



## COMMUNITY HEALTH IMPROVEMENT PLAN 2024

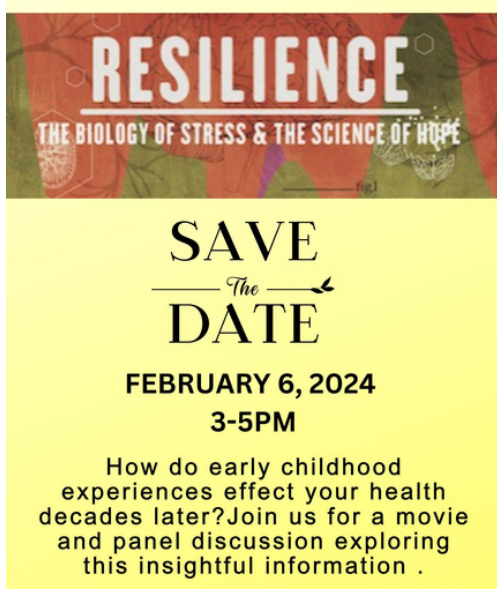
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Three years has flown by since we last did the Community Health Improvement Plan 2021, and we are preparing for the next adventure together. Without the support of our 70 partner organizations, this enormous endeavor would not be possible. In January, we will start to work with consultants Lisa Wolff and Rose Swensen from Health Resources in Action (HRiA). They will be collecting secondary data from National, State, and Municipal health sources and then turning to us for help to organize Key Stakeholder and Community Focus groups for more in-depth discussions and interviews. These discussions can provide insight into 1) the risk and protective factors and societal issues (e.g., unemployment, systemic racism) that have an impact on the health of the community; 2) identify where there are gaps in services, programs, and policies, and 3) elicit feedback on what the community views as the biggest needs to address.

This year, we will also be distributing paper and online health surveys in the community, and would greatly appreciate help to ensure we capture the correct demographics that represent Mercer County. For more information, contact Carol Nicholas at [projectdirector@gmpHP.org](mailto:projectdirector@gmpHP.org).



**RESILIENCE**  
THE BIOLOGY OF STRESS & THE SCIENCE OF HOPE

**SAVE  
— The —  
DATE**

**FEBRUARY 6, 2024  
3-5PM**

How do early childhood experiences effect your health decades later? Join us for a movie and panel discussion exploring this insightful information .

## Movie and Discussion

### Resilience: The Biology of Stress and the Science of Hope

The GMPHP Behavioral Health workgroup is showing the movie “Resilience” on February 6th, snow date February 20th, at the RWJ Fitness and Wellness Center. The movie will lead an exploration into the developments of medical studies where conditions like heart disease can be linked to childhood experiences. Therapists Tracey Post and Dr. Dara Whalen will lead the discussion following this interesting movie. To register, go to:

<https://www.rwjbh.org/events/event/?event=39114>



## OCTOBER CULTURAL COMPETENCY WORKSHOP

Sixty-four people attended the Cultural Competency workshop on October 25th at the new Capital Health Conference Center on Scotch Road, in Ewing. Dr June DePonte-Sernak from Center for Family Services, led a fascinating review that imparted awareness, sensitivity, and knowledge. The group explored biases in the workplace, CLAS (cultural and linguistically appropriate service standards, and how to implement best practices in the workplace. Attendees were challenged to examine their workplace and see what improvements they could suggest or execute. Other suggestions for personal development were to:

- Attend local cultural events
- Observe holidays and celebrations
- Advocate for Equal Rights
- Take a Certification Course (<https://sites.rowan.edu/diversity-equity-inclusion/>),
- Truth, Racial Healing and Transformation (<https://healourcommunities.org/>)
- Calm Clarity (<https://www.calmclarity.org/>)

For more information on this interesting topic go to: <https://npin.cdc.gov/pages/cultural-competence>

Thank you Dr June for a fabulous workshop!



## LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

**Diane Grillo**, Vice President of Health Promotion at RWJBH Hamilton, was recently honored with the Lifetime Achievement Award from the Princeton Mercer Regional Chamber of Commerce. The annual award dinner honors individuals who have made a remarkable impact in the community and who help drive the local business community forward. She is committed to promoting, preserving, and protecting the health and well-being of our community. One way to achieve that is through community health education and outreach opportunities.

**Diane is a founding member of the GMPHP and has served on our Board since its inception in 2012.**

**Congratulations Diane!**

## NEW MOBILE VAN

The Rescue Mission is celebrating the launch of its new customized van, which will enhance the agency's ability to provide hope, help, and save lives of people living on the streets. Barrett Young, CEO of The Rescue Mission, shared, "In this new van, people will be able to step inside and have a private conversation. And the van is equipped to more immediately help people who are ready to come in off the streets and find care."



Chalia Perry and Jose Caraballo, Peer Recovery Specialists, are looking forward to driving this new enhanced van to areas where people living on the streets and struggling with addiction are known to congregate.

"Since August 1st of last year," he added, "our Peer Recovery Specialists have been driving in a smaller van into areas in Mercer County where people struggling with addiction are known to congregate. Our staff are on the streets starting at 6:00 am, six days a week, tirelessly meeting people where they are – engaging in conversations, and providing coffee and food 4,342 times, distributed 930 Narcan kits, and referred 74 individuals to treatment."

## MEET HRiA

GMPHP has hired Health Resources in Action (HRiA) to lead the development of the 2024 Community Health Assessment and Improvement Plan. HRiA is a 501(c)3 nonprofit public health and medical research organization located in Boston, serving governmental, community, health care, and philanthropic organizations across the nation. Founded in 1957, HRiA works to help people live healthier lives and create healthy communities through policy, prevention, health promotion, and research. This broad mission statement has remained consistent throughout HRiA's history and is reflected in the organization's service areas, including strategic planning and organizational effectiveness, public health policy, research and evaluation, training and capacity building, and investments in health. With a commitment to focusing on the multi-faceted issues facing vulnerable populations, HRiA has earned a national reputation as a leader in promoting public health and health equity.

GMPHP is looking forward to introducing you to Consultants **Lisa Wolff** and **Rose Swensen** - two exceptional research scientists, as they guide us through the CHA and CHIP process in 2024.



Lisa Wolff



Rose Swensen

## NEW GMPHP BOARD MEMBERS

As we head into 2024, we want to sincerely thank **Jeremye Cohen** and **Angela Chatman** for their year of service as GMPHP President and Vice President respectively. Jeremye will stay on as President Emeritus, but Angela will be changing her position at TESU and unable to continue with the GMPHP.

The GMPHP is pleased to present our upcoming President, President Elect, and two new Community Board members starting their term February 2024.

### **Steve Papenberg - President**

- Steve is a retired Health Officer, and is currently Chair of the Pennington Board of Health, and serves on the NJ Local Board of Health Organization.

### **Allison DeBlois - President Elect**

- Allison is an Outreach Educator, focused on advocacy, policy and administration strategies and reporting for RWJ University Hospital Hamilton's Community Health Department.

### **Hal English - Community Member**

- Hal is the President and CEO of the Princeton Mercer Regional Chamber of Commerce representing almost 1600 area businesses. He has extensive experience with banking and nonprofits.

### **Dr Chris Kirk - THT Community Member**

- Dr. Chris Kirk is a Community Psychologist who serves as the Chief Program Officer for the Trenton Health Team. Welcome and thank you for volunteering with the GMPHP coalition.



Hal English



Dr. Chris Kirk



Steve Papenberg



Allison DeBlois

**SAVE**  
*the*  
**DATE**

**MARCH 13, 2024**  
**3 - 5 PM**

**SPRING CAB MEETING**

**COME SHARE YOUR RESOURCES**  
**WITH OUR COALITION PARTNERS FOLLOWED BY**  
**A PRESENTATION ON ACCESS TO CARE**

Location: RWJ Wellness and Fitness Center

Last March, our partners gathered together at the RWJ Fitness Center and shared their resources with each other. It was an opportunity to meet, network, and enjoy building relationships. Mark your calendars to do it again! We will also have a presentation on access to care. Registration information will be emailed soon.

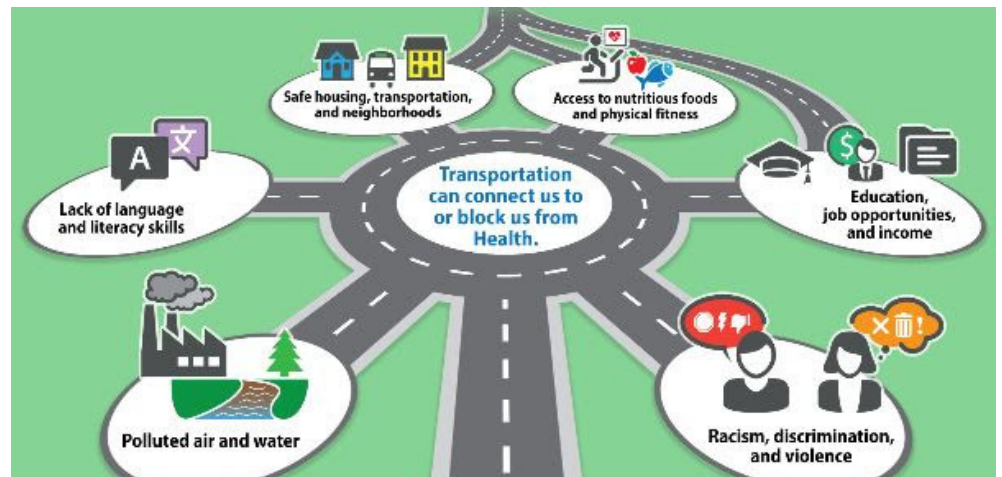
## IMPROVED ROUTE 130 CONNECTION

Mercer County in partnership with CAB member **Greater Mercer TMA** last July was able to advance bus service along the Route 130 corridor. “We both recognized the need for some time now that more and improved service was needed to get people to good jobs in the 8A area, said Cheryl Kastrenakes, GMTMA Executive Director. However, the equipment and funds were not sufficient to add new stops or additional trips, until recently”.

Through an ARPA grant Mercer County received the funding they needed to add a bus to the route, increase the number of trips and extend service to two Amazon facilities in Middlesex County, multiple Wayfair locations, Volkswagen, Home Depot, Wakefern, UPS - Cranbury Hub and other businesses along the way. The service has been well received. When comparing the number of passenger trips from October 2022 to October 2023, there has been a 79% increase in ridership.

Route 130 Connection provides service to and from Trenton, Hamilton, East Windsor and Hightstown. The one-way fare is \$1.00. Route 130 Connection also serves Mercer County Community College and offers opportunities for shopping, dining, employment and access to NJT bus service at the multiple shopping centers it serves. Staff at GMTMA helps to manage the Route 130 Connection bus service for Mercer County.

## HEALTH AND TRANSPORTATION ARE CONNECTED



# A Workshop to Support Adults and Caregivers Impacted by Cancer

## CANCER THRIVING & SURVIVING



### REGISTER TODAY!

For this free, 6-week virtual workshop designed to provide the skills needed to address the challenges to thriving.

### JOIN & EXPERIENCE

Developed by Stanford University, this licensed program in self-management is proven to help cancer patients, survivors and caregivers learn to better manage the challenges of thriving. The curriculum covers issues experienced by many such as managing fatigue; pain and sleep; dealing with difficult emotions and relationships; staying active and communicating with providers, family and friends.

### FROM PARTICIPANTS

*"I am extremely grateful to have been part of this experience, as it has helped to lighten what is a very heavy load and highly recommend it."*

*"This was a wonderful program and gave me the empowerment I needed."*

For more  
**INFORMATION**  
CALL 908-237-2328

### 6-WEEKS ON THURSDAYS | 6:00 – 8:00 PM

Dates: February 8, 15, 22 and March 7, 14, 21, 2024  
(no class will be held on 2/29)

Place: Online via Zoom  
Registration required and space is limited.



**REGISTER HERE:**  
[https://www.elixirfund.org/events/cts\\_registration/](https://www.elixirfund.org/events/cts_registration/)

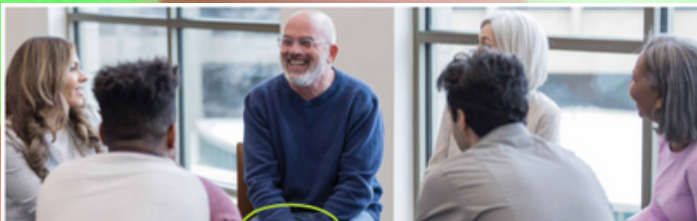
### FROM US TO YOU

All participants receive a complimentary copy of the book *Living a Healthy Life with Chronic Conditions*. This is a great self-management reference guide that provides valuable information to support your journey.

This workshop is provided by:



HELP SUPPORT AND PROMOTE OUR PARTNER'S PROGRAMS THIS YEAR!



## Parent Partnership supporting families impacted by addiction

Parent Partnership is a branch of the nonprofit organization, Be a Part of the Conversation. **Be a Part of the Conversation.**

When parents and other caregivers recognize that their loved one is struggling with substance use or addiction, we need support and understanding from those who have "been in our shoes." Parent Partnership meetings are led by volunteers with lived experience and take place Sunday through Thursday.

*Come once, once in a while, or as often as you like.*

We are not professionals - we are simply parents helping parents. Meetings are friendly and confidential.

### St. Paul's Church

218 Nassau Street, Princeton, NJ

Enter using the door down the ramp leading from the parking lot to the basement of the church. We meet in the Fireside Room.

**In Person Only - Every Monday from 7 to 8:30 pm**

Learn more about Parent Partnership:



[conversation.zone/partnership](https://conversation.zone/partnership)

Starting  
November 6,  
2023!



**Questions:**  
Contact Michelle King  
[mokingnj@gmail.com](mailto:mokingnj@gmail.com) / 609-468-8708

## Hopewell Valley Central High School

259 Pennington-Titusville Road, Pennington, New Jersey 08534

## Teen Wellness Day

HV Central High School Gymnasium

**SAVE THE DATE!**

**Wednesday, March 13, 2024**

**8:00 AM to 12:00 PM**



**This is a great opportunity to educate youth!** Students in grades 9-12 will be attending the program with the goal of learning more about overall health, wellness and safety from community providers and organizations.

**You can expect to spend a few minutes with students as they go table to table during the fair.** We anticipate 1100 students attending throughout the day.

Please bring handouts and resources about the topic you plan to share with students - they enjoy give-a-ways! A table, cover and chairs will be provided as well as light refreshments.

**Registration information will be emailed in early February.** Questions? Please contact Heidi Kahme, Hopewell Valley Municipal Alliance at [hvmunicipalalliance@gmail.com](mailto:hvmunicipalalliance@gmail.com)

**We look forward to seeing you!**



## PEER RECOVERY PROGRAM

**Creative Change Counseling is a Peer Recovery Center for Mercer County, NJ**

Led by Peer Recovery Specialists, this is a safe place to come to stay sober and build peer support. Peer Recovery at Creative Change Counseling is creating a welcoming and supportive haven for individuals on their journey to recovery. Whether you're a current client or part of the community, our doors will be open at specific times during the week and weekend.

All are welcome to come and hang out when Peer Recovery is open. Participants will always have access to our amenities when open including art room, fitness room, game room, dining room, snacks, and movie theater.

Monthly Event Calendar to follow. Be on the lookout for events like Yoga, Reiki, movie nights, breakfast club, 12 Step and self-help meetings, and more!

**FREE AND OPEN TO THE PUBLIC!**  
 For anyone in the community in recovery or exploring recovery.  
 \*TRANSPORTATION AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST

**Program Hours:**

Monday Wednesday and Friday  
 9am-1pm and 5pm-9pm  
 Saturday 9am-1pm

**Program Amenities:**

- ✓ Friendly Staff
- ✓ Fitness Room
- ✓ Movie Theater
- ✓ Art Room
- ✓ Reading Nook
- ✓ Dining Area
- ✓ Game Room

**Contact Us!**

**Michelle Szwed, EdS, LPC, LCADC, NCC, BCC, CCTP, C-DBT, EMDR-T, Program Director**  
 Creative Change Counseling at Mercer: 3525 Quakerbridge Road, Suite 903, Hamilton, NJ, 08619  
 Phone: 609-616-7721 or 609-321-5134 Email: [mszwed@creativechangeinc.org](mailto:mszwed@creativechangeinc.org)  
[www.creativechangeinc.org](http://www.creativechangeinc.org)

## PEER RECOVERY PROGRAM

The Peer Recovery Center is the perfect place for people to come and hang out in a safe and sober space. Looking for ideas of things to do with clients in sober living/treatment in the evenings or on the weekend? Come out to the Peer Recovery Center!

Consumers will have access to the art room, fitness room, game room, dining room and movie theater to use at their leisure. In addition, there will be Certified Peer Recovery Specialists on site to provide assistance and guidance in any way possible.

## SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL

CAB member **GMTMA** is here to work with your school and town on a wide variety of **Safe Routes To School** programs. For additional information on Safe Routes To School programs, email Kathleen Ebert at [kebert@gmtma.org](mailto:kebert@gmtma.org).

