



McCall Center
for Behavioral Health
prevention • recovery • community



HELP, Inc.

At the *Heart* of Wellness **With McCall & Help**

Message from Maria



Maria Coutant Skinner,
LCSW, CEO

Dear friends,

The keynote speaker for my daughter Abigail's graduation from Columbia University's School of Social work was Dr. Wanda Holland Greene. She began her remarks by singing the first few lines of "We who believe in freedom cannot rest - until it comes"; a song by Sweet Honey in the

Mental Health Awareness Month

5 Tips to Improve Communication with Your Child

May is Mental Health Awareness Month and it has never been more important to consider the impact the pandemic, social pressures, and world events are having on your child. According to the World Health Organization, one out of seven 10- to 19-year-olds experience a mental health disorder globally each year. Depression, anxiety, and behavioral disorders are the leading causes of illness and disability among this age group. If left untreated these conditions can continue into adulthood, and lead to an inability to live a fulfilling life.

There are multiple risk factors that affect an adolescent's mental health including: social pressure from peers, conforming to gender norms, violence, sexual violence, bullying, food insecurity, discrimination, and the list goes on. The more risk factors youth in this age group are exposed to, the greater the impact on their mental wellbeing.

In Connecticut, one in four high school students felt sad or hopeless for more than two weeks in the past year alone. This is concerning considering that suicide is the second leading cause of death in our state for 10 -34-year-olds. However, there is good news, with the right treatment most people have an improved quality of life.

When I know you care, I will care about what you know.

Rock, dedicated to the work of Ella Baker; a legendary civil rights leader. As the class of 534 newly minted social workers and their loved ones listened to, learned from, and were inspired by Dr Holland Greene, an act of unspeakable racist violence was unfolding in Buffalo, NY.

Angel Garza, father of ten-year-old Amerie Jo Garza, killed in her classroom in Uvalde said; “She was the sweetest little girl who did nothing wrong. She listened to her mom and dad. She always brushed her teeth. She was creative. She made things for us. She never got in trouble in school. Like, I just want to know what she did to be a victim.” That took my breath away; she always brushed her teeth.

Dr. Holland Greene discussed three key

For parents, adolescence can be tricky. It is a time in a child’s life where they seek independence but still need guidance on how to do so safely. They want their parents to listen with an open mind and communicate with empathy. Below is some guidance on how to support your child as they grow into a young adult.

1. Routines are still important, even in teen years – getting regular exercise, eating healthy, practicing good hygiene, and getting enough sleep are crucial to development. Find activities that your family can enjoy together, there may be some resistance at first, but memories will be made. As a parent, make sure you set an example with a regular, reasonable bedtime, and remember to take care of yourself. Self-care is important!

2. Talk to your child early and often about your family values – having honest, factual, and age-appropriate conversations about drugs, alcohol, smoking, sex, vaping etc. can help set boundaries, expectations, and help your child make informed choices in a sticky situation.

3. Respect your child’s agency over their life – it is important to not jump in and try to fix every difficult situation your child might face. Listen to the situation at hand and ask if your child would like to hear your advice. Allow your child to make reasonable decisions and solve problems on their own. Use your discretion about when you should step in.

4. Learn to control your emotions – let’s face it, the eye-rolling and door slamming starts early these days but responding to your adolescent’s emotional outburst with anger will typically obtain the opposite result you are looking for. It is okay to take a few minutes to yourself before you address an unwanted behavior. It can give both sides a chance to cool down and lead to a healthier conversation.

5. Say yes more often – it’s a fact, parents are busy. Between work, shuffling kids to activities, and making all the food there is barely time left at the end of the day to relax. It is common to respond to a child’s request with “no, we are too busy”. The next

components to attaining personal freedom: authenticity, humility, and rest. In my message to you today, I am working towards the first two. Rest feels counterintuitive given the urgency of these issues, but she wisely pointed out that the work will not invite us to stop, however, it requires the best versions of ourselves, and we can only show up fully when we have replenished and restored.

My friends, the process of writing this column is one of my greatest joys. It is a platform that I am deeply honored to occupy, and I spend the month thinking, praying, researching, and discussing the topic in order to have something that our readership will find meaningful. I don't presume to have answers to life's most complex issues, but

time they ask you to do something, pause before you say no, the reward of time well spent together will be worth it.

It's never too early to reach out for help

At McCall and Help, Inc. we know that early intervention can play a crucial role in creating positive outcomes later in life. The pandemic has put extra pressure on youth today and sometimes they need additional support. Whether that is one-on-one or family and group sessions, we have immediate openings to support your entire family. Remember everybody makes mistakes, keep the conversation open and if you could use extra support along the way give us a call.

[McCall Center for Behavioral Health](#)

(860)496-2100

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(203)756-8984

Find more resources here:

- [McCall/Help, Inc. Prevention Programs](#)
- [McCall/Help, Inc. Teen Behavioral Health Treatment Programs](#)
- [Turning Point CT](#)
- [US Department of Health and Human Services Adolescent Mental Health](#)

You Are Invited!!

On Friday, September 16th, 2022, national recording artist Lucinda Rowe is graciously hosting a benefit concert in our honor. The concert is being held at the Warner Theatre in Torrington and will feature the music of John Denver, who struggled with his mental health and substance use throughout his life and used music as a source of healing. A portion of the proceeds will go directly to our organization!

it's a gift to be able to wrestle with the questions and share some insight and hope. I need to tell you that in these most despairing of times, I am struggling this month to offer that positive message. Like so many of you, I am weeping over the events that have transpired and I am angry beyond words at the inaction of our policymakers to take meaningful action. May is Mental Health Awareness Month, and that feels like a cruel irony in this moment. I am working to resist writing a conclusion that offers closure. That would feel disingenuous and hollow. I think I need to stay in these feelings and honor them. I invite you to join me.

From my heart to yours,

The event begins at 7 pm with a VIP reception in the Studio Lobby followed by the concert at 8 pm. VIP and regular admission tickets are available. The VIP ticket will include admission along with appetizers, soda, coffee, and water.

Come out and enjoy the music with great friends, knowing your purchase will help provide access to lifesaving treatment for all of those in need, regardless of their ability to pay. We thank you for your support!!

To purchase tickets, visit www.warnertheatre.org or call the Box Office at 860-489-7180.

A SPECIAL CONCERT TO BENEFIT  



the Music is You

THE MUSIC OF JOHN DENVER

FEATURING NATIONAL RECORDING ARTIST LUCINDA ROWE WITH MICK CONNOLLY, GARY FIANDRA, CHRIS MORRISON & MARC RUSSELL

WARNER THEATRE

SEPTEMBER 16, 2022 @ 8PM

Did you miss our WZBG Interview?

Click on this [link](#) to hear this month's interview on WZBG 97.3! This month Dale Jones interviewed Darian Graells, Region 10 Coalition Coordinator & Tobacco Treatment Specialist. Darian

Maria

works with teens in local high schools and knows first-hand about the challenges they face due to social pressures and the pandemic. Visit our press room to listen!

To view Dr. Holland Greene's address, please visit [this link](#) about 20 minutes in.

Tune in on the 3rd Wednesday of every month at 8:20 to hear us in real-time.

And to hear the full song "We Who Fight for Freedom" please [click here](#).



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