



Hopkinton Youth & Family Services

NOVEMBER 2024- Parent/Caregiver Newsletter

Clinical Staff

Dawn Alcott-Miller, LICSW Director 508 497-9700 x1449

Dawn oversees all operations of the HYFS department, including staff/intern supervision, contracts, grants, budget management, and strategic planning. She is deeply invested in all HYFS services. She provides support with information and referrals, short-term counseling, parent consultation/coaching, case management, grants management, and educational and supportive programming.



Colleen Souza, LICSW Social Worker/Case Manager 508 497-9700 x1450

Colleen provides information and referral, case management services for residents having difficulty navigating resources, short-term counseling, and co-leads the Hopkinton Organizing for Prevention Youth Coalition.

Holly Morand, MSW, DBH Resource Counselor/Case Manager 508 497-9700 x1451

Holly provides outreach and case management services to enhance equity for residents, particularly those for whom traditional services have yet to be a good fit. She also provides outreach to special populations and those furthest from opportunity. Learn more about Holly joining HYFS in November [here](#).



Prevention Staff



Lauren Mayer, MACP Regional Prevention Coordinator - MassCALL3B Grant 508 497-9700 x1456

Lauren leads a regional cluster of towns working through a strategic model to identify risk and protective factors for youth substance use reduction. Through member engagement, she provides coordination support to the HOP coalition.

Neha Ninan (HHS Junior), Anna Noroian (HHS Junior), Emily Evans (HHS Sophomore), HOP Interns

Three youth interns support the Drug-Free Communities grant program efforts to reduce youth substance use and promote mental health in the Hopkinton community.



YOU CAN ALSO REACH OUT TO HYFS AT 508-497-9781

We're Hiring!

We are looking to complete our team:

- **A Full-time Social Worker/Program Coordinator**
- ***Please share this opportunity with those who may be interested***

Resources of the Month

National Family Caregivers Month/ Elections/ National Gratitude Month

November is National Family Caregivers Month, a time to show our support and honor the essential caregivers in our community. Family members who provide caregiving around the clock often are unrecognized within their communities and need appreciation, understanding, and support. Their work involves constant commitment, organization, responsibility, scheduling, and hands-on care.

Some self-care tips for caregivers from [Courage to Caregivers](#):



Some additional resources for caregivers:

[The VA Caregivers Support Program](#): The Caregivers Support Program teams at local Veterans Affairs facilities are excited to celebrate Veterans' caregivers monthly with various events, workshops, and opportunities to connect with other caregivers. In addition to local support, the VA offers many virtual resources and support for caregivers who may not have the time to travel.

[Caregiver Action Network \(CAN\)](#): CAN is a non-profit organization providing education, peer support, and resources to family caregivers across the country free of charge. CAN serves a broad spectrum of family caregivers. This includes parents of children with significant health needs. It also includes families and friends of wounded soldiers, from a young couple dealing with a diagnosis of MS to adult children caring for parents with Alzheimer's disease.

Caregiver Support Groups:

In Hopkinton: [The Hopkinton Senior Center](#) offers in-person and virtual caregiver support. *In-person Caregiver Support Group*: meets every 3rd Wednesday at 10:30 at the Senior Center.

Virtual Caregiver Support Group: meets on Fridays at 10:30 a.m.

Please check their [schedule](#) for the exact dates. For more information or to register, call (508) 497-0108 or email info@ourtimememorycafe.org. The Senior Center is located at 28 Mayhew St.

Other parts of MA:

[Mass.gov Support Groups for Family Caregivers](#): The MA Executive Office of Health and Human Services maintains a list of free support groups around Massachusetts hosted by the [Family Caregiver Support Program](#). This list is updated periodically, and most groups require registration. Utilize the contact information provided to register and verify dates and times, as they are subject to change.

Navigating Election Stress

Mindwise Innovations has created three reference pages for managing election stress for yourself, in the workplace, and with your children. It's important to prioritize self-care, create boundaries, and be mindful of the environment in which the conversations occur.

- [How to Combat Election Stress](#)
- [How to Manage Election Stress in the Workplace](#)
- [How to Help Your Children Understand the Election Stress](#)

National Gratitude Month is an opportunity to reflect on what you're grateful for, which has the potential to improve your overall well-being.

Practicing gratitude can have many benefits, including:

- Improved mental and physical health: Gratitude can help improve mood, decrease stress, and strengthen your immune system.
- Increased happiness: Gratitude can help you feel more positive emotions and relish good experiences.
- Better relationships: Gratitude can help you build strong relationships and deal with adversity.
- Improved job satisfaction

Here are some ways to celebrate National Gratitude Month:

- Keep a gratitude journal: Write down what you're grateful for daily.
- Send handwritten notes: Small gestures like handwritten letters can mean so much to someone.
- Volunteer: Give back to your community by volunteering your time and skills.
- Appreciate the little things: Focus on what makes you smile daily.



Check out [this article](#) from the NIH with more information on gratitude and mental health.

Coming Programs

HYFS and local partner's upcoming events are kept up to date and change frequently. Please check back often!
[Bookmark this page](#) or find it on our [website](#).

Read more about:

QPR - November 19th, 9:30 am and 5:30 pm
High School Focus Groups - December 2, 9, & 16 - 2:45 pm-4 pm
Middle School Focus Groups - TBD
My Ascension - December 5th - 2:45pm HHS Auditorium

Check out what's going on with our Community Partners

Families for Depression Awareness

Did you know that you have access to a host of webinars that help those with depression manage their illness and caregivers supporting those they love (adults of all ages and teens)? Check out their [offerings!](#)

Project ABC

A grant-funded program managed by YMCA-Metrowest offers local playgroups and caregiver consultation for preschool-age children and their caregivers. Read about the Project and its many FREE activities [here!](#)

Hopkinton Senior Center

The Hopkinton Council on Aging seeks to enhance and enrich the quality of life for adults aged 60 and older in the Town of Hopkinton by providing activities and services that encourage independence, healthy living, and continued participation in the community. Learn more [here.](#)

Hopkinton Public Library

The library hosts educational, therapeutic, and skill-building programs that explore current issues for all ages. Check out their [offerings!](#)

Hopkinton Park & Recreation

Hopkinton Parks and Recreation provides recreational opportunities for you and your family. Learn [more](#)

Hopkinton Public Health

Hopkinton Health Department & Nursing Services ensures that healthy outcomes & lifestyles are accessible & achievable for all who live, work, & visit the town. Our mission is to promote public health through education, advocacy, & provision of high-quality healthcare services. Learn more [here](#)

[Access the CDC's Parents Under Pressure Report.](#)

Parents Under Pressure

Consider reading the CDC's report of the impact of parenting on parents.

The Current State of Parental Stress & Well-Being Over the past decade, parents have been consistently more likely to report experiencing high levels of stress compared to other adults. In 2023, 53% of parents reported high levels of stress in the past month compared to 20% of other adults.	A Snapshot of Parental Stressors Throughout their lifespan, parents and caregivers often face heightened stressors, including financial strain and economic instability, time demands, concerns over children's health and safety, parental isolation and loneliness, difficulty managing technology and social media, and cultural pressures.	The Relationship Between Parental Stress & Mental Health Chronic or excessive stress, coupled with other complex environmental and biological factors, can increase the risk of mental health conditions for individuals.
The Impact of Parental Mental Health Parental mental health conditions can have far-reaching and profound implications for children, families as a whole, and for society, including increased health care costs and reduced economic productivity.	We Can Take Action The well-being of parents and caregivers is a critical and underappreciated public health priority. Simply put, caregivers need care, too.	

HYFS provides programs & services that promote behavioral health

Call us to learn more at 508-497-9781

INTERFACE Referral Service

All Hopkinton residents can access free and confidential help finding an outpatient mental health provider in as little as two weeks that best matches their needs in terms of location, the specialty of the provider, insurance or fee requirement, and availability. 1-888-244-6843

Mindwise Behavioral Health Screening

Twelve free, anonymous, scientifically validated screenings are available to check up on topics ranging from general well-being to mood, anxiety, and substance use. Take one today to gain insight and get resources.

About Us

Mission

To provide access to comprehensive social services for youth and families and to enhance behavioral health for the entire Hopkinton community.

Vision

Hopkinton will be a town in which all people are valued, where behavioral health is a high priority, and residents have a place to turn when they need help.

[The HYFS Strategic Plan](#)

[The HYFS Strategic Plan Executive Summary](#)

For any questions, comments, or concerns, please reach out to Dawn Alcott-Miller, Director, at dalcott@hopkintonma.gov or 508-497-9781

Hopkinton Organizing for Prevention

The mission of Hopkinton Organizing for Prevention (HOP) is to prevent youth substance use by providing resources, education, and support to promote well-being and resilience for all Hopkinton residents. Adults and youth can always get involved. Reach out to us to find out how! Visit us on [Instagram](#) and [Facebook!](#)

Additional resources

HYFS has a user-friendly landing page for many resource needs! Check it out for yourself or someone else.

To Learn More & For Up to Date Program Information

Visit us on our [Website](#), [HOP's Website](#) & [Facebook](#) & [Instagram!](#)