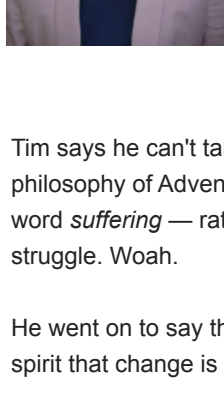


Don't rob anyone of the dignity of their suffering.

May 2026



Dear friends;

"Don't rob anyone of the dignity of their suffering."

Months ago, I was talking with my friend Tim Walsh, founder and CEO of Adventure Recovery, when he shared this with me, and it really resonated. I've been wrestling with it ever since, so I reached out to him again this morning for a follow-up.

Tim says he can't take credit for the original quote, but he uses it often, and it's central to both the philosophy of Adventure Recovery and his own approach to life. When I asked about his choice of the word *suffering* — rather than, say, *struggle* — he said that suffering is what happens when we avoid struggle. *Woah.*

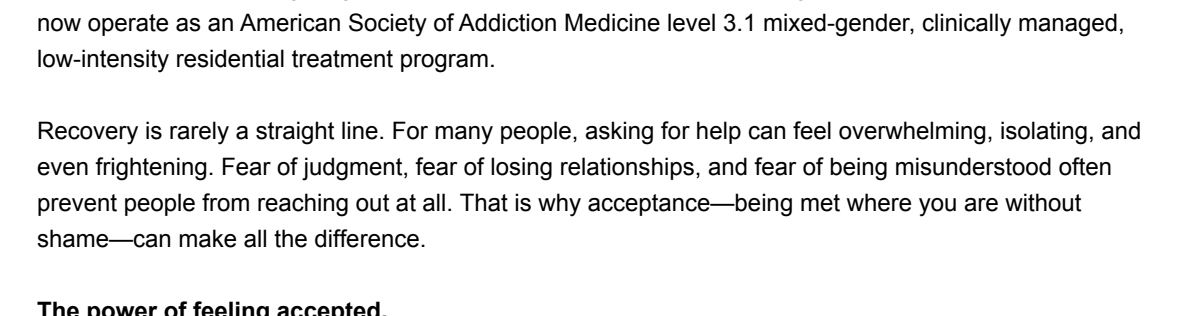
He went on to say that suffering can be transformational because it signals to our body, mind, and spirit that change is necessary.

The impulse to step in and alleviate someone else's suffering is, of course, an empathic response. But how to do that in a healthy way is one of the most human challenges there is. We do others a disservice when we try to rescue them — that impulse is rooted in the assumption that they are not capable of enduring discomfort, and that we somehow know better. The line between helping and rescuing can get blurry, but with intentional discernment, we can feel the difference.

This is radically different from walking alongside someone, being a compassionate witness or guide, and respecting their strength and agency. That approach preserves dignity. It allows for growth, and it sends a clear message: *you are not alone, and you are trusted to drive your own change.* The journey to health, healing, and wholeness belongs to them.

My best to you always,
Maria

Maria Coutant Skinner, LCSW
President and CEO



The reopening of the Hotchkiss House in Torrington is more than the restoration of a historic home—it is a reminder that every person deserves compassionate, nonjudgmental care and a community that accepts them exactly as they are.

As the McCall Behavioral Health Network expands recovery services in northwest Connecticut, the newly renovated 11-bed residential treatment program stands as a symbol of hope, healing, and whole-person care for individuals navigating substance use and mental health challenges. The Hotchkiss house will now operate as an American Society of Addiction Medicine level 3.1 mixed-gender, clinically managed, low-intensity residential treatment program.

Recovery is rarely a straight line. For many people, asking for help can feel overwhelming, isolating, and even frightening. Fear of judgment, fear of losing relationships, and fear of being misunderstood often prevent people from reaching out at all. That is why acceptance—being met where you are without shame—can make all the difference.

The power of feeling accepted.

Lydia Babbitt, McCall Outpatient Alumna, knows that feeling firsthand. Nine years ago, she sought treatment through McCall after an earlier experience elsewhere left her feeling "judged" and "dismissed." She recalls how terrifying it was to ask for help, worrying that she might "lose my job and lose my family" or "lose any respect anybody ever had for me."

What changed her life was finding a place where she truly felt supported.

"McCall was willing to start where I was," Lydia shared during a recent interview on WZBG Radio. "They want you to succeed, and they're going to do whatever they can to help you succeed."

That simple but powerful philosophy—meeting people where they are—became the foundation of her recovery journey. Lydia continued attending McCall group therapy for years, calling it "an absolute bedrock of staying on the right path." Today, she credits her long-term recovery to the support she received from McCall, her family, and her recovery community for helping her build a healthier future.

Finding a pathway that works for YOU.

Lydia's story also reflects an important truth about recovery and mental health treatment: healing is not about forcing people to "do it right."

"McCall's acceptance and support of whatever pathway works for YOUR recovery is incredibly important as well. There is no one answer any more than there is just one person," adds Lydia. "We are all different, and what we need to make our recovery successful is different. McCall is willing to accept and support those differences and the paths we need to take to keep us headed in the right direction."

That belief is woven into programs like the Hotchkiss House, which supports individuals in early recovery with housing, counseling, employment support, and continued outpatient treatment in a safe and therapeutic environment. Residents are not defined by their diagnoses, their past, or the challenges they face. Instead, they are supported as whole people with unique identities, experiences, and goals.

A different kind of care.

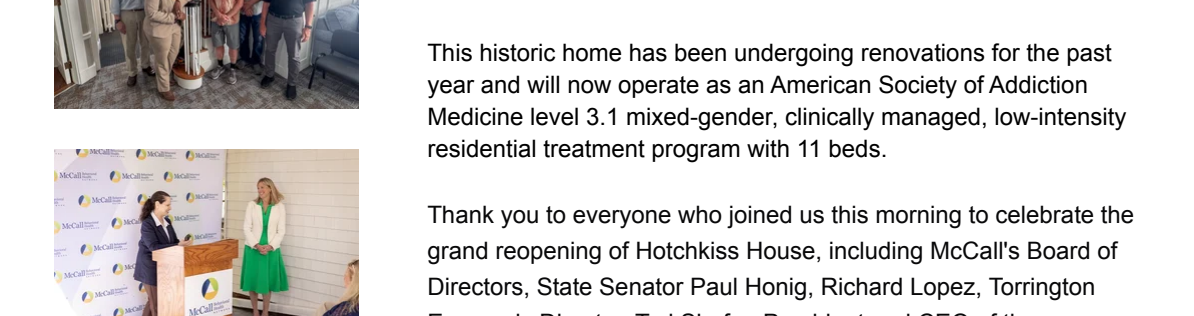
At McCall, treatment is not one-size-fits-all. It is rooted in dignity, compassion, and connection. Whether someone is seeking support for substance use, mental health, or both, they are met with understanding—not judgment—and surrounded by people who believe recovery is possible. Visit mccallbhn.org to learn more and start your recovery journey today.



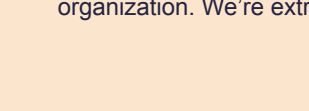
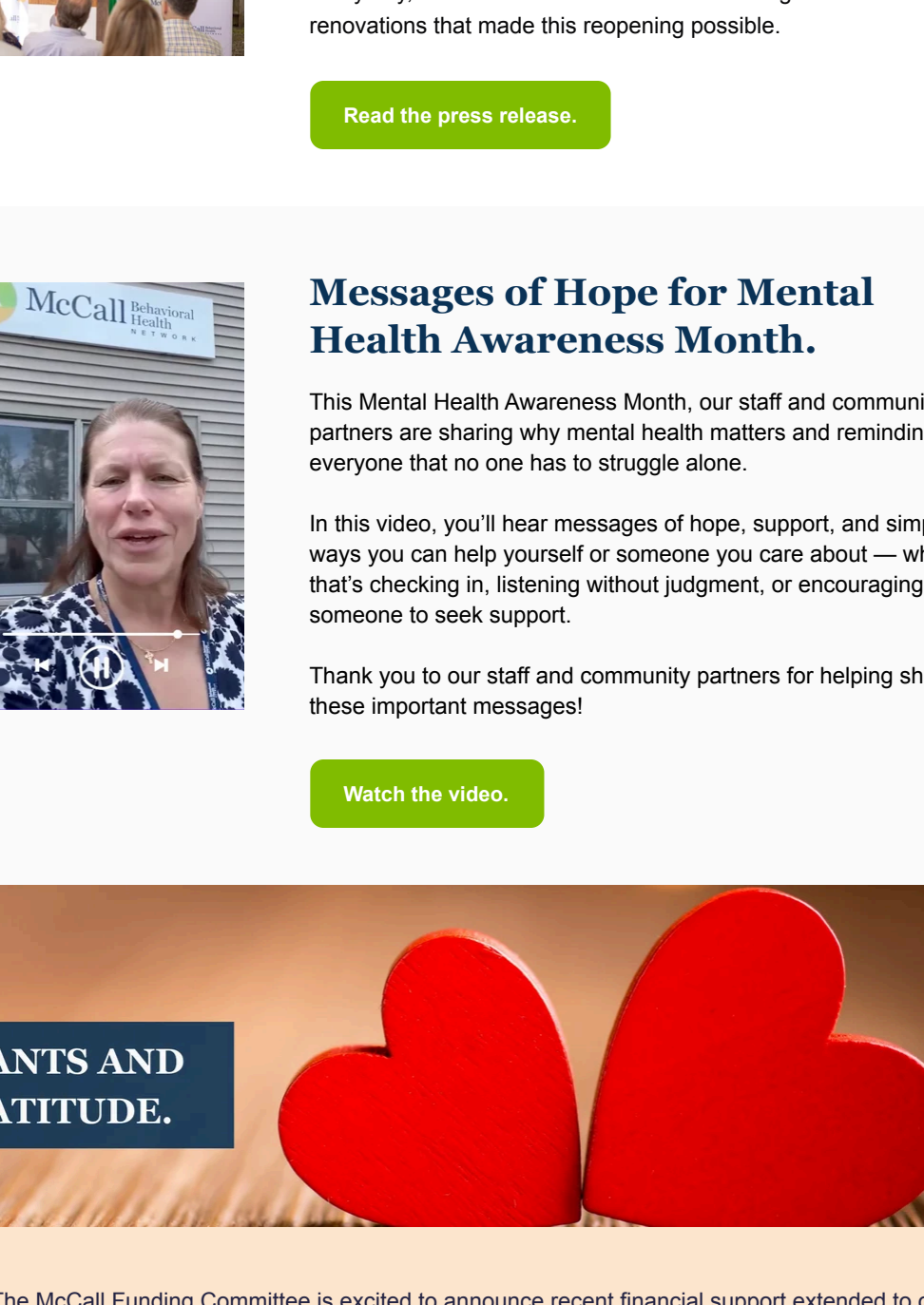
Missed the interview?

Listen now to our recent interview on 97.3 WZBG featuring McCall Service Coordinator Conrad Stenkiewicz, who shares how the expansion of services at the Hotchkiss House, and McCall Outpatient alumna Lydia Babbitt.

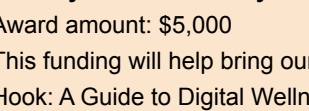
[Listen to the full FM 97.3 WZBG interview.](#)



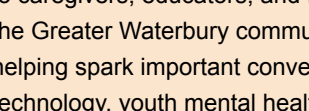
The Hotchkiss House in Torrington Reopens!



On May 19, we proudly celebrated the grand reopening of Hotchkiss House in Torrington with a ribbon-cutting ceremony, marking an important expansion of behavioral health and recovery services in northwest Connecticut.



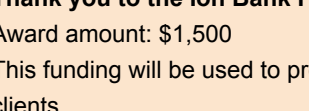
This historic home has been undergoing renovations for the past year and will now operate as an American Society of Addiction Medicine level 3.1 mixed-gender, clinically managed, low-intensity residential treatment program with 11 beds.



Thank you to everyone who joined us this morning to celebrate the grand reopening of Hotchkiss House, including McCall's Board of Directors, State Senator Paul Honig, Richard Lopez, Torrington Economic Director, Ted Shafer, President and CEO of the Northwest Connecticut Chamber of Commerce, Robert Haswell, and Siobhan Feliciano from DHMAS.

We're especially grateful to the staff who helped bring this event together, the dedicated team who will support clients in this space every day, and our facilities team for overseeing the incredible renovations that made this reopening possible.

[Read the press release.](#)



Messages of Hope for Mental Health Awareness Month.

This Mental Health Awareness Month, our staff and community partners are sharing why mental health matters and reminding everyone that no one has to struggle alone.

In this video, you'll hear messages of hope, support, and simple ways you can help yourself or someone you care about — whether that's checking in, listening without judgment, or encouraging someone to seek support.

Thank you to our staff and community partners for helping share these important messages!

[Watch the video.](#)

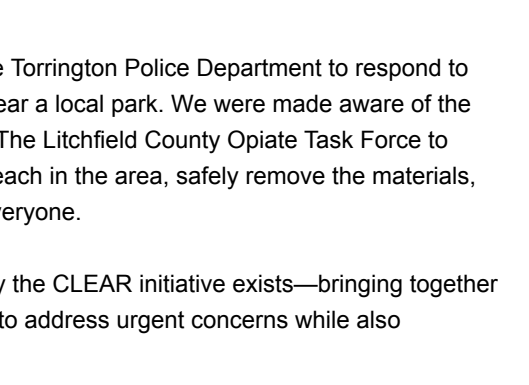


The McCall Funding Committee is excited to announce recent financial support extended to our organization. We're extremely grateful for the generous gifts that will help further our mission.

Thank you to the Liberty Bank Foundation.

Award amount: \$5,000

This funding will help bring our "Designed to Hook: A Guide to Digital Wellness" presentations to caregivers, educators, and families throughout the Greater Waterbury community at no cost—helping spark important conversations around technology, youth mental health, and healthier digital habits.



Thank you to the Mustard Seed Foundation.

Award amount: \$2,000

This funding will be used to provide basic needs for our Whole Health Center Clients in Waterbury.

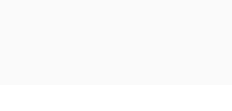
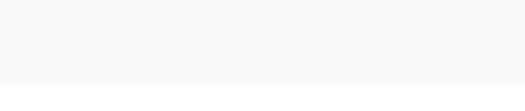
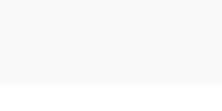
Thank you to the Ion Bank Foundation.

Award amount: \$1,500

This funding will be used to provide healthy snacks for our Child and Adolescent Outpatient Services clients.



CLEAR Team Responds Quickly to Community Safety Concern.



Earlier this month, our CLEAR team partnered with the Torrington Police Department to respond to reports of potentially hazardous materials discarded near a local park. We were made aware of the concerns and discussed with the outreach workers of The Litchfield County Opiate Task Force to respond. The team responded quickly to conduct outreach in the area, safely remove the materials, and help maintain a clean and safe environment for everyone.

This kind of coordinated, rapid response is exactly why the CLEAR initiative exists—bringing together community-based professionals and law enforcement to address urgent concerns while also connecting individuals to support.

McCall provides regional oversight and statewide coordination of the Community and Law Enforcement for Addiction Recovery (CLEAR) initiative. Through this partnership, we're able to respond in real time, reduce harm, and engage individuals in need with services and follow-up care.

If you see something concerning or would like to connect with the CLEAR team, please contact our office at 860-294-4044.

Stepping Up to the Plate for Mental Health Awareness.

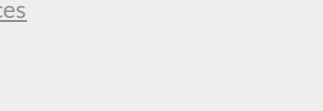
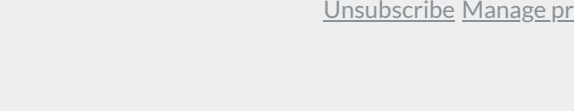


Members of our team joined organizations from across the state for Mental Health Awareness Night at Dunkin' Donuts Park. Thank you to the Hartford Yard Goats for having us!

Pictured left to right:

- Chompers, the Yard Goats' Mascot
- Donna Bielefeld, Prevention Facilitator
- Marisa Mitsteaedt, MBA, Director of Development and Marketing
- Joshua Litts, MPH, Digital Marketing Manager

McCall Participates in "Save a Life" Day.



McCall staff joined the Litchfield County Opiate Task Force for another county-wide "Save a Life" Day, an initiative to be out in the community distributing FREE Narcan kits and providing education on how to recognize and respond to an overdose.

