

# FAMILY SUPPORT PROJECT

NEWSLETTER

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## Stephen Fry

Compiled by Mary Dumas  
time-to-change.org



Stephen Fry, actor and comedian, has experienced mental health problems for much of his life. But it wasn't until he was 37 that he was finally diagnosed with bipolar disorder. "I'd never heard the word before, but for the first time I had a diagnosis that explains the massive highs and miserable lows I've lived with all my life."

During research for his documentary "The Secret Life of The Manic Depressive," Steven found out that the illness affects hundreds of thousands of people. He was also dismayed to discover the extent of prejudice surrounding mental health problems. "I want to speak out, to fight the public stigma and to give a clearer picture of mental illness that most people know little about."

Stephen thinks better public awareness is essential to help people break their silence. "Once the understanding is there, we can all stand up and not be ashamed of ourselves, then it makes the rest of the population realize that we are just like them but with something extra."

## MHA CELEBRATES OUR VOLUNTEERS

MHA's Annual Meeting was held on May 9 and honored its many volunteers and supporters with a Reception and Recognition Ceremony on Thursday from 4 to 6 pm at the Middletown Elks Lodge #1097 in Middletown, NY. MHA's Annual meeting will precede the Community Service/Volunteer Reception Recognition Ceremony where they be recognized and honored individuals, agencies and businesses who have given their time volunteering for our agency, many of whom have done it for a very long time.

The volunteers who will be receiving awards are:

For Helpline: **Bruchy Konig**

-Community Service Awards: Parents Run AMOC (*Autism Move-A-Thon of Orange County*):

**Leo's Italian Restaurant, Cornwall, Newburgh, Wappinger Falls**

-Home to Stay: **Denali Realty Ventures LLC**

-Blended Case Management Invisible Children' Housing Program and Housing Program: **Magical Moments with Santa**

MHA's Executive Director, Nadia Allan, spoke of all the volunteers and community services being offered. "MHA Board of Directors, staff and program participants are very grateful to all the Award recipients. MHA's mission continues to be fulfilled on a daily basis thanks to their priceless contribution to the individuals we serve. Their selfless and caring volunteerism and community service are vital to our success."

## MHA PROUDLY ANNOUNCES THE OFFICIAL OPENING OF THE 24/7 ORANGE COUNTY CRISIS CALL CENTER - OCCC 1(800)-832-1200

Orange County's Behavioral Health Crisis Response Team located at the County's 911 Center in Goshen opened Monday, April 1, 2019.

The OCCC is composed of a team of experienced and highly trained professionals. The calls are answered by clinician-staffed telephone support and outreach unit that is available 24-hours-a-day at 800-832-1200 to anyone in the county in need of emotional support or crisis intervention

.Before April 1, the County offered several hotline locations in the county. The emergency services center will provide a centralized response center for the unit and consolidates services.

The County's Mental Health Department has contracted with the Mental Health Association in Orange County, Inc (MHA) to provide the telephone response including the ability to screen for substance use disorders, complete New York State's required LOCADTR tool to determine substance use disorder level of care and schedule an appointment for persons in need of substance use disorder treatment.

If Peer Services are needed, the OCCC will ensure the connection with Independent Living, Inc.'s certified Peers who co-locate with the OCCC listeners at the 911 Center. Moreover, if mobile response is warranted, the call-listeners will deploy a mobile behavioral health response provided by Access: Supports for Living. The mobile team staff are also co-located at the 911 Center.

## May was Mental Health Month

When you or someone you love is dealing with a mental health concern, it can be a lot to handle. It's important to remember that mental health is essential to everyone's overall health and well-being, and also that mental illnesses are common and treatable.

So much of what we do physically impacts us mentally. That is why this year's theme for *May is Mental Health Month* – #4Mind4Body – is a call to pay attention to both your physical health and your mental health, which can help achieve overall wellness and set you on a path to recovery.

*May is Mental Health Month* was started 70 years ago by Mental Health Association in Orange County, Inc.'s national organization, Mental Health America, to raise awareness about mental health conditions and the importance of good mental health for everyone. Last year, Mental Health Month materials were seen and used by over 230 million people, with more than 10,000 entities downloading MHA's tool kit.

This *Mental Health Month*, we were focused on how a healthy lifestyle may help prevent the onset or worsening of mental health conditions, as well as heart disease, diabetes, obesity and other chronic health problems. It can also help people recover from these conditions. Eating healthy foods, managing stress, exercising, and getting enough sleep can go a long way in making you both physically and mentally healthy.

"It is important to really look at your overall health, both physically and mentally, to achieve wellness," said Nadia Allen, Executive Director of Mental Health Association in Orange County, Inc. "Getting the appropriate amount of exercise, eating healthy foods that can impact your gut health, getting enough sleep and reducing stress – it's all about finding the right balance to benefit both the mind and body."

MHA has developed a series of fact sheets (available at [www.mentalhealthamerica.net/may](http://www.mentalhealthamerica.net/may)) on the importance of exercise, diet and nutrition, gut health, sleep, and stress management. Also new this year is the **#4Mind4Body Challenge**, where we call on everyone to join us in completing a small task each day during the month of May – and tell us about it on social media using #4Mind4Body. Learn more here: [www.mentalhealthamerica.net/challenge](http://www.mentalhealthamerica.net/challenge).

"We know that living a healthy lifestyle is not always easy, but it can be achieved by gradually making small changes and building on those successes," concluded Nadia Allen. "By looking at your overall health every day – both physically and mentally – you can go a long way in ensuring that you focus on your #4Mind4Body."

For more information on *May is Mental Health Month*, visit Mental Health America's website at [www.mentalhealthamerica.net/may](http://www.mentalhealthamerica.net/may).

MHA's doors are open to the entire community. Throughout the month of May and beyond, MHA encourages you to come visit our Middletown office Monday-Friday between the hours of 8:00am-5:00pm. We are located on 73 James P Kelly Way, Middletown, N.Y. We will have an informational table available for your viewing along with experienced staff on hand to assist you in finding appropriate resources. Feel free to

call 845-342-2400 for directions.

Additionally, if you, your child, family member, friend or colleague are struggling with mental health, addiction, intellectual or developmental disability, sexual assault, housing or food crisis, call the Crisis Call Center at 1-800-832-1200 to be connected to someone who can help 24/7.

If you are a teenager, please text our Text 4 Teens (T4T) line at (845)-391-1000. The text line is open 24/7. For additional information, log onto our website at [www.mhaorangeny.com](http://www.mhaorangeny.com). You can also visit us on Facebook at Mental Health Association in Orange County. We look forward to seeing you during the month of May!

Below are some of the events that are happening at MHA and throughout Orange County.

-May is Mental Health Awareness Month Proclamation by the Orange County Legislator on Thursday, May 3 at 7:00pm at the Orange County Government Center, 223 Main Street, Goshen, NY.

-Voices United 4 Change hosted a Children's Mental Health Awareness 5k Walk at Algonquin Park, 54 Powerdermill Rd., Newburgh, NY on May 4th from 9:00am-12:00pm. For more information or to register please visit <http://gvgb.co/VU4CWalk2019> or [afreitas@asfl.org](mailto:afreitas@asfl.org).

-MHA in Orange County, Inc. will had having its Annual Recognition of MHA's Members, Supporters and Volunteers and Annual Meeting on Thursday, May 9 from 4:00pm-6:00pm at Middletown Elks Lodge 48-62 Prospect Street, Middletown, N.Y.

-Family Ties Support Group is a group for parents and families with children/adolescents who have emotional, behavioral or social difficulties (including Attention Deficit and Hyperactivity Disorders.) It meets the second Wednesday of each month from 7:00pm-9:00pm at Mental Health Association, 73 James P Kelly Way, Middletown. Please call Mary at 845-342-2400 ext. 1246 for more information.

-Family and Friends Together Support Group is a group for families or caregivers of adults with severe and persistent mental illness. It meets the Third Thursday of each month at 7:00pm at the Mental Health Association, 73 James P Kelly Way, Middletown NY. Please call Peggy for more information at ext. 1238.

-Friends Group is a free social skills group for youth ages 9 to 17 with social, behavioral or emotional difficulties. Groups currently meet in Middletown. There are two groups, a younger group for children ages 9-13 and an older group for children ages 13-17. For more information or to submit an application please contact Yaritza Barbosa, Friends Coordinator at 845-342-2400 ext. 1306.

-Vet2Vet Peer Networking groups are led by veterans for all members of the Armed Forces and veterans. Vet2Vet provides members with the opportunity to network with one another to discuss challenges and solutions with subjects such as: Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI), Military Sexual Trauma (MST), addiction, Life, Employment and Academic challenges among other topics. To talk to a veteran and learn more about Vet2Vet please call Larry Neumann at (845) 342-2400 ext. 1237.

-On May 14, members of MHA's Hudson House arranged a "walk" for Mental Health Awareness at the Newburgh Mall. There were many participants of the staff from Hudson House as well as the members who come to the program. It was a positive experience and many people stopped by the table for information and just to talk about their own personal experiences."

# Cyberbullying Starts Earlier Than You Might Think – Here’s How to Protect Your Child Now

www.Pacer@Pacer.org

When we think of kids and cyberbullying, we tend to think of older kids or teens in high school. But the truth is, cyberbullying often starts much earlier – especially since children are getting their own smartphones as early as 6 years old, according to some studies.

Here’s how to stay on top of things early so it does not become an issue with your child:

## **Have a Conversation Early**

Before your child ever accesses any technology used to communicate with others-including social media, chat groups, interactive games and texting-sit down and have a talk. When you discuss technology, use acknowledge that it may be difficult for them to talk with you about bullying. If you reassure your child that you understand how important it is to be able to communicate with friends by phone and online, they may be more likely to let you know if troubling communications occur.

## **Set Clear Cyber Rules and Guidelines**

Just as you have safety rules for your child in the physical world, do the same in their cyber- world. Safety basics include not sharing email or social media passwords with friends; realizing that not everyone online is who they claim to be, and thus, being careful what you share with people you may not know; and setting boundaries about what is and is not appropriate to share online. Establish clear rules about whether your child can “friend” people they do not know, certain hours you child can access technology, and whether or not technology is allowed in their room at bedtime. Discuss what behavior is and is not acceptable and be sure to encourage your child’s questions to ensure you are both on the same page.

## **Stay Involved in Your Child’s Changing Cyberworld**

Let your young child know that you will have access to their passwords, email accounts, social media, and other technology, and “friend” your child to monitor what they post. Determine if and when you might use passwords to check on account content. Explore parental control options through your internet and wireless service providers and continue to establish with your child what access you will have to their online lives.

Encourage them to also check in with you when they have questions or if something just does not feel right. Stay up to date with changing technology, and as you child matures, consider adjusting the rules so they are effective and age appropriate. As a parent you are responsible to know about your child’s cyber life. Open communication is the best way to make sure their interactions are healthy and fun.

# Internet Drugs – What Parents Should Know– Corporate Services EAP

**It’s All Online** – You can buy pretty much anything you want online, including powerful opioids, Adderall and synthetic compounds that change their formulas frequently and ever so slightly to stay a step ahead of the law. All it takes is a few clicks to have a package on the way to one’s front door.

**The Dark Web** – Most online dealers hang out on the “dark web.” The dark web is only accessible via a special browser called Tor that makes its user anonymous and extremely difficult to trace. The dark web is rife with drugs, child pornography, illegal services, stolen identity information, and other illegal activities. People who seek drugs online take extra steps to cloak their identity by paying with cryptocurrency such as bitcoin and using an untraceable email address.

**And Not-So-Dark Web** – But although the dark web is a haven for drug activity, a US Senate inquiry found that some drugs, specifically opioids, can be found and purchased through a simple Google search. Recently, when members searched for “buy fentanyl online,” hundreds of websites popped up. Fentanyl is an opioid 100 times stronger than heroin that has been responsible for thousands of overdoses across the U.S.

**Dangerous Drugs from Odd Places** - In addition to opioids, legal drugs like salvia, K2, and bath salts are also easy to buy online. Salvia, a plant grown in Mexico, produces hallucinations and distortions of reality so severe that others must stand by to prevent harm to the user. State laws vary on whether the drug is legal to possess, making online sales legitimate and the laws change constantly. Many illicit drug sites that you can find on common search engines are based in China. Although the Chinese government has cracked down online drug sales-with the death penalty-the incentive to sell illicit drugs is high. Illicit fentanyl at \$6,000 an ounce can sell on the street for \$1.6 million.

**Exotic, Harmful and Fatal Substances** – Makers of K2, or synthetic marijuana, change up formulas to stay just within the law. K2, also know as spice, is a mix of industrial chemicals sprayed on dried plant material. The chemicals are designed to mimic THC, the active ingredient in marijuana. Users are not exposed only to hazardous chemicals but also to potentially unsafe levels of synthetic THC. If fentanyl is mixed with any substance, the result could be death for the user. Synthetic cathinones, commonly known as bath salts, can also be legally purchased online. The drug mimics the effect of the khat plant which produces a mild stimulant high. Like K2, makers substitute chemicals to mimic the khat plant’s properties. A bath salts overdose can result in death and the drug is addictive. Buying online drugs through the worldwide web can be traced by law enforcement but with so many transactions taking place, it’s unlikely that a buyer will be caught. Websites shut down and pop back up again under another name to avoid detection.

**Parent Tough Love and Control over Internet Devices** – To keep your children from buying drugs online, it’s important to have access to all their electronic devices.

- Know the purpose of every program and app on your family’s phones, tablets and computers. Make sure Tor browsers and other software used to access the dark web are not on your family’s devices.
- Keep close track of debit and credit cards used by your children. Your transaction history can tell you who has received money from your accounts. Know where your (or your kids’) money is going.
- Be aware of packages coming into your home, especially if they were sent via the postal service. Online drug dealers prefer the US Postal Service for delivery because suspicious packages are examined by hand, rather than by the more accurate, automated methods used by UPS and FedEx.



Nadia Allen and Bruchy Koenig



Nadia Allen, Peggy Spagnola, Marvally St Clair, Lisa Hill in Newburgh Mall

Developmental Disabilities AMOC Group





Mental Health Association  
in Orange County, Inc.  
73 James P. Kelly Way  
Middletown, New York 10940  
(845) 342-2400  
Helpline: (800) 832-1200  
Text 4 Teens: (845) 391-1000

## MEETINGS

### July 2019

July 8	5:00 PM	NAMI-Annual Picnic	
July 10	7:00-9:00 PM	Family Ties Support Group	MHA
July 18	7:00-9:00 PM	Family & Friends Together for Families of Adults with Mental Illness	MHA

### August 2019

August 12	NO MEETING	NAMI-Orange Meeting	MHA
August 14	7:00-8:30 PM	Family Ties Support Group	MHA
August 15	7:00-9:00 PM	Family & Friends Together for Families of Adults with Mental Illness	MHA

### September 2019

September 9	6:30-8:30PM	NAMI-Orange Education Meeting	DMH
September 11	7:00-8:30PM	Family Ties Support Group	MHA
September 19	7:00-9:00 PM	Family & Friends Together for Families of Adults with Mental Illness	MHA
September 25	6:30-8:00 PM	Family & Friends Plus Music Group	MHA

### October 2019

October 7	6:30-8:00PM	NAMI-Orange Education Meeting	DMH
October 9	7:00-8:30PM	Family Ties Support Group	MHA
October 17	7:00-9:00PM	Family & Friends Together for Families of Adults with Mental Illness	MHA
October 30	6:30-8:00 PM	Family & Friends Plus Music Group	MHA

*All meetings are held at Mental Health Association unless otherwise indicated. Please call to confirm the day and time of the meetings. Dates and times may change due to weather, holidays, etc. For information call Peggy at 845-342-2400 Ext. 1238 or Mary at Ext. 1246.*

### Vet2Vet Support Groups Meet Weekly

<b>Monday</b>	6:00 PM	Thrall Library, 11-19 Depot Street, Middletown Board Room – 1st Floor
<b>Tuesday*</b>	2:30 PM	Hudson House, 245 Broadway, Newburgh *Meetings are held bi-weekly at Hudson House
<b>Wednesday</b>	6:00 PM	Tai Chi and Qigong Class Cornerstone Residence, Newburgh
<b>Thursday</b>	6:00 PM	Cornerstone Residence, 111 Broadway, Newburgh

*Please call Larry at 342-2400 Ext. 1237 for further information or special accommodations.*