

## Progress Not Perfection



# York County Wellness Courts

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### Whatever you have been through...we support you.

This week is National Sleep Awareness Week. Your sleep health is strongly associated with your mental health. NSF recommends 7-9 hours of sleep a night for most adults. 50% of all adults who sleep less than that recommendation also experience mild or greater levels of depressive symptoms. This week and every week, make sure you are getting enough rest!



**April is Sexual Assault Awareness Month (SAAM).** This is a time to recognize advocates, survivors, and their loved ones. During this month, organizations and advocates work to increase open discussion about sexual assault, improve

awareness, and identify resources for those affected by sexual assault. April 7th is designated as the Day of Action. This campaign pushes individuals to not only learn about sexual assault but to actively work against it as well. Someone is sexually assaulted every 68 seconds in the United States. Every 9 minutes, a child falls victim to sexual assault.

**May is Mental Health Month**, which raises awareness of mental health conditions and their impact on the physical, emotional, and mental well-being of families and communities. Established in 1949, Mental Health Month aims to educate individuals on mental illness prevention, treatment, and recovery. The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services work with other government agencies, public health organizations, and community members to improve the outlook for individuals impacted by mental illness.

**June is national PTSD Awareness Month.** Although it is typically associated with combat veterans, PTSD can impact anyone who has experienced what they interpret as a traumatic event. The term was first used in the DSM-III (1980), though earlier publications describe similar diagnoses. In 2014, the federal government designated the month of June to raise awareness of the condition and resources to assist those who experience it. According to the National Center for PTSD, approximately 6% of individuals will have PTSD in their life.




### Community Service Spotlight: Self care kits for Valley Youth House

During the month of February, Wellness Court Participants partnered with Leadership York Team D, and donated items to create self care kits for youth and young adults experiencing homelessness and receiving services through Valley Youth House- York County. Participants assembled 140 kits that will be provided to Team D as part of their overall project. Learn more about Valley Youth House at: <https://valleyyouthhouse.org/>



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### VITA: FREE TAX PREPARATION



The **Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA)** program offers free tax preparation and filing to low- and moderate-income individuals, families, persons with disabilities, the elderly, and limited English-speaking taxpayers who need assistance in preparing their tax returns in York County.

**Families** (2 or more people) and **individuals** who made \$60,000 or less in 2023 may be eligible to receive **FREE** tax preparation through the **Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA)** program!



**TAX PREPARATION WILL BEGIN ON FEBRUARY 5TH, BY APPOINTMENT ONLY!**

To schedule an appointment call **717-848-1808** or **223-232-4017**.

**LOOKING FOR DIRECTION?**

**YORK COUNTY COMMUNITY RESOURCE GUIDE**




### Winter 2024 Commencement Ceremony

On February 27, 2024 we celebrated 15 graduates of York County Wellness Courts. These 15 individuals decided to fight for their recovery and their freedom and they are winning! Prior to introducing the Drug Court graduates, Judge Gothie said "Participants who are motivated to change their lives win. Trained staff win. Programs that are funded well win. Programs that have the support of their elected officials, of the community, and of the public win. Communities that invest in mental health and substance abuse treatment win, I am grateful that in York County we have decided to fight and that many of the things we need are in place...We are extremely fortunate that visionary yet pragmatic leaders in York County had the foresight and wisdom to pursue the construction and maintenance of our wellness court programs. That intentional planning, networking and building has tangible results that you will see today".

In their own words:

*"Before Drug Court, I was a slave to my addiction. After Wellness Court, I'm free to live well."*

*"Phase One brings you out of the darkness into the light."*

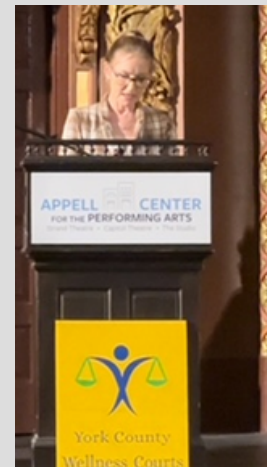
*"Don't be a victim. Be victorious."*

*"It was a hard, meaningful struggle. If it weren't for the people who helped me, I wouldn't be here today."*

*"I'm now a productive member of society thanks to the program, and that's wild to me."*

*"Keep honest communication with your team and you got this."*

*"This DUI Court program is like a canvas, and each of the team members are like a paintbrush."*



### Key Note Speaker Julie Pullo-Hess

Julie is a 2000 graduate of the York County Drug Court program, and a person in long term recovery. She owns and operates Keep It Green Recovery Homes with her husband, Ray, and has just embarked on a new adventure—the creation of Life Changing Pathways, a new Recovery Community Organization in York.

Julie obtained her Certified Recovery Specialist credentials in 2019. She is Vice-President of the Colonial House Board of Directors. She sits on the Reentry Coalition Advisory Board. She is a member of the York Partnership for Recovery, which plans events each year to celebrate National Recovery Month. She is actively involved in the local and very vibrant recovery community in York.

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Save  
The  
Date



### How Does HONESTY Affect Recovery?

When we talk about honesty in recovery, we're referring to honesty with other people as well as with yourself. You can't expect to live a life of substance use and/or mental health recovery without being brutally honest along the way.

Let's talk about all the bad things dishonesty brings:

- One lie ALWAYS leads to another.
- Dishonesty prevents you from tackling the issues that led to this point.
- Dishonesty breaks the trust that others have in your and damages relationships.
- Dishonesty affects your support team's ability to help you.
- Dishonesty tricks you into believing you don't have a problem.
- Dishonesty keeps problematic people, places, and things in your life.

Now, why is honesty important in recovery:

- Honesty leads you to understanding all of life's issues that brought you to this point.
- You will gain more trust, respect, and love from others if you are honest.

- Your support team will be more equipped to help you.
- Honesty gives you pride in yourself and your journey.
- Being honest lets you become a role model for other people.
- Being honest reduces the stigma associated with mental health and substance use disorders.

April 30th is National Honesty Day. Celebrate by sharing your journey and opening up to those around you. No matter what happens, your support team will always be proud of your honesty.

### Keeping Families Together

2022 Drug Wellness Court graduate, Jolene Hagans, and Drug Wellness Court Coordinator, Meghan Hennigan were recently interviewed by Ellie Person, CBS 21 News, to discuss how Problem Solving Courts work to keep families together. Scan the code below to see the full story.



*"It's hard for me to admit that I was an addict, but I was used to the shame of addiction," Hagans said. "But it was even harder as a mother to admit I was being a bad one."*

### NOW HIRING

York County Courts believe that diverting individuals into problem-solving courts instead of charging fines or sentencing them to jail and prison can reduce recidivism and repeat offenses, reduce jail and prison expenses, and support healing to improve lives. The Principles of Balanced and Restorative Justice can summarize the basic philosophy that problem-solving courts adhere to. These principles include:

- Community Protection: ensuring that residents are safe in the community.
- Accountability: when an individual commits a crime, that individual must give back to the victim of the crime and the community.
- Competency Development: working to make sure that individuals who participate in these programs leave the system more responsible and capable than when they came in, so there is a chance for the party to be a productive member of society.
- Individualization: establishing a unique treatment plan for each person based on the specific needs and information provided.

The success rate of problem-solving courts depends directly on the individuals' relationship and partnership and the criminal justice system. Individuals who complete all programs and graduate may qualify to have charges dismissed or expunged, or penalties reduced.

Do you want to help individuals walk out of the justice system and into recovery? We have multiple probation officer positions open on our teams! A full job description and application can be found by scanning QR code 1. After applying, please scan QR code 2, and email your resume letting us know you saw the posting in the newsletter and completed an application.



QR code 1



QR code 2