



West Virginia  
Behavior/Mental Health  
Technical Assistance Center

## Happenings

### LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

The WV State Legislators have recognized the crisis teachers are experiencing in their classrooms and responded by introducing HB 4649. Through this legislation, trauma-informed practices would be implemented in schools and classrooms across the state. The WVBMH TAC has already completed several trauma trainings, reaching several hundred teachers, paraprofessionals, counselors, and administrators through our partnership with WVDE and ReClaimWV.

Research states that a relationship with a positive, caring adult is the greatest predictor for successful outcomes and resiliency for students affected by trauma. This adult is often an employee in the local school system. We are depending on our legislators to pass this bill and recognize the importance of this work.

### PBIS SPRING FOLLOW-UPS

The PBIS Spring Follow-Ups were held in the North on March 3rd at the Robert H. Mollohan Research Center and in the South on March 6th at the Chief Logan Conference Center.

We took a different approach to this year's follow-ups. Each school was responsible for creating a display to explain their implementation of Tier 1. Thanks to all of our school teams who created and presented creative and informative posters!

*Pictured right: Posters from the PBIS Spring Follow-Ups*



### FREE COURSE ON TRAUMA

Starr Commonwealth, an organization that provides online courses for professional development, is offering their Trauma-Informed Resilient Schools course for free (previously priced at \$199).

Visit this [link](#) to get more information. Use the coupon code (all caps) TRAUMAINFORMED at checkout to gain access to the course for free.

## MARION COUNTY HOLDS PBIS WORK SESSIONS

Gia Deasy, Special Services Director, and Denise Shipley, Behavior Specialist, have been working diligently to ensure school-wide PBIS is alive and well in Marion County. This district provides the unique opportunity for school teams to meet at “work sessions” that are solely PBIS- and behavior-related. These are held seasonally in the fall, winter, and spring. Work sessions are evening events, and every school in the county is invited to attend.

The sessions are focused on hot topics that various schools in the district are facing. Recent topics have included vaping, agency gallery walks, the effects of the opioid crisis, and ReClaimWV.

In January, Alicia Ziman, North Region Behavior Support Specialist, was honored to join one of these sessions to talk with elementary schools about anger and aggression in young students.



*Gia Deasy and Denise Shipley have been working diligently to ensure school-wide PBIS is alive and well in Marion County.*

### PRESCHOOLERS CAN BE PROBLEM SOLVERS

When young children face conflicts in the classroom, many will have difficulty coming up with good solutions. Children have to be specifically taught problem-solving steps, alternative solutions, and to understand that solutions have consequences.

Teachers may want to use the [Solution Kit cards](#) and the “[We Can Be Problem Solvers](#)” social story available from the National Center for Pyramid Model Innovations Resource Library. These tools can help build problem-solving skills in authentic situations.

### A SUPER SATURDAY

On Saturday, March 7th, 65 early childhood professionals gathered in Moorefield, WV, for a day of training and fun. Participants came from Hardy, Hampshire, Mineral, Grant, Berkeley, Jefferson, and Pendleton Counties.

Presentations were delivered by Sara Smouse, WVBMH TAC Early Childhood Behavior Support Specialist, and Leigh Saville, WV ATC Autism Specialist.

Topics included trauma and ACEs in early childhood, autism overview and strategies, and visual strategies for early childhood classrooms.

Thanks to everyone who participated!

*Pictured below: Super Saturday participants*



# CRISIS TEXT LINE |

## CRISIS TEXT LINE

We are all going through some changes in our lives due to the COVID-19 virus. Many people may be feeling stress and anxiety during these uncertain times.

Some activities that might help with those feelings include the following:

- Practicing mindfulness
- Reframing negative thoughts
- Connecting with loved ones
- Listening to music
- Meditation or yoga
- Exercise
- Breaking the cycle of 24/7 news

For those of us dealing with current mental health issues, these things may not be enough to sustain our mental health. The Crisis Text Line is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. It's simple to use.

Just text MHFA to 741-741. Help can be just a text away.

## INFORMATION AND RESOURCES FOR COVID-19

The National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) recently published a [guide](#) featuring COVID-19 (coronavirus) information and resources.

Topics/questions addressed in this guide include the following:

- I'm having a lot of anxiety because of the coronavirus. Please help.
- I'm quarantined or working from home—lonely and isolated even further—what can I do?
- Are people who have a mental illness at a greater risk of contracting COVID-19?
- I lost a loved one to coronavirus. Where can I find support?

This guide is free to access and includes linked resources related to each topic or question.



## WVBMH TAC

The goal of the WVBMH TAC is to assist teachers, students, families, and communities that are faced with challenging behaviors and mental health issues through training, resources, and promotion of evidence-based strategies and interventions.



## CONTRIBUTORS FOR THIS ISSUE

Tiffany Hendershot, Eastern Panhandle Region Behavior Supp. Spec.  
henderson6@marshall.edu

Amy Kelly, WV Behavior/Mental Health TA Center Director  
kelly9@marshall.edu

Alicia Ziman, North Region Behavior Support Specialist  
holt64@marshall.edu

Sara Smouse, Northern EC Behavior Support Specialist  
strother3@marshall.edu

Dianna Bailey-Miller, Mental Health First Aid Coordinator  
baileymiller@marshall.edu

Jess George, Southern Region EC Behavior Support Specialist  
george31@marshall.edu

Teryl Jones, South Region Behavior Support Specialist  
joneste@marshall.edu

## WVBMH TAC

Marshall University  
1 John Marshall Drive  
Huntington, WV 25755

304-696-2332

[www.marshall.edu/bmhtac](http://www.marshall.edu/bmhtac)

Director: Amy Kelly

## OUR PROJECTS AND PARTNERSHIPS



YOUTH  
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AT MARSHALL UNIVERSITY



West Virginia DEPARTMENT OF  
**EDUCATION**