems, a sense of competence and many other benefits.
- ★ Means getting a good laugh. Laughing decreases pain, may help your heart and lungs, promotes muscle relaxation and can reduce anxiety.

Regular exercise:

- ★ Elevates mood, reduces stress, increases energy level, improves appearance, and stimulates the release of endorphins and serotonin, which makes you happier.
- ★ Increases alertness and creativity.
- ★ Improves your overall mental and physical well-being. Even taking a 15-minute walk, 3 times a week, can help.
- ★ Keeps you active and also creates more opportunities to meet new friends!
- ★ Decreases stress. On days when you are feeling overwhelmed, hit the gym or do another type of exercise.

Potter's Hand, Helping Those in Need

The Potter's Hand organization's mission is to "Meet the needs of neighbors in our community." Potters Hand is currently accepting household donations. The Potter's Hand donation center is a vehicle to spread the gospel by providing donations of appliances and furniture to those in desperate need.

The donation center accepts

donations of furniture and appliances (small or large) in good condition. Good condition means they could be turned over to someone in need right away without any repairs needed. The donation center cannot accept cribs, TVs or car seats. Some needs are greater than others, such as beds, refrigerators, and washer/dryers.



Kathy Prior of Potter's Hand

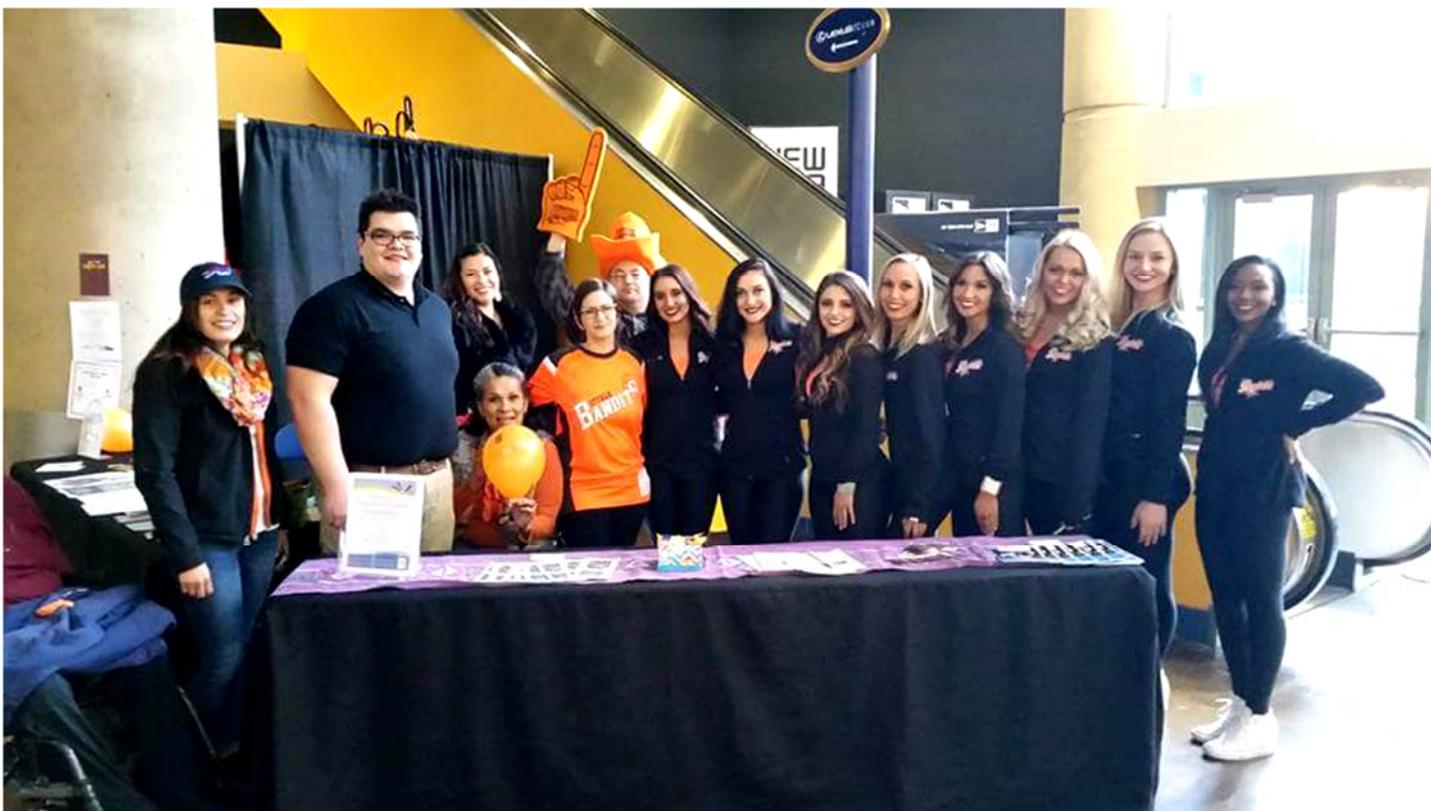
Buffalo Bandits - Native American Night

On Friday, March 3rd 2017, the Buffalo Bandits and Key Bank Center, celebrated Native American Night in Bandit Land. A portion of the proceeds will benefit programs at Native American Community Services of Erie and Niagara Counties (NACS). The Bandits defeated the Rochester Knighthawks 13-9!

This ongoing partnership with NACS, honoring the Haudenosaunee traditions, has helped bring increased programs to Western New York. During the half time period those in attendance, were treated to a Haudenosaunee dance. This helps create awareness in our local community, to Native culture and perspectives. "NACS is proud of our partnership with the Bandits and we appreciate the respect they've shown the Native community throughout the years," said NACS Executive Director Michael Martin (Onondaga Six Nations).

In addition to the festivities, a special recognition given to Eugene Porter (Mohawk Six Nations), for his service, as a Native American Veteran and a \$1,000 scholarship was awarded to Nicole Printup (Tuscarora Nation).

A great time indeed! In furthering NACS programs, we are currently seeking Foster Parents, of any nationality, single or married, over the age of 21. Please call Anna Miller at (716) 874-2797, ext. 303 for more information.



Pictured: NACS Family Services and Health & Wellness Staff with Bandit Cheerleaders



submitted by Corey Yamamura, NACS TP

Did you know that the month of April is Autism Awareness Month? Throughout the month of April, awareness is raised to help understand what Autism is about. Starting on April 2nd, World Autism Awareness Day throughout the world, many will “Light it up Blue”, by showing support for Autism with displaying blue lights at night.

So what exactly is Autism? Autism is a disorder that affects development and/or social skills. No two people are alike, nor are those with Autism. This is why it is referred to as Autism Spectrum Disorder. In the United States, over 3 million adults are diagnosed with Autism. It is believed to be 1 in every 68 children are affected and 1 in every 42 boys. These numbers continue to grow.

Knowing the signs and making yourself aware, helps provide insight and understanding to the

disorder. The major signs that you can be aware of are:

- 1) Struggling – Socially expected norms are not normal.
- 2) Hypersensitivity – Varying levels of texture or light can create increased intolerance.
- 3) Hyposensitivity – Opposite of above.
- 4) Repetition – Certain movements or order of tasks.
- 5) Object Attachment – Particular toys or objects.
- 6) Communication – Initiating conversations and/or eye contact can be difficult.
- 7) Interaction – Preference is given to isolation due to communication difficulties.
- 8) Fascinations – May have unusual interest’s or hobbies, which can include heightened knowledge of those interests.
- 9) Preservation – Can become fixated on a particular word or fact. Preference to routine and changes can create anxiety.
- 10) Developmental Delays – Not hitting age appropriate milestones.

These are just a few of the signs. Early detection and specifically designed treatment can create the best environment for the person with Autism.



Meet Our Newest NACS Team Member

Hello, my name is **Jill Morris** and I am the Niagara Falls Seasons Program Specialist. Seasons is a financial literacy and culture program that is new to NACS. We are planning a different craft and financial lesson for each five week module so look for Season’s fliers on the upcoming module! From 2012-2015 I was involved with the Gathering at the Heart of Niagara Native American Event at Goat Island. I enjoyed putting together a Smoke Dance Competition every year.

I also have over ten years’ experience in the residential mortgage field. I know what applying for a mortgage entails and what mortgage companies look for with your credit. Additionally, I have worked as a first club administrator and I helped low income and 1st time home owners apply for grants to be applied towards their down payments and closing costs. I am looking forward to working with the community through Seasons! If you have any questions about Seasons or want to sign up feel free to reach out to me at jmorris@nacswny.org

Infant Immunization

submitted by Erie County Dept. of Health

ONE OF THE BEST WAYS TO PROTECT YOUR CHILDREN IS TO MAKE SURE THEY HAVE ALL THEIR VACCINATIONS ACCORDING TO THE ACIP RECOMMENDED SCHEDULE.

Listed here by the CDC are five important reasons to vaccinate your child.

Immunizations can save your child's life. Because of advances in medical science, your child can be protected against more diseases than ever before. Some diseases that once injured or killed thousands of children are no longer common in the U.S. – primarily due to safe and effective vaccines. Polio, one example, was once America's most feared disease, causing death and paralysis across the country, but thanks to vaccination the United States has been polio-free since 1979.

Vaccination is very safe and effective. Vaccines are only given to children after careful review by scientists, doctors, and healthcare professionals. Vaccine side effects are almost always mild such as redness or swelling at the site of the shot, but this is minimal compared to the pain, discomfort, and risk of injury and death from the diseases these vaccines prevent. Serious side effects following vaccination, such as severe allergic reaction, are very rare.

Immunization protects others you care about. Children in the U.S. still get vaccine-

preventable diseases. In fact, we have seen resurgences of measles and whooping cough (pertussis) over the past few years. While some babies are too young to be protected by vaccination, others may not be able to receive certain vaccinations due to severe allergies, weakened immune systems from conditions like leukemia, or other reasons. To help keep them safe, it is important that you and your children who are able to get vaccinated are fully immunized. This not only protects your family, but also helps prevent the spread of these diseases to your friends and loved ones.

Immunizations can save your family time and money. A child with a vaccine-preventable disease can be denied attendance at schools or daycare facilities. Some vaccine-preventable diseases can result in prolonged disabilities and can take a financial toll because of lost time at work, medical bills or long-term disability care. In contrast, getting vaccinated against these diseases is a good investment and usually covered by insurance.

Immunization protects future generations. Vaccines

have reduced and, in some cases, eliminated many diseases that killed or severely disabled people just a few generations ago. For example, your children don't have to get smallpox shots anymore because the disease no longer exists anywhere in the world. By vaccinating children against rubella (German measles), we have dramatically reduced the risk that pregnant women will pass this virus on to their fetus or newborn, and birth defects associated with that virus are seen in only rare cases in the United States. If we continue vaccinating now, and vaccinating completely, parents in the future may be able to trust that some diseases of today will no longer be around to harm their children in the future.

For more information about the importance of infant immunization, visit CDC's [vaccine website for parents](#)

Courtesy of: Erie County Dept. of Health, Immunization Action Plan



Just Tell One, Media Tool-Kit

submitted by Star Wheeler, Director of Health & Wellness

MEDIA TOOLKIT



HOW MEDIA CAN SUPPORT MENTAL HEALTH AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE AWARENESS. As a member of the media, you have an important role in helping educate the public about issues relating to mental health and substance abuse.

Mental health is just that—health. So, a person with a mental illness should be depicted no differently than someone with a physical disease such as cancer, diabetes, or even the common cold. Alcohol and drug addictions are complex diseases that often require both medical treatment and behavioral therapy.

WHAT YOU CAN DO. As you cover events or write stories for your publication, station, or organization, please keep in mind the following facts.

- Mental illness **can happen to anyone.**
- You probably **know someone with a mental illness** and don't even realize it.
- Mental illnesses are surprisingly common; they affect **almost every family in America.**
- About **1 in 4 adult/adolescent Americans** are living with a diagnosable mental health condition.
- If someone has a mental illness, that **doesn't mean he or she is incompetent, lazy, unpredictable, a criminal, or violent.**
- In fact, individuals with mental health challenges are **12 times more likely to be victims of crime** rather than perpetrators.
- 50% of all mental illness appears **before age 14** and 75% before age 24.
- 80% of youth with severe depression **receive no or insufficient treatment.**
- Despite effective treatments, there are **long delays – sometimes decades** – between the first onset of symptoms and when people seek and receive treatment.

WHY IT'S IMPORTANT. Far too frequently, news stories, TV shows, movies, and other media cast mental illness in a negative light—spreading damaging stereotypes and outdated misconceptions in the process. The result is stigma and discrimination against those dealing with mental health issues and substance abuse, which prevents individuals from getting the support they need. Even though virtually all mental health conditions are treatable, only 40% of people struggling with these issues seek professional assistance.

We are incarcerating young people with mental illnesses, some as young as 8 years old, rather than identifying their conditions early and intervening with appropriate treatment.

At least half of the children and youth in the child welfare system have mental health problems; 85% of these children receive no services.

More than 50% of students with untreated emotional behavioral disorders drop out of high school; of those who do remain in school, only 42% graduate with a high school diploma.

Seasons Basket Weaving



CANDLE BASKET

CORN-WASHING
BASKET

SWEET GRASS
BOOKMARK

BANKING BASICS



Erie

May 19, 2017
1005 Grant St.
Every Friday
5:30-8:30
for five weeks

Niagara Falls

May 17, 2017
1522 Main St.
Every Wednesday
5:30-8:30
for five weeks

□ To register contact: □

Zoe Merritt
716-874-2797 *315

or
Jill Morris
716-874-4460

Funded by the Department of Health and
Human Services-Administration
for Native Americans



"The Front Door" Information Session

submitted by Christopher Covey, Medicaid Services Coordinator

NACS is having the first **Front Door** information session on June 22nd from 6:00 to 8:00 pm. This is very exciting to our Medicaid Service Department in **Family Services** and gives us a chance to grow. This is the first step in which anyone with a disability or family members of people with a disability can come and find out how to access the services they need and for any additional supports they can get from the Office of People with Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD). Some of these services include: respite, employment and day habilitation, community habilitation, housing supports, and family support services. If you know anybody who needs services, please feel free to stop by. In order to register please call Francine Benzel, (716) 874-2797, ext. 301 or by email:

Fbenzel@nacswny.org

Native American Community Services

"All Our Relations" Project



Haudenosaunee Culture: Women's and Men's Roles

Norma General
Cayuga, Wolf Clan
Traditional Women's Role

Thursday May 11, 2017
6-8 p.m.
1005 Grant St.
Buffalo, New York

Monday May 15, 2017
6-8 p.m.
1522 Main St.
Niagara Falls, New York

Colin Martin
Mohawk, Turtle Clan
Traditional Men's Role

Monday June 12, 2017
6-8 p.m.
1522 Main St.
Niagara Falls, New York

Thursday June 15, 2017
6-8 p.m.
1005 Grant St.
Buffalo, New York



Brought to you by the "All Our Relations" Project of Native American Community Services, funded by the W. K. Kellogg Foundation, as well as businesses, private foundations, and caring individuals like you!

