



Independence

HEALTH & THERAPY

2028 N SEMINARY AVE | WOODSTOCK, IL 60098 (815)338-3590 INDEPENDENCEHEALTH.ORG

MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS KNOWLEDGE IS POWER

What condition is marked by unstable moods and self-image?

Borderline personality disorder

When someone has difficulty with attention and hyperactivity, it's called?

ADHD

What are repetitive, harmful impulses called?

Impulse control disorder

What's a common technique to reduce stress?

Deep breathing

Most common mental health condition in the U.S.?

Anxiety disorder

Percentage of adults with mental health conditions who receive treatment?

<50%

How many college students experience anxiety/depression?

1 in 3

What's a healthy stress relief strategy?

Engaging in hobbies

How many people globally have a mental health condition?

1 in 4



May is Mental Health Awareness Month

Across the country, May is recognized as Mental Health Awareness Month, a time to elevate the conversation around mental health, reduce stigma, and encourage individuals to seek support when they need it. This month serves as a reminder that mental health is a vital part of overall well-being and deserves the same care and attention as physical health.

Mental health challenges can affect anyone, regardless of age, background, or life circumstances. Whether someone is navigating anxiety, depression, grief, trauma, or major life transitions, support and connection can make a meaningful difference. Therapy is one of the most effective ways to access that support.

Therapy offers a dedicated space to be heard, understood, and supported without judgment. Through individual counseling, clients can develop coping strategies, process difficult emotions, build insight, and work toward meaningful, lasting change. For some, therapy provides support during a particularly challenging season; for others, it becomes an ongoing investment in personal growth and emotional well-being.

At Independence Health & Therapy, we are committed to supporting individuals across all stages of their mental health journey through individual counseling and psychiatry services tailored to each person's unique needs; as well as community support groups including, a Brain Injury Support Group and Caregiver Support Group.

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May is Mental Health Awareness Month

In addition to the support group offered through IHT, Jenn Balleto, LCPC facilitates the Survivors of Suicide Loss Support Group (SOS), offered in partnership with the McHenry County Mental Health Board and the McHenry County Suicide Prevention Task Force. SOS provides a safe, compassionate space for individuals who have lost a loved one to suicide. This group provides an opportunity to connect with others who share

similar experiences, process grief in a supportive environment, and begin to find meaning and hope alongside loss.

This May, we want to remind our community that support is available, healing is possible, and reaching out is a courageous first step. Whether through therapy, psychiatry, or support groups, you do not have to navigate life's challenges alone.

MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS WORD SEARCH



- PREVENTION RESILIENCE ACTION
- RECOVERY BEHAVIOR WELLBEING
- SUPPORT THOUGHTS AWARENESS
- PATIENCE STRESS MINDFUL
- STIGMA MENTAL HEALTH
- MIND

SOS

Survivors of Suicide Loss Support Group

When a loved one takes their own life, pain and confusion can be crippling for those they leave behind.

SOS—Survivors of Suicide Loss is a support group for those grieving such a loss.

Join us in a compassionate, caring, confidential setting to share your story and to find strength, inspiration and hope in each other.

Sponsored by:
McHenry County Mental Health Board.

For more information on suicide prevention efforts in McHenry County visit the McHenry County Suicide Prevention Taskforce website, www.mchenrycountysptf.org


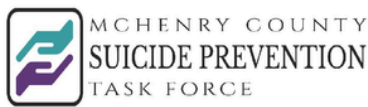
Meeting Information:

1st & 3rd Thursday

McHenry County
 Mental Health Board
 Conference Room D

620 Dakota St, Crystal Lake
 7pm-9pm

Questions?
 Contact Jenn Balleto, LCPC
jballeto@independencehealth.org

“Mental health problems don’t define who you are. They are something you experience. You walk in the rain, and you feel the rain, but you are not the rain.”
 -Matt Haig

Scan to learn about Independence Health & Therapy’s Behavioral Health Providers




Resilience Beyond Recovery: Sean's Story and the Lifelong Impact of Brain Injury

After childhood accident and 24 brain surgeries, Sean overcame learning disabilities, earned a bachelor's degree, adapted careers, and built a 24-year UPS tenure through resilience.

Brain injuries can happen in an instant, but their effects can last a lifetime. Sean's story of survival powerfully illustrates both the challenges and the possibilities that come with a traumatic brain injury (TBI), and why awareness, early intervention, and long-term support are so critical.

At just three years old, Sean fell down a flight of concrete stairs while riding his tricycle. Initially, doctors believed it was a minor head injury. Within days, however, the reality became clear: Sean was experiencing severe brain swelling. Emergency surgery saved his life, but it marked the beginning of a long medical journey.

Over the course of a single year, Sean underwent 16 brain surgeries to treat swelling and hydrocephalus (fluid on the brain). Doctors were forced to remove a portion of his skull to allow the brain to swell safely, an extraordinary and frightening procedure for a child and his family. Holidays, birthdays, and everyday childhood moments were spent in the hospital, surrounded by dedicated medical staff who became extended family.

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Growing Up with a Brain Injury

Surviving the injury was only the first step. As Sean grew older, the long-term effects of his brain injury became more apparent, especially in school. Learning difficulties led to repeating kindergarten and ongoing academic struggles. Grades did not come easily, and memory and processing challenges followed him through high school and beyond.

Yet persistence told another story. Despite these challenges, Sean earned a bachelor's degree in law enforcement, with a minor in business management, proof that a brain injury does not define a person's potential.

"I wanted to show that even if learning is harder, you can still accomplish what you put your mind to," he shared.

Adapting to a Changing Life

Medical complications continued into adulthood. Over Sean's lifetime, he has undergone more than 24 brain surgeries, along with multiple spinal operations. A shunt failure in 2017 resulted in a medical emergency that left him disoriented and unaware of his surroundings, highlighting how TBI effects can resurface decades later.

Professionally, a planned career in law enforcement was cut short when doctors ruled it unsafe due to the risk of head injury. Instead, he built a 24-year career at UPS, working in warehouse and driving roles until retirement. Even when Sean's paths changed unexpectedly, adaptability made success possible.

Family, Purpose, and Perspective

Sean is a father of two accomplished children, one an English teacher, the other pursuing college and creative design. Both children, he proudly describes as intelligent and driven. His advice to them, and to others, is simple but powerful: "Follow your heart. If you have passion and purpose, that's what matters."

Today, in retirement, Sean focuses on improving his health, managing life independently, and staying connected through our brain injury support group which provides understanding, shared experiences, and hope.

Hidden Reality of Traumatic Brain Injuries

- TBIs can be missed or underestimated, especially early on
- Effects can last a lifetime, even if the injury happens in childhood
- Recovery is not linear—challenges may resurface years later
- Support, understanding, and inclusion are essential to quality of life

Independence Health & Therapy Unveils New Mission, Vision, and Values

At Independence Health & Therapy, our heart has always been in the well-being of those we serve. We believe that by working together and removing barriers to care, we can ensure every individual feels respected, supported, and connected.

We are thrilled to share a refreshed mission and set of core values that reflect who we are and where we are going.

MISSION

Driving care and enriching lives to foster health, wellbeing, and independence.

VISION

A thriving community with improved health and quality of life.

VALUES

ACCESSIBILITY AND INCLUSION

We ensure our services are welcoming, accessible, and inclusive. We reduce barriers to care, meet individuals and families where they are, and create environments free of judgement and stigma. Every person deserves access to compassionate support regardless of background, language, or circumstance.

CARING

Caring at IH&T means creating safe, dignified environments where individuals feel respected, supported, and connected. We approach every person with empathy and patience, recognizing the vulnerability that often accompanies aging or behavioral health challenges. Our care extends beyond the individual to the family, offering reassurance and partnership while reducing isolation and fostering meaningful purpose. In every interaction, we honor the whole person and promote wellbeing, independence, and quality of life.

RADICAL COLLABORATION

We work in partnership with families, referral partners, community leaders, and one another. We believe that strong collaboration strengthens outcomes, expands access, and builds a healthier community. We actively seek partnerships that enhance our impact and ensure coordinated care.

COMMITTED TO EXCELLENCE

We go the extra mile. We continually seek better solutions, stronger outcomes, and meaningful experiences for those we serve. We are committed to high-quality programming, responsible stewardship, and continuous improvement.



CAREGIVER STRESS IS REAL

Up to 70% of caregivers experience burnout - you're not alone.

Make Your Mental Health a Priority—Because Caregivers Matter

Caring for a loved one is an act of love, but it can also be overwhelming.

If you're feeling exhausted, stressed, or burned out, you're not alone.

When you prioritize your well-being, you can show up stronger for the ones you love.

WE'RE HERE TO HELP

Take a break. Know your limits. Ask for support.

You deserve care too.



Independence
HEALTH & THERAPY



2028 N Seminary Ave | Woodstock, IL | (815)338-3590 | IndependenceHealth.org

PEACE OF MIND FOR YOU
COMPASSIONATE CARE FOR
YOUR LOVED ONE



ADULT DAY & MEMORY CARE PROGRAMS

- Social Connection
- Activities to Support Well-Being
- Care Coordination & Medication Monitoring
- Door-to-Door Transportation
- Monday through Friday 9am - 4 pm
- Caregiver Support

OUR PROGRAMS SERVE INDIVIDUALS WITH:
Alzheimer's Disease | Neurocognitive Illnesses | Dementia | Social Isolation



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scan to learn more



IndependenceHealth.org

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UPCOMING EVENTS

Coffee & Conversation

June 4, 2026

July 2, 2026

August 6, 2026

7:30 - 9:00 am

Independence Health & Therapy

2028 N Seminary Ave, Woodstock

Coffee + Community = The best way to start the day!

Complimentary coffee & pastries

Caregiver Support Group

Every 2nd Thursday of the Month

9:15 - 10:45 am

Independence Health & Therapy

2028 N Seminary Ave

Caregiver Support Group

Every 3rd Friday of the Month

1:00 - 2:30 pm

First Congregational Church

Library

461 Pierson St, Crystal Lake

Picnic in the Park

June 5, 2026

3 - 6 pm

3400 Pearl St., McHenry

Family picnic and resource fair.

Free food & entertainment.

Brain Health Happy Hour

June 24, 2026

4:00 - 5:00 am

Independence Health & Therapy

2028 N Seminary Ave

Gain knowledge on everyday habits that support brain health with Dr. LaVigne, PHD.

Brain Injury Support Group

Every 2nd Wednesday of the Month

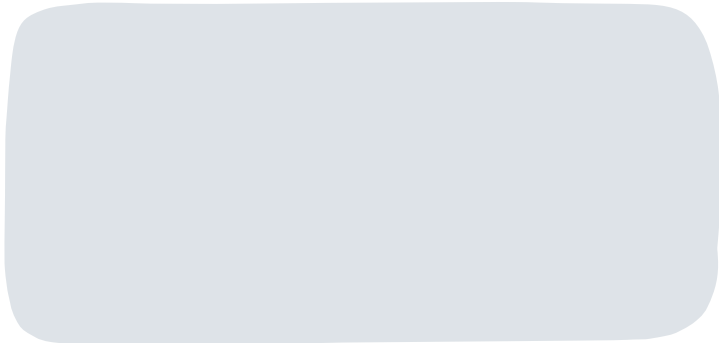
10:00 - 11:30 am

McHenry County Mental Health Board

620 Dakota St, Crystal Lake



2028 N Seminary Avenue
Woodstock, IL 60098



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 **Independence**
HEALTH & THERAPY

Independence Health & Therapy's
21st ANNUAL
tee to tea
Women's Golf Outing
Monday, August 31, 2025
8:00 am – 2:00 pm
Woodstock Country Club

Enjoy a continental breakfast, mimosas, nine holes of golf, on-course games, snacks and beverages, and a high tea luncheon.

SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES AVAILABLE