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Education ~ Advocacy ~ Outreach ~ Prevention

March 2010

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Responding to School Violence

The shooting last month at Deer Creek Middle School resulted in many complex headlines about mental health issues. Following the shootings, MHAC contacted several media outlets to provide education and resources about two important topics related to the shooting: how to help children who experience traumatic situations and how challenging it is for people with serious mental illness to access public mental health care.

[Helping children cope with traumatic situations](#) is important to the healing process and childhood development. Often, the news media overlooks this side of the story in favor of more sensational headlines. However, this is one of the most important messages the media can communicate. MHAC assists media outlets to provide professional strategies for parents and caregivers to communicate about violence in a healthy way.



9News Clip: [Coping with school violence](#)

The shootings at Deer Creek Middle School also made clear that the mental health system in Colorado is fragmented and difficult to navigate, particularly for low-income individuals. MHAC works with news media to explain the problems involved. We encourage reporters to look at the issues from different angles, for example, funding for mental health care, insurance coverage and coordination of care.

[FOX 31 News clip:](#) School Shooting: mental health, Columbine High School and Platte Canyon High School comparison

Quick Links

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Do you or someone you know need help navigating the mental health care system? Visit the [Help Starts Here - Resources](#) page of our website for a searchable resource database, fact sheets about mental health or for the phone number for the [Information & Referral Service](#).

Making Real Change in 2009

Mental Health America of Colorado is grateful to the many individuals and organizations that support our programs through voluntary work and financial contributions. Without this support, our valuable programs would not exist.

In 2009, MHAC reached nearly 20,000 Coloradoans through its programs. For example,

- The [Pro Bono Outreach Program](#) provided free professional mental health services to nearly 1,300 economically disadvantaged people with mental health needs, including individuals, families and children. These services, valued at nearly \$750,000, were provided by a team of 70 volunteer mental health professionals.
- Nearly 685 people accessed [free mental health screenings](#) or depression, anxiety, bipolar disorder and posttraumatic stress disorder through the MHAC website and at community events.
- The MHAC Advocacy Team now has over 1,100 members and the [Public Policy & Advocacy Program](#) provided 250 grassroots advocacy trainings.
- The [WE CAN!](#) program provided trainings to 130 consumers of mental health care.

Thank you for helping us make real change in Colorado in 2009!

Tribute 2010 ~ Save the Date!

Mark your calendars for the 29th Annual Tribute dinner and fundraiser honoring **Patty** and **Don Cook**.

Wednesday, September 29, 2010
Sheraton Denver Downtown Hotel
1550 Court Place ~ Denver, CO 80202

For over 25 years, MHAC's Tribute event has brought together members of the community to share their passion for mental health. It provides an opportunity to learn about mental health and wellness and the relevant issues facing Colorado. Proceeds from the evening support MHAC's efforts in outreach, education, prevention and advocacy to benefit all Coloradoans.



Staff News

Heather Cameron joins MHAC as the Vice President of Marketing & Development. Most recently, Heather served as the director of Metro Crisis Services, Inc. She was instrumental in developing a mental health crisis system for the Denver metro area.

[Contact Staff](#)



News & Announcements

Mental Health Matters

Join us to learn more about our mission and vision and see how MHAC leads prevention, education, outreach and advocacy programs and mental health services across Colorado. We look forward to meeting you and sharing how we can all make a difference in the lives of individuals and families coping with mental health issues. Light lunch will be served.



Thursday, April 1 ~ 7:30am - 8:30am
MHAC Office, 6th Floor Conference Room
1385 S. Colorado Blvd., Denver CO [Map](#)

RSVP by Tuesday, March 27. [Email Alyson](#) or call 720-208-2243.

Bank for a Cause

Liberty Savings Bank has created a unique program called Bank for a Cause because it is committed to the community and charities it serves. When you open a Bank for a Cause checking account and meet the criteria of the account, Liberty Savings Bank will donate 1% of the debit card signature. Account holders may choose from a variety of nonprofit organizations that are part of this program. Mental Health America of Colorado is happy to be part of this program!



Learn more about [Bank for a Cause](#)

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