



Maybe your nervous system is onto something.

July 2026



Dear friends,

Dr. Bruce Perry once wrote, "All of us tend to gravitate to the familiar, even when the familiar is unhealthy or destructive. We are drawn to what we were raised with."

When we are children, we create stories to make sense of the world and then we work, often without realizing it, to make those stories true. We adapt in whatever ways keep us safe and connected to the people we depend on. These coping mechanisms serve a vital purpose at the time they're formed. A child who learns to stay quiet, to anticipate a parent's mood, or to take care of everyone else before themselves isn't doing anything wrong. They're doing exactly what the moment required to protect themselves.

So when we notice ourselves repeating a pattern later in life whether in a relationship, at work, in how we respond to conflict or closeness; the more useful question isn't "*what's wrong with me?*" It's *what was right about this strategy when I first built it?*"

Psychodynamic theory offers another layer here. It suggests that many of our patterns are not just habits we fall back into, but expressions of deeper, often unconscious beliefs about who we are and what we deserve. If a child absorbs the belief that they are difficult to love, or responsible for a parent's pain, they may grow into an adult who, without consciously choosing to, arranges their life to confirm it. This is sometimes called repetition compulsion: we unconsciously recreate old dynamics, even painful ones, because they feel like home, and because some parts of us are still trying to find resolution. It can look self-destructive from the outside. From the inside, it often feels like fate.

Naming this pattern is powerful, because it loosens its grip. Once we can see that a belief was formed, not fated, we can start to question it. We can ask what still serves us, and what we're ready to let go of.

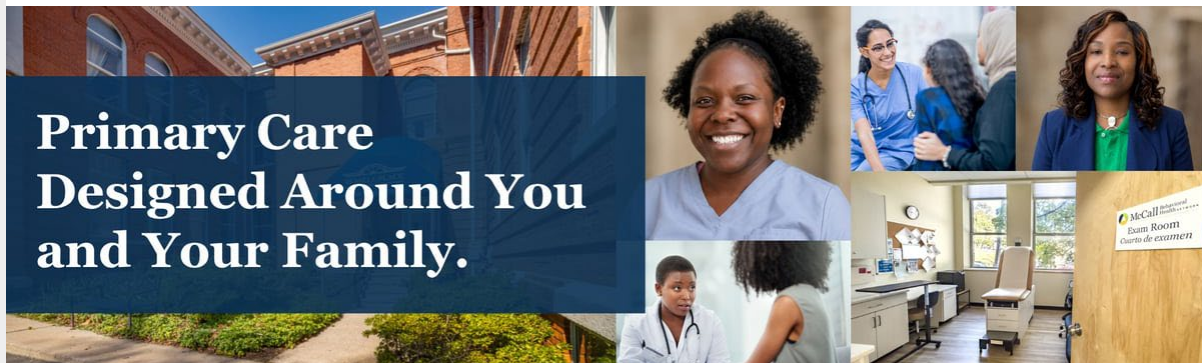
This is often harder than it sounds, because the nervous system doesn't always know the difference between what's familiar and what's healthy. Left on its own, it will choose familiar chaos over unfamiliar peace, every time. That's not because chaos feels good, but because it feels *known*. Healing means teaching our nervous system, and our deeper beliefs, a new lesson: that discomfort

does not mean danger, and that we deserve more peace than we've allowed ourselves.

The nervous system that learned chaos can also learn peace; this is not sentiment, it's neuroplasticity. Every time we notice an old pattern and choose differently, even in some small way, we are laying down new pathways alongside the old ones. So I want you to know, dear friends, that this peace is possible and accessible to each of us...and you are well worth it.

My very best to you always,

Maria Coutant Skinner, LCSW
President and CEO



Choosing a primary care provider is one of the most important decisions you can make for your health. The right provider does more than diagnose illnesses or perform annual checkups—they get to know you, understand your health goals, and become a trusted partner in helping you and your family stay healthy through every stage of life.

But finding that kind of care is not always easy. Busy schedules, limited access to primary care, and the challenge of coordinating care for different family members can make it difficult to find a provider who is both accessible and the right fit.

At the McCall Behavioral Health Network's Whole Health Center in Waterbury, the primary care team is working to change that by providing accessible, compassionate care for individuals and families of all ages.

Comprehensive primary care with your family in mind.

The primary care clinic at the Whole Health Center is located at 969 W. Main Street in Waterbury, making it easier for families to receive the support they need in one convenient location. From wellness visits and school physicals to ongoing health concerns and chronic condition management, the team focuses on providing personalized care that meets patients where they are. The clinic offers convenient appointment options, telehealth visits, and after-hours support to help patients access care when they need it.

Compassionate, whole-person care is at the heart of the Whole Health Center's approach. Whole-person care is an intentional commitment to addressing physical, mental, and emotional health, recognizing that every part of your well-being is connected.

"Whole-person care is an approach to wellness that looks beyond individual symptoms to support your physical, mental, and emotional health as connected parts of your overall well-being," says Rashidat Olyakun, APRN, McCall Family Nurse Practitioner.

The Whole Health Center also offers additional services to support the health and wellness of the entire community, including mental health support, child and family therapy, substance use treatment, and an on-site pharmacy.

The importance of a trusted healthcare relationship.

A strong relationship with a primary care provider can make a lasting difference in a person's health. When patients have a provider who knows their history, understands their concerns, and takes the time to listen, healthcare becomes more personal, proactive, and effective.

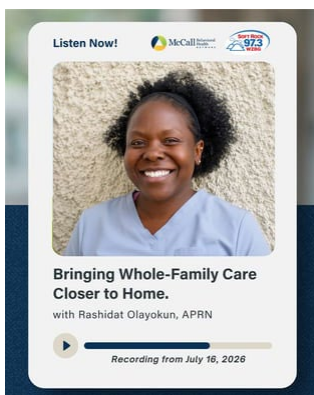
For Rashidat and the Whole Health Center team, primary care is about more than treating illness. It is about building lasting relationships with patients and families, helping them stay healthy through every stage of life, and creating a place where people feel comfortable returning whenever they need care.

"We really strive to make the Whole Health Center feel like a community home base, not just a medical office," Rashidat says. "People love to know that they can come to one place and truly be heard, truly be seen."

Take the next step toward better health.

Whether you are searching for a new primary care provider, due for a routine checkup, or looking for a healthcare team that can care for your entire family, McCall's Whole Health Center is here to help. You do not need to be a current McCall client to become a primary care patient.

Call 203.754.0322 to schedule an appointment or [visit our website](#) to learn more about our primary care services.



Did you miss the interview?

Listen to our recent interview on 97.3 WZBG, where Rashidat Olayokun, APRN, discusses how strong primary care is built on trust, accessibility, and a genuine understanding of each person's unique needs.

Listen to the full FM 97.3 WZBG interview.

In The News



We reached our goal! Thank you!

On behalf of everyone at the McCall Behavioral Health Network, we would like to extend a heartfelt thank you to our generous donors who participated in our 2026 Northwest Corner Gives Fundraiser.

Thanks to your incredible support, we raised \$28,799!

With matches from the Northwest CT Community Foundation, we surpassed our goal of \$20,000, with every dollar supporting our “No Child Turned Away” Access to Care Fund, helping ensure that children and teens in Northwest CT can access high-quality, whole-person care when they need it most.



McCall Accepted into World Trade Center Health Program.

The McCall Behavioral Health Network has been accepted into the World Trade Center (WTC) Health Program, expanding access to specialized behavioral health services for eligible 9/11 responders and survivors.

As the nation approaches the 25th anniversary of September 11, this milestone highlights McCall’s commitment to supporting individuals impacted by trauma and providing compassionate, evidence-based care to those experiencing the lasting effects of 9/11-related events.

[Read the press release.](#)

Overdose Awareness Day Vigil



and Resource Fair.

Save the date: August 31, 2026

5:30 P.M. — 8:30 P.M.

Coe Memorial Park, Torrington

Every August, the Litchfield County Opiate Task Force invites community members to come together to honor and remember loved ones lost to overdose.

The event will feature local resources and support, followed by speakers and a candlelight vigil offering a space for remembrance, healing, and hope.

[Click here to view the event page.](#)



This July, we celebrated the third annual Deflection Week, recognizing a community-based approach that helps individuals experiencing substance use challenges access treatment and support before an arrest occurs. Deflection programs provide pre-arrest intervention by connecting individuals with behavioral health services, recovery coaching, and other community resources, offering a pathway to care instead of the criminal justice system.

By reaching people sooner, Deflection programs help ensure these critical moments become opportunities for support rather than punishment. Early intervention can also reduce repeat interactions with the criminal justice system, lower overdose risks, and shift community perspectives by promoting a more compassionate, health-focused approach to supporting individuals with substance use disorders.

In our new blog post, learn more about Deflection and how McCall's CLEAR Initiative is helping make this approach possible across our communities.

[Read the blog post.](#)

Deflection in Action: Community Partners Creating Change.

Deflection relies on collaboration between community partners. The McCall Behavioral Health Network provides regional oversight and statewide coordination for the Community and Law Enforcement for Addiction Recovery (CLEAR) Initiative, partnering with law enforcement officers, first responders, behavioral health providers, social workers, and recovery support professionals.

[Watch this video](#) from Sergeant Brandon Kelly of the Torrington Police Department to learn how Deflection is connecting people to care, support, and hope in our community.

[In this second video](#), Farrah McCullough, Family Recovery Coach Supervisor at the McCall Behavioral Health Network, speaks on how Deflection work shifts the perspective on substance use disorder—moving away from punishment and towards care, dignity, and real support. shares.



The Carnes Weeks Center Gardening Club.

In June 2026, we launched a Gardening Club at Carnes Weeks to provide clients with opportunities to build routine, responsibility, teamwork, and a tangible sense of accomplishment. The club is designed to offer meaningful roles that align with each client's abilities, energy level, and length of stay, ensuring everyone can contribute in a way that feels rewarding.

Since the club began on June 1, clients have embraced the opportunity with enthusiasm. Together, they have planted vegetables grown from seed in the raised garden beds, created a butterfly and serenity garden on the property, and established flower and herb gardens. They are also working on several ongoing projects that will transform the space into a year-round garden while



creating an environment that promotes pride, relaxation, and reflection.

The Gardening Club is an optional group that meets on Monday afternoons for clients at Carnes Weeks. During each session, participants discuss gardening ideas, plan projects, and assign responsibilities. Throughout the week, clients take ownership of their tasks, while our staff provide guidance and support as needed. This is their garden, and it serves as a living reminder of what can be achieved through hard work, consistency, and determination. It also reflects the power of a community working together toward a shared goal.

Although this project is still in its early stages, our staff are excited about its continued growth and look forward to cultivating the Gardening Club as a year-round program for years to come.

The Carnes Weeks Center Gardening Club is growing thanks to the generous support from Fit Together of Northwest Connecticut.



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