



EDUCATING & COLLABORATING

According to a recent survey, our school district families have identified mental health and wellness as a top concern. While we are unable to offer live events at present, the education committee has devised some creative alternatives.

Hannah's House is sponsoring a presentation on local channel 44 featuring Kevin Gallagher, a psychotherapist specializing in working with adolescents and families. We are collaborating with two local youth programs to support and promote resiliency in difficult times: Sculpture School with Eddie Merma in Waitsfield and The Waterbury Area Makers Cooperative. We are offering bereavement meetings with specialist Fran Plewak for November and hosting a weekly parenting group in December. Check our website for more details and stay tuned for more virtual events!

FUNDRAISING CHALLENGES IN 2020

Like so many other nonprofit organizations, Hannah's House has faced huge challenges over these past months. Our major fundraiser, the Mad Marathon, was canceled while Hannah's House has remained open to the community through telemedicine. Thankfully, we

have received several grants, including the Red Sox Impact Award, but community support from individuals and businesses is more important than ever. We hope you will help Hannah's House continue to provide and expand mental health services in our area.

WHAT YOUR DONATIONS DO:

- Provide therapy to clients of all ages & financial situations
- Attain qualified therapists
- Allow quick response time - usually within 48 hours
- Connect the public with other local resources
- Provide office space for therapy in Waitsfield & Waterbury
- Provide on-site counseling at local schools
- Bring in experts on mental health issues to share knowledge
- Raise awareness of mental health & reduce stigma

HOW TO DONATE:

By Check:

Hannah's House Inc
PO Box 217
Waitsfield, VT 05673

By Credit Card Or Paypal:

HannahsHouseVT.org
Click Donate

Hannah's House is a VT 501c(3) nonprofit. Your donation is tax deductible.



WELCOMING OUR NEW EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



I am thrilled to be serving Hannah's House as Executive Director in this challenging time. This organization thrives on learning and adapting. The therapists continue to serve a large number of people in the community, quickly adapting to an online tele-medicine platform and outdoor therapy sessions when possible. With the seasons changing and possibility of more in-office appointments, we are taking every precaution to keep our therapists and clients safe and adjust to these new circumstances.

The need for mental health care and self-care is greater than ever. As a working mother of two school-aged children, the lack of a consistent routine within the family unit has proven to be one of the most difficult obstacles. With less daylight and long lists of tasks, I have to pause daily and make the time for self-care. Here are my top ten methods: Vitamin D3 drops, prayer/meditation, exercise, savor my favorite hot tea, talk to friend/therapist, cuddle with my dog, light a candle/incense, put down my cell phone, eat something delicious, and sit near my happy light.

Everyone has different methods of self-care; now is a good time to compile your own list. Ask a friend or therapist for more stress-reduction ideas or call us at 802-496-9715, where there is a warm voice on the other end of the line. I extend my deepest gratitude to the Hannah's House team and supporters for enabling this small but mighty organization to continue to meet the mental health needs of our community.

Chrissy Rivers
Executive Director

"Quite simply, the importance of the services that Hannah's House therapists provide to students at Crossett Brook Middle School is without measure. Over the years, the (counseling) sessions have - and are - changing the lives of so many adolescents in our area... I do not know what we would do to fill the growing need were it not for Hannah's House."

- Tom Drake, Principal
Crossett Brook Middle School

A NOTE FROM BARB CHRISTIE-GARVIN ON HER RETIREMENT

It has been an honor serving as Executive Director of Hannah's House with the therapists, the Board, and community partners as it has grown into a trusted local resource for mental health in our community. After seven plus years, it is my pleasure to pass the baton to Chrissy Rivers to bring her fresh energy and skills to lead Hannah's House into the next ten years. I look forward to supporting Chrissy and the mission and work of Hannah's House from the wings while taking time to practice retirement and enjoy the trails and back roads of Vermont with my husband.



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Waitsfield: MRV Health Center
859 Old County Rd.



LEARN TO ESCAPE INTO YOURSELF

By Hayley Hamilton, LICSW, LADC

Hannah's House Therapist



This is an incredibly hard time for so many people right now. One bit of advice is to try to put your "horse blinders" on

and perhaps opt out of external stressors beyond your control; whether it's COVID or politics or even social media. This is a great time to go within ourselves and get comfortable with our inner structure and resources. This is a sense of being quiet and knowing that within yourself, you have all that you need.

You need to build a relationship with yourself and get comfortable with the idea of "self." Most of us are so busy running or achieving that going within ourselves can be a scary place simply because it is so unfamiliar. Work on not only finding quiet within yourself, but also in knowing we can comfort ourselves in this space when we feel isolated or overwhelmed. There are plenty of resources you can use to help you practice visiting this space - you can certainly meditate or use online resources or apps like Calm, Headspace, 10% Happier, 7 Days of Meditation and others. With practice, in any moment, you can stop and detach from the urgency or crisis at hand to go within and broaden your scope as

a witness to a larger reality than this particular stressful moment. Move beyond it, knowing it will pass if you allow it to. Obsessive thoughts are very common, but realizing what we have control over versus what we don't and being the observer and using detachment to step away are two strategies that help you break from the outer world and into yourself.

Thinking of yourself first is a healthy and necessary selfishness that we aren't taught. Asking yourself questions like, "How am I doing?" and "What do I need?" can help you come back into your inner structure. Make a list of the things you enjoy doing by yourself that calm you.

The more stressful the world becomes, the more important self-care is. Being on your own side is critical. Take inventory of the dialogue you have with yourself - is it supportive? Is it compassionate? Are you on your own side? Whatever you focus on will grow in your mind, so grow the flowers, not the weeds! Try to practice acceptance and consider changing negative self-talk to a positive "I am working on this," tone. If you are your own cheerleader, you will always have a best friend living within. So please don't be afraid of your inner structure. The more time you spend with yourself in times of quiet with a loving self-dialogue, the more comfortable you will be there.

FAMILIES IN COVID TIMES

By Kevin Gallagher, Psychotherapist
Specializing in adolescents and families

Back in April, everyone was so glad that COVID-19 came in spring rather than fall; now it's fall and it's still with us. It is clear that there is a unique kind of fatigue that comes with living in Covid times. It's part anxiety and part depression. It causes irritability, fear, anger and sadness, whether for ourselves, for our kids, or even for our parents. Consequently, there is a lot more tension in family life. So if you are sick of it, you are not alone. The good news is that humans are very adaptive to change - just remember that adaptation does not happen overnight. It takes a while to figure out how to stay safe and stay sane. Here are some reminders to help you and your family hold steady in these uncertain times.

7 Tips for Coping with COVID

1. No one is trying to annoy you. Everyone manages stress differently. You do too.
2. Routines are very important for kids. Help them keep a regular schedule.
3. Get outside when you can. Nature is a great antidote for stress and fatigue.
4. Pay attention to how you use food and substances to deal with feelings.
5. A pandemic is not the best time to re-evaluate your marriage.
6. Ration how much media you consume and limit how many sources you check.
7. Family activities require parents to take charge of screen times for kids and themselves.

PERSPECTIVES FROM OUR THERAPISTS

"When the pandemic hit us in March, I transitioned all of my clients to Telehealth. This modality has been very accessible to youth and adult clients, but has created barriers for many of my younger clientele, who use play and creative expression to facilitate communication. So in September, I shifted to a hybrid model of in-person only by necessity. I have been exploring with clients the ways in which we can grow and become more resilient through this experience. I have seen a marked increase in demand for mental health support, which has put us to the test in more than one way."

Heidi Robbins, MA
Hannah's House Therapist

"Being a therapist during this time has been a balancing act on many levels. Many clients are feeling stressed and overwhelmed with an existential sense of anxiety. This is a shared experience for all of us, therapists included. Being fully present for my clients, while also for my family and friends can be draining at times. It has definitely forced me to practice what I preach, which is to have appreciation for the small things, connecting with nature, daily mindfulness and exercise, shutting down when necessary. We are so privileged to live in such a wonderful community and beautiful place. I make sure to remember that each day."

Gary Frankel, LICSW
Hannah's House Therapist

MEETING OUR
COMMUNITY'S
NEEDS IN 2020

155

Local Clients
Served per month

4278

Hours of Counseling
Provided this year

\$4490

In Financial Aid for
mental health services

EMERGENCY NUMBERS FOR HELP 24/7

Wash. Co. Mental Health Crisis Line: 802-229-0591

National Suicide Prevention: 800-273-8255

VT Crisis Text Line: Text VT to 741741

HANNAH'S HOUSE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR:
Chrissy Rivers

RED SOX FOUNDATION AWARDS HANNAH'S HOUSE \$10,000

Red Sox fans nominated their favorite nonprofit mental health organizations in each of six New England states this spring, and Hannah's House was one of five finalists recognized for its work in raising awareness and improving mental health outcomes in Vermont. Thanks to the many supporters who voted, Hannah's House was awarded the top prize for Vermont.

From the Red Sox Foundation, "We recognize that this unprecedented crisis has affected our society in numerous ways including the

mental health of so many in New England. We are in awe of the important work you do in this critical area in your community and we recognize that during this challenging time, non-profit organizations are in need of extra support to fulfill their missions."



RED SOX
FOUNDATION