



The Friends Connection Grapevine

Making the Right Connections

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The Friends Connection

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Philadelphia, PA 19123

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The Friends Connection of Montgomery County

700 E. Main St.
Norristown, PA 19401

P: 610.292.9922

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<http://www.mhasp.org/friends>

From the Director

We have been working hard this past year growing the program and assessing the effectiveness of Friends Connection through a National Research Grant with the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Service Administration, SAMHSA and the University of Pennsylvania. You can read more about our involvement with this National Outcomes Study on Consumer Operated Services on page two. A big thank you goes out to all of the program participants who chose to have a voice in this National Outcomes Project with their participation. Without you, this project would not exist.

Special thanks goes to Bill Burns-Lynch, Terrance Means, all the staff, Mark Salzer and the Researcher at Penn for their hard work and persistence in the recruitment and assessment of program participants and our Consumer Advisory Board for their guidance along the way.

As we move forward in our growth, we have been developing a Friends Connection Web site. This Web site will provide information about the program, individual advocacy, resources on co-occurring issues and a calendar of the program events. Through this site we will be able to help more people have access to our program as an alternative, or as a supplement, to traditional services. Visit us online at www.mhasp.org/friends.

I am sure by now that you have noticed our new logo and Newsletter format. We would like to thank our Web site developer, Nancy Massey of Massey.net, Inc. for her work in the development of our new Web site and the design of the Newsletter and logo.

Congratulations to Carol Holmes, manager of the Montgomery County Friends Connection, and the staff for their dedication, commitment and hard work in the successful start up of the program. We would like to extend our thanks to the Montgomery County Administration for the opportunity to provide consumer operated peer support services to people with co-occurring issues.

Special thanks to the MICA team, CTT and ICM's at Central for their support in providing us with referrals and making us a part of the treatment team. It is essential that Peer Support staff have an open line of communication with case managers for the successful growth and recovery of program participants. We have begun this process and look forward to continued success.

One of the challenges we face as a suburban program is the ability to travel. The staff of Friends Connection is working with program participants as they learn the public transportation system in order to access clean and sober activities in the surrounding communities. We believe that in order to foster independence and integration in the community, program participants need to utilize the public transportation system. The ability to travel independently, or with another person, is an empowering experience that helps to build self-esteem and an improved quality of life.

Jeanie Whitecraft,
Director of Friends Connection Programming

NEWS WORTHY

The Friends Connection of Montgomery County

The Friends Connection of Montgomery County (FCMC) opened its' doors in January of 2001. Temporarily located at 536 Dekalb Street in Norristown, FCMC is providing one-to-one community-based peer support services to individuals with co-occurring disorders. Additionally, we are beginning to sponsor recreational activities in the community (please see our calendar of events in this newsletter). We are steadily building our staff and accepting referrals for program participants. We are accepting consumers into the program who are residents of Montgomery County and meet the following criteria:

1. Reside in Lower Merion or Norristown proper,
2. Are connected to BSU numbers 465 or 466,
3. Have a co-occurring mental health and substance abuse problems.

We currently offer services to 16 consumers from Lower Merion and Norristown. We anticipate a move to our permanent site at 700 East Main Street, 2nd Floor, north side Norristown, in August of 2001. Once we settle in to our new location we will establish a weekly Double Trouble meeting open to the entire community.

To inquire about FCMC services please contact Carol Holmes, Program Manager at 610-292-9922.

Revisiting the Consumer Operated Services Program Outcomes Project Friends Connection of Philadelphia

Mark Salzer, Ph.D.,
University of Pennsylvania

The Philadelphia Friends Connection (TFC) is nearing the end of its third year of involvement in a four-year study to assess its effectiveness. TFC is one of eight sites receiving funding from the Center for Mental Health Services, a division of the Substance Abuse Mental Health Services Administration, with the overall goal of studying the effectiveness of consumer-operated services. Consumer-operated services are increasingly viewed as potentially valuable additions to traditional mental health services and it is hoped that a demonstration of the effectiveness of these services will lead to increased funding and expansion of these types of services. Other sites involved in this national study include drop-in centers, self-help groups, and advocacy programs.

Over the past three years TFC staff and researchers from the University of Pennsylvania have been working with representatives from the other sites and a coordinating center to design the multi-site study and select measures that examine those domains where consumer-operated services are thought to be most valuable. These domains include increasing consumer empowerment, recovery, hope, quality of life, and general well being. TFC has been quite successful enrolling people in this project over the past year and will continue to enroll new participants through at least the end of September 2001. This project is a wonderful opportunity for consumers to express their views about the mental health system in Philadelphia and how the services they receive impact their lives.

Eligible participants are those who have a co-occurring mental health and substance abuse disorder and are currently receiving targeted

case management services (either Intensive Case Management or Resource Coordination).

Participants in this project have five interviews with researchers from the University of Pennsylvania over a sixteen-month period and are paid \$20 for each interview. All information provided is completely confidential. For more information about this project, to schedule a presentation, or to make a referral contact Terrence Means at 215-599-4011, extension 4.

The Philadelphia Friends Connection Double Trouble Meeting

The Friends Connection Double Trouble meeting is back and looking for your support! We meet on the 4th floor, suite "C" at Riverview Place (520 North Delaware Avenue). The Double Trouble group meets every Saturday from 2:00PM to 3:00PM. We look forward to seeing you there! Many thanks to the folks at CTT for making the space available to the group!

Enhancing Recovery Supports in the Latino Community

We continue to have our Spanish speaking Double Trouble 12-step meeting on Wednesdays from 1PM – 2PM at the Presbyterian Church on Hancock Street and Susquehanna Avenue. The meeting started in October of 2000 and continues to need a lot of support. We have a number of Spanish speaking people from the community but currently the majority of those who attend are non-Spanish speaking individuals. Oftentimes we conduct the meeting bilingual. These meetings can be an integral component for recovering individuals with co-occurring disorders within the Latino Community. Please spread the word and come out to join us in recovery. For further information contact Robert Cuadrado at 215-599-4011 ext. 5.

Upcoming Conferences

Sponsored by
MCP Hahnemann University
(For info call: 215-842-4380)

July 25-27, 2001

PA Mental Health/Mental
Retardation Conference
Lancaster Resort Hotel
Lancaster, PA

March 20-22, 2002

20th Therapeutic & Psych Rehab
Conference
Sheraton Bucks County Hotel,
Langhorne, PA

November 28-30, 2001

11th Annual Forensics Conference
Holiday Inn Harrisburg/Hershey,
Grantville, PA

April 15-17, 2002

13th Conference on Dual Disorder
(MH/DA)
Lancaster Resort Hotel
Lancaster, PA

Staff Highlights

The Friends Connection Welcomes New Staff

A lot has been happening over the past year here at the Friends Connection, and as we continue to grow we welcome new staff to the program. The Friends Connection of Philadelphia welcomes Karim Bey, Walter Gordon, Mike Nelson, Aisha Muhammad, and Nikole Fitzpatrick all as Peer Support Counselors. Additionally, we welcome Celeste Ford as a Program Supervisor.

We also wish a warm welcome to the Montgomery County Friends Connection staff - Carole Holmes, Program Manager; Ted Dawson, Peer Support Counselor and Resource Coordinator; Javier Cintron, Harriet Benson; Angel Ortiz all as Peer Support Counselors; and Lisa Figueroa, Administrative Coordinator.

Alumni News

The Alumni Program continues to be a support to our graduates of the Friends Connection. We meet on a monthly basis to conduct business, plan fundraisers and activities, and also to interact in the community on a social and supportive level. Being involved with the Alumni can be a rewarding and enriching experience. It provides an opportunity for members to extend their community involvement and to identify and share related concerns.

The Summer and Fall seasons are an exciting time for the Alumni as the weather is great and our activities are creative and adventurous. Highlights to come include a cruise on the Spirit of Philadelphia and of course, our Annual Alumni Picnic. If you have been an inactive member of the Alumni, we invite you back to join us! If you would like additional information on how to participate in the Alumni group, please contact Robert Cuadrado at (215) 599-4011. We look forward to seeing you in the community!

Mark Your Calendar for These Upcoming Alumni Events

Monthly Meeting

Friday, August 3rd
Friday, September 7th
Friday, October 5th
Friday, November 2nd
Friday, December 7th

Upcoming Events

August 10th - Alumni picnic
Sept. 14th - Spirit of Philadelphia

Don't forget to join us for our monthly Fund Raising Event at the Friends Connection monthly Dance (see calendar of events for dance dates and times).

Recovery Zodiacs



Aries (Mar 21-Apr 19)

Find the path that leads you to wellness.
Follow that path daily!

Taurus (Apr 20-May 20)

Feeling stuck? Go to a meeting, call
your sponsor. Talk about your feelings.

Gemini (May 21-Jun 20)

Today is the perfect day to start something
new. What have you been putting off?

Cancer (Jun 21-Jul 22)

Make a list of your strengths. Tape them
to your mirror and read them every day.

Leo (Jul 23-Aug 22)

Some say that relapse is only a step
away. Guess what? So is RECOVERY.
Work your steps.

Virgo (Aug 23-Sept 22)

What do you want most out of life?
Set a new goal for yourself today. Strive
to achieve it every day!

Libra (Sept 23-Oct 22)

When you are feeling lost, stop. Take
time to think, take time to feel, take
time to plan your way back home.

Scorpio (Oct 23-Nov 21)

When is the last time you really listened
to yourself? Be still today, sit quietly
with your thoughts.

Sagittarius (Nov 22-Dec 22)

Life is full of good things. Look around your-
self, see the goodness and be thankful!

Aquarius (Jan 20-Feb 18)

We can heal our past pain by taking
care of ourselves in the present. Be
good to yourself today.

Pisces (Feb 19-Mar 20)

Relapse prevention is a key component
of recovery. PLAN to keep yourself away
from drugs and alcohol.

DID YOU KNOW...

Actively addressing issues of relapse and returning to treatment (as soon as possible) after a relapse can help facilitate long-term recovery and help minimize the negative effects of relapse on your life. Don't let a minor slip turn into a "full blown" relapse. The sooner you stop using drugs and/or alcohol, the less damage you will do to your health, your relationships, and your finances.

Here at the Friends Connection we have developed the SOBER Path to Relapse Prevention. The SOBER Path is designed to provide you with an easy to remember, step-by-step format to help you stop early in the relapse, to explore the reasons for the relapse, and to help focus attention on key issues for ongoing relapse prevention. The accompanying questions are only meant to be a guide. The SOBER Path can also be used to develop an initial relapse prevention plan. Try to explore each area as thoroughly as possible. Sometimes it is helpful to write your response down on paper.

SOBER A Path to Relapse Prevention



SAFETY/SUPPORT

- Take yourself out of the "high risk" situation.
- Take yourself out of the alcohol/drug use situation.
- Find a safe place to be. Get support (go to a meeting, call your sponsor, call a friend in recovery).



OUTLET (verbalize thoughts and feelings)

- What thoughts did you have before you decided to use? How did you feel before you used?
- What thoughts did you have as you were seeking drugs/alcohol?
- How did you feel as you were seeking drugs/alcohol?
- What benefit did you get from using (if any)?
- What were your thoughts after you used? How did you feel after you used?
- What are you thinking about yourself right now? How do you feel right now?



BEHAVIOR TRIGGERS

- What was the situation that you were in? How did you get in that situation?
- What were some of your behavior triggers (things that you did that kept you headed toward relapse)?
- What were some of the triggers in the environment (people, places, things)?
- Are there any patterns you can identify with past relapses?



EXPLORE ALTERNATIVES

- What are or what were the consequences of your alcohol/drug use?
- How could you have avoided the situation?
- What could you have done differently once you got in the situation?
- What resources are available to you?
- What resources do you need to identify to help support your recovery?



RELAPSE PREVENTION

- Review all of the above steps, develop a new relapse prevention plan.

Some issues to consider:

- What were the consequences of your relapse?
- What steps will you take to maintain wellness on a daily basis?
- What steps will you take to avoid/deal with triggers?
- What steps will you take to avoid high risk alcohol/drug use situations?
- What "high risk" situations do you need to avoid in the future?
- What are your reasons for staying clean/sober?
- Who are your supports? How can you contact these supports?
- Identify a 12 Step Fellowship meeting (or other support group) that you can utilize.



Circle of Friends

This is the section of our newsletter that we dedicate to you our readers. We invite you to share your thoughts with us in short stories, poems, or inspirational sayings.

If you would like to contribute contact Bill Burns-Lynch at 215-599-4011 or just send your contributions to Bill at the Friends Connection office. We look forward to seeing your words in print!

Personal Stories

Hi, I'm Stephanie. Participating with the Friends Connection I've gotten real personal with my recovery and mental health. I've also learned that I can't do it alone. That's where my peer support counselor Frenzell Campbell comes in. She supports my growth, she encourages me to join the Friends Connection in outside events and activities to have fun, get support, and to make time for my friends. All I can say is that up until now, I never really knew what a real friend was like in my life. But today I keep it green with my new friends that I've found in the Friends Connection and that really helps me to grow in my recovery.

-Stephanie Jordan, Program Participant

My name is Liz and I like the Friends Connection because they keep me occupied doing things in the community and that helps me from being left alone in my head. I like to participate in all of the trips they sponsor. My Peer Support Counselor helps me when I'm down and the weekly outings I attend help me meet people in the community. If I didn't have a peer support counselor I wouldn't make as many AA, DT, and NA meetings as I do now. Participating with the Friends Connection has also helped me get to know people who understand me. The Friends Connection never puts me down they always make me feel like I can do anything as far as achieving the goals that I want, especially if I put my mind to it. I'm glad I have the support from the Friends Connection because if I didn't who knows where I'd be today. I give special thanks to Linda Moore and other peer support counselors who have helped me.

-Elizabeth Otero, Program Participant

Poetry

Life's Journey

I've been on a journey,
I've traveled so far,
I didn't realize the path would be so far.
To discover the treasures
that life has in store,
To understand true friendship
and what it's meant for.

When finding yourself in a confused
and unfamiliar place,
You ask yourself one question:
Is this life?
Because I feel like I'm in outer space.

Then realizing the ups and downs,
The fears and insecurities are just
another journey that life takes on.
You traveled that journey because you
feel you belong.
Belong to yourself and knowing
who you are.
You can travel any journey no matter
how near or far.
So when you enter a place of
unfamiliar beings
Just remember this: you are who you
are that unique supreme-being.
Don't get distracted
for what life has in store,
Remember when one shuts there is
always another open door.

*- Frenzell Campbell,
Peer Support Specialist*

DOUBLE TROUBLE GROUP MEETINGS



We have made every effort to contact the meetings listed below to confirm their activity. Additionally, we have tried to include phone numbers and contact people where possible. As of our printing date all of these locations continue to be actively meeting. If you are aware of other meetings that we have not included, or changes to this list, please contact Bill Burns-Lynch (215-599-4011) and we will be happy to update the meeting list in our next newsletter.

OD = Open Discussion CD = Closed Discussion

**Philadelphia County
The Friends Connection**
520 N. Delaware Ave
4th Floor, Suite C
Saturdays – 2pm – 3pm
(215) 599-4011 OD

Girard Medical Center
8th St. & Girard Avenue
Tower Building – Main Floor
Fridays – 7:00pm
(215) 787-2131 OD

Consortium Partial Program
451 University Avenue
Wednesdays – 10:30am
(215) 596-8000, ext. 234 OD

Do Drop In Consumer Center
1229 N. Broad St. – 2nd Floor
Thursdays – 3pm
(215) 236-7675 OD

Path CMHC
8220 Castor Avenue
Tuesday – 7pm – 8pm
(215) 728-4600 OD

Northeast Consumer Center
6801 Frankford Avenue
(entrance on Charles St.)
Wednesday – 4pm
(215) 624-6163 OD

Kirkbride Institute
111 N. 49th Street
Thursday – 8pm
(215) 471-2000 OD

**Norris Square
Presbyterian Church**
(Spanish speaking group)
Hancock & Susquehanna Ave.
Wednesdays – 1pm to 2pm
(215) 599-4011, ext 5 OD

Warren E. Smith
1315 Windrum Ave. – 2nd Fl.
IOP Program
Wednesdays – 1pm – 2pm
(215) 455-3900 OD

Horizon House
120 S. Broad Street
Wednesdays – 11am;
Thursdays – 11am
(215) 386-1600 CD

Unity Club House
2221 North Broad Street
Monday, Wednesday –
3:00pm – 4:00pm
215-235-1366 OD

New Life Consumer Center
3119 Spring Garden Street
Tues, Thursday, Friday –
1:00pm – 2:00pm
215-243-0550 OD

Bucks County
For more information on
Bucks County Double
Trouble Groups listed below,
please call the Reach Out
Foundation of Bucks County
at 215-428-0404.

**Lower Bucks County
Reach Out Foundation**
229 Plaza Blvd.,
Pennsbury Plaza
Morrisville, PA 19067
Wednesdays – 2pm to 3pm;
Thursdays – 7pm to 8pm
Fridays (Youth Adult
Meeting) 7pm to 8pm
215-428-0404 OD

Penndel Mental Health Center
1517 Durham Road
Penndel, PA 19047
Tuesdays – 7pm to 8pm
215-752-1541 OD

Lower Bucks Hospital
501 Bath Rd.
Bristol, PA
Fridays – 7pm to 8pm
215-946-2823 OD

**Candlelight – Woodbourne
Campus**
1609 Woodbourne Rd.
Suite 403
Levittown, PA
Thursdays – 7pm to 8:30pm
215-946-2823 OD

**Freedom from
Double Trouble**
Croyden Station Café
Rt. 13 & Newportville Rd.
Croydon, PA
Wednesdays – 7pm to 8:30pm;
Sundays – 7pm to 8:30pm
215-535-1727 or
215-752-8153 OD

**Northwestern Human
Services Center of Bucks
County Newportville Group**
4401 Sunset Ave.
Newportville, PA
Mondays – 8pm to 9pm
215-788-5800 OD

Penn Foundation
807 Lawn Ave.
Sellersville, PA 18960
Mondays – 7pm to 8pm
215-257-6551 OD

**Delaware County
Chester Consumer Center**
3101 West 7th St.
Chester, PA
Fridays – 1pm
610-497-4300 OD

**Crosier Medical Center
CMHC**
2600 West 9th St.
Chester, PA 19103
Mondays – 12:45pm
610-497-7671 OD

**Northwestern Human Services
of Delaware County**
800 Chester Pike
Sharon Hill PA 19079
Wednesday –
11:00am to 12 Noon
610-534-3636 OD

**Chester County
Community Crossroads
Drop-in Center**
529 E. Gay St.
West Chester, PA
Tuesdays –
3:30pm to 5:00pm
Thursdays –
3:30pm to 5:00pm OD

**Lehigh County
Allentown State Hospital**
1600 Hanover St.
Allentown, PA 18103
Mondays – 6:30pm to 8:30pm
610-740-3200 OD

**Montgomery County
Glenside DRA**
(Dual Recovery Anonymous)
245 Keswick Ave. – 2nd Fl.
Glenside, PA
Saturdays – 8:00pm to 9:30pm
215-576-9796 OD

Eugenia Hospital
660 Thomas Rd.
Lafayette Hill, PA
Sundays – 7pm
215-836-7700 OD

**New Jersey
Pemberton Corrections
Institute**
Pemberton, NJ

**2nd Wednesday of the
Month – Men Only**

**4th Wednesday of the
Month - Women Only**
To attend, contact Bob
Hewson @ 215-545-0515



The Friends Connection 520 N. Delaware Ave., 2nd Floor, Suite 200 Philadelphia, PA 19123
P: 215.599.4011 F: 215.923.2133

Calendar of Events

The Philadelphia Friends Connection
Calendar of Events
July to December 2001

Weekly Activities

Mondays 3:00PM
Billiards at River Bank,
800 Delaware Ave., Philadelphia
Cost is \$3.00 per game.

Wednesdays 3:30PM
Bowling at Erie Lanes, M and Erie
Ave., Philadelphia
Cost is \$2.50 per game.

Saturdays 2:00PM
Double Trouble Group, 520 N.
Delaware Ave, 4th Floor, Suite "C"

Monthly Activities

Sunday, July 15
**Cool off at the Friends
Connection Splash Party**
3pm - 6pm
Northern Liberties Rec. Center
321 Fairmount Ave.
1 block N. of Spring Garden St.
Admission \$3.00
Bathing suits only, no cut off shorts.
Pizza and soda provided.
Rain date: Sun. July 22nd

Friday, September 21
**WELCOME back to the
Friends Connection Dance**
7pm - 9pm
Northern Liberties Rec. Center
321 Fairmount Ave.
1 block N. of Spring Garden St.
Admission to Dance is free,
nominal fee for refreshments.

Friday, October 19
**FALL back to the Friends
Connection Dance**
6pm - 9pm
321 Northern Liberties Rec. Center
Fairmount Ave., 1 block N. of Spring
Garden St.

Food, music, and dancing! For infor-
mation contact Frenzell Campbell.
Wednesday, November 7
**Join us for the Roller Skating
Party at St. Charles Skating Rink**
N.W. corner of 20th &
Christian Streets.
Cost is \$3.50 including skate rentals.
Pay at the door.

(easy access by the 17 bus line, one
block W. on Christian St. if coming
from Center City. If you're coming
from further south the bus stops across
the street on 20th & Christian St).
Contact Frenzell Campbell for details
(215-599-4011, ext. 1102).

Friday, November 16
**Come give THANKS at the
Friends Connection Dance**
7pm - 9pm
Northern Liberties Rec. Center, 321
Fairmount Ave., 1 block N. of Spring
Garden St.
Admission to Dance is free, nominal
fee for refreshments.

Wednesday, December 12
**Time for our annual trip to see
the lights at Longwood Gardens**
Bus and admission to the gardens is
\$4.00 per person.
Seating is on first come first serve
basis. Bus leaves TFC at 3:00PM and
returns approximately 10:00PM.
Contact Frenzell Campbell for details
(215-599-4011, ext. 1102).

Friday, December 21
**Come WARM UP at the Friends
Connection Dance**
7pm - 9pm
Northern Liberties Rec. Center, 321
Fairmount Ave., 1 block N. of Spring
Garden St.
Admission to Dance is free, nominal
fee for refreshments.

For information on all Philadelphia
Friends Connection activities, contact
Frenzell Campbell at 215-599-4011,
ext. 1102.

Montgomery County Friends Connection Calendar of Events July to December 2001

Scheduled Activities

Friday 4:00PM - 5:00PM
**Bowling at Facenda
Whitaker Lanes**
Swede Road & Germantown Pike,
Norristown. Cost is \$2.25 per game.

First Friday of the Month
**Come out and join us for our
Monthly Dances at the George**
7:00PM - 9:00PM
Washington Carver Community
Center, 249 E. Jacoby Street
Norristown, PA, 19401.

For information on all Montgomery
County Friends Connection activities,
contact Ted Dawson at 610-292-
9922.



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The Friends Connection Grapevine

Making the Right Connections

TFC is bridging the gap to provide supports for individuals with co-occurring disorders.

Special Thanks to the Grapevine Newsletter Contributors:

Frenzell Campbell

Robert Cuadrado

Linda Moore

Robert Brisbon

Javier Cintron

Bill Burns-Lynch

Jeanie Whitecraft

Stephanie Jordan

Elizabeth Otero

<http://www.mhasp.org/friends>