



WCSI

Westmoreland
Casemanagement
and Supports, Inc.

WINTER 2024
NEWSLETTER



It's hard to believe another year has come and gone! Take a look at what we've been up to these last couple of months and what we have going on in the new year!



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JANUARY IS
NATIONAL BIRTH
DEFECTS AWARENESS
MONTH



Every 4.5 minutes, a baby is born with a condition that affects the structure or function of their body. Collectively, these conditions are referred to as birth defects. They can vary widely in how and where they affect the body, and while medical advancements have greatly improved health and survival, many of these conditions are lifelong and require lifelong care.

Achieving the best possible health will look different for different people. No two people living with these conditions are exactly alike.

Everyone's journey is unique, shaped by their specific condition, individual strengths, and the support system in place. However, a community of support can help people with these conditions no matter what health experiences they are navigating. To learn more about WCSI's Early Intervention services, click [here](#).

WCSI MISSION STATEMENT

We are dedicated to working in partnership with all individuals impacted by Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities and Behavioral Health Challenges through their connection to essential services, personal empowerment, and promotion of wellness.

WCSI VISION STATEMENT

WCSI will be the leader in integrating people into the community through Recovery, Wellness, and Positive Approaches to live a full and renewed life.

WCSI CORE VALUES

COMMITMENT
QUALITY
INTEGRITY
ACCOUNTABILITY
RESPECT



WHO WE ARE: SERVING THE COMMUNITY FOR 30 YEARS!

Established in 1994, WCSI provides a range of Behavioral Health, Intellectual and Developmental Disability, and Early Intervention services to the residents of Westmoreland County.

WCSI is dedicated to having a positive impact on the community it is so fortunate to serve. Our philosophy is straightforward: We provide services to any eligible individual or family, doing everything possible to ensure the best possible outcomes.

This means that our involvement in the community is not defined only by funded services but rather by a holistic response to individual, family, and community needs.

We meet you where you are:
In any stage of your life.
In your home or in the community.

We care about your whole person, and we are committed to connecting you with the resources to enable you to thrive in all aspects of your life. Our services are individualized according to your identified needs and preferences.



December is National Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD) Awareness Month. SAD is a type of depression that occurs during certain seasons of the year, most often fall or winter. It is thought that shorter days and less daylight may set off a chemical change in the brain, leading to symptoms of depression.

Symptoms can include:

- Sad, anxious, or “empty” feelings
- Feelings of hopelessness, guilt, worthlessness, or helplessness
- Loss of interest or pleasure in formerly enjoyable activities
- Fatigue and decreased energy
- Overeating (or conversely, lack of appetite)
- Difficulty concentrating, remembering details, or making decisions
- Social withdrawal
- Thoughts of death or suicide

Talk to a mental health specialist or health care provider if you are experiencing any of these symptoms and find out what therapies or treatments may be available to you.



Some Reasons to

CALL, TEXT, AND CHAT 988

Thoughts of suicide

Feeling depressed or anxious

Drinking too much or drug use

Trauma



Out and About



WCSI's Community Impact: A Look Back at the last three months of 2024

WCSI has been actively connecting and engaging with the community through a variety of events for all ages! From job fairs and health fairs to family-friendly celebrations, and educational events, WCSI has certainly been out and about! Let's take a look at some of the highlights!

WCSI Behavioral Health department at our No Tricks, Just Treats event October 30, 2024.



On October 30th, our Behavioral Health department sponsored an adult recovery-focused client activity at our Greensburg office called "No Tricks, Just Treats." The clients engaged in painting pumpkins with their thoughts and feelings followed by a discussion afterwards, brain activities with snacks and treats, a photoshoot for self-confidence, as well as group activities/games for socialization and team building.



WCSI Targeted Case Managers hosted "Don't Ghost Your Feelings" on October 14, 2024

Our WCSI New Kensington office held a Halloween children's recovery event on October 14, 2024. The theme was "Don't Ghost your Feelings." Clients engaged in Halloween arts and craft activities with their TCMs. While creating, TCMs and clients had discussions about self-care, coping skills, how fears and worries look and feel, and Halloween safety. The children enjoyed the event and socializing with new peers.





Out and About



SCO Quality Specialist, Lauren Hussar and SC Training Supervisor, Coty Campbell at the 2024 Health and Education Expo held October 23, 2024.

WCSI was represented at the 2024 Health and Education Expo sponsored by Westmoreland County Department of Human Services. WCSI was also a sponsor of this event, which was held at Westmoreland Mall. This event featured over 100 vendors and attracted people from all over our county.

SC Training Supervisor, Jennifer Armstrong-Schaefer and Agency Development Specialist, Becky Carns at the Westmoreland Community Job Fair November 19, 2024.

El Lead Service Coordinator, Georgiann Beske and SC Training Supervisor, Jennifer Armstrong-Schaefer had sand art for the children at the Breakfast with Santa event.

TCM Shannon Beatty and SC Training Supervisor, Jennifer Armstrong-Schaefer enjoyed the sand art activity with the children at the Cookies with Santa event.

Saturday, December 7, 2024 was a fun-filled day of activities with Santa and friends!

WCSI participated in Breakfast with Santa at the Monessen Civic Center and Cookies with Santa at the Scottdale Elks. Both events were sponsored by Westmoreland County BH/DS/DI and the DHS office.

The children got to do activities, meet holiday character, have some tasty treats, and meet Santa Claus and his friends!



Carelon Award



On November 18, 2024, representatives from Carelon Behavioral Health recognized WCSI as a “Top Performing Provider” regarding approved claims submissions in 2024. CEO Lynnette Emerick acknowledged this achievement was because of the efforts of the Targeted Casemanagement (TCM) Staff, WCSI’s Quality and Compliance Staff, and WCSI’s Fiscal Staff. Congratulations to all!



Carelon Health of Pennsylvania Top Performing Provider

is awarded to

Westmoreland Casemanagement and Supports, Inc.

In recognition of outstanding achievement in approved claim submissions in
2024

Lisa Ciccarelli, Director of Provider
Relations

November 18, 2024

DATE

COMING IN THE NEW YEAR!!

New Beginnings Parent Café

January 8th from 12-2pm

*Session will be held via Zoom

To register contact Shana

724-217-8303 or

parentwise@wfspa.org

What is a Parent Café?

Parent Cafés are physically and emotionally safe spaces where parents and caregivers talk about the challenges and victories of raising a family.

Participants explore their strengths, learn about the Protective Factors (Resilience, Relationships, Support, Knowledge, and Communication), and create strategies from their own wisdom and experiences to help strengthen their families.

Cafés are structured discussions that are designed to inspire, energize, and excite participants to put into practice what they have learned.





ID/A Awareness at The Farm

Save the Date

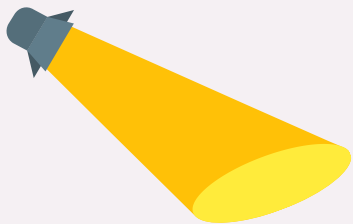
March 8, 2025

11am -3pm at Westmoreland Mall

SPREAD
THE WORD
INCLUSION

Scan QR code to
register for Eblast
updates for the
event. and more.





Employee Spotlight



**Barbara Hinger, Base
Supports Coordinator
(Above left)**



**Lisa Fyke, Behavioral
Health Targeted Case
Manager (Above right)**



**Shelly Stevenson Rhome,
Early Intervention Service
Coordinator (Right)**

Q: How long have you been at WCSI?

Barbara: Going on 16 years

Lisa: 6 years. I also worked at WCSI right out of college for 2 years but left to take care of 2 babies. I went into labor while working at WCSI LOL. (I have 3 kids now)

Shelly: 1 year and 9 months

Q: What is your favorite part of your job?

Barbara: The people I advocate for.

Lisa: Meeting so many interesting people! I like hearing their stories and I love helping people. I also love my coworkers. They are supportive and upbeat!

Shelly: The favorite part of my job is being able to help families so that their children can have healthy lives. I enjoy meeting and talking to families. All the early intervention teams are awesome people to work with!

Q: What is your favorite thing or favorite memory about WCSI?

Barbara: Having a lot of vacation time and flexibility

Lisa: When one of my clients finally decided to go to college, facing the worst odds, not only made the Dean's list, but also received a scholarship.

Shelly: My favorite memories about WCSI would have to be the numerous children that I have seen grow and succeed past their goals!

Q: As a child, what did you want to be when you grew up?

Barbara: A teacher.

Lisa: A veterinarian or a teacher

Shelly: When I was a child, I wanted to become an art teacher.

Q: What was your first job ever?

Barbara: Camelot music store in the mall

Lisa: The Auto Bathhouse. I have so many fond memories with friends working there.

Shelly: My first job was a gate attendant at an Elks Lodge where my family were members. I worked in the summer and would check members and their guests into the swimming pool area.

Q: What led to you working in this field?

Barbara: I have been volunteering in the special needs classroom since I was in kindergarten, and I also worked in a group home

Lisa: I was fascinated with Psychology in college. I had an incredible professor.

Shelly: I worked in a preschool room for 7 years and enjoyed working with children. I wanted to continue to work with children but just wanted a change. One of my best friends that works for WCSI encouraged me to apply for the position when the opportunity arose. I am so happy that she did!

Q: What's the best advice you can give to someone who is just starting out in your field?

Barbara: There is a lot to learn and be patient.

Lisa: A cat always lands on their feet. I stress so much about my clients and when things do not go as planned, I try to remember that they are responsible for their lives.

Shelly: Number one, overall, stay organized! Number two, if you make a mistake, it can be fixed.

Q: What do you enjoy doing outside of work?

Barbara: Scuba diving, country line dancing, traveling, walking for exercise.

Lisa: Camping, paddleboarding, kayaking, fishing, hiking with my pup.

Shelly: I love being with my husband, two daughters, our dogs and friends! I love spending time outside whether it be boating or riding side x sides at our hunting camp. I also enjoy taking photos.

Q: If you could learn to do anything, what would it be?

Barbara: Fly an airplane would be very cool

Lisa: Haha, I would like to learn to sing better.

Shelly: I would like to learn to worry less and have more faith.

Q: What is your "happy place"?

Barbara: Under water with marine life and sharks

Lisa: The river. I grew up a river rat, spending my summers with my family at their cabin on the Allegheny.

Shelly: My happy place would be at our hunting camp and being at my alma mater, WVU, with our girls that are both attending.

**November 18 until
March 16, 2025**

**Westmoreland
County**



**Current Weather
Now**

Below

30°

**NEED A SAFE PLACE
TO STAY WARM?**



**EMERGENCY COLD
WEATHER SHELTERS
ARE OPEN**

**CALL 211
to connect to
the cold weather
shelter**

Shelter locations:

- 218 S. Maple Ave. in Greensburg, PA
- 2217 Harrison Ave. in Latrobe, PA

Open from 8 p.m. to 8 a.m. for anyone who is homeless or without heat.

To check if the shelters will be open on a given night, call 211. The shelters will be active through March 16.

HELP FOR HEATING LIHEAP

The Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) is open from November 4, 2024 through April 4, 2025.

LIHEAP grants range from \$200 to \$1,000

CRISIS maximum grant \$1,000*

***Must have a shut off notice or service denial letter**

1

Who qualifies for LIHEAP?

The 2024/2025 LIHEAP Income Guidelines:

Household Size	Monthly Maximum Income Limit	Annual Maximum Income Limit
1	\$1,882	\$22,590
2	\$2,555	\$30,660
3	\$3,227	\$38,730
4	\$3,900	\$46,800
5	\$4,572	\$54,870
6	\$5,245	\$62,940
Additional members add	\$672 each	\$8,070 each
For income limits for larger households, visit www.LIHEAPhelps.com		

2

How to apply? It's easier than ever! Depending on your circumstances, you may apply:

- **Online** - www.LIHEAPhelps.com.
- **By mail** – Download an application at www.compass.state.pa.us.
- **In person** – Applications are taken at all local County Assistance Offices.
- **For more information**, call the LIHEAP hotline at **1-866-857-7095**.
- **By telephone** - Contact the local County Assistance Office.

3

What will you need to apply?

- Names of people in your household
- Dates of birth for all household members
- Social Security Numbers for all household members
- Proof of income for members of your household
- A recent heating bill
- Dates of birth for all household members
- Termination notice or denial letter for CRISIS

COLD WEATHER SAFETY TIPS

When you are outside, frostbite and hypothermia are possible, so you need to protect yourself.

1. Wear layers of loose-fitting, lightweight, warm clothing.
2. Wear a hat. Try to stay dry and out of the wind.
3. Cover your mouth to protect your lungs from extreme cold.
4. Mittens, snug at the wrist, are better than gloves.

To keep pipes from freezing on an outside wall:

1. Let hot and cold water trickle or drip at night from a faucet.
2. Open cabinet doors to allow more heat to get to un-insulated pipes under a sink or near an outer wall.
3. Make sure heat is left on and set no lower than 55 degrees.
4. If you plan to be away:
 - (1) Have someone check your house daily to make sure the heat is still on to prevent freezing, or
 - (2) drain and shut off the water system (except indoor sprinkler systems).

If Pipes Freeze:

1. Make sure you and your family know how to shut off the water, in case pipes burst.
2. NEVER try to thaw a pipe with an open flame or torch. Use a hair dryer instead.
3. Always be careful of the potential for electric shock in and around standing water.



At WCSI, employees truly are our #1 Resource!

A career at WCSI offers you:

- A challenging environment where you will put your skills to good use
- Continuous training and development to ensure you reach your full potential. An opportunity to gain valuable experience and build a lucrative career
- Competitive salaries
- Generous benefits
- A family focused approach to employment, providing flexibility in balancing work and home

WCSI takes great pride in offering a comprehensive, competitive benefits package for its full-time employees. Visit our website for a complete [benefits summary](#)!

To view current job openings and apply, visit our website at www.wcsi.org/openings/ or scan the QR Code below.



For more information, visit our website at www.wcsi.org
or scan the QR Code on the first page.

Don't forget to like and follow us on Facebook and Instagram for more
information on valuable resources, community events, and the good work we do!



A year's end is not just a
closing chapter;
it's a mirror reflecting your
growth and resilience,
a reflection of the strength
you've found within.

+ ✨
2025
✨ Happy ✨
New Year



From all of us at WCSI wishing you and your loved ones Happy
Holidays and a very Happy New Year!