

Youth Support Directory



Mental Health Advocates of Western New York

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What is Peer Support?

“Peer support showed me that I am strong, and that I can do this.”

Peer Support involves getting help from someone whose experiences are similar to yours. People with similar stories are able to listen, to offer hope, and to provide support for recovery in a way that is different from, yet just as valuable as, professional services.

Purpose

This booklet was created to give youth easy access to support programs, self-help groups, youth empowerment programs, and other community resources.

The utilization of peer support, community resources, and self-help groups is essential to the recovery process and to the growth of an individual.

Meet Our Youth Peer Advocates



Mercedes Busby (YPA Coordinator)

Supports youth at 20 Something Group



Julianna Hill (YPA Coordinator)

Supports youth at BryLin, Erie County Medical Center (ECMC), and Teen Peer Support Group



Jared Courier

Supports youth at Baker Victory Services, Western New York Children's Psychiatric Center (WNYCPC), and 20 Something Group



Anthony Donalson

Supports youth at 20 Something Group

Meet Our Youth Peer Advocates



Alexis Kennedy

Supports youth at Teen Peer Support Group



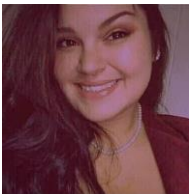
Kaitlyn Ledzian

Supports youth at Blank Slate: Open Art, BryLin, Erie County Medical Center (ECMC), Teen Peer Support Group, and phone support



Charlie Leyte

Supports youth at Teen Peer Support Group



Bailey Robinson

Supports youth at Blank Slate: Open Art

Overview of Programs

Community Teen Programs

These are various teen programs in the community including recreational, mentoring, educational programs, and more.

Support Groups

Support Groups are peer-to-peer community meetings where youth can speak with other youth who are going through similar life experiences. This allows them to gain important skills, receive advice and support, and to support others in their recovery.

Youth Empowerment Programs

Youth empowerment programs help youth to develop various skills in areas such as leadership, assertiveness, advocacy, and mentoring. They are also able to work on making new friendships and building connections in their communities.

Community Programs



Spotlight On Youth (SOY) is an open mic series held from 5:30-8:00 PM on the third Wednesday of every other month at Shea's Smith Theatre. It gives young people ages 13–19 a chance to share and develop their talents in front of a live and supportive audience. All art forms are welcome. No advance registration is required.

- **Location:** 646 Main Street, Buffalo, NY 14202
- *For more information, please visit:*
<http://www.justbuffalo.org/literary-events-in-buffalo/spotlight-on-youth-a-buffalo-open-mic/>



Compeer recruits, screens, and matches trained volunteers and mentors in one-to-one supportive friendship relationships with children in Erie County who are striving for good mental health. *Compeer* mentors bring sunshine and hope into the lives of children and youth, aged 3-17, who are in need of a positive adult role model and a trusted friend.

- **Location:** 135 Delaware Avenue, Suite 210, Buffalo, NY 14202
- **Contact:**
 - Phone: 716-883-3331
- *For more information, please visit:*
<http://www.compeerbuffalo.org>



Northwest Buffalo Community Center offers recreational and educational programs for children and teens, ages 6-19. Programs include summer day camp, tutoring, boxing, and more.

- **Location:** 155 Lawn Avenue, Buffalo, New York 14207
- **Contact (Boxing):** Don Patterson
 - Phone: 716-876-8108 ext. 16
- **Contact (Community Arts Education Program):** Shelia Benson:
 - Phone: 716-708-8735
 - Email: artscapadewny@gmail.com
- *For more information, please visit:*
<http://www.northwestbuffalo.org>



The Seneca Street Teen Program is both an after-school program and outreach mission. Students in grades K-12 participate in tutoring, mentoring, clubs and activities, and dinner. During the summer, teens have the option to take part in the Mayor's Summer Youth Program where they work at *Summer at Seneca Street*, acting as leaders for the younger children.

- **Location:** 1218 Seneca Street, Buffalo, NY 14210
- **Contact:** Jamie Ryder
 - Phone: 716-939-3501
 - Email: ryder.jamie@gmail.com
- *For more information, please visit:*
<http://senecastreetcdc.org/>

M&T FIRST FRIDAYS



@THE GALLERY



M&T First Fridays at The Gallery hosts free admission to parts of the Albright Knox Art Gallery and select events to everyone every first Friday of the month from 10:00 AM – 10:00 PM. Certain events are available for a fee and special exhibition admission is Pay What You Wish.

- **Location:** 1285 Elmwood Avenue, Buffalo, NY 14222
- *For more information, please visit:*
<https://www.albrightknox.org/events/mt-first-fridays-gallery>

Support Groups



People Against Trafficking Humans (P.A.T.H.) provides various support groups to youth and adults including art therapy, counseling, grief support, etc. All services are free and no registration is required.

- **Contact:**
 - Phone: 716-601-5678
 - Email: info@pathofwny.org
- *For more information, please visit:*
<http://pathofwny.org/>

Teen Peer Support Group provides youth with an opportunity to connect with peers to discuss and explore pathways to recovery. Open to youth ages 13-18. Not necessary to register beforehand.

- **City Location** (Mental Health Advocates of WNY):
999 Delaware Avenue, Buffalo, NY 14209
 - Meets 1st and 3rd Friday of every month from 6:00-7:30 PM
- **Northtown Location** (WNYCPC Community Services): 575 Alberta Drive, Suite 2, Amherst, NY 14226
 - Meets 2nd and 4th Thursday of every month from 6:30-8:00 PM
- **Southtown Location** (Watermark Wesleyan Church): 4999 McKinley Parkway, Hamburg, NY 14075 (Enter Door #5)
 - Meets 2nd Friday of every month from 6:00-7:30 PM

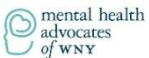


- **Contact:**
 - Phone: 716-886-1242 ext. 345
 - Email: peersupport@mhawny.org



Expression Through Art gives the opportunity for children ages 7-12 and teens ages 12-17 to use art as a meaningful tool to express and communicate thoughts, feelings and sense of self. Throughout a four week therapeutic art program, youth can use drawing, painting, collage and mixed media to explore the themes of identity, emotional recognition and regulation, self-expression and group process in a safe and structured space. Classes are free!

- **Location:** 999 Delaware Ave, Buffalo NY 14209
- **Contact:** Melissa Salamon
 - Phone: (716) 886-1242 ext. 346
 - Email: msalamon@mhawny.org



Blank Slate: Open Art allows young adults ages 13-26 to freely express themselves and make new friends through the use of various art media. Classes are free, but RSVP and registration is required to attend.

- **Locations:**
 - Tosh Collins Community Center (Enter middle door from back of building): 35 Cazenovia St, Buffalo, NY 14210
 - Meets 1st Wednesday of every month from 6:00-7:30 PM
 - Mental Health Advocates of WNY: 999 Delaware Ave, Buffalo, NY 14209
 - Meets 3rd Wednesday of every month from 6:00-7:30 PM

- **Contact:**
 - Phone: 716-886-1242 ext. 345
 - Email: peersupport@mhawny.org



Gay & Lesbian Youth Services (GLYS) offers a variety of opportunities and services for gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender and questioning youth and their friends, ages 14-21.

- **Drop-In Center Hours:**
 - Open Monday – Thursday (*September-June*) from 2:30-7:30 PM
 - Open Tuesday and Thursday (*July-August*) from 12:00-5:00 PM
- **Location:** 371 Delaware Ave, Buffalo NY 14201
- **Contact:**
 - Phone: 716-855-0221
 - Email: director@glyswny.org
- *For more information, please visit:*
<http://www.glyswny.org/>

Youth Empowerment Programs



Youth Empowerment & Leadership (YEL) is a youth-led leadership program for teens and young adults, ages 13-22, living in Erie County, who are or have been involved in, the Children's System of Care. *YEL* provides team building and leadership training, with the goal of empowering youth to engage other youth.

- **Location:** Family Help Center, 60 Dingens St, Buffalo, NY 14206
- **Contact:**
 - Call: 716-892-2172
- *For more information, please visit:*
<http://familyhelpcenter.net/>



YOUTH POWER! is a New York State network run for and by youth and young adults. The organization enables young people to have meaningful involvement on all levels of the services they receive. *Youth Power* ensures the availability of Peer Support through persistent advocacy, technical assistance and by offering training and educational opportunities.

- **Contact:**
 - Phone: 585-432-0333
 - Email: info@youthpowerny.org
- *For more information, please visit:*
<http://www.youthpowerny.org/>



Youth M.O.V.E. National is a youth and young-adult driven, chapter-based organization dedicated to improving services and systems that support positive growth and development. Their goal is to unite the voices of individuals who have lived experience in various systems including mental health, juvenile justice, education, and child welfare.

- **Contact:**
 - Phone: 1-800-580-6199
 - Email: info@youthmovenational.org
- *For more information, please visit:*
<http://www.youthmovenational.org/>



BestSelf Behavioral Health (BBH) is an innovative organization formed through the merger of Child & Adolescent Treatment Services and Lake Shore Behavioral Health. *BBH* offers a wide range of services and programs including after-school programs, vocational programs, mobile services, and mental health counseling.

- **Contact:**
 - Phone: 716-884-0888
 - Email: info@bestselfwny.org
- *For more information, please visit:*
<http://bestselfwny.org/>

Transition-Age Youth Resources

(For young adults 18-29 yrs.)

Employment and Education



ACCES-VR works with students, families and school districts to coordinate appropriate services for students with disabilities who are leaving secondary education and entering adult vocational rehabilitation and related services. These efforts are crucial to enable students to achieve maximum success in post-high school activities consisting of integrated employment (including supported employment), post-secondary education, independent living, and community participation. Students who are expected to exit school within two years should be referred to *ACCES-VR* when the school, student and/or parents jointly recognize that the student's disability will interfere with his/her ability to work in the community. Additionally, the vocational rehabilitation services needed cannot be among the continuum of mandated school district programs.

- **Location:** 89 Washington Ave, Albany NY 12234
- **Contact:** Sarah Wolf
 - Phone: 716-848-8016
 - Email: Sarah.Wolf@nysed.gov
- *For more information, please visit:*
<http://www.acces.nysed.gov/vr>



ACE Employment Services offers a range and continuum of vocational rehabilitation services that assist customers to choose, get, and maintain preferred competitive employment positions. The team is comprised of a Job Developer, Job Coaches, Life Coaches, Certified Benefits Advisors and Rehabilitation Practitioners.

- **Erie County Location:** 327 Elm Street, Buffalo, NY 14203
 - Phone: 716-884-5216
- **Genesee County Location:** 220 East Main Street, Batavia, NY 14020
 - Phone: 585-343-9162
- *For more information, please visit:*
<http://rsiwny.org/what-we-do/programs/ace-employment.html>



Pathways to Success offers four distinct college preparatory program pathways leading to college success. All programs are non-credit and tuition-free. The mission of Pathways to Success is to increase the successful movement of students from basic educational programs to college completion through partnerships between Erie Community College, Buffalo Public Schools Adult Education Division, Erie 1 BOCES, Kenmore-Tonawanda School District, Maryvale Community Education, and Erie 2-Chautauqua-Cattaraugus BOCES. The Pathways to Success program is for anyone at least 17 years of age who is not eligible to be enrolled in high school and wishes to enroll at Erie Community College.

- **Contact:**
 - ECC City Campus: (716) 851-1109
 - ECC North Campus: (716) 851-1423
 - ECC South Campus: (716) 851-1691
- *For more information, please visit:*
<https://www.ecc.edu/college-prep/>

Support



Twenty-Something Support Group: Open to youth ages 18-29 yrs. Provides peer support to young adults facing mental health and/or substance use struggles.

- **City Location** (Mental Health Advocates of WNY):
999 Delaware Avenue, Buffalo, NY 14209
 - Meets 3rd Friday of every month from
6:00 PM – 7:30 PM
- **Southtown Location** (Watermark Wesleyan Church): 4999 McKinley Parkway, Hamburg, NY 14075 (Enter Door #5)
 - Meets 2nd Friday of every month from
6:00 PM – 7:30 PM
- **Contact:**
 - Phone: (716) 886-1242 ext. 345
 - Email: peersupport@mhawny.org



Refreshing Waters Respite: Available to adults ages 18+ in Erie County who are struggling with a mental health issue and want an alternative to hospitalization.

Refreshing Waters is a short term (1-5 days), peer-run respite home that provides a peaceful and calming environment that promotes health and wellness.

- **Contact:**
 - Phone: (716) 248-2886
- *For more information please visit:*
<http://www.wnyhousingoptions.org/OurServices/RespiteServices/tabid/430/Default.aspx>

Smartphone APPS

Calm Harm

Headspace: Guided Meditation

I Am: Daily Positive Reminders

Not Ok

Operation Reach Out

Rise Up + Recover

Self-Help for Anxiety Management

Smiling Mind

Suicide Safety Plan

The NOW

Wunderlist

WRAP – Wellness Recovery Action Plan

Social Media Resources

www.justtellone.org

www.rainymood.com

www.recoveryourlife.com

www.itgetsbetter.org

www.teencentral.net

www.usreachout.com/wecanhelpus

<http://www.twloha.com>

<http://www.blahtherapy.com>

24/7 Crisis Hotlines

Youth under 18: Spectrum C.A.R.E.S. (716)882-4357

Adults: Crisis Services (716)834-3131

Addictions Hotline: (716)831-7007

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 1-800-273-8255

Crisis Text Line: Text "HOME" to 741-741

or use Facebook Messenger:

<https://www.facebook.com/crisistextline>

Who We Are

At Mental Health Advocates of Western New York, we take a holistic approach to supporting the mental health of individuals and families. Whether you need help getting through life's challenges or finding treatment for a mental illness, you can count on us to listen, comfort, and guide you to the right program or healthcare resource.

Contact Us

999 Delaware Ave. Buffalo NY, 14209
(716) 886- 1242

(Youth Peer Program: ext. 345)

(Child & Family Support Program: ext. 313)

Email: peersupport@mhawny.org

<http://www.mhawny.org>

Meet with a Youth Peer Advocate!

Youth Peer Advocates work part-time and typically give youth support in a group setting, but if you or someone you know is interested in meeting one-on-one with a Youth Peer Advocate, feel free to request a meeting before your next group or send an email to peersupport@mhawny.org

