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4141 E. Dickenson Place
Denver, Colorado 80222



Join MHCD's Together Green initiative! Sign up to receive this newsletter electronically at www.mhcd.org.

Everyone Can Get Involved with MHCD and Make a Contribution to the Lives of People We Serve



Donate a Holiday Gift - Gifts of Joy Bring Smiles to Deserving Kids

Each year MHCD serves the mental health needs of over 1,000 children and adolescents, many of whom have experienced trauma, have

been victims of emotional or physical abuse or have seen serious violence in their homes. Most are indigent and may not receive a gift this holiday season. You can help by donating a gift or gift card to our annual gift drive, Gifts of Joy. You can donate now through **December 10**. Please contact joanne.aiello@mhcd.org for more information.

Contribute Online

MHCD is now a part of GivingFirst, an online giving tool. Visit www.mhcd.org or www.givingfirst.org to learn how this partnership supports MHCD by paying all online giving fees.

Contribute in the Workplace - Spread the Word

As a member of Community Health Charities, government employees working in organizations participating in the Combined Federal, Colorado Combined, and Denver Combined workplace giving campaigns can designate their donations to benefit MHCD by entering our code: 39579. Contact barbara.shaw@mhcd.org.

Contribute Your Time - Volunteer

CHAMPS - Caring Hands and Minds Providing Support is our volunteer program. We could use your help to promote recovery. For more information contact joanne.aiello@mhcd.org.

Contact Us
Mental Health Center of Denver
4141 E. Dickenson Place
Denver, Colorado 80222
303.504.6500 www.mhcd.org



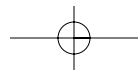
YOU ARE INVITED TO JOIN US

Gifts of Hope

MHCD Fundraising Breakfast

October 1, 2008
Grand Hyatt Hotel Denver
7:45 - 9:00 am

CONTACT:
JOANNE.AIELLO@MHCD.ORG



perspective



NEWSLETTER OF THE MENTAL HEALTH CENTER OF DENVER • FALL 2008

Connections Reduce Court and Jail Time

When you first meet Matt, a soft-spoken young man in his mid-twenties with a gentle demeanor, it is hard to believe that he



MHCD Case Manager Michael Prejean, B.S. CACII works with C2C consumers at MHCD's Capitol Hill Clinic at Humboldt. He credits the direct collaboration with Denver's criminal justice system and flexibility in treating consumers as individuals for the program's success.

has been arrested close to 100 times for violations like trespassing and being uncooperative with police. Once he entered MHCD's Court to Community Program (C2C), Matt's life started down a different path.

MHCD and the Colorado Coalition for the Homeless partnered 18 months ago with the Denver Crime

Prevention and Control Commission and the Denver court system to create Court to Community, targeted at individuals with mental illness and a history of repeated violations of city ordinances, like trespassing. The initial goal of the grant-funded program was to decrease jail time and court appearances by 25 percent. **Remarkably, in just a year-and-a-half, the program has been so successful that results show a reduction in jail recidivism by 80 percent.**

Matt, who has Bipolar Disorder and a history of substance abuse, was living on the

streets when he first became involved with MHCD eight years ago, according to his case manager Michael Prejean. Prejean, one of two MHCD clinicians who work with the 24 C2C consumers at MHCD's Capitol Hill Clinic at Humboldt, entered Matt into the program in the hopes of helping him break his cycle of arrests. A little more than a year later, Matt has not been arrested or jailed, and he now lives in an apartment and manages his own finances.

By court order, C2C connects consumers to mental health treatment and medication, substance abuse services, and housing and social support assistance, leading to significant progress for the majority of the program's 41 total participants, according to MHCD Program Manager J. Eric Smith. "It's the immediate connection to needed services that makes the difference," he says.

C2C's unique approach closes treatment gaps and provides the most appropriate services for consumers, according to James Ginsburg, Director of Substance Treatment Services/ Housing First, who heads up the program for the Coalition. "This program is ultimately about providing the proper care for people who are not really criminals," explains Ginsburg. "They are people who are caught up in the expensive cycle of jail and court."

For consumers like Matt, who calls C2C "a step in the lifelong road to recovery," C2C requires personal effort and commitment. "Court to Community is a program that builds on people's strengths," says Matt, "but you have to contribute. No one is enti-

Total of 41 Court to Community Consumers:

- 70% Male
- 30% Female
- Ages 19 to 69 Years Old

After 18 months:

- 2/3 Have Not Been Re-Arrested
- 80% Reduction in Jail Time
- \$104,790 Savings to Taxpayers

tled. You have to understand what you can do with your strengths."

There is definitely no sense of entitlement for Matt, a young man who has worked hard to take advantage of the opportunities C2C offers him. "I am grateful for this program and for all of the people who have helped and contributed to MHCD to make this program happen," he says. "I can now look at the different directions in life available to me."

Court to Community is partially funded through grants from the Colorado Health Foundation and Denver's Crime Prevention and Control Commission.

Get to Know Us MHCD Enriching Lives & Minds Open House

Join us for a one-hour informational event, held monthly, to learn more about how MHCD is changing lives by helping people recover from mental illness.

Wednesday, September 17 • 5:15-6:30 p.m.
4141 E. Dickenson Place, Denver, CO 80222

To RSVP or for future dates, contact Joanne Aiello at 303.504.6732 or joanne.aiello@MHCD.org.

TOGETHER GREEN

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