Connecting with Others

Sometimes we want to connect with others in a meaningful way, but we’re not sure where to start. When facing personal challenges it can be difficult to allow ourselves to be vulnerable enough to accept help from supports in the community. The TIP and Bucks County LIFE staff have supported many individuals in a variety of life focuses including learning to connect with others socially and building skills for engagement which a young person can carry with them throughout their life.

Recently, a young man, who was supported by the TIP Program was living in an area without social supports or the friends needed to make or share memories with. This left him feeling isolated which impacted his self-esteem. With the support of his TIP Facilitator he identified this as a concern and established a goal around improving his social skills so he could learn to interact with others and form meaningful relationships in the community.

Together, this young man and his TIP facilitator, worked very hard on this goal. Finally, with great enthusiasm (though much admitted nervousness too), he was able to start connecting with his community with his TIP facilitator by his side. Throughout this process, there were times when he would request to leave events, feeling overwhelmed by social anxiety, and during those times his TIP facilitator was encouraging, understanding, and supportive, framing these times as learning experiences and steps along the way. These steps would lead towards developing coping skills and working toward his goal.

Within months, this youth was able to go beyond attending events, and with the support of his TIP Facilitator and additional support from the Bucks LIFE Certified Peer Support Specialist, he was able to begin connecting with other young people. He learned to develop skills on how to socially engage with others at events, share his common interests, ask meaningful questions, and exchange information to form real peer connections.

Essentially, he went from feeling nervous about talking to others at gatherings, to engaging with other in a friendly way, to then fostering real friendships and actually begin others at gatherings, to engaging with other in a friendly way.

Over time, he needed less and less assistance from TIP and Bucks County LIFE Programs.

See the young man achieve success in this area of his life is a wonderful example of setting a meaningful goal and then finding the right supports and resources to reach it. In this case, he was able to develop practical social skills which allowed him to form real connections and enhance his life.

TIP (Transition to Independence Process) is an enhanced case management program provided by Access Services for youth and young adults between the ages of 16 to 25, who have a Mental Health Diagnosis and Medical Assistance. For more information about the TIP program, contact Tom at: 1-888-442-1590, option 2.

Join the Bucks County Suicide Prevention Task Force for a Three Mile Fun Walk!

The course is designed as approximately a one mile loop. Walkers are encouraged to walk any distance they feel comfortable completing. All walkers raising or donating at least $10 will be entitled to a walk t-shirt.

Walk Date: Sunday, April 22, 2018
Walk Location: Bucks County Technical High School 610 Wistar Road, Fairless Hills, PA
Walk Times: Check-in/Registration: 9:00am
Walk Begins: 10:00am
For more information, please contact: Dawn Seader, Walk Coordinator at (267) 904-7655 or holdonyoumatter@buckscounty.org

Senator Tomlinson’s Children Expo
This free event will feature entertainment for children and families as well as an array of exhibitors offering information on state and county programs of interest to children and parents. The event is free and open to the public. Rain or Shine!

When: Saturday, April 14, 2018
11 a.m. – 2 p.m.
Where: Council Rock High School South 2002 Rock Way Holland, PA 18966

Bucks County Children’s Mental Health Awareness Event
Free event for children, transition age youth, and families. Activities and resources geared to mental health awareness.

When: Saturday, May 5, 2018
11:00am—2:00pm
Where: Barnes and Nobles, The court at Oxford Valley 210 Commerce Blvd Fairless Hills, PA 19030

Planning for the Future Expo 2018
The Quakertown, Pennridge, and Palisades School Districts with the Bucks County Intermediate Unit are coordinating to bring transition resources to families in Upper Bucks and the surrounding area. This event will host transition workshops and highlight resources for students with IEPs. Students, parents, guardians, teachers, counselors and other professionals who work with transition age youth in Bucks, Montgomery, and Lehigh counties are all invited to attend.

When: Mon, April 23, 2018
5:30 PM – 8:30 PM
Where: Quakertown Senior High School 600 Park Avenue Quakertown, PA 18951

Workshops:
- 5:30pm - Introduction to Secondary Transition
- 7:30pm - College Accommodations and Disability Disclosure

Agency Fair
6-8pm - Pathways to Transition

Learn more at: https://bit.ly/2pIE14q

Bucks County LIFE on Social Media

Twitter: @accessservicespa Facebook: www.facebook.com/accessservices Instagram: @accessservicespa

Check out our website www.lifebinbucks.org and join our email list to receive updates on monthly parent/professional workshop trainings, youth events, and family community events.
Youth Involvement: Magellan Youth Leaders Inspiring Future Empowerment (MY LIFE)

What is MY LIFE? Magellan Youth Leaders Inspiring Future Empowerment (MY LIFE) is made up of youth between the ages of 13 and 23 who have experience with the following issues: mental health, substance use, juvenile justice, or foster care. The group focuses on important issues affecting youth through regular meetings, special events, presentations, and performances.

All Meetings are held at: Abington Health Center - Warminster Campus 225 Newtown Rd, Warminster, PA 18974 the 2nd Thursday of each month from 5:30 to 7:30 pm.

Who can join MY LIFE? MY LIFE groups and activities are open to any youth who:

- Are between the ages of 13 and 23 years old.
- Has experience with mental health, substance use, juvenile justice, or foster care-related issues.

Magellan welcomes youth who have these challenges themselves. Magellan also welcomes youth who have a family member or friend experiencing these challenges. No application is needed to join this group. Any youth who attends a meeting or an event is considered a MY LIFE member. MY LIFE helps youth use their experiences to help others. It gives the chance to help improve the programs and systems that serve young people.

Why MY LIFE?

MY LIFE is a group where youth can:

- Feel supported
- Make friends
- Have fun
- Show off their talents
- Learn about topics that are important to them

MY LIFE gives youth a chance to build:

- Confidence
- Positive social supports
- Leadership skills

Contact Marissa Gates at MGates@magellanhealth.com or (215) 504-3966 for more information about MY LIFE.

Eagles Autism Challenge

Join Philadelphia Eagles players, alumni, coaches, executives, cheerleaders and SWOOP for the Eagles Autism Challenge, a one-day bike ride and family-friendly 5K run/walk.

Choose from 15, 30, or 50-mile cycling routes, or the 5K run/walk, all beginning at Lincoln Financial Field and ending on the 50-yard line. Activities include a Friday Night Kick-Off Party and Saturday Finish Line Celebration on the field.

This event will take place on Friday, May 18th and Saturday May 19th.

Learn more at: www.eaglesautismchallenge.org/

Every April, Autism Speaks kicks off World Autism Month beginning with UN-sanctioned World Autism Awareness Day on April 2.

Join by the international community, hundreds of thousands of landmarks, buildings, homes and communities around the world, light blue in recognition of people living with autism. Autism-friendly events and educational activities take place all month to increase understanding and acceptance and foster worldwide support.

Learn How to Light It Up Blue at: www.autismspeaks.org/wam/how-to-liub

Light It Up Blue

Information originally from www.autismspeaks.org

Light It Up Blue

Joining the international community, hundreds of millions of landmarks, buildings, homes and communities around the world are lighting up blue in recognition of people living with autism.

Autism-Friendly Events:

- Autism Speaks’ World Autism Month
- Autism Speaks’ Light It Up Blue

Learn how to Light It Up Blue at www.autismspeaks.org/wam/how-to-liub

Eagles Autism Challenge:

Join Philadelphia Eagles players, alumni, coaches, executives, cheerleaders and SWOOP for the Eagles Autism Challenge, a one-day bike ride and family-friendly 5K run/walk.

Choose from 15, 30, or 50-mile cycling routes, or the 5K run/walk, all beginning at Lincoln Financial Field and ending on the 50-yard line. Activities include a Friday Night Kick-Off Party and Saturday Finish Line Celebration on the field.

This event will take place on Friday, May 18th and Saturday May 19th.

Learn more at: www.eaglesautismchallenge.org/