



Celebrating Recovery September 2022



Dear friends:

I was recently at my favorite coffee shop (shout out to Giv Coffee in Canton!) with my daughter Abigail, and I was in search of my new favorite beverage; a matcha tea lemonade. In that pursuit, I learned about the concept of a 'bliss point' from Jeff; the shop's owner. He explained that in the food industry, manufacturers identify the combination of sugar, fat and salt in processed foods that make us crave more. Companies optimize revenue by engineering products that optimize consumption. Jeff wanted to make me that matcha lemonade, but he wanted to do it with pure ingredients; carefully brewed tea, freshly squeezed lemons and a bit of honey. This is more expensive and time consuming and tastes different from a similarly named beverage at, say, Starbucks. I will admit, my friends, that I have one heck of a sweet tooth and I am very susceptible to the high bliss point of processed foods. Together with the fast pace with which I too often operate, I can defer to the quick option...in fact, I've been known to rationalize a bag of peanut M & M's as a meal option. I always feel a little sick after giving over to that urge, however.

I am very blessed to have extraordinary friends and family members from whom I've learned some of life's most valuable lessons. I'd like to share one with you this month. One of my very dearest friends, Caroline, has a remarkable practice of pausing during experiences; a day at the ocean, a deep conversation, a walk, a hearty laugh, and saying; "isn't this wonderful?! Aren't we so blessed?!" She has done this for as long as I've known her and every single time it is a beautiful gift. She slows us down and expresses deep gratitude for the experience of the moment. In doing so, she provides a bliss point that is based on gratitude rather than consumption, on what is, rather than what isn't and should be. There is a sense of centered peace present in Caroline; you get the sense that when you're with her; it's precisely where she wants to be...she also has an admirable, albeit frustrating, lack of a sweet tooth.

The pull towards frenzied consumption of any number of products is something we can all relate to, especially when we're experiencing a sense of lack or discomfort. When so many aspects of our world are designed to keep us in that state and communicate that only through more and more consumption will we find relief, we can easily get caught up. Taking time to check in on our bodies, find gratitude in the small and meaningful experiences and deep connections are where I aim to find my bliss (although admittedly I remain drawn to a sweet treat!) By the way, Giv Coffee makes the very best matcha tea lemonade; the steps and time involved in getting it just right are a sweet reminder of Caroline's life lesson.

All my best,
Maria Coutant Skinner, LCSW, President & CEO

National Recovery Month

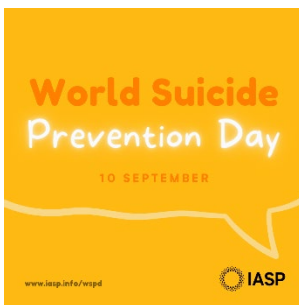
Each year, Recovery Month emphasizes that "Recovery is for Everyone: Every Person, Every Family, Every Community" to shift our focus to community, we celebrate our diversity and seek to develop deeper understanding, caring, and connection that nurtures recovery.

This September we celebrate the millions of people who have found, are finding, and have yet to find this path to hope, health, and personal growth. As part of the celebration McCall attended the CCAR Recovery Walk in Hartford. The event was attended by government officials, various speakers, and the recovery community. Check out some photos from the event.





World Suicide Prevention Day



On September 10th, we joined our colleagues and friends around the world to celebrate World Suicide Prevention Day. An estimated 703,000 people a year take their life around the world. In 2020, the U.S. had one death by suicide about every 11 minutes and is a leading cause of death for people aged 10–34 years.

Knowing the warning signs and preventative measures can be life-saving for your loved one.

According to the [Suicide Prevention Resource Center](#) (SPRC) risk factors for suicide include:

- Prior suicide attempt(s)
 - Misuse and abuse of alcohol or other drugs
 - Mental disorders, particularly depression and other mood disorders
 - Access to lethal means
 - Knowing someone who died by suicide, particularly a family member
 - Social isolation
 - Chronic disease and disability
 - Lack of access to behavioral health care
 - Risk factors can vary by age group, culture, sex, and other characteristics.
- The following people are at higher risk: members of the LGBTQIA+ community, middle-aged males, and people of color.

Protective factors are ways you can support your loved one and prevent suicide. They include:

- [Effective behavioral health care](#) – it is never too early to ask for help
- Encourage and develop strong bonds to family, schools, community, and friends
- Develop problem solving and coping skills
- Know who to call in an emergency or to get support
- [Reduce Access to Lethal Means](#)

At McCall, we would like our clients to know that it is okay to talk about suicide and that there are resources available. For instance, this past year the 988 lifeline was launched. It is a beacon of hope, providing free confidential support to people in suicidal crisis and emotional distress. They help thousands of people every day and are a resource for anyone in need.

For more resources check out the links below:

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: Dial 988

In an emergency dial 911

In CT dial 211

[Prevent Suicide CT](#)

[988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline | SAMHSA](#)

[The Trevor Project Lifeline:](#) 1-866-488-7386

[Trans Lifeline](#) 1-877-565-8860

[McCall Behavioral Health Network:](#) (860) 496-2100

Happy Hispanic Heritage Month

September 15th marked the start of Hispanic Heritage Month, and we are proud to celebrate the Hispanic and Latin(o/a/x) heritage here in Connecticut and throughout our country. Noel R DeLeon II, Emergency Overdose Responder, offered to share his experience growing up as a first-generation Puerto Rican- American in Connecticut.

It is that time of year when we celebrate the Hispanic culture and its heroes. Back in 1968 it started as Hispanic week, twenty years later it became the month-long celebration we know today. It encompasses numerous Latin American countries such as Guatemala, Costa Rica, Honduras, and islands as well. Cuba, Dominican Republic, and Puerto Rico to name a few.

In all honesty I learned most of these facts this year. My family and Hispanic friends never truly observed this month. Most were too busy working to provide for their families. Some were trying to “fit in” so much they could not risk the connection. My household fell somewhere in between the two.

Add in that every place of employment until now never even mentioned Hispanic Heritage Month and you get me. While I am proud of my Puerto Rican heritage, I have rarely openly displayed that pride. I have always been either too busy to bother or too afraid of being seen as lesser to openly celebrate this month.

This year is different, this year I researched and learned. This year I feel safe to celebrate. The reason for that is simple, I work somewhere that cares enough to recognize this month. I work somewhere that makes me feel safe and seen.

I thank McCall for not only observing this month but giving me the opportunity to share my thoughts and feelings on it. Never have I worked somewhere that is so accepting of all people regardless of race or creed. Thank you for reminding me through actions and not just words that it's okay to feel racial pride and still love and respect others for their own.

Thank you Noel for sharing your story!! For a list of community events this month click [here](#) and [here](#).

Adolescent Mental Health at McCall

School has started back up and families are finding their groove as they return to school-year routines. Parents and caregivers are all too familiar with the anxiety that comes with the start of a new year. There is the typical anxiety around adjusting to new teachers, friends, starting middle or high school, and just wondering if they fit in.

However, adults who are close to children know the pandemic has exacerbated some of the problems our youth are facing, including depression, anxiety, and stress. The Centers for Disease Control Adolescent Behaviors & Experiences Survey found 37% of students experienced regular mental health struggles during pandemic. In October of 2021, the American Academy of Pediatrics even declared a national emergency in children's mental health due to an increase in anxiety, depression, suicidal behaviors, eating disorders, and substance use.

We are listening and in response, we have expanded our capacity for adolescent clinical services. McCall has multiple levels of service, and a young person doesn't have to experience addiction to come here. We also treat depression, anxiety, vaping, and a variety of mental health issues.

We do a comprehensive intake at McCall's Adolescent Services Program and then determine which level of care a child needs. Personalized treatment plans created with the youth and family ensure that goals are appropriate, attainable, and important to all who are involved.

For more information contact:

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TOPIC :
ADOLESCENT
MENTAL
HEALTH

WEDNESDAY
SEPT 21
8:20 AM

MISS THE INTERVIEW?

DON'T WORRY, WE HAVE YOU COVERED.
HEAD TO OUR PRESSROOM NOW TO LISTEN!
WWW.MCCALLCENTERCT.ORG/NEWS-AND-MEDIA

McCall behavioral health... FM97.3 WZBG

This month Laura Cummings, LCSW, CCDP-D, Adolescent Clinical Supervisor was interviewed on WZBG, speaking about adolescent mental health and the programs we offer. She offers tips to parents who often want to know how best to help their child. Click on the image to listen.

Veterans Administration Housing Program

For over 10 years, our Veterans Administration (VA) Housing Program provided transitional apartments for homeless veterans. After an in-depth analysis and much thought and consideration, we came to the difficult decision to end the program. It is winding down this month and all residents at the VA House are in the final stages of being moved into their new homes; they are being especially cared for with wrap-around services. Rest assured that serving our Veterans is a top priority at McCall. They will continue to be able to receive services through our inpatient and outpatient treatment programs.



Top Workplace 2022



McCall Behavioral Health Network has been named a Top Workplace by Hearst Connecticut Top Workplaces for the FIFTH consecutive year!



The award is based solely on the feedback offered through an employee survey we administered just a few months ago. More than 102 of our staff participated, and we are grateful for their input.

Being named a Top Workplace is a great distinction— only 59 companies made this year's list. We are honored, especially because the judges were our staff. Congratulations to all of our staff, who make McCall such a special place to work!

Out & About with McCall

Over the past month we have held and participated in some wonderful events. Check out the pictures below!

"The Music is You, The Music of John Denver" Benefit Concert

On September 16th McCall staff, clients, board members, donors and friends gathered together at the Warner Theatre in Torrington to celebrate our newly merged organization. National recording artist Lucinda Rowe and her band put on a great show that was enjoyed by all. Thank you to everyone who came out to support our organization!!





Thank You Northwest Community Bank Foundation



We would like to give a huge thank you to the Northwest Community Bank Foundation, who awarded us with \$15,000 for website development. From left to right, Foundation Vice President and McCall Board Vice President Paul McLaughlin; McCall Foundation Chief Executive Officer Maria Coutant Skinner; Foundation Chair of the Board Alan Colavecchio; and Foundation President Stephen Reilly.

Genoa Pharmacy Grand Opening at Renato Outpatient Services

On Wednesday, 8/31 we celebrated the grand opening of [Genoa Healthcare](#) Pharmacy at Renato Outpatient Services in Waterbury! Genoa can manage prescriptions for staff, and our residential and outpatient clients throughout our organization.

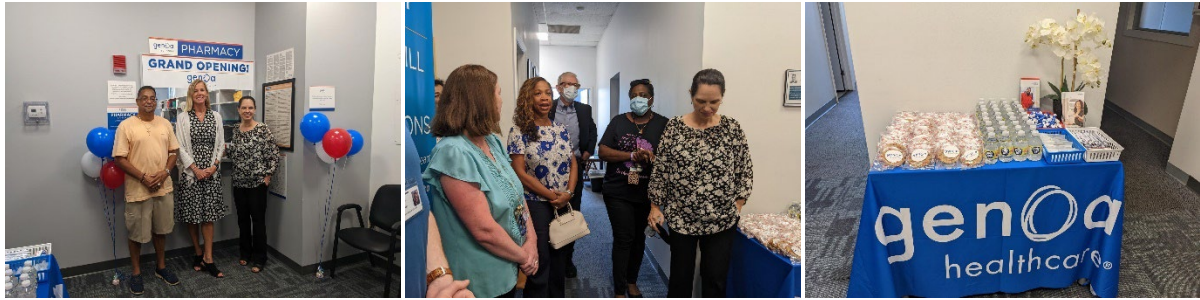
Joe McGrath, Economic Development Director in Waterbury, State Senator Rob Sampson, Representative Geraldo C Reyes Jr., Connecticut Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services Regional Manager Natalie DuMont, Ph.D., LPC joined us for the ceremony.

Genoa pharmacy:

- Fills **all** medications (not just behavioral health)
- Mails all medications (at no extra cost) or you can pick them up at curbside
- Organizes your pills based on the date and time you need to take them, making it easy to stay on track
- Helps you transfer prescriptions from other pharmacies

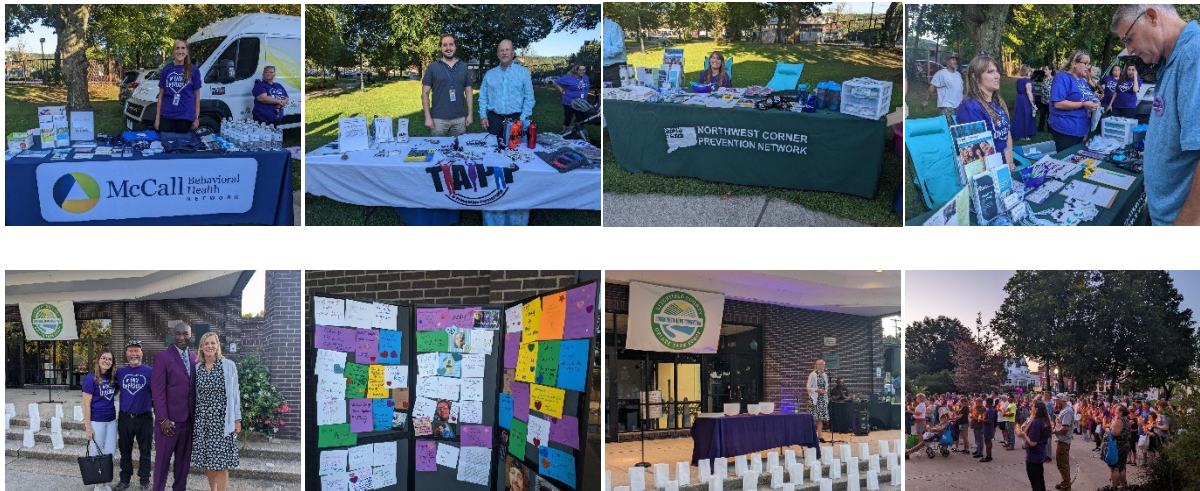
Call Brittany Travis, Pharm.D., RPh., Genoa site manager for more information 203-437-7280





Overdose Awareness Day Resource Fair & Vigil

The Litchfield County Overdose Task Force organized another beautiful event at Coe Park in Torrington. During the event we heard from so many who lost loved ones to an overdose and those who inspired us. It was an impactful night as we gathered together as one community to grieve and honor all of those we have lost.



Our Contact Information

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