



A CLOSER LOOK

NEIGHBORS HELPING NEIGHBORS

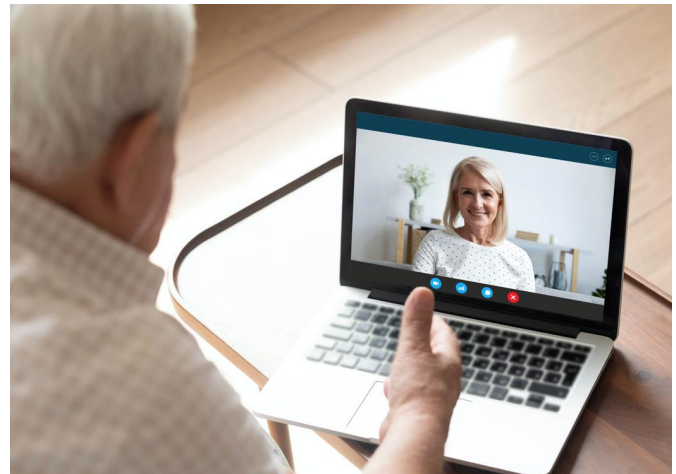
The mission of Greenwoods Counseling & Referrals, Inc. is to provide access to high-quality and affordable mental healthcare and related social services for individuals and families living or working in Litchfield County.

The Director's Desk

JOHN SIMONCELLI,
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Dear Friends,
Welcome to the very first edition of what will be an ongoing newsletter for our supporters and our community partners. The inaugural edition focuses on COVID-19's impact on our services, our community outreach efforts, and our work to help those struggling with addiction. The pandemic brought unprecedented challenges that were matched by the hard work and dedication of our staff. Personally, I was filled with gratitude as I witnessed our employees rise to the occasion to ensure our clients would continue to receive the care they need. Their hard work allowed us to remain connected to our clients even though we had to be physically distant. While there are some startling and heart-breaking statistics in this edition (see Fast Facts), we want you to also see the hope that exists in the stories of recovery and change. As you'll read in the following pages, no one gets better alone, just as no agency can survive without help from its supporters. Thank you for your commitment to making our community better and for taking the time to stay connected to Greenwoods.



Transition to Telehealth

In just three days...

On March 18th, due to Covid-19, the entire staff of Greenwoods began working from home and in three short days our team worked diligently to implement Telehealth services. The clinical staff did an excellent job of transitioning clients to this new platform without any interruption in care. Clients in need were provided with financial assistance to cover the cost of cell phone bills and other technology needed for Telehealth. Technical questions were addressed in real time by Michael Pisco, Greenwoods Clinical Coordinator, who became a virtual help desk for two weeks. Program Manager, Liz Griswold, cared for our most vulnerable clients in our Medication Assisted Treatment - (continues on page 2)

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and school-based mental health programs. The team at Greenwoods was able to prioritize both the health of our clients and safety of the entire staff, which could not have been achieved without the improvements and infrastructure built over the last three years.

Out & About

SARAH TOOMEY,
COMMUNITY OUTREACH & RECOVERY NAVIGATOR

Medication Assisted Treatment (MAT) comes in a number of forms and is considered a best practice



for the treatment of opioid dependence. In February, when we were still able to meet people in the community, I received a phone call one morning. The caller stated they were struggling with addiction and needed help. This person was referred by a friend that was already a client of the Greenwoods MAT program. The caller shared he was having strong urges to use heroin and felt he would if he didn't have a plan that day. We set up an appointment to meet for coffee in the community as soon as possible. The man was extremely grateful to meet. Our team worked quickly to set him up for an appointment with the Greenwoods MAT program and got him in that afternoon. The client later shared he felt his life was saved that day. Today, five months later, the client is in a safer home, aspiring for a better job and continuing to work hard on his program of recovery.

This story exemplifies the importance of meeting people where and when they are ready. With almost one person a day overdosing in Litchfield County, these types of interventions are literally saving lives.

Fast Facts

- **There is a greater chance of dying of a drug overdose than in a car accident.**
- **In 2019 there were 1,200 unintentional drug overdose related deaths in CT. 73 were in Litchfield County.**
- **Litchfield County often has among the highest OD death rate per capita in CT.**
- **In July 2020 we are seeing about one OD a day in Litchfield County.**
- **Naloxone (Narcan) reverses an opioid overdose and saves lives. Get a free Narcan kit and training by contacting Sarah Toomey, Community Outreach & Recovery Navigator.
Call (860) 309.3845, or email stoomey@greenwoodsreferrals.org**

"THE OPPOSITE OF ADDICTION ISN'T SOBRIETY. IT'S CONNECTION."

-Johann Hari

Journey of Recovery

ELIZABETH GRISWOLD,
MAT & YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH PROGRAM MANAGER

At Greenwoods we offer a type of MAT medication called Suboxone in conjunction with regular group and individual psychotherapy. We first met one of our clients “Bob” in the



spring of 2019. In the fall of the same year he experienced a series of triggering events including the death of a friend from a drug overdose. Bob also lost his housing and suffered a significant physical injury. These events contributed to Bob relapsing back to his drug of choice. However, because of the rapport and trust built prior to his relapse, Bob felt confident that he could return to Greenwoods without judgment or shame. Since returning, he has regained employment, found new housing and is about to purchase a vehicle. He started saving money and purchased his first laptop with a goal of furthering his education. Bob intends to become an addiction counselor. He recently shared that he can finally take a deep breath and feel a bit of peace. Bob is now a Recovery Support Specialist and has started to volunteer with local initiatives aimed at reducing drug overdoses and helping people get into treatment. When asked about all the positive changes in his life, Bob explained, “I’ve learned that the only thing I have complete control over is my reaction to the world around me.”

An Expression of Gratitude

We would like to give a heartfelt shout-out to **Conversations On the Green** for their endless work towards building a healthier community, and most especially for their support of Greenwoods.

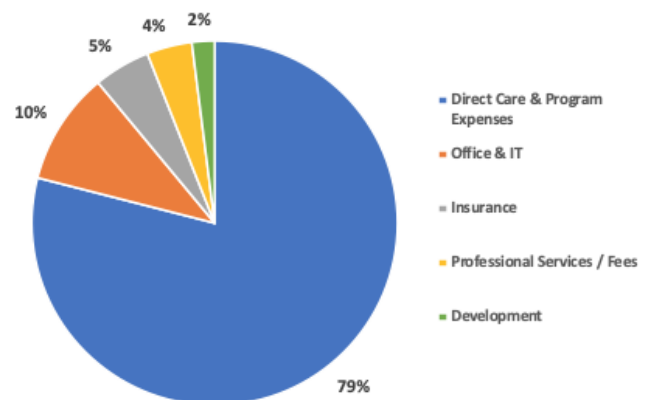
Conversations On the Green (COG), a local organization that brings nationally recognized voices to Town Hall style forums right in our own backyard, aims not only to inform but to engage the audience in the conversation, and in turn, creates and strengthens connection within our community.

All proceeds from each conversation are donated to local charities working with the most vulnerable residents of Litchfield County - and Greenwoods is one of the grateful recipients of their work.

Thank you, Conversations On the Green, for your ongoing support and commitment to building a healthier community in the Litchfield hills.

To learn more about COG, visit them at: www.conversationsonthegreen.com.

Greenwoods Current Year Expenses - \$811,400



We thank our donors for their continuing support of the Greenwoods mission.