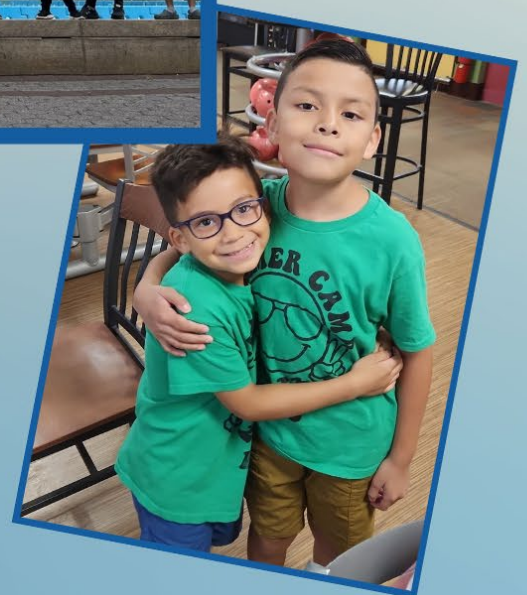
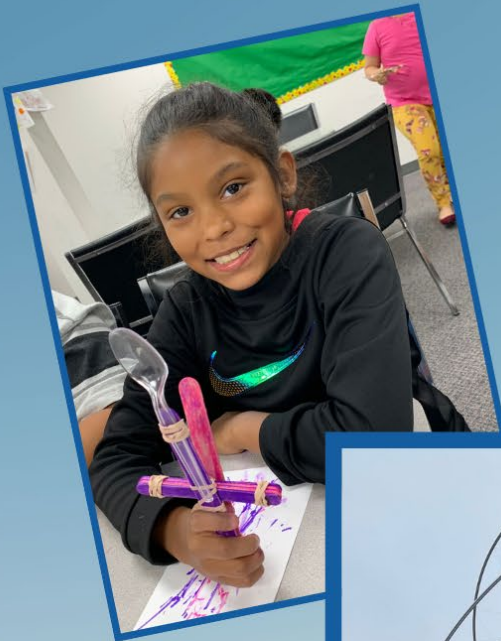
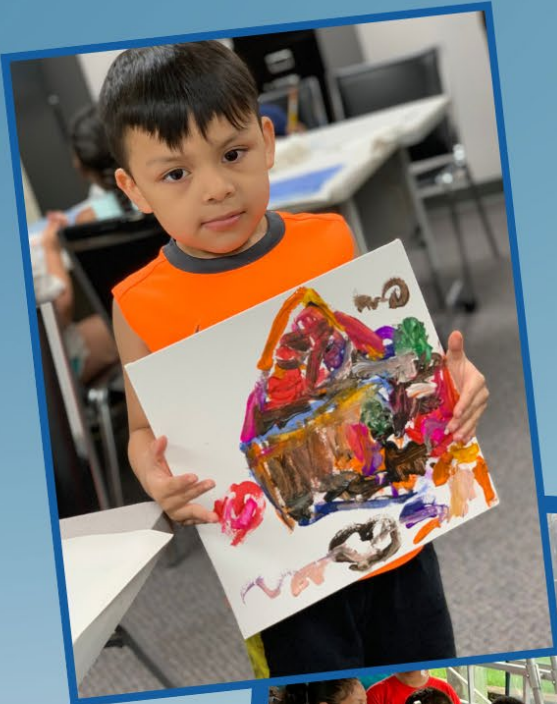


Hispanic Counseling Center



2023 Annual Report





OUR MISSION

The mission of the Hispanic Counseling Center is to enhance the strengths of Long Island's families and children through bilingual, bicultural counseling, prevention, vocational, and educational services to enrich their lives, foster economic independence, and nurture dreams for the generations to come.

ORGANIZATIONAL PROFILE

The Hispanic Counseling Center (HCC) promotes family and community wellness with a fully bilingual/bicultural staff and a network of interrelated services including licensed behavioral health treatment. HCC supports the recovery of the individual, and the entire family system, in a single point of entry. The agency locations in Hempstead and Bay Shore provide treatment and prevention for chemical dependency, mental health, and youth and family programs and in 2023 served more than 1,850 clients a month. HCC is the only agency in Nassau County licensed by both the New York State Office of Mental Health (OMH) and the New York State Office of Addiction Services and Supports (OASAS) to provide these services in a fully bilingual, bicultural setting for families and individuals who are working toward a constructive, self-sustaining way of life. Services are available to all, regardless of race, ethnicity, or ability to pay.

HCC was originally established in 1977 by the Nassau County Department of Drug and Alcohol Addiction Services and the Nassau County Youth Board to provide substance abuse treatment services and services for children and adolescents in response to the county's growing Hispanic population. Since its inception, HCC has been a beacon of hope for many immigrants and their families who have come to Long Island seeking to make a better life.

The agency has grown from one program and four staff in a 600 square foot rented office in 1977, to ownership of a 38,000 square foot modern facility with multiple programs and services in 2023. HCC is proactive in developing programs that respond to the most urgent needs of the community and through individual, group, and family counseling, educational workshops, case management, support groups, family activities, after-school tutoring and enrichment, summer camp, crisis intervention, and prevention programs for at-risk youth, clients are able to receive multiple services in one setting.



HISTORY OF THE HISPANIC COUNSELING CENTER INC.

- 1977** The Hispanic Counseling Center established by the Nassau County Department of Drug and Alcohol Addiction to provide substance abuse treatment services to growing Hispanic population in Nassau County
- 1979** Nassau County Youth Board awards funding for prevention, education, and counseling services to limited English speaking youth and families
- 1986** HCC licensed by New York State to become first bilingual, bicultural alcohol and drug rehabilitation clinic in Nassau County
- 1987** Summer Program begins for children ages 7-12
- 1989** After school homework help and tutoring sessions are available to all school age children.
- 1992** HCC awarded license from New York State for mental health outpatient clinic
- 1993** Supported Housing Program inaugurated for mentally ill clients in need of housing
- 1994** English as a Second Language Program available to all HCC clients
- 1995** Respite Program established to provide information, counseling, support, and respite services for families with children having serious emotional problems
- 1996** Domestic Violence Program created to fill a gap in services for victims and perpetrators
- 1998** HCBS Waiver Program established to provide in-home services to developmentally disabled adults and children
- 1998** Literacy Program instituted to teach adults how to read and write in Spanish
- 1998** Early intervention Program created for children ages 0-3 and families to provide social work services at HCC and in the home
- 1999** Medicaid Service Coordination Program begins for developmentally disabled adults and children to provide case management to live at home rather than an institutional setting
- 2001** Ryan White Mental Health Program begins for People with HIV/AIDS
- 2003** HCC moves to 344 Fulton Avenue Hempstead, the new building owned by the agency



HISTORY OF THE HISPANIC COUNSELING CENTER INC.

- 2003** Teen Drop-In Center begins
- 2008** HCC purchases 336 Fulton Ave Hempstead to expand the Mental Health program
- 2011** Kinship program begins to provide support to grandparents/caregivers of children whose parents are incarcerated, deported or hospitalized
- 2012** Project Hope starts after Super Storm Sandy to provide crisis counseling
- 2014** Super Storm Sandy Program provides multiservice support to storm victims
- 2017** Care Coordination to provide case management
- 2017** Mental Health Clinic Crisis Stabilization Services begins, to provide intensive services
- 2017** Empire State After-School Program begins, to provide after school and Saturday academic and counseling support to youth and their parents
- 2017** Partners in Prevention begins, to provide evidence based drug prevention services
- 2018** Community Health Connections Program begins, for residents of the Village of Hempstead
- 2019** Partnerships established with LI Cares Kids Cafe and Hofstra University STEM Program
- 2020** HCC Suffolk County Mental Health Clinic re-opens in Bay Shore
- 2020** Regional Prevention and Support Services in partnership with Northwell Health begins, to provide intensive case management to decrease the risk of HIV infection
- 2020** Project Hope begins, to provide COVID-19 related crisis counseling and referrals
- 2020** Nassau Mental Health Clinic expands services for children affected by domestic violence with funding from Mother Cabrini Health Foundation
- 2021** State Opioid Response (SOR) II Program begins, a multi-year prevention program in partnership with AHN and other agencies and organizations
- 2022** COMHPS Program evolves from FEMA NY Project Hope to OMH project to provide short term counseling and social supports and behavioral health resources
- 2023** Mother Cabrini After-School Program begins, to provide after school and Saturday academic and counseling support to youth and their parents in the HSD Middle School.



MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS



2023 Board of Directors

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Nanette Malebranche

Vice President

Dilcia Granville, Ph.D. MSW

Treasurer

George Santiago Jr., Ph.D.

Secretary

Sonia Berrios Villanueva

Members

Yahira Acosta-DeLeon, MSW

Gloria Baca

Yesenia Galeas-Vasquez

Liz Gutierrez

Veronica Lopez

Adam M. Tavares, Esq.

Dear Friends of HCC:

On behalf of the Board of Trustees and the entire HCC staff, it is my pleasure to share with you the Hispanic Counseling Center’s 2023 Annual Report. The Hispanic Counseling Center has been well respected as a pillar in the community for over 47 years for the services it provides, many of which are unique programs. The agency has grown and expanded since 1977, adding programs to respond to the community’s most vital needs, including educational workshops, summer camp, respite, and housing and after school tutoring.

My involvement started as a member of the Fundraising Committee. Being part of HCC was such a rewarding experience that I wanted to become a Board Member. I have had the honor and privilege to serve as Board President for the past four years. I am proud to enthusiastically volunteer for this exceptional organization which provides distinctive and vital services to the Long Island community.

The Board of Directors would like to acknowledge and express our deep appreciation of CEO, Claudia Boyle. Claudia has demonstrated outstanding leadership since assuming her position in 2020. We would also like to recognize the HCC staff. The success of HCC comes from their devotion to provide an invaluable service to the community.

I would like to extend our sincere appreciation to the many public and private supporters who have so generously funded HCC programs and services in 2023. We thank you for making it possible for HCC to continue to impact the lives of our clients, and we look forward to fostering our continued partnerships with you as our respected community partners.

I would also like to acknowledge the Hispanic Counseling Center’s Board of Directors for their commitment of time, governance, and generous support.

We invite you to learn more about HCC’s programs and services which have so successfully transformed lives since 1977.

Nanette Malebranche
President



MESSAGE FROM THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER



Dear Friends of the Hispanic Counseling Center,

I am delighted to share with you the highlights of our journey in 2023 through this annual report. As I reflect on the past year, I am filled with immense pride in the accomplishments and the profound impact the Hispanic Counseling Center (HCC) continues to have on the lives of individuals and families in our community.

HCC has remained resolute in its dedication to providing exceptional services to the Long Island community. Rooted in our mission of empowering individuals, nurturing resilience, and fostering emotional well-being, we continue to transform lives and serve as a beacon of hope for many. A standout achievement was the expansion of our afterschool program into the middle school, enabling us to reach even more newly arrived children in need. Through these efforts, we have actively worked to break down barriers and improve the lives of so many immigrant families, not only academically, but also in the area of mental health, ensuring that our services are accessible to all who require them.

I continue to be proud and excited about the launch of the Community Mental Health Promotion and Support Program last year, continuing to promote mental health awareness and provide support to those impacted by mental health challenges. This revitalized program has been strategic in engaging our community more effectively, offering education, support, and connection to vital services.

Our behavioral health clinics have experienced significant growth, particularly in referrals for children, adolescents, and young adults facing serious and persistent mental health and substance use issues or a combination of both. Our Youth and Family and prevention programs continue to provide invaluable support to students and offer a nurturing environment during crucial after-school hours. Through engaging activities and educational workshops, we strive to equip young people with the skills they need to thrive and steer clear of negative influences.

Collaboration continues to be the key to our success, and we are proud to continue to strengthen and expand these partnerships with agencies, associations, hospitals, school districts and many others in Nassau and Suffolk counties. These collaborations have allowed us to extend our reach and provide essential services and support to a broader audience.

My heartfelt thanks to our dedicated Board of Directors for their unceasing support. I am so deeply grateful to our generous donors and funding partners whose contributions enable us to innovate and meet the evolving needs of our community.

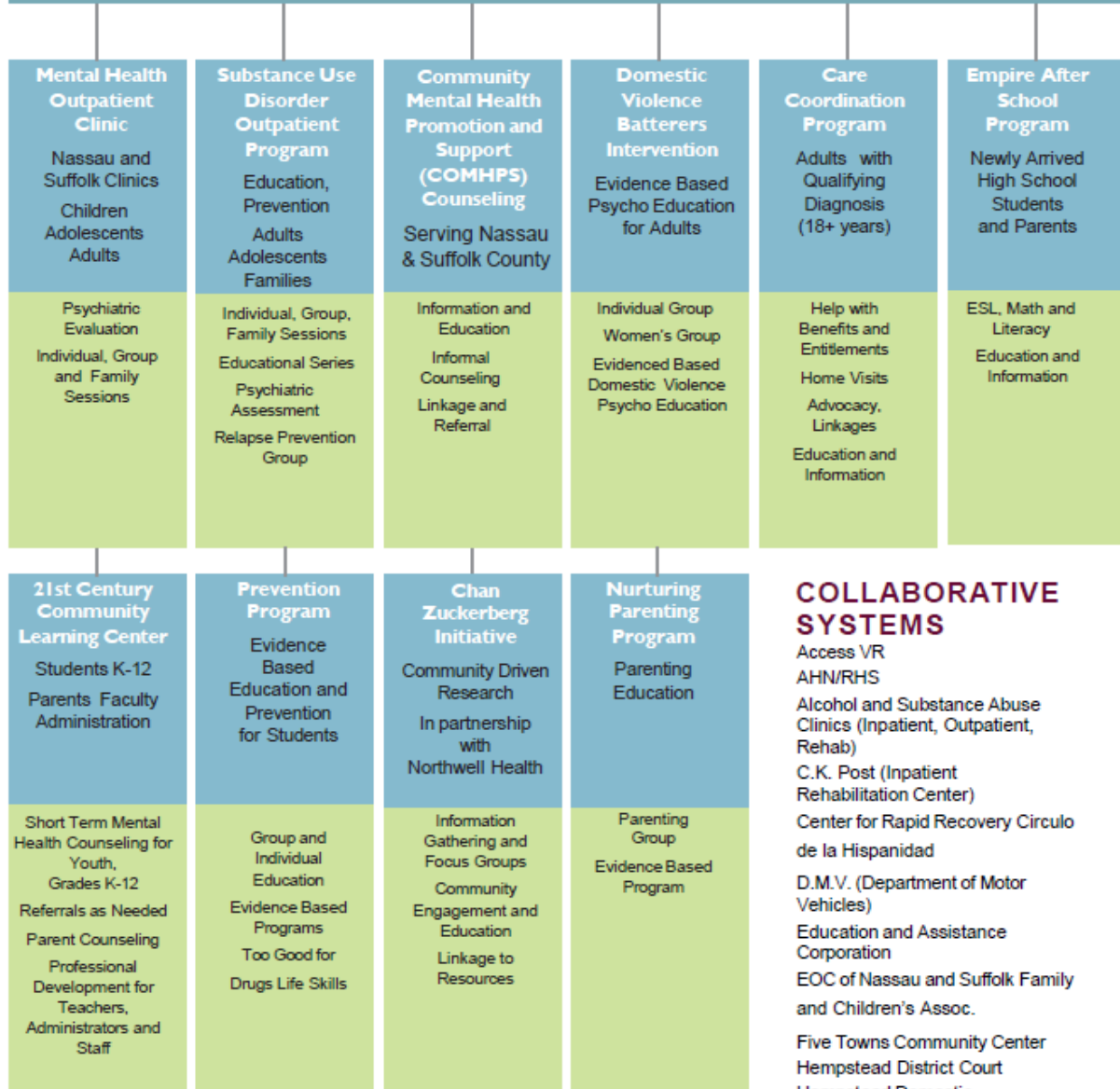
Last but certainly not least, I express my profound gratitude to each one of the exceptional staff of the Hispanic Counseling Center. Their tireless dedication, professionalism, and support are the driving forces behind our success. Without them, HCC would not be the thriving agency it is today, serving the Long Island community with compassion and excellence.

Warm Regards,
Claudia M. Boyle, LMHC
Chief Executive Officer



HISPANIC COUNSELING CENTER

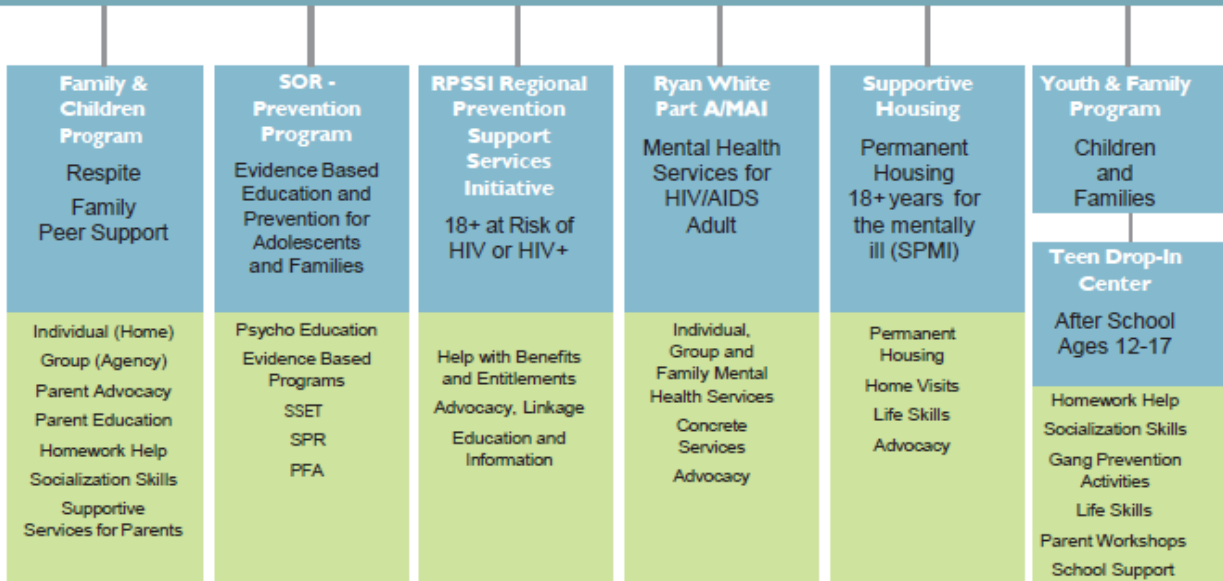
HISPANIC COUNSELING CENTER, INC.





HISPANIC COUNSELING CENTER

HISPANIC COUNSELING CENTER, INC.



Kingsborough Addictions
 Center (Inpatient Rehabilitation
 Center)
 LGBT Network
 LIISA – Long Island
 Long Island FQHC, Inc
 Local Government Units
 Local Primary Care Physicians
 and Pediatricians
 Local State and Private
 Colleges and Universities
 Long Island Association for
 AIDS Care (LIAAC)
 Long Island County on
 Alcoholism and Drug
 Dependence (LICADD)
 Long Island Jewish Women
 Coalition – Peninsula chapter
 Mental Health Association
 of Nassau County
 Mineola Felony Court
 MTA and Able Ride
 Nassau and Suffolk CPS/APS
 Nassau and Suffolk County
 Churches and Places of
 Worship
 Nassau and Suffolk County
 Department of Social Services
 Nassau and Suffolk County
 Health Home Case
 Management

Nassau and Suffolk County
 Hospitals and Shelters
 Nassau and Suffolk County
 Social Security Administration
 Nassau and Suffolk Foster Care
 Nassau and Suffolk Private
 Attorneys
 Nassau County Adolescent
 Diversion Program
 Nassau County and Suffolk
 County School Districts
 Nassau County Office of
 Mental Health, Substance Use
 and Developmental Disabilities
 Nassau County District
 Attorney's Office
 Nassau County Family Court
 Nassau County Office of
 Hispanic Affairs
 Nassau County Office of
 Youth Services
 Nassau County Youth and
 Safety Coalition
 Nassau County P.I.N.S. (Person
 in Need of Supervision)
 Diversion Program
 Nassau County Parole
 Department
 Nassau County Police
 Department
 Nassau County Probation
 Department

Nassau Suffolk Law Services
 Nassau University Medical
 Center Detox Program
 Nassau University
 Medical Center
 Neurologists and
 Private Psychiatrists
 Northwell Health
 NYS Department of Health
 NYS Office of Mental Health
 (OMH)
 NYS Office of Addiction
 Services and Supports
 (OASAS)
 NYS Office of People with
 Developmental Disabilities
 (OPWDD)
 NYS Office of Children and
 Family Services (OCFS)
 NYS Office of Parks and
 Recreation
 Options for Community Living
 Personalized Recovery
 Oriented Services Program
 (PROS)
 Planned Parenthood
 SEPA Mujer
 SALVA-Domestic Violence
 Program
 Suffolk Project for AIDS
 Resource Coordination
 (SPARC)
 The Safe Center of LI

**Mother Cabrini
SIFE Program**
 Newly Arrived
 Middle School
 Students
 ESL, Math and
 Literacy
 Education and
 Information



THE IMPACT OF THE HISPANIC COUNSELING CENTER EXPRESSED IN THE WORDS OF HCC PROGRAM CLIENTS

In the words of 'COMHPS' clients:

“Thank you to the COMHPS program for its support to our community, and especially to me. It has been of great help in dealing with my self-esteem and depression. Thanks to the individuals who are part of this wonderful program. Thanks to the team members of the support group "This and That.”

“I am a client of HCC since 2013. The discussions in the COMHPS program have helped me a lot in overcoming the personal problems I have faced in my life. This has been possible thanks to these wonderful people who are part of the COMHPS program: Carolina, Diana, and Carlos, who are professionals. I also try to pass on the message to other people thanks to their abilities and support. I am grateful for the time they share with us; you always learn and they educate us on how to act if needed. Thanks to God and the program for caring about our well-being.”

In the words of 'Care Coordination' clients:

“I love the fact that I can rely on care coordination support services. Care coordination at the Hispanic Counseling Center has helped me by getting educational information on health and wellness resources and access to community programs. I feel relief to know that I can secure food, Medicaid, and transportation and not miss my medical appointments. I can also call any time and find assistance with public assistance applications. A person with language barriers can find comfort in care coordination. Thank you HCC Care Coordination Program.”

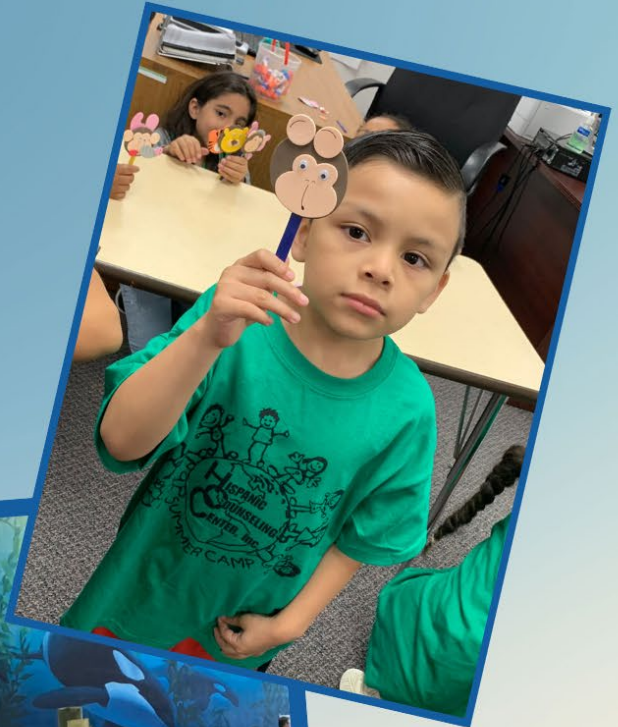
In the words of 'Mental Health Clinic' clients:

“Being a client at HCC has transcended the conventional therapist-client dynamic; it has become a symbiotic relationship where I not only receive valuable support but also actively incorporate the lessons learned into my own life. The wealth of knowledge and coping mechanisms acquired from therapy sessions has not only enhanced my emotional well-being but has become a resource I draw upon whenever I'm in distress.”

“Once I started taking my sessions seriously, taking every word she said and ingraining it into my mind, I saw genuine progress. My anxiety started to slowly decline, and my anxious ticks became minimal. I would wake up and I'd feel okay, which was better than anything else in the years before. It only got better. My communication skills increased drastically, I was able to repair my relationship with my mom and I was able to focus in school. The most important piece of progress for me though, was my confidence. I worked on myself and started practicing deep amounts of self-care and looked out for my own health. I've dropped nearly 40 pounds, cleared up my skin and developed (as cocky as it sounds) an incredible style. I look in the mirror and feel good about myself, and my camera roll has more pictures of me than ever before. This journey has been long but deeply rewarding, and I will only continue to grow.”



HISPANIC COUNSELING CENTER





CARE COORDINATION

HCC Care Coordination has a partnership with Northwell Health and has been in operation since 2017. The focus of Care Coordination is to assist individuals in monitoring their health, both behavioral and physical, to ensure that they remain healthy. Each client is assigned a Care Coordinator who assists the client to obtain medical and behavioral health providers in the community of their choice. As necessary, clients are assisted with referrals to appropriate medical providers and community health organizations.

Care Coordination provides services to individuals age 21 or older. Ninety percent of the HCC Care Coordination client base is senior citizen, male and female, and predominantly Hispanic. The program seeks to provide enhanced services to the client and each Care Coordinator develops a six month care plan that identifies strengths and barriers for the client. Interim target dates are set as well as assessments to ensure better quality of health.

In 2023 Care Coordination provided case management support services to a total of 136 clients. Care Coordination continued to assist clients with filing for unemployment, social services, SNAP benefits, housing re-certifications, U.S Naturalization, Metro Cards, food pantries and medical appointments. The Care Coordination team continues to work closely with other HCC programs and partners at Northwell Health and other organizations.

In 2023, Care Coordination staff worked with the HCC Teen Drop in Center to arrange for children of mutual clients to receive gifts during the holidays. Care Coordination also continued to work closely with Long Island Cares food bank and provided food to many care coordination clients in need.

The goals for the Care Coordination program for the year 2024 will be to continue expanding number of food items within the food pantry to continue addressing the food disparity among our seniors, as well as continue to expand and meet our goal of 165 clients by the end of 2024.



COMMUNITY MENTAL HEALTH PROMOTION AND SUPPORT PROGRAM COMHPS

The Community Mental Health Promotion and Support Program (COMHPS), funded by the NYS Office of Mental Health (NYS OMH), officially began on December 13th, 2022, to continue the vital services provided by NY Project Hope Coping with COVID, that ended statewide on December 12th, 2022.

As an outreach based initiative, the COMHPS Program was designed to provide community engagement, mental health wellness promotion, individual screenings for mental health conditions, brief counseling, and as indicated, referrals to the HCC Mental Health clinic or other licensed mental health professionals.

Using U.S. census data, staff identified the towns and villages with the highest Hispanic population in Eastern Nassau and Western Suffolk counties. This information helped to establish a catchment area and provided the basis for in-person outreach to inform the community of program services and identify clients.

Program staffing includes one team leader and six outreach workers. Throughout the year, outreach workers received required training through the NYS OMH, the Center for Practice Innovation (CPI), the National Council for Mental Wellbeing, and the National Child Traumatic Stress Network. In addition, outreach workers participated in Learning Collaborative sessions conducted by the NYS OMH training team.

In 2023, the program served 1,119 community members in individual/family sessions; and 4682 community members in educational/support group sessions in both Nassau and Suffolk counties. In addition, the COMHPS team participated in 182 community events sharing program information and resources with over 9000 participants.

Program accomplishments include; establishing partnerships with organizations within the communities served, establishing trust and rapport with community members, and successfully serving target populations. The COMHPS Program will continue to support individuals with mental health needs and establish, maintain, and improve individual and community mental health and wellness.

The goals for the COMHPS program in 2024 are to conduct more support groups within the communities served to help improve their mental health status, as well as expand partnerships in underserved communities where gaps of services for mental health have been identified.



HISPANIC COUNSELING CENTER

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE BATTERERS ACCOUNTABILITY PROGRAM (BAP) & NURTURING PARENTING SKILLS PROGRAM (NPP)

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE BATTERERS ACCOUNTABILITY PROGRAM (BAP)

This 26 week psycho-educational program is designed to educate individuals who are referred by courts and child welfare agencies due to charges stemming from domestic violence and child abuse. The goal of the program is to offer individuals an opportunity to change learned behaviors through education, challenging them to take responsibility for their actions, recognize the impact of their actions on victims, control violent impulses, and reduce the potential for family violence. Referrals come from the courts and probation, among others. 23 clients from both Nassau and Suffolk Counties registered for the 26-week program and 11 successfully completed the program.

Participation in the BAP program is court mandated as a consequence of being arrested and charged with domestic violence. Many clients have little understanding of the U.S. judicial system and are overwhelmed due to language and cultural barriers. Because they see it as a punishment and a legal requirement to fulfill, many clients offer resistance at the outset of the program.

The Batters Accountability Program is not one of judgment, but one of support, guiding the clients to analyze their actions and attitudes, leading to more positive behavior. Developing a positive dynamic between the counselor and client is paramount to successful completion of the program. Clients respond when this open communication is established.

The goals for the Batters Accountability Program (BAP) in 2024 are to improve communication of the unique nature of the agency's BAP program, collaborating with people and groups involved in the criminal justice system (judges, court agents, lawyers, probation), as well as to increase awareness of the BAP program for women perpetrators of domestic violence among people and groups involved in the criminal justice system (judges, court agents, lawyers, probation).

NURTURING PARENTING SKILLS PROGRAM (NPP)

This 16-week Nurturing Parenting Skills Program (NPP) is a psycho-educational program designed to build nurturing parenting skills as an alternative to abusive and neglectful parenting and child-rearing practices. In 2023, classes were held on-site at the Hispanic Counseling Center in Hempstead, with parents placed in groups, based on the ages of their children.

While the program was originally created to help women who were victims of domestic violence with their parenting skills, it now includes both men and women who are striving to be better and more responsible care givers. The program is offered free of charge to parents willing to accept this challenge. Most clients are mandated or referred by the HCC Mental Health Clinic, CPS, Family Court, and other agencies in response to the urgent need for these services among many families, including those of the Hispanic community.

In 2023, 41 clients from Nassau County registered or attended the parenting classes; 25 clients successfully completed the program.

The goals for the Nurturing Parenting Program in 2024 are to increase development of parenting resources according to the age level of children and secondly, to promote and encourage the participation of other parents who desire to improve their parenting skills.



EMPIRE STATE AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAM

The Empire State After-School Program (ESAP), in partnership with the Hempstead School District, assists newly arrived Hempstead High School students and their families by providing social and academic support during the school year and summertime. ESAP offers support to children who have recently arrived in the United States from other countries. The newcomers arrive with a variety of educational and linguistic backgrounds and diverse social and emotional needs. ESAP develops solutions to the challenges faced by newcomer students and encourages collaborative planning to help students succeed. Parents are offered educational workshops and parent support groups. In 2023, the program supported 150 students and their families in the Hempstead School District.

During 2023 ESAP continued to serve students and their families by providing support in their adaptation to acculturation changes. Throughout the 2022-2023 school year and the 2023 summer program, ESAP continued to remain 100 percent in-person with certain exceptions that remained using online platforms. This helped students and teachers stay updated with online platforms. Assistance also continued to be provided in English and Spanish.

The program used all the necessary academic tools to support students to pass their exams and regents to graduate in 2023. Students participated in structured and supervised educational services after school including tutoring, youth development, and school resources to help meet learning standards and be successful in school. Program teachers designed effective lesson plans to assist students in academic subjects, English as a New Language, and provided students who may have experienced interrupted or inconsistent formal education with reading and writing in their native language, they are known as SIFE.

The program also provided social and emotional support for students and their families. This included making referrals to the HCC Mental Health Clinic, the Substance Use Disorder Program, and other appropriate support services for those who experienced trauma or emotional stress in the country of origin, on their trip to the U.S., or adapting to a new culture and the pandemic. The program referred and provided information to more than 130 students and their families to service providers in Nassau County, such as the Nassau County Office of Hispanic Affairs, The Nassau County Department of Social Services, Island Harvest, The Salvation Army and other agencies.

The goal of this program for 2024 is to continue to provide academic support services for SIFE students.



FAMILY PEER SUPPORT SERVICE (FPSS) AND RESPITE PROGRAM

The intent of the program is to provide respite and family peer support services for families raising a child ages 6 through 21. An eligible child exhibits deficit functioning in one or more of the following areas: self-care, educational achievement, family interactions, socialization, self-control, self-direction, etc. or experiences social, emotional, developmental, and/or behavioral challenges in the home, school, placement, and/or community. The primary objective of the Children and Family Peer Support Services Program is to reduce family stress, reduce the incidence of hospitalization or re-hospitalization, and decrease the risk of child abuse.

The program continued to work with the OMH Long Island Field office on an array of services to children and families through the Child and Family Treatment Support Services as well as the Respite Services. In 2023, the Respite Program served fifty-five (55) children / adolescents and thirty (30) families in Nassau County. Groups were provided on-site group activities one day a week from Monday through Thursday after school. Five families (5) received individual respite services one time per week. In 2023, all children also received tutoring, socialization and recreational time with trained staff with the goal of children improving their academics as well as socialization skills. During school breaks, children were also provided with various leisure activities such as trips to the movies, bowling, and to the park.

Throughout the year 2023, families were offered tickets to different events such as the Long Island Children's Museum, historical sites, and cultural destinations. These tours provide educational and enriching experiences for families to learn about history, art, science, or other subjects while enjoying quality times together.

In 2023, parents and families were also provided with the following resources: food banks, Department of Social Services assistance, healthcare assistance, and many others. Children and their families continued to be connected to food and health resources, SSI, DSS, and educational services and self-care through webinars, Zoom meetings, and weekly contact. The program collaborated with outside agencies and other HCC programs through referrals as needed.

The goals for the Family Peer Support Services and Respite Program for 2024 are to continue to foster emotional growth in the children and families being served and, to provide interim relief and assistance to children and families in challenging situations.



GREENTREE FOUNDATION 'NEW NORMAL' SUPPORT PROGRAM

The 'New Normal' Support Program, a special initiative funded by the Greentree Foundation, targeted clients in need of COVID-19 relief by providing evidence based educational tools and strategies to address the symptoms many immigrants and community members experienced as a result of the pandemic. The support groups, provided at no cost, were offered to clients in cycles of ten weekly sessions for each of three different age groups: children (8-11 yrs.), youth (12-17 yrs.), and adults (18+). The adult group was conducted in the evenings and the children and youth groups were conducted on Saturdays via Zoom. The support groups promoted mental health education and healthy coping mechanisms, in addition to regularly scheduled HCC Mental Health Clinic sessions.

Evidence based mental health assistance tools were tailored for each age group to help children, youth, and adults. Each group offered children, youth and adult clients of the Hispanic Counseling Center a safe space to express their concerns, be heard, and not feel isolated. Group members provided emotional support and advice to each other. Participants expressed experiences and emotions lived as a result of the pandemic and found that they were not alone in this healing process.

The 'New Normal' Support Group sessions conducted a total of 289 units of service in 2023. Topics discussed within the adult's group were: Loneliness/Isolation, Grief/Illness, Promoting Helpful Thinking, Promoting Positive Activities, Building Problem Solving Techniques, Managing Reactions, Depression, Anxiety, Rebuilding Healthy Social Connections and Self-Care. Topics of discussion for the youth's group included Peer Pressure, the Effects of Substance Use, and Social Anxiety. For the children's group Bullying, Peer Pressure and the Importance of Sleep/Rest were discussed.

The support groups were especially beneficial to community members without medical insurance. Referrals were made for all participants within and outside the agency. Clients expressed interest in attending support groups offered by the Hispanic Counseling Center in the future. This grant ended July, 2023.



HISPANIC COUNSELING CENTER

MENTAL HEALTH OUTPATIENT CLINIC

The HCC Mental Health Clinic (MHC) is the only fully bilingual, bicultural mental health program in the region licensed by the New York State Office of Mental Health to provide treatment for children, adolescents, adults, and families in a bilingual bicultural setting. The goal of the clinic is to enable individuals who have chronic mental illnesses or who are suffering emotional distress to achieve their highest level of functioning within their families and community. Services provided by the MHC include individual, family, and group therapy, psychiatric services, medication management, and crisis intervention for those in need.

The MHC staff includes two bilingual psychiatrists, eleven full-time therapists, and three Fee for Service therapists. MHC therapists participate in ongoing training on risk assessment, co-occurring disorders, evidenced-based practices, HIPPA, sexual harassment and corporate compliance regulations, and other topics.

The Mental Health Clinic accepts referrals from the Department of Probation, Child Protective Services, schools, hospitals, immigration detention centers, and works in partnership with the Northwell Health ER Clinic for referrals in need of urgent attention, among others. The Mental Health Clinic and other HCC programs cross refer clients as necessary for optimum client outcomes and as needed clients are referred to community services and resources such as food distribution centers, housing/rental assistance and school services for children. MHC youth and children benefit from the Respite Program and the Teen Drop-in Center for academic support and development of socialization skills. In 2023, the Mental Health Clinic also experienced an increase in referrals to Substance Use Disorder program as a result of increase in co-occurring disorders among clients.

The Mental Health Clinic also participates as a field placement site for Masters level social workers and mental health counseling students from local colleges and universities including: Hofstra University, Adelphi University, LIU, Fordham University, Molloy University, and Stony Brook University. Field placement students receive guidance and supervision from MHC program coordinators and gain skills and experience while providing clinical services and expanding the number of clients HCC is able to serve. These collaborative partnerships between universities and the MHC benefit clients, the community, and field placement students who, after graduation, have the opportunity to be hired as full-time employees at the agency.

Annually the Mental Health Clinic conducts a telephone client satisfaction survey to assess client-perceived outcomes of therapy. A sample of clients is selected at random and is conducted by agency staff other than MHC therapists to increase response rate. Findings from 49 completed surveys indicate that 47% of clients reported gaining control over their presenting psychiatric symptoms and/or depression. 27% reported improved family relationships and a decrease in familial domestic violence/disturbances. The rate of re-hospitalization remained low with 2% of the sample being re-hospitalized during the first year of treatment in the MHC.

Nassau County:

In 2023, the Nassau Clinic received 1,638 applications and screenings for treatment. The total number of clients served in 2023 was 1,467 individuals. The total number of units of service billed was 19,314. Despite challenges and limitations including limited psychiatric staff, the clinic accommodated new referrals, especially a large number of children and adolescents.

In 2023, therapists continued to provide individual, family, and group therapy via telehealth platforms including Zoom, Doxy.me, and telephone, to ensure that clients received appropriate treatment in the circumstances presented since the pandemic. However, therapists were also able to bring a large percentage of clients back to office for in-person individual/family/group therapy sessions and psychiatric sessions. As a result of returning to in-person appointments, the number of units of services increased and cancellations decreased.



HISPANIC COUNSELING CENTER

The goal for the Nassau County Mental Health program for 2024 is to hire an additional 4 full-time therapists in order to increase number of clients served. The HCC Nassau clinic will also look to increase their total number of units of service billed from 19,314 to 20,000 in 2024.

Suffolk County:

The HCC Suffolk Mental Health Clinic located in Bay Shore, NY has been serving clients since July 2021. The Suffolk Clinic developed and expanded relationships with the community, including the Brentwood School District, Central Islip School District, Suffolk County Community College, and the Suffolk County Mental Health Clinic. The Suffolk HCC MHC saw clients in person and via telehealth, as needed.

The HCC Suffolk clinic successfully accommodated all referrals, especially a large number of children and adolescents. In 2023, the HCC Suffolk Clinic received 866 applications and screenings for treatment. The total number of clients served in 2023 was 684, and 9,662 units of service were billed.

The goal for the Suffolk County Mental Health program for 2024 is to begin to explore where the clinic could expand or relocate to introduce additional services onsite, such as care coordination and substance use disorder program treatment.



RPSSI – REGIONAL PREVENTION AND SUPPORT SERVICES INITIATIVE PROGRAM

The Regional Prevention and Support Services Initiative Program (RPSSI) provides case management to individuals who register in the program. The program focuses on decreasing the risk of new HIV infections and targeting people at risk of contracting HIV, Hepatitis C, and sexually transmitted infections. Access to clients and awareness on the use of PEP (Post-exposure Prophylaxis) which means, taking medication to prevent HIV after a possible exposure and PrEP (Pre-exposure prophylaxis) for HIV prevention for individuals at risk, continued to be offered to clients. These services are offered in Nassau County. The purpose of RPSSI is to reach as many community members and inform, educate and provide information/material on HIV and STD prevention/testing and connect them to services.

During 2023 HCC continued year 3 and began year 4 of the RPSSI program in partnership with Northwell Health and the North Shore University Center for AIDS Research and Treatment (CART). HCC is proud to be a partner in this multi-organization effort implemented by hospitals, clinics, and community based organizations in Nassau County. In 2023, 87 clients were served and registered. 219 clients received services during the year, and 300 clients were reached and educated on the RPSSI program services.

The RPSSI is a much needed program in the community. It allow us to educate and reach the community to prevent the spread of HIV/STD infectious diseases. The implementation of the RPSSI in the community will allow to continue to build relationships with medical providers, case managers and continue the referral process for testing and other services.

The goals for the RPSSI program in 2024 are to expand access to and awareness of PEP and PrEP for individuals at risk as well as to continue to enroll and connect community members in need of service to clinics for testing HIV/STD testing.



HISPANIC COUNSELING CENTER

RYAN WHITE PART A/MAI MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES FOR PEOPLE WITH HIV/AIDS

Ryan White Mental Health Part A/MAI (Ryan White) is a federally funded program that provides care and treatment services to people living with HIV who are uninsured or underinsured. The Minority AIDS Initiative (MAI), a component of Ryan White, addresses the needs of minority communities disproportionately impacted by HIV/AIDS. The program has been in operation since 2001 with the goal to assist the most vulnerable who are ineligible for any entitlements and who reside in Nassau and Suffolk Counties. The HCC Ryan White Outpatient Comprehensive Mental Health Services Program is conducted by bilingual and bicultural staff and specialized mental health services are provided by a psychiatrist and licensed clinical social workers.

During 2023, the Ryan White program served 66 clients from Nassau and Suffolk County, and continued to provide a wide range of services including psychosocial evaluation, psychiatric evaluation, individual, and group therapy, counseling groups, crisis intervention, home and/ hospital visits when needed, and information on other eligible services, and referrals. The Ryan White program continued to provide telehealth mental health treatment utilizing telephone and/or video conferencing when clients were unable to attend sessions physically due to employment schedule conflicts. The staff continued to modify schedules in order to have flexibility to accommodate clients. Clients' have increased their ability to utilize technology. 2023 was a year where clients were able to advocate for themselves and were able to learn how to schedule medical transportation on their own, allowing them to attend their medical appointments with minimal assistance. Additional program services such as: linkage to other resources, minimal gift card distribution, food pantries referrals/list and employment information continued to be available for clients. Occasional home visits continued to be conducted to secure required signatures and meet new clients.

In 2023 the agency continued to see clients in person as COVID-19 statistics continued to lower in both counties. Individual and group sessions were made available both in person and via zoom, to meet client comfortability with services provided.

The goal for the Ryan White/MAI Program in 2024 is to conduct more community activities such as; wellness fairs and tabling events to promote the program and expand awareness to help those diagnosed with HIV/AIDS.



THE STATE OPIOID RESPONSE (SOR) II PROGRAM

The State Opioid Response (SOR) III program funded by OASAS serves vulnerable youth and families at risk of opioid and substance use. In 2023, a total of 235 clients were served. Program services were delivered in-person and via zoom. The SOR III program implemented 'Evidenced Based Practices' (EBP) as part of this New York State prevention initiative to reduce opioid consumption and deaths by overdose. Each EBP promotes healthy coping mechanisms and seeks to develop resiliency in program participants. As needed, referrals were made for mental health services within the agency. In 2023 SOR III utilized the following Evidence Based Programs with successful outcomes in all settings and for all client groups:

Psychological First Aid (PFA) and Skills for Psychological Recovery (SPR): These two evidenced based programs were offered at three Family Service Association shelters in Nassau County and to all programs in HCC. In addition, we collaborated with the Nassau County Victim's Advocate Office to facilitate services to victims of crime. Moreover, we partnered with the Teen Center at the Hempstead High School to assist students in need of psychological support. PFA is a brief intervention for people with acute distress symptoms such as anxiety, irritability, grief, emotional ups and downs, poor sleep, poor concentration, etc. SPR is used in combination with PFA to teach clients lifelong skills such as managing reactions, promoting helpful thinking, and problem solving. During 2023 a total of 68 clients received these programs via zoom and in-person.

Parenting Wisely Teens and Young Children (3-11): Two- online programs that promote effective parenting skills for parents of teens and younger children. With the guidance of a counselor, and through program videos, parents learned important concepts to promote mutual respect, good communication, and unity in the family. Parents were referred by the Mental Health Clinic, and typically children and teens were receiving mental health services at the Clinic. Sessions were conducted via zoom or in-person at the parent's convenience. During 2023, 102 parents participated in the Parenting Wisely program via zoom and/ or in-person.

Support for Students Exposed to Trauma: SSET is a 10-week support group for students ages 12 to 17 who have experienced some type of trauma in their lifetime. The SSET in group was conducted at the Hempstead High School with positive outcomes. The HCC Mental Health Clinic referred clients to three support groups in 2023. Participants learned the common reactions to trauma and learned how to normalize their emotions. Parents identified improvement in their children after completing the sessions.

Positive Action: This is a school based curriculum that promotes the philosophy that "*we feel good about ourselves when we do positive actions and there is always a positive way to do everything*". The program served 25 students from middle and high school enrolled in the Teen Drop in Center at HCC. Students showed a special interest in the program and learned strategies to build a positive identity and self-concept while writing journals, playing games, and practicing self-evaluations.

Pre-Venture (youth 12-17): Pre-Venture is a new program that was added in October 2023: This is an evidence-based prevention program that uses personality targeted interventions to promote mental health and skill development and delay youth substance use. Pre-Venture helps youth to learn better coping mechanisms, weight the consequences of their actions, make healthy decisions, set long term goals and more. Implementation will begin in early 2024.

The goal for this program for 2024 is to continue implementing these initiatives in the SOR Program.



SUBSTANCE USE DISORDER (SUD) PROGRAM

Throughout 2023, the goal of the Substance Use Disorder (SUD) Program continued to assist individuals who abuse substances to achieve sobriety and to live a substance free lifestyle. Families are provided with services designed to meet the individual treatment needs of each family member. In addition to the program's therapeutic services, clients are provided with educational and prevention services to address the cycle of addiction. All services are delivered in an atmosphere of cultural understanding which recognizes the importance of family involvement. The incorporation of a self-help philosophy serves as the basis for maintaining abstinence and achieving sobriety.

Program staff is fully bilingual and bicultural and the program is housed within a multi-service agency which allows the program to provide clients with comprehensive treatment and referrals. Program services are designed in a flexible manner and consider time and employment constraints of clients, with sessions available in the morning and in the evening.

The Substance Use Disorder Program has continued to provide services to adults, adolescents, and children predominantly of Hispanic origin, who as a result of their alcohol/drug use have been negatively impacted in many areas of their lives. The program provided mostly in-person services in the year 2023 (group sessions, individual sessions and intake assessments), with very few services conducted via telehealth. The Substance Use Disorder Program continued to receive referrals from Nassau and Suffolk District Courts, Felony Treatment Drug Court, Family Court, Probation Officers, Social Service agencies and community attorneys. The program continued to receive referrals from the Domestic Violence Courts for individuals struggling with addiction and explosive behavior, and received an increase in referrals from schools, CPS and PINS (Person in Need of Supervision) Diversion regarding adolescents involved in experimentation or full use of substances and/or alcohol.

In 2023 the program delivered nearly 10,000 individual and group counseling sessions, with a significant admission of adolescents and children as young as 10 years of age who are beginning to experiment and frequently consume alcohol and other substances including tobacco products. On a weekly basis, the program offered seven (7) substance use disorder groups, one (1) domestic violence/substance use disorder group, one (1) substance use/women's group, one (1) substance use/adolescents group, one (1) relapse group, one (1) coping skills group, and three (3) educational series groups. A treatment plan was developed for each client with scheduled weekly group sessions, weekly educational series, and biweekly or weekly (as needed) individual sessions, and if needed, a relapse group. Individual, group and/or psychoeducation were also available for the family or significant other affected by a loved one's abuse of drugs or alcohol. During the past year, all clients were, and continue to be educated about seeking the adequate medical attention and follow the indicated protocol in case of being sick with COVID 19 or any other airborne disease.

The goals for the SUD program for the year 2024 will be to increase the number of services provided during year 2023, and to develop a new group, a family group, to aid significant others of those with addiction problem.



SUPPORTIVE HOUSING PROGRAM

The Supportive Housing Program (SHP) provides permanent housing to eligible adults with a serious mental illness diagnosis and is the only program in Nassau County in which clients reside in individual apartments and have access to secure, safe affordable housing. The goal of the SHP is to help clients maintain housing and assist clients with additional community resources to achieve fully independent lives.

In 2023, the Supportive Housing Program served 29 clients diagnosed with Serious Mental Illness. Among these clients were 16 females, 11 males and two LGBTQ. The SHP client population is composed of 16 Hispanic, six African American (non-Latino), six white (non-Latino) and one other race. The SHP serves various age groups: one client between the ages of 25 and 44, 15 clients between the ages of 45-64 and 13 clients 65 or older. The program housed 28 single clients and one family composed of a mother and two children. The housing units are scattered throughout Nassau County with 20 clients residing in Hempstead, four clients in Freeport, two clients in Rockville Centre and three clients in Glen Cove.

The SHP continued to provide clients with services needed to maintain fully independent lives including services from HCC Care Coordination and Mental Health Clinic, and various services including financial assistance, landlord tenant issues budget training, transportation support, crisis management, benefit entitlements, referrals to other agencies, COVID related concerns, and assistance with forms and translations.

In January 2023 Tenancy Support Services (RTSS) was initiated which includes additional community integration and skill building, stabilization services, individualized needs assessment, treatment planning, independent living skills training, community resource coordination, and crisis planning and intervention.

In 2023 the SHP collaborated with external agencies and organizations to support clients in achieving greater independence in the community. Key partnerships include Central Nassau Guidance, for medical assistance; Nassau Mental Health Association, for financial management; Sail Act Team, for comprehensive support; Mobil Residential team, for crisis intervention; Saint Vincent de Paul Society, for low cost furnishings; and Catholic Charities, for essential services.

In 2023, the Supportive Housing Coordinator participated in training to enhance the delivery of exemplary services to the SHP clients. Training included Long Island Housing Services Fair Housing Rights, Center for Practice Innovations: Managing Challenging Behaviors, Developing an Action Plan for Implementing Evidence-Based Treatment, and Dealing with Difficult People/Navigating Challenging Situations, and the Nassau County Town Hall 2023.

In 2023, the Supportive Housing Program recorded 827 contact units with clients. The SHP clients completed 9,786 units of residence in the program. Clients provided positive feedback through anonymous surveys regarding SHP services, including tenant/landlord issues, home visit scheduling, staff satisfaction and service delivery.

Future goals for 2024 include training on daily living skills, such as cooking, cleaning, laundry, nutrition, and wellness, to teach clients how to be proactive in their everyday lives, and workshops to educate clients on critical aspects of being a tenant, specifically, understanding tenants' rights and responsibilities and budgeting.



YOUTH AND FAMILY PROGRAM

The Youth and Family Program continued to provide academic support services to students in the Hempstead High School and Middle School. The program also continued to support our families by providing referrals to other HCC programs. The Teen Drop In Center's staff members provide mentoring to our students as well as tutoring help and emotional support. The program continued to provide a safe haven for our teens during the after school hours where youth are more likely to engage in risky behaviors.

In September of 2023, we had approximately 23 students enrolled in our after school program. On average we had about 17 students attend daily. During the academic school year the program provided students a variety of educational workshops. We were able to provide workshops to the students which included boxing, self-defense, yoga and Cornell Cooperative 4H Extension. The student advocate also assisted the parents in navigating the school system and continued to be an intricate part of the program. Part of the program's success was due to parental involvement which is an integral part of the children's education.

During the school year in 2023, there were approximately 15 students with good progress reports and report cards that were taken on field trips. This was used as an incentive for the students to keep improving their grades every quarter. The goal of the program is to have the students try their best and not give up and to one day graduate high school. After school programs such as this, have a big impact on youth from low socioeconomic neighborhoods like Hempstead.

In December of 2023 HCC once again held its Annual Children's Christmas Event which has been an HCC tradition for many years. Over 240 families were able to receive holiday gifts that were donated to HCC and all children had a picture taken with Santa Claus. The Christmas Party is always important to the children and their families. For many of the children, the HCC Christmas Party gift may be the only one they receive during the holiday season and HCC makes every effort to secure substantial donations to fulfill each child's 'wish list'.

In July and August of 2023, HCC was able to continue to offer its Summer Camp program to its clients. The summer of 2023, 20 children registered and attended camp every day. The program included fun and educational field trips, STEM workshops, art and science workshops, as well as fitness workshops facilitated by Cornell Cooperative Extension. The summer camp program was a success and highly rated by both parents and children.

The goals for the Youth and Family TDIC program for 2024 are to increase enrollment and daily attendance as well as to be able to provide a reading/literature program for our students.



OUR SUPPORTERS

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- NYS Office of Addiction Services and Supports
- NYS Office of Children and Family Services
- NYS Department of Health
- NYS Office of Mental Health
- NYS Research Foundation for Mental Hygiene
- Nassau County Community Development Agency
- Nassau County Department of Human Services
- Nassau County District Attorney's Office
- Nassau County Office of Youth Services
- Village of Hempstead Community Development Agency
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- Mother Cabrini Health Foundation
- Northwell Health
- M & T Bank
- United Way of Long Island

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