

Community News

A Newsletter for Friends of Residential Resources, Inc.

August 2014

Progress

Ellis P. Baum, Regional Director
Scarborough, ME

Hi there...allow me to introduce someone to you: Her name is Sherri Bisson and she lives in Portland, Maine. Sherri has been supported by RRI since 1997. Sherri lives by herself and receives 24 hour staffing. Sherri was just in the office dropping off some paperwork and stopped into my office to say hi. Through some big smiles and giggles, Sherri told me she was "goooooood" and clearly, she is. I have been hearing and seeing first-hand just how "good" Sherri has been doing lately and many of the comments people have been making have started with "wow! I never would've thought..." Right. Let's explore this dynamic a bit.

One of the biggest traps we face as caregivers for people is labels. An unsuccessful trip to the grocery store means this person can't shop for food. An early exit from a movie theatre means this person doesn't like going to the movies. A few moments of anxiety at a cookout means this person doesn't like going to parties. Next thing we know, these opportunities are not offered any more. Any of this sound familiar? I suspect that it does.

The point I'm trying to make here is that it is not easy to assess progress and too often quick decisions turn into life-altering, lasting effects. There are many factors that hide a person's progress or make it difficult to track, for instance turnover. When there are many staff coming and going it becomes really hard to make progress or have anyone notice your progress. Routines also play a hand in hiding or delaying progress. Routines do offer comfort from predictability of course, but it should not mean that new things aren't explored.

Sometimes we just have to push the reset button when we're supporting people. All of the labels

that have collected and been passed on over the years, the comfy routines, everything we "think" we know needs to be wiped clean and looked at with fresh eyes. It can be pretty amazing what we find out.

Over at Sherri's house, the reset button has been pushed fairly recently and who would've thought: Sherri can have free access to her clothing despite severe OCD. Sherri loves fresh flowers in her home and really enjoys going to pick them out. Sherri enjoys coming to the office weekly to have lunch with her peers. Sherri enjoys picking out art and hanging it on her walls at home. Sherri gets a huge kick out of going to a dance class...and we're still learning.

When it comes to the art of supporting people make no mistake that good is not excellent and status quo is not progress... and if you don't believe me, take a trip to Sherri's – she will be happy to tell you.



The Interview

Michelle Leger, Participant
Emerald St, Keene, NH

I went to an interview for Project Search at Cheshire Medical Center in Keene to learn how to do things like cleaning beds, restocking products, filing and mailing, and cutting fruits and vegetables like bananas. Then we went on a tour of the hospital to see what they do at each station. We did an activity with the group to see how we work within a group. We had to wait for a call to see if we were accepted into the program and I got the call. I am very excited about it.

Also, as you can see by the pictures of my home provider, Cheryl, and I in the pool, we had a lot of fun swimming. Cheryl said she would jump in, clothes and all, after I got in. Yup, I got in and she jumped in. We had a great time.



Connie's Adventures Continue...

Greg Sears, DSP
Emerald St, Keene, NH

Connie Loiselle's latest Sunday outing occurred at the Surry Mountain Dam on June 22, 2014. The day culminated with us arranging wildflowers we had picked near the parking area.

She was amazed at the dam's expanse and the importance of the reservoir for our region. Connie was awestruck by the scenic vista of the hills and tree lines as we crossed the dam. "I must see this place again in the fall." Connie exclaimed. It turns out that Cheshire County has myriad destinations to explore!



TBI Participant Regains Voice & Confidence In Photography

Sue Roerig, RN
Ballston Lake, NY

It was in January 2013 when I admitted David to RRI under the TBI waiver and introduced him to his HCSS, Nicole MacDermid. David had suffered a serious brain injury, and prior to that time he had been a well-known radio announcer with his own show every Sunday evening. Since his injury David had struggled to regain confidence with the voice within him, so finding photography has recovered that expressive personality he once possessed.

With help from his HCSS, he goes out into the community every week and captures a moment in a photo that is passionate for him and invites all of us to enter into the experience. David has been a joy to watch recover since I first met him, for he possesses a vibrant personality and a zeal for life. His motivation to regain skills through a variety of creative methods has proven to be advantageous to his recovery. He is the perfect portrait and representation of how the TBI waiver program provides opportunities for individuals to reach a high level and degree of independence and quality of life in the community.

The three photos show how David has reconnected to his community. He has sponsored a fundraiser for individuals that have suffered a stroke with a local radio station. The second photo is of David and staff Nicole MacDermid. The third is the two boats he grew up riding since his childhood, the Mohican and Minne-Ha-Ha.

His choice of subject matter represents what is important to David and has been a meaningful goal that he continues to work on weekly with his staff. David resides in a home where he grew up with both parents in Lake George, NY. It is well known to many tourists and he is living the history and capturing it in photos he hopes to share with family, friends, and community. As the RN that supervises David and Nicole, it has been such a joy to watch them work toward goals that are truly positive and contributing to his independence and growth.



New Beginnings

Shawn Hopseker, Day Hab, ILST, PCA Staff
Plattsburgh, NY

Just about a year ago I had the wonderful opportunity to begin my journey with Residential Resources. During this first year as an ILST, Day Hab, and PCA service provider I have met a group of amazing people. Brian Z. is one of these unforgettable individuals. Despite us being new acquaintances, Brian was quick to give me the opportunity to really get to know him and shared many of his interests and how he enjoys spending his time.

Brian loves horses. He enjoys riding and sometimes just watching them graze. We are currently working on getting him involved with riding lessons and possible volunteer opportunities. Brian is a self-described "social butterfly" and thrives being out in the community interacting with people. Everywhere we go, it seems Brian is recognized by someone and he takes great pride in knowing that many people are in his circles of friends and acquaintances. He also has an immense knowledge of local history and enjoys frequenting

many of the locations rich in that history. Most recently Brian and I enjoyed a day visiting a historic covered bridge in Jay, NY that was completely rebuilt exactly as it had been originally, to save one of the last remaining bridges of its type.

Without a doubt one of the most inspirational things about the time I have spent with Brian has been watching him embrace his new independence and living on his own in a new apartment within the community. Brian has met this responsibility head on and has grown and stepped outside of his comfort zone with each challenge. He is hopeful for his future and grateful for those that share in his continued success.

I am proud to be a part of a growing number of people within Residential Resources who make a difference in people's lives by providing life-enhancing supports and equally as important, friendship.



Think PINK!

Bethany Dow
Program Manager
Manchester, NH

Did you know that there is such a thing as National Pink Day?! If you didn't know this, you are not alone! Jen Boisvert stumbled upon this day and chose to share it with some of the other managers in Manchester. On June 23rd the Manchester Office celebrated Pink Day with lots of pretty pink things as well as many people dressing in pink to support this day. Thanks to Jen we had some beautiful flowers that she made and thanks to Tiffany we had some delicious gluten free and regular cupcakes with pink frosting. One of our providers gave us some beautiful pink flowers. If you know of any national days that can be celebrated please share them and we can get together to celebrate them!



SUMMERTIME.

And the living is easy.

Christine Townsend, RN Nurse Trainer
Manchester, NH

It's summer! Trips to the beach, picnics in the park, baseball games, working in the garden, sitting by the pool. What could possibly go wrong with these pictures? Well – how about sunburn, dehydration, heat stroke.

Let's start with dehydration. Our bodies are made up of somewhere between 50% and 75% water, depending on age, size, and amount of muscle mass. People begin to feel thirsty after losing 2-3% of that water. However, mental performance and physical coordination become impaired at a 1% fluid loss, that's before we even know we are thirsty.

The body keeps cool by increasing the blood flow to the skin, and by sweating. As we sweat, we are losing water from our bodies. Some of the medications taken by many of our consumers can disturb this natural cooling mechanism and can cause the body to overheat. Since many of our folks are not always able to let us know when they are thirsty, it's the responsibility of the staff

and providers to be aware of how quickly and easily our consumers can be in a dangerous (and possibly even life-threatening) situation.

Signs and symptoms of dehydration and/or heat stroke can include increase in body temperature, fatigue, dizziness, fainting, headache, nausea, or altered mental status such as confusion, disorientation, and irritability.

Some medications also can cause photosensitivity, causing the skin to burn much more easily. Prevention is the best protection for sunburn. Protective clothing, sunscreen and staying in the shade, plenty of water and juices, popsicles, watermelon, grapes, and other summertime treats can help to keep fluid levels where they should be.

Remember – heat stroke, dehydration and sunburn are more easily prevented than treated! Enjoy an extra popsicle or slice of watermelon, lemonade, or ice cream cone! Have a wonderful, fun-filled, and safe summer!

Thank you to everyone who contributes articles and pictures to the newsletter.

Articles are due by the second Friday of each month for the following month's newsletter. The newsletter will be posted at www.resresources.com on the first business day of each month.

If you do not have access to the internet and would like a copy of the newsletter mailed to you, please contact your local Residential Resources office to make arrangements.

Community News

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Founder and Owner

Our Guiding Principles

Creativity We foster creativity by exploring and learning, embracing change, and pursuing best practice. We always ask ourselves, 'Is there a better way?'

Truth / Honesty We foster an environment where open and honest feedback and sharing are expected, encouraged, and supported. We honor commitments; and we share feelings, opinions, experiences, ideas, and information in order to optimize each individual's personal and professional growth and development.

Empowerment We empower people through a process which includes giving them the opportunities, the authority, the information, and the examples necessary to become successful decision makers.

Diversity We welcome and value different perspectives, contributions, and capabilities. We promote growth, opportunity, and experience.

Quality We continually improve our services by: Promoting positive change; Increasing knowledge and skills; Encouraging personal growth; Valuing individual differences; Learning from our experiences.

Respect We believe that respect is a right, and we conduct ourselves accordingly. Our standards include the exercise of human dignity; the honoring and valuing of self and others; and communication that is clear, direct, and honest.

Trust We create trust by being consistent, stable, honest, and reliable. Trust also requires sincerity, knowledge, and capability.



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