WCMHS has created a collaborative connection with Lawrence and Arline Seiler, producers of the local access TV show Abled and On Air. The show is written and produced by the Seilers, and filming, editing and broadcasting is done at ORCA Media in Montpelier.

Kirk Postlewaite, Communication and Development Director at WCMHS, met Lawrence at this year’s Disability Awareness Day at the Statehouse. In their first discussion, they both realized that there were many fantastic stories to tell about the work we do here at WCMHS to support folks in the community. Lawrence suggested we do a show on Peer Supports, which is a growing movement in Mental Health Care where people with lived experience support individuals who are struggling with mental health challenges. The first show went really well, and we have since completed four more shows with two more in planning stages.

This opportunity has been a very positive one for both Abled and On Air and WCMHS. Both groups benefit from the generous use of ORCA’s state of the art studios and supports. WCMHS benefits by getting more information out to the central Vermont citizenry about our services, ways to lesson stigma and an increase in overall awareness about mental health, developmental disabilities, and substance use challenges faced by many in our region. Lawrence and Arline benefit by having a consistent pipeline of show materials while also being able to engage in their greatest mission, to increase the awareness of the “differently abled” and to advocate for inclusions and equal treatment for everyone in our communities.

WCMHS looks forward to continuing this positive connection, and we want to give a BIG thank you to Lawrence and Arline for their work with us over the past several months.
WHERE HOPE AND SUPPORT COME TOGETHER

WCMHS Initiates Community Conversations on Mental Health Crisis

These past two summers, Washington County Mental Health Services has been inviting community members to join in discussions on how they view the status of mental health in their community. We’ve visited Montpelier, Northfield, Waitsfield, Plainfield and Waterbury. For each discussion we have arranged for a different panel of people who work or live in that community, both professionals and family members. These have been public and private mental health clinicians, educators, superintendents, police, emergency room doctors, family members, clients and legislators – just to name a few. With the help of moderator Peter Mallary, from Vermont Association of Mental Health and Addiction Recovery, the panelists were asked a few questions to prime the pump and get the conversation going with the audience. It’s been a dynamic and exciting experience to spend time together – neighbors helping neighbors – sharing thoughts, ideas, and even angst. Here are some of the topics which were on the minds of over 150 people who attended these gatherings, along with ideas for solutions and questions regarding the assistance that might already be available. The information will be used to advance our agenda for working with other helpers as we strive to improve the human experience through our individual and collective efforts.  

Mary Moulton, Executive Director

“Being a human being is traumatic”

“I’m all in favor of creating healthy high risk opportunities for children, such as a challenging hike, expression through the arts, biking, skateboarding."

“Team Two has saved lives”

“Need screening for suicide in primary care practices”

“We need more crisis workers. They have helped me stay out of the hospital and get into the hospital. I don’t know how they do what they do.”

“Mental health is health”

“In Iceland children go to school for ½ day and are required to have a hobby to work on for the other half – can we be like Iceland?”

“My parents would never talk about mental health. They don’t feel comfortable discussing it or even recognize it as an issue.”

“Talk about it. We need to lose the stigma and allow people to come forward for their kids and themselves and get the help they need.”

“Behavioral interventionists for kids in schools is fantastic but there are kids who fall between the cracks. We have more and more children who feel tremendous stress in their lives and are struggling.”
### WHERE HOPE AND SUPPORT COME TOGETHER

**COMMUNITY FORUM RESULTS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TOPICS</th>
<th>DISCUSSION POINTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Trauma in our community</td>
<td>Building healthy communities; educating people about trauma; WCMHS teaches Youth and Adult Mental Health First Aid to groups in the community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stigma</td>
<td>Mental health is health; continue to talk about mental health care and support as a natural part of our health, encouraging people to tend to it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suicide</td>
<td>Reducing stigma; Safe Gun Project; Zero Suicide, a model to screen for suicidal ideation and provide immediate and on-going support. WCMHS is implementing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emergency Room Waits</td>
<td>A different place to go for a mental health emergency other than the Emergency Room; a place that is comfortable and welcoming, with fresh air, windows, peer supports</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Isolation and Loneliness</td>
<td>Creating “community”—having activities that welcome people of all walks to join; more outreach to those in need; volunteers; neighbors reach out to neighbors. Police being part of the community in a community policing model.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Substance Abuse – Effect on Children and Families</td>
<td>Schools are needing more supports for kids who are not available for education during the day because their parents are “absent” from their lives.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hospital Beds</td>
<td>We need more beds but how many? How do we make sure we build the right amount and also fix the emergency room wait problem?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Supports for Severe Mental Health Issues</td>
<td>Underfunded Community system; people slipping through the cracks and then needing more support. More prevention. More crisis workers. More services in the community could help people come out of the hospital more quickly.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social media and use of “devices”</td>
<td>“Social media is a problem”—creating healthy options to spending time on social media for both children and adults</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identification and treatment for mental illness within Correctional facilities</td>
<td>Getting better but needs to be robust; transitioning people back to the community and welcoming them</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Police Response and Support</td>
<td>Team Two model throughout the state where mental health crisis workers and law enforcement train and respond to mental health crisis together—de-escalates situations and enhances safety!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Toxic Stress in our Lives</td>
<td>Finding balance, exercise, activities, friends, relaxation, self-care—turn off the television and step away from social media</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support for Elders with depression, anxiety, and substance use issues</td>
<td>Helping elders to talk about mental health.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schools experiencing more children in school with mental health needs than are or can be provided</td>
<td>Screening and supports for children with high needs; getting upstream of the problems. Teaching kindness as part of the curriculum; having more diverse activities and more crossover to community volunteering and involvement.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Integrating mental health into primary care practices</td>
<td>Every practice should ask about mental health, suicidal ideation. Education and training for doctors. Mental health clinicians in every practice.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
I have had the humble privilege of working in mental health emergency services for 20 years. People frequently ask me ‘how do you continue to do that work? It must be so hard and sad.’ The truth is I love my job. It’s not always easy. Sometimes it is hard and sad but it is also filled with true hope. The people who I see every day are alive and I am hopeful that just one more day, one more minute, one more second will make the anguish a little less and the strength that helped the person live through that anguish will continue to grow stronger.

Mental health, like physical health, affects us all. Mental illness, like physical illness, also affects us all. The continuum with which we experience mental and physical health is individual but we can all empathize with what it’s like to feel physically unwell on some level and we can also all empathize with what it’s like to feel mentally unwell at different times in our lives. We have all faced heartache, stress, sadness, anger, fear and an array of other emotions as well. Depression is a compilation of symptoms just like a physical illness. We need to talk about mental health and mental illness with the same genuine interest, vigor and directness as we talk about physical health and physical illness. We need to talk about treatment options and recovery stories to promote overall mental wellness as we talk about treatment options and recovery stories promoting overall physical wellness. A person struggling with suicidal ideation is struggling just as fiercely as a person struggling with a physical ailment. I have worked with people from all walks of life and I can assure you mental illness, like physical illness, does not discriminate.

Recently there have been two very public figures, Kate Spade and Anthony Bourdain who have sadly died by suicide. Many people often ask me ‘what should I do if I am worried someone might have suicidal thoughts?’ Or ‘what should I do if I’m worried someone is depressed?’ My answer might seem very simple and rudimentary: please ask them how they are. This might seem very basic but the reality is genuinely asking someone how they are and being ready to listen to the honest answer is harder than we might think.

Being willing to ask someone how they are doing when you know the answer might be they aren’t doing very well at all can be incredibly difficult and scary. The concerned family member, friend, colleague or neighbor should never feel alone in offering someone support when they are struggling. We are here to help you. Washington County Mental Health Emergency Services is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week for anyone to call for help and support for themselves and/or to get advice and guidance about what to do to help someone else.

It is also true that many times a person struggling with their mental health will try and hide their troubles because they might feel ashamed or embarrassed. When another person asks ‘how are you’ they say ‘I’m fine.’ The other person might continue to have concerns but is unsure how to show support as they don’t want to ‘pry’ or be disrespectful. In mental health emergency work we find there are many ways for people to show genuine care and concern. Honestly stating why you’re concerned is the most respectful, transparent way to show your concern. If a person needs space sending thoughtful, supportive messages through different media is another way to show care and concern. I have also sat quietly with people just to be present and share the burden of the distress so they are not alone. I have written cards, texts, emails and left voicemails just to show a person they are not alone. Isolation is a significant risk factor for suicide. I have also had to find balance with people who need space but need to also know there are people who genuinely care and want to share the burden they are feeling. We are here at WCMH emergency services to help guide people through individual situations so please call us at 229-0591 for support and guidance.

For people who are struggling with suicidal ideation we are here to help. We want to help. I believe the greatest gift we can give anyone is time. I humbly ask for one more day, one more minute, one more second to please hang in there even when it seems impossible. I truly believe it can get better. Please call 229-0591 for help and support. The journey is one step at a time.

You do not have to be alone on your journey.
WHERE HOPE AND SUPPORT COME TOGETHER

**WCMHS PARTNERSHIP WITH FCWC AND UVM-CVMC (ARTICLE FROM FCWC)**

We are really excited about our newest service! Through a partnership with UVM/Central Vermont Medical Center and Washington County Mental Health, we are offering expanded family supports embedded in the Pediatric Primary Care practice in Berlin. This exciting pilot program includes an opportunity to offer families with children aged 0 through 36 months a screening for Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and a follow up meeting with family support specialists who can provide a menu of options, including information and referrals, parenting information, and connections to community supports.

The goal of this project, through the Family Center and Washington County Mental Health Services, is embedded in the pediatric practice. We will promote child and family protective factors, prevent and mitigate toxic stress, and promote healthy child development. Families screening positive will receive on-site support from Family Support Coordinators at the time of their visit. Family Support Coordinators will offer families immediate options including secondary screening, parenting support resources, and community resource referrals. All too often, healthcare professionals struggle with the challenge of supporting families who have needs beyond the immediate medical.

Here is what Family Center Family Support Coordinator, Felicia Messuri, has to say about the pilot, "I am so excited to be part of this new team! Dr. Shelton and her staff have warmly welcomed us into their practice. Dr. Shelton deeply understands that some of the medical issues she sees regularly are brought on by trauma and ongoing stressors within the family. We hope to provide a comprehensive service to help families connect with needed resources and support, assisting children and parents with overcoming barriers whether that be challenges with housing, transportation, child care or substance abuse, to name a few."

This project builds on the relationship between families and pediatricians through a blended office-based and community outreach model, identifying families early, and providing support services during a child’s vulnerable early brain development period, strengthening families and promoting each families’ protective factors. We are thrilled to have such great community partners in Central Vermont to embark on this exciting new pilot, with special appreciation to Dr, Gwen Shelton and her team for welcoming us on board.

**PATRIOT AWARD**

Scott Miller, of the Residential Treatment Program at Washington County Mental Health (WCMHS), was recently given the Patriot Award by the National Guard’s Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve (ESGR) project. Scott was recognized for his support of another staff member who is a National Guard Reserve member, Jeremy Brekenridge. Jeremy nominated Scott for the National Guard’s Patriot Award for support in meeting his scheduling needs at the Vermont Guard.

The Patriot Award reflects the efforts made to support citizen warriors through a wide-range of measures including flexible schedules, time off prior to and after deployment, caring for families, and granting leaves of absence if needed. The intent of the ESGR program is to increase employer support by encouraging employers to act as advocates for employee participation in the military. Supportive employers are critical to maintaining the strength and readiness of the Nation’s Guard and Reserve units.

WCMHS Executive Director Mary Moulton also signed the Guard’s Statement of Support, which is the cornerstone of ESGR’s effort to gain and maintain employer support for the Guard and Reserve.

WCMHS would like to extend a thank you to Jeremy for his commitment to the Guard and to Scott for going the extra mile to make sure Jeremy is supported in fulfilling this important commitment. Great work guys!
If Julia Child is right—people who like to eat are all the best people—then Mindy is among the very best around. Not only does she like to eat, she likes to make delicious, healthy food for others.

Every Wednesday in the kitchen of her day program in Barre, she whips up lunches ranging from comfort food, like mac and cheese, to more complicated dishes, including chicken cordon bleu and venison stew. Everyone loves her trifle with homemade cream. Holidays are special occasions. There’s corned beef and cabbage for St. Patrick’s Day and turkey and stuffing for Thanksgiving. When guests are finished, extra food is donated to the local homeless shelter.

This is a labor of love. With the help of Rosie Emmons, her community support specialist, Mindy manages the entire process: She develops the menu and grocery list, shops, cooks, makes change and deposits her net proceeds in a savings account. Those who buy Mindy’s lunches pay $5 for each meal and $1 for water or soda.

“Cooking makes me feel happy,” says Mindy. “It makes me feel very proud.”

Mindy’s lunches also happen to be an incredible achievement for an individual whose violent and aggressive behaviors once necessitated the support of two staff members. Through cooking, art and other activities, Rosie has helped Mindy with her emotional self-regulation and impulse control.

“Everybody has an ability, no matter what the challenge,” explains Rosie. “You have to look and find that ability and go with it.”

Rosie also spotted Mindy’s talent for painting. She encouraged her to work on her art with the Learning Network, a program of Washington County Mental Health Services. Mindy’s paintings have been featured in the organization’s monthly literary magazine, Shock Waves, and her abstracts have hung in local gallery shows.

“Painting helps to calm her nerves after a rough day,” says Rosie, who is a vocal proponent of art therapy. Mindy expresses her emotions on canvas, especially during moments of crisis, such as when a family member is ill. Poetry is a new interest that she is combining with painting.

“I love seeing Mindy’s reaction when she accomplishes something she hasn’t before,” said Rosie. She is now giving poetry readings during her Wednesday lunches.

In fact, giving is an important part of Mindy and Rosie’s special partnership. In addition to donating leftover food, they stage a harvest meal fundraiser every fall to benefit the Washington County’s Community Outreach and Action Team, which provides holiday gifts to people who are struggling financially. The lunch is open to the public.

It takes a month to prepare roughly 80 pounds of turkey, 27 pounds of roast pork and 25 pounds of garlic mashed potatoes. Stuffing, root vegetables and fresh pies round out the menu. As with the regular Wednesday lunches, Mindy takes the lead on shopping and cooking.

Their first lunch, in 2015, raised $636 after expenses. This past year, they served 140 meals, donating $1,031 to support of 19 families.

Mindy has earned a reputation as a powerful voice in the community. Each month, she attends a potluck supper of Friends Helping Friends, a group of self advocates. They hone their skills and plan fundraisers to support participation in the state’s annual Voices and Choices conference for people with developmental disabilities. In 2016, Mindy won the conference’s Self Advocate of the Year Award.

“I’m a good dancer,” laughed Mindy when talking about the conference. “They have different classes and speakers, and I won an award.” Workshops cover topics ranging from starting businesses to dating, and from social media to speaking up in planning meetings.

Mindy is also taking her experiences and voice into the political arena. She attends state legislative breakfasts to help policymakers better understand the issues facing participants and support staff in Vermont, advocating for higher pay and respect for service providers.

“I feel she had it in her the whole time,” says Rosie of Mindy’s talents. “She just needed a little help getting it out. She’s unique. She’s very capable. It just took some encouragement.”
WHERE HOPE AND SUPPORT COME TOGETHER

ME2/ ORCHESTRA FALL SHOW

WCMHS will host the Me2/ Orchestra this fall on 11/11/18 at the Barre Opera House! We are so very excited to bring this amazing ensemble of musicians along with world class conductor Ronald Braunstein to our area. In addition to featuring amazing music, this event will also celebrate the mental health needs of those who have served or currently serve in our armed forces as it is also Veteran’s Day.

Me2/ (“me, too”) is the world’s only classical music organization created for individuals with mental illnesses and the people who support them. Me2/ serves as a model organization where people with and without mental illnesses work together in an environment where acceptance is an expectation, patience is encouraged, and supporting each other is a priority. The mission of Me2/ is to erase the stigma surrounding mental illness (including addiction) through supportive classical music ensembles and inspiring performances.

The Barre Opera House is central Vermont’s premier performing arts facility. This 1899 theater is the cultural cornerstone of Barre, Vermont – “Granite Center of the World.” The mission of the Barre Opera House, Inc. is to restore, preserve and operate the historic Barre Opera House as a center for the performing arts serving the entire Central Vermont community.”

More information to come in the near future about tickets for this event. Be sure to mark your calendars for 11/11/18!

CH.O.I.C.E. ACADEMY HOLDS SUCCESSFUL FUNDRAISER FOR 12TH YEAR!

Ch.O.I.C.E. (Changing Our Ideas Concerning Education) Academy held its 12th annual 100 Square raffle dinner in April and raised $7,749. The biggest sponsor for the evening was Capital City Kia. There were amazing silent auction items donated by local businesses and local people, too many to mention!

All proceeds from this event benefited the student’s annual year-end trip. This year the students went to New York City in June! For most academy students this is an opportunity of a lifetime that positively supports the student’s social and emotional growth. These experiences offer new places and situations in which to practice the skills they have been learning.

Ch.O.I.C.E. Academy is a licensed, independent Jr./ Sr. high school at WCMHS. Ch.O.I.C.E. integrates mental health services with education.

Students from schools across Washington County (and some parts of Orange County) may attend Ch.O.I.C.E., and often it is a last chance for success. The great news is that this is exactly what they often find there!

Congratulations once again to both the students and staff at Ch.O.I.C.E. for another successful year! You show what is possible when people work together on shared goals and support one another along the way.
WHERE HOPE AND SUPPORT COME TOGETHER

WCMHS RECOGNIZED AS A CENTER OF EXCELLENCE!

As you may know, Washington County Mental Health Services (WCMHS) has been chosen as a Center of Excellence in the winter of 2018. A Center of Excellence is “…a great place to get care and a great place to work. It is an organization or program within an organization that is an integral part of the health neighborhood — providing rapid access…. high value, comprehensive, whole person care supporting resiliency, recovery, and results in excellent outcomes, and high client satisfaction.” WCMHS, along with United Counseling Services, was one of the two mental health agency in Vermont to receive this certification in early 2018.

Over two years ago, WCMHS formed a team to pursue the Center of Excellence certification. The team reviewed key markers to help determine where the agency already met the measures required to gain the certification as well as areas that either needed better data tracking or improvement. The efforts of an entire agency full of amazing employees, focused leadership, and dedicated partners was needed to make this happen.

In 2017, the team completed the work of addressing and improving upon: access to services; client satisfaction; comprehensive, integrate care; excellent value; and excellent outcomes. The process was exciting and the results reassuring that WCMHS was indeed providing excellent care to those we serve.

In early 2018, certification was granted through Vermont Care Partners (VCP). VCP represents 16 agencies statewide, providing leadership for an integrated system of services and supports for mental health, developmental disabilities, and substance use disorders. The five areas considered to become a Center of Excellence include: Excellent Value, Comprehensive Care, Easy Access, Excellent Outcomes, and World Class Customer Service. For example, a measure of Comprehensive Care is: Individuals without a PCP (primary care physician) are helped to enroll with a PCP. By assisting an individual in finding a PCP, WCMHS helps ensure that all the person’s needs are met, receiving the mental and physical health care they need. Another example is the measure of Easy Access—the Number of Schools with co-located services. WCMHS is embedded in most schools in central Vermont, which helps ensure students receive the level of support they need in their home school.

Vermont Care Partner’s Center of Excellence Certification builds upon the work of the National Council for Behavioral Health. The goal of the certification is quality improvement across its 16 agency network. After a rigorous review by peer leaders and an external blind review from the Jeffords Institute for Quality at the University of Vermont, WCMHS is now a VCP Center of Excellence for 3 years. When awarding the certification, VCP issued these findings:

“WCMHS has proven that it is an excellent place to come to receive high quality care from dedicated staff. The people you are charged to support achieve excellent outcomes and report high satisfaction.”

Going forward as a Center of Excellence, WCMHS will continue with the work we do to support some of our most vulnerable community members. We will provide excellent care at an affordable cost, and we will remain steadfast in our mission to advocate for the inclusion of all persons into our communities and to actively encourage Self-Determination, Resilience, and Recovery.
WHERE HOPE AND SUPPORT COME TOGETHER

WCMHS GOES SOLAR

WCMHS in collaboration with Norwich Technologies is planning two projects in the near future to put WCMHS on the solar energy grid.

First, Norwich Technologies is going to install solar panels on WCMHS’s Admin building at 885 South Barre Rd. Norwich visited the building this spring and determined that it would be an ideal setting to install panels due to the large roof space. WCMHS will generate energy from the panels that will then be utilized to reduce our energy bills and to be a good corporate citizen by promoting green energy!

The agency is also in negotiations with Norwich Technologies to provide land on one of our properties in Barre to create a solar field. This field will be used to generate green energy for use in our local community as well, and we are committed to continuing our efforts to be a responsible member of our central Vermont community.

HEATON STREET GETS A SPRING MAKEOVER FROM GMUW VOLUNTEERS!

Each year the Green Mountain United Way organizes a volunteer group that donates their time and energy to spruce up the inside and outside of local nonprofit organizations. This year United Way volunteers chose Heaton Woods Nursing Home and Washington County Mental Health (WCMHS) Heaton Street building as their projects. Close to 25 volunteers, almost all of whom work for Blue Cross / Blue Shield, came together and worked on improving the outside grounds of Heaton Street.

The whole area got an extensive late spring cleaning, and included pruning trees, painting picnic tables, scraping and painting around windows and putting in perennials that had been donated. The building looks noticeably cleaner and contributes to making WCMHS clients feel valued as they enter a clean facility that is welcoming on the outside as well as the inside.

A big THANK you to Carrie Stahler at Green Mountain United Way for organizing this and to Blue Cross / Blue Shield for letting their employees take time to help beautify both the Heaton Woods Nursing Home and Washington County Mental Health Heaton Street building.
I was asked this question by a Head-Start preschool teacher the other day, smiled, and gave her the Parent-Child Interaction Therapy overview. Her next question, “How do I make a referral?”

PCIT is a unique approach that uses intensive parent coaching to promote positive communication and discipline for families with children ages 2 ½ through 6 years. PCIT is the only evidence-based practice in which the parent and child are treated together throughout the course of treatment. The therapist communicates with the parents from behind a one-way mirror through a wireless in-ear speaker while the parent plays with the child.

PCIT is a step by step coached behavioral training model that has two phases: Child Directed Intervention, (CDI), and Parent Directed Intervention, (PDI). In Child Directed Intervention, (CDI), the parent is taught specific skills to become an attuned caregiver, using play to restructure ways to effectively and positively respond to their child. The aim of the CDI is for parents to learn more appropriate and positive parenting practices and to establish a warm and rewarding relationship, thereby improving the parents’ ability to set limits and consistently follow through.

PCIT is conducted as weekly sessions, and both parents are encouraged to attend therapy. When both parents attend, a session is first conducted with one of the parents, and a second session with the other parent immediately follows. This phase of treatment bolsters and reinforces a stronger attachment between the dyad as well as increasing child compliance.

Phase two is Parent Directed Intervention, (PDI), in which specific behavior management techniques based on social learning theory are taught to shape the child’s behavior when parents are coached to consistently implement clear limit setting. This phase of treatment strengthens behavioral and emotional regulation in both parent and child. PDI is effective in disrupting the cycle of social emotional challenges such as childhood aggression, low social competency, poor coping skills, low self-esteem, social struggles with peers, and struggles with behavioral and emotional regulation.

Parents who engage in PCIT treatment experience an increase in parental confidence, behavioral management skills, stronger attachment relationship with their children, and an overall sense of improving family well-being.

**PCIT Parent Feedback**

When I first sat down with Washington County Mental Health, I remember feeling desperate and hopeless with my son. He was struggling to keep his body safe at daycare and at home, he was defiant, unruly and just very disrespectful. I cried nightly, feeling like a terrible mother because I found myself struggling to like my son.

So they suggested Parent Child Interaction Therapy (PCIT). At first, the thought of being watched was nerve racking, and then I thought to myself well how exactly is playing with him, going to fix him. But like I said, I was desperate and I was willing to try whatever they suggested.

My son and I graduated from PCIT several months ago now. I will say that I am glad that I was desperate and willing to do whatever they suggested. PCIT was one of the best things that have happened to the both of us. I learned through this process what my son truly needed from me, through just playing with him.

Sometimes as adults with the day to day tasks we lose sight of just how important it is to carve out five minutes to get on the floor with our kids and play.

I learned how play can give them a sense of control, how praising them can lead to more positive behaviors, how reflections and behavior descriptions can make them feel like you’re interested in what they are doing, as well as giving them approval. All these things built my son’s confidence, made our bond stronger than it was before, and gave me extra tools on how to deal with certain situations.

I also learned just how important it is to follow through, and I still at times struggle with this. As a working mother of two young boys, there are days that I have the energy to fight the battle and other days I just don’t have the energy to pick that battle with my children. That’s the great thing about PDI, it teaches you the language to use, gives you the steps, and the best part is that you’re being coached, so you’re not alone.

Personally, I think that being coached was the most amazing part. I knew I wasn’t in this alone, I know that I had support. I had someone that I could lean on and someone to just tell me everything was fine and that I was doing great.
WHERE HOPE AND SUPPORT COME TOGETHER

PCIT CONTINUED

Even though we graduated we still use PCIT CDI skills twice a week and I even find my son asking me for “special time”. Half way through this process I made some big realizations.

First, I realized it had nothing to do with fixing my son and had everything to do with fixing us. We needed a controlled environment to learn to communicate and learn how to talk to each other, as well as need for setting clear boundaries. Secondly, I realized just how much I enjoyed my son, how much I valued his imagination and creativity. I realized how amazing it is to get on the floor and just play. I really started enjoying our time together and still do! It was a gift considering where we started from. I will forever be grateful to be given the opportunity to do PCIT.

It’s extremely challenging raising children, especially if they are strong willed. I would honestly recommend PCIT to anyone struggling with their young child. It can be a challenging process and it takes time to see the real progress. I remember being less than halfway through and feeling like nothing was ever going to change, but I stuck with it and things did change.

If you put in the work, follow the steps, do the homework, and attend the weekly sessions it will be more than worth in the end. If nothing else, you’ll grow a better understanding for your child, grow a better and stronger bond and gain some knowledge and tools, as well as resources. PCIT was the best learning experience for both my son and I.

(Parent of 5 year old Liam)

PCIT Parent Feedback (2)

We were struggling with our very rambunctious and inquisitive 4 year old. His failure to listen and follow through with tasks were on a daily basis. Our family was feeling a lot of stress with the constant battles. He was also acting out in school which made it difficult for him to learn and coexist with his peers.

In our search for help, we were referred to PCIT. We were introduced to two very kind and supportive ladies who helped us realize what mistakes we were making and how to properly communicate with our son.

There have been huge improvements which might not have happened without PCIT’s assistance.

We really appreciate having had the opportunity to take these classes and highly recommend it to anyone who is struggling with their child.

( Parent of a 4 year old male Ezio).

WCMHS is proud to bring innovative therapies to families and individuals in need. Through compassionate and creative services, people’s lives do improve. And this is a great thing!
For 50 years we have worked to serve our community through education, support, and treatment of individuals who live with mental health or intellectual and developmental challenges.

Support from our donors is absolutely vital continuing the important supports we provide to some of our most vulnerable community members.

You can help by donating at www.wcmhs.org or by mailing to:

WCMHS
Attn: Kirk Postlewaite
PO BOX 647
Montpelier, VT 05601

Sign up for our E-newsletter and help us in our efforts to Be Green!

Send your contact information to:

WCMHS
Attn: Kirk Postlewaite
PO BOX 647
Montpelier, VT 05601

Email: kirkp@wcmhs.org

Phone: 802-229-1399 *702

THANKS!