

*Warren County
Stigma Free Newsletter*

STIGMA TIMES

DECEMBER 2022 | VOL 3

The Warren County Stigma-Free Communities Initiative is a county-wide program which aims to eradicate the stigma associated with mental illness and substance use disorders. We are dedicated to bringing people together to be stigma-free in order to facilitate inclusive communities and individual healing by bringing awareness, building knowledge and fostering compassion through advocacy.



INSIDE THIS ISSUE



- Holiday Blues
- Coping with Holiday Blues
- Agency Spotlight
- Upcoming Events
- Positive Activities





HOLIDAY BLUES

The joy and warmth of the holidays sometimes arrive with uninvited guests:

Isolation & Loneliness

Unrealistic or Unattainable Expectations

Financial Difficulties

Memories of Loved Ones Who Have Passed

Feeling Overwhelmed or Stressed

Seasonal Depression



COPING WITH HOLIDAY BLUES

WE ASKED MEMBERS OF OUR COMMUNITY TO SHARE SOME PERSONAL EXPERIENCES ON HOW THEY COPE WITH HOLIDAY STRESS AND DEPRESSION:

The best thing I ever did for my mental health during the winter, and specifically the holiday season, is to remind myself that self care is not selfish. Yes there are traditions and events that still bring me joy, but there were others that over the years added stress and impacted me negatively. I've set new boundaries with family and friends, said "no" to invitations I wouldn't have before, and found new ways to celebrate that are beneficial to my well being (Such as New Year's Eve with me, my cats and a good book!). Admittedly, at first it was hard to figure out what works best to navigate my mental health needs and family obligations, but I knew something had to change and I'm glad I took these steps towards creating a more balanced holiday season.

- Janice M.



During the Winter months when it is MUCH colder and getting dark earlier, I make sure that I spend some time outdoors with my dog, PeeWee, even if it is only 10 or 15 minutes. He loves the cold weather so he makes me laugh when dodging through the heaps of snow and burying himself in the snow drifts. When I head back indoors, I make sure to put on an uplifting movie and drink some warm tea while snuggling with my pup!

- Jessica S.

COPING WITH HOLIDAY BLUES

WE ASKED MEMBERS OF OUR COMMUNITY TO SHARE SOME PERSONAL EXPERIENCES ON HOW THEY COPE WITH HOLIDAY STRESS AND DEPRESSION:

We moved into our home right around Christmas and knew NONE of the neighbors. Then the pandemic hit so we never really got to meet them. I had posted a scavenger hunt (pictured on the right) to my neighborhood's Facebook page as an ice breaker and it was well received. Other homes got into the competition. I try to make myself busier with fun activities to combat the blues. Distraction is key, for me.

-Anonymous



AGENCY SPOTLIGHT



Domestic Abuse
& Sexual Assault
Crisis Center
of Warren County

As we have quickly entered into the holiday season, I am often asked the question, “Does domestic violence increase during the holidays (Thanksgiving to New Year’s Eve)?” This is a complicated question, but the short answer is no. The rates of violence for those who are impacted by violence may or may not be precipitated by the holidays but rather if there is a propensity to violence in the home, there is always the risk. However this risk is contingent on multiple factors in the home: patterns of abuse, stressors, support systems, etc. (although please note this is not the cause of violence but contributory factors).

DASACC offers a variety of wrap-around services from emergency shelter placement, hotline calls, counseling, legal advocacy, outreach and prevention.

Interestingly, at DASACC, the holiday season becomes a bit quieter at shelter/residential placements; meaning hotline calls decrease a little and the need for emergency shelter decrease a little. Please note at the same time, we experience higher rates of needs for food, clothing and gifts and other incidentals. This information I am providing is based on DASACC statistics, but there may be different experiences in the police departments and other areas of the criminal justice system.

Conversely, DASACC counseling services during past holiday seasons have increased because of all the many triggers around family gatherings, custody exchanges, gift-giving, and trauma. Survivors of domestic violence may experience additional stress, as well as unique challenges, during the holiday season because of the many possible triggers and trauma experienced. DASACC offers a Holiday Shoppe each year in which the community can come and “shop” for free for their children. It is here we are able to make connections with those who may not know about our services, provide support, safety planning, food assistance, referrals and advocacy.

If you or someone you know is being hurt, DASACC can help. Please call our confidential 24/7 hotline at 908-453-4181.



Jill Zinckgraf, EdD, MPA
Advocate/Executive Director

UPCOMING EVENTS

Stigma Free in Local Schools

February 22, 2023 (Snow date March 2, 2023)

The Belvidere Wellness Alliance (BWA) will be honoring Dr. Rosalie Lamonte (Warren County Superintendent of Public Education) and the school nurses and counselors from the Belvidere School District and sending districts. During a reception, attendees will brainstorm to identify mental health needs in the public schools.

Conversation with the Chief

March 2023, Date TBD

An evening program where residents can 'drop in' for coffee, refreshments, and an open chat with the Belvidere Chief of Police.

Earth Day

April 22, 2023

The BWA will be supporting the Belvidere Community Center with Earth Day activities and information with a special emphasis on Pollinator Gardens and Bees & Honey. They will also be sharing information about the Belvidere Food Pantry Garden.

Nutrition and Mental Health

2023 Date TBD

The BWA will be hosting a presentation on nutrition and mental health. More info to come...



Please follow the BWA on Facebook; you may message them there OR or leave a message for Rose or Mark at (908) 475-4065.

The BWA meets at the Belvidere Community Center.
301 2nd St,
Belvidere, NJ
07823



POSITIVE ACTIVITIES

Non-Holiday Feel Good Movies

Rosaline - PG-13

Free Guy - PG-13

CODA - PG-13

Inside Out - PG

The Map of Tiny Perfect Things - PG-13

Along with the many streaming services available, The Warren County Libraries also have movies to borrow!

Richard D Gardner Branch
2 Shotwell Drive
Belvidere, NJ 07823

Catherine Dickson Hofman Branch
4 Lambert Road
Blairstown, NJ 07825

Southwest Branch
404 Route 519
Stewartsville, NJ 08886

Northeast Branch
63 US Hwy 46
Hackettstown, NJ 07840



Holiday Feel Good Movies

Klaus - G

Noelle - G

The Santa Clause - PG

Boy Called Christmas - PG

It's a Wonderful Life - PG

Frozen - PG

Elf - PG

The Christmas Chronicles - G

Elliot the Littlest Reindeer - PG

Christmas with the Kranks - PG

POSITIVE ACTIVITIES

It's never too cold to enjoy nature!

Warren County has picturesque scenery, hiking trails, farms, meadows, streams and lakes. Even on the coldest days, it can be helpful to look outside, get a breath of fresh air, and appreciate the beauty of nature around us.



Jenny Jump State Forest *Hope, NJ*
Allamuchy Mountain State Park *Allamuchy, NJ*
Field of Dreams *Independence, NJ*
Pequest Wildlife Management Area *Mansfield, Liberty & White, NJ*
Merrill Creek Reservoir *Harmony, NJ*
Washington's Roaring Rock Park *Washington Township, NJ*
Meadow Breeze Park *Washington Township, NJ*
Footbridge Park *Blairstown, NJ*
for a complete list, please visit
www.warrenparksfoundation.com
www.warrenparks.com
www.ridgeandvalleyconservancy.org



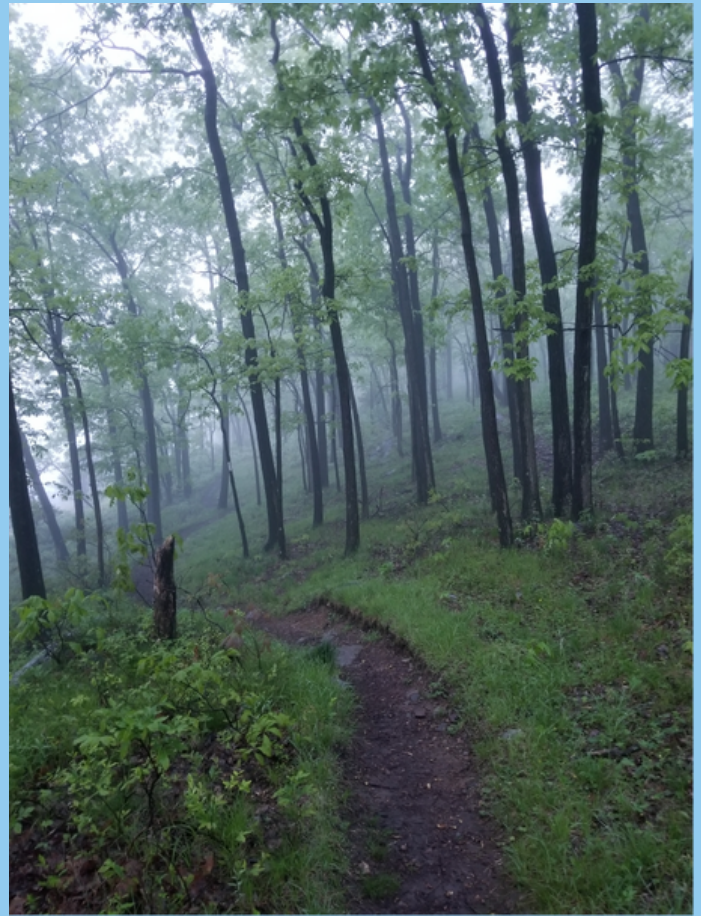
Delaware Water Gap
Credit: Laura Richter



Lake Marguerite Wildlife Refuge *Oxford, NJ*
Credit: Stephanie Nienstedt



Del Water Gap
Credit: Anne Dumschat



Raccoon Ridge
Credit: Anne Dumschat



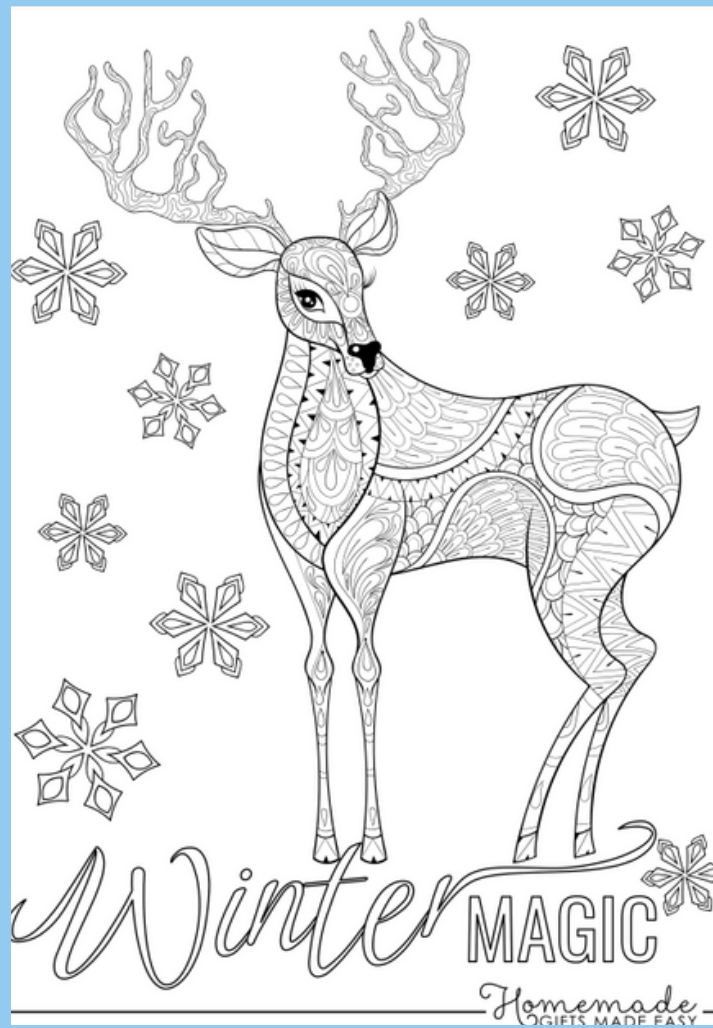
Old Mine Road
Credit: Anne Dumschat



Oxford Lake
Credit: Stephanie Nienstedt



Color to de-stress



**Print this page for
some relaxing activities**



word search

- blizzard
- candy cane
- chilly
- cold
- cookies
- decorations
- earmuffs
- fireplace
- holiday
- icicle
- mittens
- skiing
- sledding
- snowflakes
- snowman
- winter wonderland

H	Y	A	U	V	H	N	Q	S	S	R	H	J	F	N	P	H	Q	K	L	Y	X	W	I	Y
D	H	A	M	J	A	K	Q	N	F	P	V	Z	H	I	X	I	B	C	Q	L	K	I	G	J
F	B	L	V	M	T	S	O	E	L	A	P	D	X	V	R	O	P	D	G	Y	V	N	M	U
Y	B	S	W	K	T	W	X	T	M	K	F	U	Y	O	X	E	Z	Z	L	Z	T	T	O	O
G	E	O	B	F	F	C	C	T	H	O	L	I	D	A	Y	S	P	L	O	Y	G	E	O	H
Q	N	U	E	L	I	V	O	I	V	Y	O	X	A	A	V	I	I	L	N	M	F	R	D	T
S	X	I	A	S	Q	N	N	M	Z	O	J	V	P	C	J	H	I	J	A	M	U	W	T	I
Q	N	K	T	K	V	W	L	S	J	N	F	W	Y	I	C	J	I	V	C	C	F	O	G	Y
E	E	D	Z	C	P	Q	V	Q	U	B	E	K	F	P	B	Y	B	O	I	W	E	N	R	T
S	N	T	E	L	A	P	M	K	J	P	R	Q	Z	I	S	Y	V	Y	S	Z	V	D	F	H
W	S	F	I	C	P	K	B	Y	L	C	B	R	M	L	Q	P	M	N	F	S	G	E	M	C
G	O	C	W	L	O	A	P	W	P	G	Q	Z	U	D	A	Q	H	P	F	G	K	R	L	U
Q	N	E	Q	X	L	R	Y	B	F	I	K	I	H	K	C	R	I	C	U	N	A	L	G	R
U	Z	I	T	R	P	U	A	Q	A	T	N	V	Y	J	C	G	B	O	M	M	Y	A	C	U
U	T	J	I	B	M	B	H	T	O	S	U	E	P	D	L	O	C	Q	R	X	G	N	W	N
F	X	M	X	K	V	L	O	M	I	T	E	J	E	Z	P	N	D	G	A	I	J	D	K	Y
S	K	F	H	T	S	I	L	D	Q	O	X	I	D	A	W	Q	D	W	E	F	Q	A	Z	N
M	Q	X	B	F	Z	Z	I	Z	T	J	N	T	K	O	S	J	F	R	S	G	S	F	X	A
U	H	X	P	Z	C	Z	D	Z	F	P	U	S	H	O	R	C	X	J	S	D	U	Z	N	G
B	I	F	M	W	L	A	A	K	N	W	O	K	I	M	O	C	A	N	D	Y	C	A	N	E
H	X	M	C	S	W	R	Y	F	I	I	K	C	R	B	M	C	Q	P	K	E	R	M	M	L
F	E	S	F	E	L	D	F	K	E	V	I	F	V	D	I	P	J	F	G	I	M	M	O	O
A	O	Q	U	Z	J	F	W	V	C	G	N	I	D	D	E	L	S	I	Y	Y	G	G	U	U
E	A	J	M	G	W	Q	K	G	L	A	F	K	I	E	X	X	P	G	G	Z	Z	C	N	Y
U	A	Y	L	U	W	N	W	E	R	N	V	F	S	Z	X	S	M	O	F	L	B	Z	N	I