

CATHOLIC CHARITIES

BLOOMINGTON

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CatholicCharitiesBtown.org



Spring 2008 Newsletter

STRESS

What is it? • How can we eliminate it? • Does it matter? • What does it have to do with Catholic Charities Bloomington?

Because much of the work done at Catholic Charities Bloomington is about helping people deal with the stresses of daily life, we spend a lot of time helping our clients find answers to these questions. Although we generally think of stress as something negative and something to be eliminated from our lives, it is actually a natural part of living and simply describes what happens in our bodies when we respond to any of the many daily demands put on us.

Stress, mild to severe, is an inevitable part of life and unavoidable. Stress is the way our body helps us “get up and get going” and is not necessarily bad. However these changes that happen in our bodies that allow us to respond do take a toll and create some wear and tear on our system. Fortunately, our bodies are designed to repair this damage and return us to a relaxed, healthy state of being.

Problems are likely to develop if our bodies do not have the opportunity to go through the recovery process after experiencing stress. For recovery to happen, stress cannot be continuous. If stress is too severe or if stressors follow one another with no recovery time, our body may lose its capacity to repair the damage. It is then that we begin to experience stress symptoms.

These symptoms can range from minor, such as occasional trouble falling asleep, to severe, such as experiencing dangerously high blood pressure. Stress symptoms may underlie as much as 70 percent of all visits to family doctors. Stress may also be the trigger for many of the psychological and emotional symptoms that cause people to seek counseling. The symptoms resulting from stress can come on the heels of some very difficult events such as the death of a family member,

or it can come months or years after a series of traumatic experiences such as those some soldiers experience after returning from combat. Sometimes problems develop not because of a very obvious or dramatic situation but because of ongoing stress with no chance to rest and recover on a regular basis. Stress can affect individuals, relationships, families, organizations, or even whole societies.

How does Catholic Charities Bloomington fit into this picture? Our counselors are trained to recognize the effects of stress and how it might be damaging to a person’s physical and emotional wellbeing, or the stability of a marriage, or the healthy functioning of a whole family. But recognition is not enough. Then the counselor’s job, in partnership with the person, the couple, or the family is to find ways to change lifestyles, eliminate some stressors, manage those that cannot be eliminated, and find new means of recovery from the wear and tear of stress. None of us are immune to stress; however all of us are capable of enhancing our ability to handle it.

Photo by: Laura Sikes/Catholic Charities



Mission Statement

Catholic Charities Bloomington is dedicated to the enhancement of the dignity and functioning for all persons in the community-at-large through education, social service delivery, and advocacy. We are especially committed to working within our communities to remove barriers that block the quality of life for the poor, the disabled, or for persons marginalized by our society in any way. We serve all residents of the counties of the Bloomington Deanery of the Archdiocese of Indianapolis: Brown, Lawrence, Morgan, Monroe, Orange and Owen Counties.





Stress and the Family

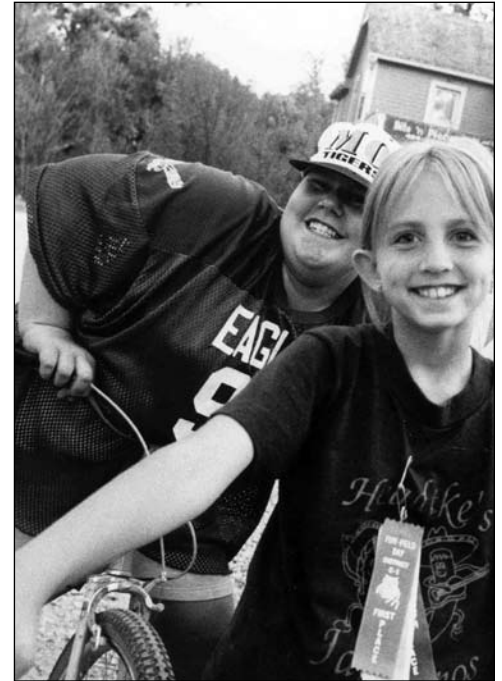
At Catholic Charities Bloomington we hear a lot about family stress and how it is affecting the ways in which family members relate to one another. We also often hear good ideas, old and new, about how families are learning to avoid, manage and recover from stressors. Here are some of the creative ways families cope:

- Mom and Dad remembering that they are also Husband and Wife; reviving date nights out.
- Remembering that families are always changing to meet new demands and challenges.
- Finding other families to share work and play.

- The whole family taking a martial arts class.
- Having an “unplugged” evening at home once a week and playing table games.
- Saturday afternoon hike, bike ride, or walk to the park.
- Volunteering together once a month.
- A family “quiet time” before bed.
- Finding a volunteer tutor for a child struggling with math.
- Spending less money and shopping at yard sales.
- Parents listening more and talking less.
- Remembering to tell children how great they are.

Healthy families find ways to take care of themselves spiritually, emotionally, and physically. Even the healthiest family needs help at times. The healthy family is not isolated from the larger community. Even “good” families can have “bad” problems. Healthy families don’t let guilt or shame keep themselves from reaching out for help.

The mission of Catholic Charities Bloomington is to make help accessible to any family in our community who is experiencing difficulties they are unable to address alone. We do this by offering counseling on a sliding fee scale and by respecting each family’s unique needs.



Lauren Chelec/Catholic Charities USA

Did You Know Catholic Charities Bloomington...

- More than doubled the number of counseling hours provided in the last half of 2006 as compared to 2007?
- Now offers a full range of psychological and psychoeducational assessment services for children and adults?
- Now provides counseling services in three Catholic schools, St. Charles in Bloomington, St. Vincent de Paul in Bedford, St. Ambrose in Seymour; and at Pinnacle, a private Bloomington School?
- Has bilingual counseling services for our Spanish-speaking community members in Bloomington and Seymour?

Partner Profile: Passport to Manhood

Four local agencies are collaborating to provide young men, ages 11 to 14, an opportunity to explore what it means to become a man and have some fun doing it. The agencies are Catholic Charities Bloomington, Oak Tree Counseling, Big Brothers Big Sisters of South Central Indiana, and the Boys & Girls Club of Bloomington.



is Catholic Charities Bloomington volunteer and IU student, Charlotte Murphey. The boys have already had a chance to visit Rhino’s to learn about Youth Radio and will soon be visiting Bloomingfoods to learn about healthy eating.

Passport to Manhood has provided this group of boys

The program is in full swing as this newsletter goes to press. The group is being led by four Indiana University interns, Matt James and Seok-Hwan Chang, both graduate students from IU’s Counseling Program in the School of Education, and Shane Whittington from IU’s School of Social Work. Also helping behind the scenes

with an opportunity to address many of the stresses facing young men in our community. This ranges from finding healthy, safe leisure activities to developing goals that will lead to a satisfying work life. It has taken the time and support of many agencies and businesses to make this work.

Photo by: Laura Sikes/Catholic Charities USA



Stress and Poverty

It has been known for years that stress and poverty are linked. The poor tend to face greater stressors which generate more stress-related problems such as heart disease and high blood pressure. More recently it has been found that children are especially vulnerable to stress and suffer greater health problems than adults. The assault to children's health from living in poverty seems to follow them into adulthood even if, as adults, their socioeconomic status is higher.

A study published in Psychological Science last November found that the longer kids spent in poverty, the worse their bodies were at handling the stressors of their environment. With the advances in brain imaging we are even beginning to better understand how the brain is impacted by stress. The impact of poverty on stress levels in youth has implications for everyone in our society. When we allow children to grow up in poverty, it costs everyone money. These findings also show us the damage we can all experience from chronic stress and specific stressors such as noise pollution, relationship turmoil, and financial woes. They also demonstrate the importance

of stress management for children and families.

Catholic Charities' essential mission is to remove the barriers that block the quality of life for the poor and the empowerment of their efforts to move out of poverty. There are many essential services such as adequate food, shelter, and health care that families need to be able to begin the difficult road out of poverty.

The counseling services offered by Catholic Charities

Bloomington are essential to this process.

These services help persons learn how to develop the skills to reduce and manage stress for themselves and for their children. Catholic Charities Bloomington is dedicated to its mission of offering counseling without any economic barriers. We also strive to make counseling services more widely available by reaching out through our parishes and other community agencies. One of our current programs is offering counseling and stress management groups to residents of Martha's House, an emergency shelter for homeless adults.

For more information on stress and poverty, visit <http://stress.about.com/od/stresshealth/a/socioeconomic.htm>. Catholic Charities USA has started a Campaign to Reduce Poverty by 50% by 2020 involving all the essential elements to alleviating poverty. To learn more visit CatholicCharitiesUSA.org.

Photo by: Alexandra Peeler/Catholic Charities USA



Volunteer Highlights

Catholic Charities Bloomington has been very fortunate to have two outstanding young women as volunteers. Meg McGillivray (pictured at right), a junior at Bloomington North High School, comes to our office every Tuesday after school and works on a variety of crucial projects, such as keeping our donor lists and thank you responses up to date, helping collect demographic data, and just helping out in general. Thank you, Meg!

Charlotte, "Charley", Murphey, an Indiana University freshman, has put in many hours providing administrative support to our Passport to Manhood boys' group. She has developed needed permission forms, arranged field trips, and pursued the best pizza deals to be found in Bloomington (Thank you, Aver's!), and thank you, Charley!



Agency Council Members

Marsha McCarty, Ph.D.,
Agency Director

Jim McGillivray,
President

Shirley Boardman,
Secretary

Mike John Radcliffe,
Treasurer

Members

Father John Hall

Sister Joan Luerman, OSF

Wendy Perry

Maureen Gahan

Jennifer Kincaid

David Siler, Ex-officio
*Executive Director, Secretariat
for Catholic Charities and
Family Ministries*



Ensuring Access to Safe Affordable Housing

Catholic Charities USA Calls for Increased Support for Affordable Housing Development, Homelessness Prevention, Gulf Coast Recovery, and Low-Income Housing

As our Campaign to Reduce Poverty in America declares, poverty in the United States is a moral and social wound in the soul of our country, one that threatens the well-being of our nation. One of the ways in which our well-being is threatened is through the lack of safe affordable housing.

Our nation's affordable housing crisis displaces millions of people into homelessness each year. More than five million others live on the brink of homelessness or in severely substandard conditions as they struggle to meet enormous increases in housing costs, which for a number of years have largely outpaced wages. It is estimated that on average a worker would have to earn \$16.31 an hour to afford rent in our country, paying no more than the affordability standard of 30 percent of their income on housing.¹ Today, nearly one in three U.S. households spends more than 30 percent of its income on housing, and more than one in eight spends upwards of 50 percent. Persons burdened with severe housing costs find themselves struggling to pay for basic needs such as food and health care and have nothing to contribute to long-term investments such as education and savings.

Catholic Charities agencies nationwide can be found working at every point in the housing continuum, from homeless street outreach to foreclosure prevention to affordable housing development. We can be found counseling young couples as they move toward homeownership or an elderly widow as she considers converting her home equity into a desperately needed stream of income. We can just as easily be found helping a young, single mother find an affordable apartment so that she can reunify with her children.

In such work, Catholic Charities agencies

daily witness the emotional, physical, and financial toll that the lack of safe affordable housing levies upon our brothers and sisters. We have seen federal funding for affordable housing wane over the past few years; fund-



ing for public housing declined by 25 percent between 1999 and 2006.² In addition, we have seen the challenges of people on long waiting lists for housing assistance. People can be on



waiting lists for Section 8 housing vouchers for several years in many cities, and for every one low-income senior housed in Section 202 housing, there are 10 more low-income seniors waiting. On top of that, homeless persons arrive at shelters and have had to be

turned away.

Catholic Charities agencies rely on partnerships with government, public housing authorities, private business, and community groups to leverage enough resources to provide desperately needed housing services to the poor and the vulnerable. We cannot do this work alone. Government must be an equal partner. Indeed, Catholic Charities USA will continue to hold our partners, especially the federal government, accountable in their commitment to provide desperately needed housing programs. Congress must take immediate action to address America's growing affordable housing crisis.

Detailed information on housing policies and our positions can be found on the Advocacy page of the new Catholic Charities USA website: www.catholiccharitiesusa.org.

Karen Wong, legislative policy and research analyst for Catholic Charities USA, contributed to this article.

This article was originally published in its entirety in the 2007 Fourth Quarter issue of Charities USA. Reprinted with permission of Catholic Charities USA.

1. National Low Income Housing Coalition (NHLIC), 2006. *Out of Reach*.
2. Rice, D. and Sard, B. *The Effects of the Federal Budget Squeeze on Low Income Housing Assistance*. Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, 2007.



Providing Help. Creating Hope.

By: David J. Siler, executive director for the Secretariat for Catholic Charities

A few years ago, Catholic Charities USA, the national member service organization for the Catholic Charities agencies throughout the United States adopted the tagline, “Providing Help. Creating Hope.” Now, our own archdiocesan Catholic Charities organization has embraced this statement to clearly communicate what we do and what we seek to achieve.

Help is provided in many different ways: helping homeless families find permanent housing; helping seniors find companionship; helping children find a safe haven after school; helping pregnant mothers make the best choice for their children; helping refugees find a home and a job; helping the hungry find food; helping the depressed find happiness.

Help can come in so many different and varied ways, and the ultimate goal in providing help is to create hope. When a family has a home, a senior has companionship, children are safe after school, pregnant mothers make good decisions for their children, refugees find a home and a job, the hungry have food, the

depressed find happiness, the light of hope can enter their lives. The light of hope is the brightest of all lights and can make all the difference in the world.

I would imagine that all of us at some point of time in our lives have experienced a “poverty of hope” – those times when it seems that nothing will change to make our lives better. If we’ve lived through those times and gotten to the other side, I also imagine that we can look to some small ray of hope that revealed itself that gave us the strength to hold on.



At Catholic Charities we know that the source of genuine hope is love – and since God is love we can

also say the source of hope is God. Just before the conclusion of Pope Benedict XVI’s encyclical, God is Love, our Holy Father states it this way, “Love is the light – and in the end, the only light – that can always illuminate a world grown dim and give us the courage needed to keep living and working”.

I am reminded of an old song Burt Bacharach called, “What the World Needs Now

is Love”. Some would judge the song to be “corny” but it tells us that there is just too little love and that the world needs more love. I think Mr. Bacharach’s song connects with the gospel of Jesus who came to remind us that God loves us and wants us to live in the glory of this love.

Our Catholic Charities staff and volunteers provide help in many varied, formal ways through our 35 different programs. But, we don’t need a program to provide help. In both the very smallest and in the largest of ways that each of you gives help, you too create hope for the receiver of the help and by God’s grace, you too experience hope as the giver since “it is in the giving that we receive”.

How will you create hope today?

www.CatholicCharitiesIndy.org

Secretariat Advisory Council and Staff

Each agency has an advisory council to help determine local priorities. In addition, the secretariat (department) has an advisory council to determine the priorities of Catholic Charities as-a-whole. Many of these members also serve on their local agency advisory councils.

David J. Siler, executive director for the Secretariat for Catholic Charities and Family Ministries

David J. Bethuram, associate executive director for the secretariat

Stefanie Anderson, communications and marketing coordinator for the secretariat

Bill Spangler, President of the Secretariat Advisory Council

Members

- | | |
|--------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Jake Asher | Peggy Magee |
| Bob Buckner | Jim McGillivray |
| Mary Ann Browning | Ron Mead |
| Mike East | Father Don Schmidlin |
| Pinkie Evans | Sister Marlene Shapley |
| Dave Grimes | John Thompson |
| Tom Hirschauer | Roberta Walton |
| Bill Jones | |

The Secretariat for Catholic Charities and Family Ministries encompasses six Catholic Charities agencies:

- Catholic Charities Indianapolis
- St. Elizabeth/Coleman Pregnancy and Adoption Services
- Catholic Charities Bloomington
- Catholic Charities Terre Haute
- Catholic Charities Tell City
- St. Elizabeth – Catholic Charities (New Albany)

Each agency serves any person in need in their respective deanery, with the exception of our adoption services available in Indianapolis and New Albany. These two agencies are licensed adoption agencies for the states of Indiana and Kentucky.

Volunteer and Donation Needs

Many of the programs provided by Catholic Charities Bloomington need volunteer support, which allows the agency staff to devote more time to providing professional counseling services. It is partly because of volunteer support that we have been able to expand the number of counseling hours provided to the community.

Catholic Charities Bloomington is also grateful to our many donors, who make it possible to offer quality mental health counseling without regard to ability to pay. This is critical to our mission. Some of our current needs include:

**Two laptop computers for use in our outreach programs:
approximately \$2,400**

**Toys and games for our therapy with young children:
approximately \$400**

**Testing materials for our psychological assessment services:
approximately \$1,500**

**Additional advisory council members and volunteers:
Priceless!**

To volunteer or make a donation, contact Marsha McCarty at mmccarty@catholiccharitiesbtown.org. Or donate online at CatholicCharitiesBtown.org.



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