



**HOWARD  
CENTER**  
Help is here.

# Health and Wellness Tips + HC Facts and Stats

Main Number  
**802-488-6000**

First Call for  
Chittenden County  
24/7 Crisis Line  
**802-488-7777**

[howardcenter.org](http://howardcenter.org)



**Howard Center Annual Report FY20**

# About Howard Center

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Howard Center has a long and rich history as a trusted provider in the community. With a legacy spanning more than 155 years, we provide progressive, compassionate, inclusive, high-quality care and supports to those in need.

We offer an array of exemplary **mental health**, **substance use**, and **developmental services** across the lifespan and our annual conference, numerous professional trainings, and free public education events help to improve care, inform our community, and decrease stigma.

## Our Mission

We help people and communities thrive by providing supports and services to address mental health, substance use, and developmental needs.

## Our Vision

Howard Center is a national leader in the delivery of integrated and seamless community-based supports for individuals, families, and communities in need.

*Help is here.*

## Our Values

- Clients are at the heart of our decision making.
- We are committed to individual and collective well-being and success.
- We are responsible stewards of the resources entrusted to us.
- We are steadfast in our practice and pursuit of excellence.

# Board of Trustees

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*as of June 30, 2020*

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## Executive Leadership

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Bob Bick, *Chief Executive Officer*

Sandy McGuire, *Chief Financial and Operations Officer*

Catherine Simonson, *Chief Client Services Officer*

Sandra Steingard, MD, *Chief Medical Officer*



# Howard Center By The Numbers

Total hours  
of service  
provided

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3,790,992

Total number  
of services  
provided

---

800,914

## OTHER INDICATORS OF HEALTH AND WELLNESS:

- 92% of new clients were screened for substance use problems.
- 98% of new clients were screened for domestic violence.
- 65% of new clients were screened for depression.
- 93% of new clients were screened for trauma history.

### Client satisfaction is our top priority.

*Here's what our clients have to say:*

The services I received were right for me. **88%**

My/our quality of life improved. **83%**

The services I received made a difference. **89%**

Staff treated me with respect. **96%**

I received the help that I needed. **89%**

*“Reflecting on the events of the year I am thankful for colleagues who have been quick to adapt and innovate, for clients who have been so understanding and accepting of change, and also for our donors, friends, and all of our community partners including Governor Scott and his administration, and especially, Commissioners Levine, Hutt, and Squirrell and their teams for guiding and leading with transparency, calm, and compassion through this unprecedented time.”*

*— Bob Bick, CEO, Howard Center*



## People Are Helped By The Following Services



Outpatient Services



Medication-Assisted Treatment



School-Based Services



Community-Based Supports



Crisis Services



Residential Services



Employment Services



Multiple services in above categories

# ANNUAL BUDGET: \$109,267,592



■ MEDICAID .....	87.4%
■ OTHER STATE .....	10.2%
■ OTHER FEDERAL .....	.2%
■ LOCAL/PRIVATE .....	2.2%

■ COMMUNITY BASED SERVICES .....	56%
■ CRISIS SERVICES .....	7%
■ OUTPATIENT SERVICES .....	6%
■ RESIDENTIAL SERVICES .....	13%
■ SCHOOL BASED SERVICES .....	18%



■ WORKFORCE .....	85%
■ PROGRAM/OPERATIONAL SUPPORT .....	15%

AGENCY ADMINISTRATIVE RATE.....8.82%

**“With what I’ve experienced, it is clear to me that Howard Center serves as the social and emotional insurance for our greater community, helping us when we are most vulnerable.”**

**— Chittenden County School Superintendent**

## Health and Wellness Tip

### Get help.

We all need help at some point. It's okay to ask for help and it's important to model this for our children and loved ones.



— Charlotte McCorkel, LICSW, Senior Director of Client Services, Howard Center

## HC Facts and Stats

### OUR HISTORY

Howard Center for Human Services merged with The Baird Center for Children and Families and Champlain Drug and Alcohol Services in

# 1994

combining the three organizations' boards, staff, and services and defining the breadth and scope of Howard Center today.



**HOWARD  
CENTER**  
Help is here.



## Health and Wellness Tip

### Savor joy and positivity.

Focus on the positive rather than the negative. Make it a point to stop, look around, and find the positive—breathe it in and let it permeate throughout your being.

— Lucy Mallon, Executive Assistant, Howard Center



## HC Facts and Stats

# HELP IS HERE



*Meet Kamal.*

**Kamal Pradhan,**  
Intensive Community Support Worker

Kamal and 1,500 of his Howard Center colleagues helped more than 16,000 people last year, with everything from mental health and substance use to education and developmental services.

HowardCenter.org  
802.488.6000



**HOWARD CENTER**  
Help is here

**OUR STAFF:** Thank you to our over **1,600 staff** — including teachers, nurses, direct service professionals, clinicians, IT staff, support workers, psychologists, environmental services staff,

physicians, residential counselors, support staff, and more — **serving our community 24/7/365.**

## Health and Wellness Tip

### Set goals and commit.

Incorporate goals into your day and include them as part of your routine. You can also set goals in different areas, like improving health, advancing learning, completing a project, taking a daily walk, or calling a friend.



— Karen Prosciak, Psy.D., Senior Director of Donor Relations, Howard Center

## HC Facts and Stats

### COMMUNITY SUPPORT

Howard Center supported over

# 19,000

people last year with their mental health, substance use, and developmental needs. **That's more than one tenth of Chittenden County.**



## Health and Wellness Tip

### Hydrate.

Up to 60% of the adult human body is water and it is essential for life. Drinking water throughout the day, every day, will help your body to function optimally and give you the energy you need.



— Debra Stenner, President,  
Howard Center Board of Trustees

## HC Facts and Stats

**60+ LOCATIONS:** Howard Center offers a breadth of services and programming in over 60+ locations throughout Vermont, including clinics, residential homes, schools, overnight crisis programs, office-based settings, and more.

The Robert H. & Cynthia K. Hoehl  
Family Services Wing



## Health and Wellness Tip

### Rise and sweat.

Early morning exercise can start your day off on the right track. So don't hit the snooze button and go engage in that half-hour run, walk, meditation, yoga session, or any other self-care activity. It's a great way to start the day.



— Al Gobeille, Chief Operating Officer, UVM Health Network

## HC Facts and Stats

### COMMUNITY SUPPORT

Safety Connection combines innovative technology and professional staff to deliver overnight support to **104 people living independently** in the community across the state.



It is designed to offer participants help when needed, prevent crisis, and extend an individual's ability to age in place.

## Health and Wellness Tip

### Practice acts of kindness.

Sometimes it's the little things that make a difference. Holding a door for someone, shoveling a neighbor's walkway, or contributing food items to a local donation bin — these are just a few things that can help us feel connected with neighbors and community.



— Sima Breiterman, MS, Director of Adult Services, DS, Howard Center

## HC Facts and Stats



Visit [howardcenter.org](http://howardcenter.org) for a free **Suicide Prevention Resource Guide** or email the developmentteam@howardcenter.org to request as many copies as you need for your classroom, sports team, book group, colleagues, friends, or family. We also offer free medication lock boxes and gun locks.

## Health and Wellness Tip

### Call a friend.

Connection with others is important to us on many levels. Taking the time to reach out to a friend almost always make us feel good. Friends can help us celebrate good times and provide support during difficult times. The Mayo Clinic says that adults with strong social support have a reduced risk for many significant health problems. Reach out to a friend today.



— Anne Paradiso, LICSW, Director of School Programs, Howard Center

## HC Facts and Stats



**SCHOOLS:** Howard Center operates **four** independent therapeutic schools that serve Vermont students: **Baird**, **Centerpoint**, (in partnership with Northeastern Family Institute and Matrix Health Systems), **Fay Honey Knopp**, and **Jean Garvin**.

## Health and Wellness Tip

### Be kind.

2020 has been a tough year for everyone. Please be kind to each other and yourself. We will get through this together.



— Stephen Leffler, MD, President and COO,  
University of Vermont Medical Center

## HC Facts and Stats

### COMMUNITY OUTREACH

# 1,575

contacts were made by our Community Outreach Team serving Colchester, Essex, Richmond, Shelburne, South Burlington, Williston, and Winooski.

Outreach specialists work in partnership with local and regional law enforcement, businesses, and citizens to respond to individuals with unmet social service needs, often due to mental health or substance use issues.

## Health and Wellness Tip

### Crazy-busy.

Brené Brown says, “One of the most universal numbing strategies is what I call crazy-busy. Crazy-busy is a great armor. It’s a great way for numbing. We stay so busy, and so out in front of our life, that the truth of how we’re feeling and what we really need can’t catch up with us. I’ve learned about the importance of rest and play, and now have the willingness to let go of exhaustion as a status symbol and productivity as self-worth.”



## HC Facts and Stats



*Susanna Jaeger, Arts Collective Artist*

**THANK YOU** to our thousands of friends and donors for their generosity and commitment to our work on behalf of the people we serve. Their support is critical for Howard Center to thrive.



## Health and Wellness Tip

### Accept the things you cannot change.



In the spirit of supporting our community members in recovery or in 12-step programs, we share their *Serenity Prayer*, “**God, grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, the courage to change the things I can, and the wisdom to know the difference.**”

— Reinhold Niebuhr

## HC Facts and Stats

**ACT1** provides a safe, supervised environment for individuals to regain sobriety. The program helps the person and family through the crisis, promotes stability, recommends an appropriate post-intervention level of care, and assists with referrals.

**1,524**

screenings completed

**962**

admissions

## Health and Wellness Tip

### Connect face-to-face.

Social media, texting, and email are great ways to stay connected but they're not a substitute for seeing and talking with someone. When you can't visit in person, make phone calls or better yet, use video chat apps like Zoom and FaceTime to stay connected with friends and loved ones.



— Deanna Ryerson, Ph.D.,  
Director of Crisis, Howard Center

## HC Facts and Stats



Howard Center has received the distinguished Center of Excellence accreditation from Vermont Care Partners. The five Standards of Quality Care that have been met are

**Comprehensive Care, Easy Access, Excellent Outcomes, World Class Customer Service, and Excellent Value.**

## Health and Wellness Tip

### Start with small goals.



Small goal achievement when you are starting on a wellness plan can influence motivation, mood, and attitudes for behaviors that promote health, despite disconfirming experiences. So start with small incremental goals and stay the course. *(Davis, Campbell, Hildon, Hobbs, & Michie, 2015)*

— Matt MacNeil, Ed.D., Director of Evaluation and Outcomes, Howard Center

## HC Facts and Stats

### EARLY CHILDHOOD AND FAMILY

**MENTAL HEALTH PROGRAM:** Supports the social and emotional growth of children ages birth to six, in partnership with their care-givers including parents, kin, foster families, and early education providers. Increasing the capacity of a child's care-giver to meet the child's needs will have lifelong positive impact on that child's physical and emotional health. **8,065 services were provided to 262 children and families.**

## Health and Wellness Tip

### Don't touch your eyes, nose, or mouth.



This helps to keep you healthy by preventing viruses and bacteria from entering your body and making you sick.

— Jamie Brew, RN, Nursing Supervisor, Howard Center

## HC Facts and Stats

In 2020, Howard Center joined the City of Burlington and over 30 community organizations **to declare racism as a public health emergency.**



“We are committed to a world without racism. With roots in social justice, Howard Center staff work each day to serve our community and strengthen diversity, equity, and inclusion in our organizational culture and system of care.”

— Catherine Simonson, LICSW, Chief Client Services Officer, Howard Center

## Health and Wellness Tip

### Get outside!

Take a walk in the morning, evening, or on a lunch break to help get you away from your screen and give you a much needed breath of fresh air.



— Alison Johnson, Assistant Director of Development, Howard Center

## HC Facts and Stats

**Project SEARCH** is a business-led collaboration that enables young adults with disabilities to gain and maintain employment through training and career exploration. Partners include South Burlington High School, the University of Vermont Medical Center, and the State of Vermont Department of Vocational Rehabilitation.



**Project SEARCH** interns worked an average of

**19**

**hours per week.**

## Health and Wellness Tip

### Play and be silly.

Find time to be playful, spontaneous, light-hearted, and creative. It feels good in the moment and researchers in Switzerland found that it can lead to improved academics, better stress management, and a more active lifestyle.



— Bob Bick, CEO, Howard Center

## HC Facts and Stats

### COMMUNITY PARTNERS



Thanks to so many of our generous community and business partners, the people we serve are able to participate in cultural events and activities such as a show at the Flynn Center for the Performing Arts, a day at ECHO, Leahy Center for Lake Champlain, or a visit to Shelburne Museum or Shelburne Farms, and others.

# Health and Wellness Tip

## Actively practice gratitude.

Say thank you often.

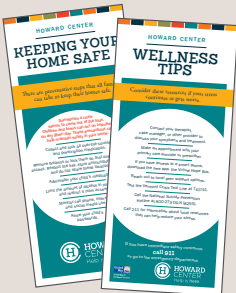
Robert Emmons, psychology professor and gratitude

researcher at the University of California Davis, has linked gratitude with a wide range of benefits, including strengthening your immune system and improving sleep patterns, feeling optimistic and experiencing more joy and pleasure, being more helpful and generous, and feeling less lonely and isolated.



— Tonya Mason, Director of Family and Transition, DS, Howard Center

## HC Facts and Stats



**Need public health materials for your healthcare office or business? Contact us at [developmentteam@howardcenter.org](mailto:developmentteam@howardcenter.org).**

## Health and Wellness Tip

### Watch a sunrise or sunset.

Finding a few moments at the beginning or end of your day can bring mindfulness into your daily routine and give you an opportunity to bask in and appreciate the natural beauty all around us.



— Sandy McGuire, MBA, Chief Financial and Operations Officer, Howard Center

## HC Facts and Stats

### ELDERCARE PROGRAM



# 72

adults were served by our Eldercare program, which is part of a statewide initiative between Howard Center and Age Well to provide mental health and co-occurring treatment to homebound adults ages 60 and older.



# Health and Wellness Tip

## Accentuate the positive.

Surround yourself with upbeat people who encourage you to grow and become the best version of yourself.



## HC Facts and Stats

We respect **WOMEN, MEN** and **NON-BINARY PEOPLE** • We value **BLACK LIVES** • We stand with our **LGBTQIA+ COMMUNITY MEMBERS** • We celebrate **CHILDREN** • We stand with **IMMIGRANTS, REFUGEES**, with **INDIGENOUS PEOPLES**, and **PEOPLE OF ALL FAITHS** • We support **INDIVIDUALS** and **FAMILIES** challenged by mental health, substance use, and developmental disabilities.

*We stand with our **COMMUNITY.***

# HATE HAS NO BUSINESS HERE. All are Welcome Here.

• Tāt cả đều được chào đón ở đây  
• Svi su dobrodošli ovdje  
• Dadka kulushoo ha dhawaatheen

• Dhammaan waa ja soo dhaweynayaa  
• Wote wanakubaliwa hapa  
• Todos son bienvenidos aqui  
• Svi su dobrodošli ovdje



## Health and Wellness Tip

### Treat yourself.

Many of us spend a lot of time caring or doing for others. Think about making a habit of doing something nice for yourself. It doesn't have to be big or fancy, it could be treating yourself to a favorite food, having your own movie night, or heading to bed early.



— Beth Holden, LCMHC, LADC, Director of Home and Community Programs, Howard Center

## HC Facts and Stats

**SAFE RECOVERY:** For many people, the recovery process includes periods of use and non-use. Safe Recovery is a safe place for people to come to for support, even if they are currently using. The program offers rapid access to medication-assisted treatment and supports to access treatment.

**28,000+**

Narcan doses distributed since 2013

**1,450+**

reported overdose reversals

## Health and Wellness Tip

### Connect with nature.

Enjoy the lake, savor views from a mountain top, appreciate solitude in the woods, work in the garden.



— Simha Ravven, MD,  
Chief Medical Officer, Howard Center

## HC Facts and Stats

### HOWARD CENTER ARTS COLLECTIVE

Anne Averyt, Arts Collective Artist



A collaborative that offers artists, many of whom have lived experience with mental health and substance use challenges, the opportunity to connect, create, and exhibit their work. To see

their new video and for information about upcoming shows, visit [howardcenter.org](http://howardcenter.org).

## Health and Wellness Tip

### Start fresh every day.

Get up, work hard, focus on the positive. Reinvent yourself each day by starting fresh and letting go of yesterday.



— Gene Richards, Director of Aviation,  
Burlington International Airport

## HC Facts and Stats

### RESIDENTIAL SERVICES



Home is the place where you belong. Howard Center provides

**22**

residential homes that support children, adolescents, and adults with mental health, substance use, or developmental needs.

## Health and Wellness Tip

### Allow yourself to feel.

Just as toxic negativity exists, toxic positivity can also get in the way of our healing. During difficult times, allow yourself to feel loss and acknowledge hardships—grief can come in so many forms and is unique to each individual. It's ok to not be ok sometimes.



— Jesse Bridges, CEO,  
United Way of Northwest Vermont

## HC Facts and Stats

### STREET OUTREACH PROGRAM

# 5,371

contacts were made by the team, who work with police, service providers, and local merchants to support individuals with mental health, substance use, housing or other social service needs, in and around the downtown Burlington business district.

## Health and Wellness Tip

### Shop local.

Increase your connection to the community, reduce your carbon footprint, and support your local merchants.



— Carrie Hathaway, Director of Budget and Financial Management, Howard Center

## HC Facts and Stats

### OUR HISTORY

We trace our roots to

# 1865

when we began serving widows and children of the Civil War at The Home for Destitute Children. Since then, we have adapted to meet the needs of our community and today we are the seventh largest employer in the state, with 50 programs across 60 locations.



## Health and Wellness Tip

### 12 Healthy Habits.

- 1 Have breakfast.
- 2 Plan your meals.
- 3 Drink plenty of water.
- 4 Take an exercise break.
- 5 Go offline.
- 6 Learn something new.
- 7 Don't smoke.
- 8 Sleep well.
- 9 Train your muscles.
- 10 Head outdoors.
- 11 Keep your balance.
- 12 Dedicate time to mental health.



SOURCE: WEBMD.COM

— Cathie Buscaglia, Director of Innovation  
and Special Projects, Howard Center

## HC Facts and Stats

**STABILIZATION, TREATMENT, AND RECOVERY TEAM (START):** Through outreach, engagement, and connection, START peer community recovery specialists offer mental health recovery support that is strengths-based and hope driven. Our stories emphasize resiliency and recovery as we create relationships that allow us to learn and explore possibilities together. Our work incorporates and reflects the principles and tasks of Intentional Peer Support.

## Health and Wellness Tip

### Get enough sleep.

Giving up sleep seems like an easy way to put more hours into your day. Waking up an hour early gives you time to work out and staying up an hour later means more time for a movie or paperwork but too little sleep can cause a decline in cognitive performance and reaction times. The Sleep Foundation advises adults to get seven to nine hours per night. Children and teens need more.



— Delaina Norton, MS, Director of Long-term Supports and Services, Howard Center

## HC Facts and Stats



We are grateful to the over

# 220

shared living providers and foster care parents who extend care and support in their homes to individuals with developmental disabilities and to children with emotional, behavioral, and/or mental health challenges.



## Health and Wellness Tip

### Meditate.

Psychologists have found that mindfulness meditation changes our brain and biology in positive ways, improving mental and physical health and overall well-being. A simple way to think of it is training your attention to achieve a mental state of calm concentration and positive emotions. Start by setting aside five minutes, closing your eyes, and breathing deeply. Integrate a practice into your daily routine to find moments of inner peace.



— Julia Paradiso, LICSW, Director of Access & Intake, Howard Center

## HC Facts and Stats

### SUBSTANCE USE DISORDER TREATMENT

# 1,382

individuals received treatment for opioid use and support for their recovery through medication-assisted treatment, intensive outpatient programs, and other services.

## Health and Wellness Tip

### Color.

Just like when you were a kid, coloring can be calming and relieve stress. New Zealand researchers say coloring for as little as ten minutes a day can help reduce anxiety and depression. Coloring induces a mindful or meditative state and is linked to changes in brain-wave activity. So get out your crayons.



— Brigett Weinstein,  
AmeriCorps VISTA Service Member



AmeriCorps

## HC Facts and Stats



### HOME AND COMMUNITY

**PROGRAMS** work with youth

and families with mental  
health and/or behavioral

challenges on a continuum  
from very young children

through transition age youth,

including in-home, community, and residential  
locations. Services are family friendly, trauma-  
informed, and designed to meet the goals  
youth and families identify as important.

## Health and Wellness Tip

### Make something.

We didn't evolve hands for typing or swiping the touch screens on our phones.

Crafting, cooking, sewing, gardening, home improvement, art — all these popular pursuits satisfy what some call a primal need to make and tend to things. There's great satisfaction to be found in cooking a special meal, tending to the garden, painting a room with a splash of color, repairing a broken chair or making a new one.



— Beth Goss, LICSW, Director of Client Care and Coordination, Howard Center

## HC Facts and Stats

### INDICATORS OF HEALTH & WELLNESS

# 97%

of clients had housing, and we know that housing is a critical indicator in the overall measure of health.

## Health and Wellness Tip

### Cultivate your relationship with nature.



Living in or near green spaces and spending time in natural settings and cultivated gardens can improve emotional and mental health. Even creating greenspace in our homes with houseplants can benefit our wellbeing.

— Catherine Simonson, LICSW, Chief Client Services Officer, Howard Center

## HC Facts and Stats

### COMMUNITY EDUCATION SERIES

*“Great film and discussion.” – Attendee*

Howard Center hosts a free and open to the public community education series each spring and fall and offers timely educational sessions and dialogue on a variety of current topics.



## Health and Wellness Tip

### Read a book.

A study at the University of Sussex found that reading can significantly reduce stress, even more than listening to music or enjoying a cup of tea. Experts suggest that you skip the news and instead read a book that won't be upsetting. Fiction or how-to books on a subject of interest or a favorite hobby make great choices.



— Bob Bick, CEO, Howard Center

## HC Facts and Stats



### SCHOOL SERVICES

Howard Center's school-based clinicians support the mental health needs of students in

# 49

schools and alternative programs in Chittenden County.

## Health and Wellness Tip

### Reach out to someone who may be alone.



Drop off a basket of goodies, make a meal, deliver flowers, leave a note, or make a call. These small acts of kindness can help maintain connection and you may also feel a sense of satisfaction from giving back.

— Denise Vignoe, Director of Development and Communications, Howard Center

## HC Facts and Stats

### FIRST CALL FOR CHITTENDEN COUNTY



Howard Center's mobile crisis line received

# 25,060

calls for support last year.

That's an average of

# 69

calls per day, **24/7/365.**

## Health and Wellness Tip

### Stretch and breathe to reduce stress.



Your physical, emotional, and mental health are all linked.

Taking care of your physical self will help with the rest! ❶ Stand up, feet apart, arms out and at shoulder height. ❷ Breathe in through your nose and out through your mouth, filling your lungs each time and releasing that air fully.

❸ Keep your arms up to open up your lungs.

— Monica Caserta Hutt, Commissioner, Department of Disabilities, Aging and Independent Living, Vermont Agency of Human Services

## HC Facts and Stats

### COMMUNITY SUPPORT

Howard Center's main Access and Intake line received

# 12,923

phone calls as a first line of support.

## Health and Wellness Tip

### Find your flow.

Athletes call it “the zone” and musicians find “the groove”. Psychologist Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi calls it “the flow state”. In the flow, people lose track of time and their surroundings, and they describe their actions as automatic or instinctual. Definitions differ but most agree it happens when a person’s skill and concentration match the difficulty of a task or activity. Whether you find it in crafting, exercise, music, or art, go get yourself some flow.



— Alysia Beaman, MBA, Senior Director of Administrative Services, Howard Center

## HC Facts and Stats

### INDICATORS OF HEALTH & WELLNESS

# 82%

of clients reported that the services provided by Howard Center during COVID-19 were helpful.



## Health and Wellness Tip

### Don't procrastinate.

Go do something you've been putting off. You will feel a sense of accomplishment and reduce stress and anxiety. And in the spirit of Benjamin Franklin, who once said, "You may delay, but time will not, and lost time is never found again."

— Laura Pearce, LCMHC, Director of Information Management and Compliance, Howard Center



## HC Facts and Stats

Howard Center staff pivoted when the pandemic began in March 2020. Services were quickly adapted to support clients and their families by delivering meals, grocery items, and medications. Our Street and Community Outreach teams delivered

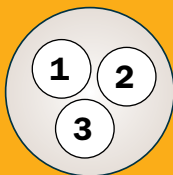
# 4,363

meals in partnership with  
Feeding Chittenden.

## Health and Wellness Tip

### Remember the three “W”s.

As we begin vaccinating Vermonters against COVID-19, it will still be very important to continue to wear your mask, watch your physical distance, and wash your hands, until we have the pandemic under control in Vermont.



— Stephen Leffler, MD, President and COO,  
University of Vermont Medical Center

## HC Facts and Stats

### FIRST CALL FOR CHITTENDEN COUNTY



Howard Center's mobile crisis service fills a critical need in the community. Last year, we completed

# 4,084

crisis assessments.

## Health and Wellness Tip

### Take ten deep breaths.

A growing number of studies have found that diaphragmatic breathing may trigger body relaxation responses, reduce the production of harmful stress hormones, and benefit both physical and mental health. Breathing exercises can have immediate effects by lowering blood pressure, and stimulating the bodies parasympathetic reaction — the one that calms us down. Try it right before any activity that raises your stress levels.



— Elaine Soto, LICSW, Director of Community Support Programs, Howard Center

## HC Facts and Stats



Community outreach and engagement are an important part of our mission. You'll often find us at community events, introducing Howard Center and our programs.

## Health and Wellness Tip

### Boost Endorphins.

Endorphins are chemicals produced in the body and research has shown they can reduce stress and bring about feelings of happiness. Try one or more of these to stimulate natural endorphin production: regular exercise • giving back • yoga and meditation • spicy foods • dark chocolate • laughing often.

— Jude Smith Rachele, Ph.D., Director of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, Howard Center



## HC Facts and Stats



Our Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Team supports many initiatives including **agency roundtables**, **employee affinity networks** for disability, LGBTQIA+, and multiculturalism, training to support employees in **exploring bias** including **understanding identity**, **pronouns**, and **inclusive language**, and helps to develop **community partnerships**.

## Health and Wellness Tip

### Volunteer.

Volunteerism can benefit you and the organization you choose to support. It's a way to give back and support community organizations or initiatives. People in communities who need extra support often benefit from volunteer activities. The Mayo Clinic says volunteers benefit mentally and physically from activities as they can offer a sense of purpose, an opportunity to learn new skills, meet new people, stay active, and reduce stress levels and the risk of depression. Doing good really is good.

— Dana Poverman, LADC, LCMHC, Director of Medication-Assisted Treatment, Howard Center



## HC Facts and Stats

# 40

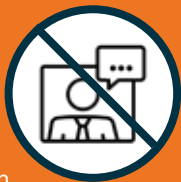
Academic interns and AmeriCorps VISTA service members help Howard Center with programming throughout the year.

## Health and Wellness Tip

### Turn off the news.

Take a break from stress-inducing news. Pick a day and don't read, watch, or listen to any news or visit web forums where news or politics is discussed. You can also reduce your daily news consumption to a limited number of minutes. Use the time you regain to do a project, practice a hobby, improve a skill, or learn something new.

— Mike Glod, Senior Development and Communications Director, Howard Center



## HC Facts and Stats

### ARCh (ACCESSING RESOURCES FOR CHILDREN)



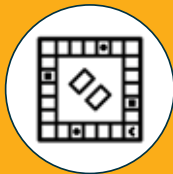
# 300

children/families work with a Care Coordinator who helps with connections to resources, support, routines, school meetings, and transition to adult services.

## Health and Wellness Tip

### Play a board game.

Get away from the news, screens, and noise. Board games can be a fun way to connect and relax with friends or family.



— Dan Hall, LADC, Director of Outpatient Services, Howard Center

## HC Facts and Stats

### PARTNERS FOR ACCESS



**Does your family need help finding a therapist?** We can help. **Partners for Access** is a single point of contact for families seeking outpatient mental health services in Chittenden County.

Reach out for information: 802-488-7474;  
[partnersforaccess@howardcenter.org](mailto:partnersforaccess@howardcenter.org)

## Health and Wellness Tip

### Put pen to paper.

Writing has been shown to improve mental wellbeing. Letter writing, journaling, keeping a gratitude diary, and list-making are known to alleviate depression and anxiety. Through letters, we can feel connection to others.



— Sandy McGuire, MBA, Chief Financial and Operations Officer, Howard Center

## HC Facts and Stats

**We work to reduce stigma, every day.**

**Know the facts.** • Educate yourself and talk openly about developmental disabilities, mental health, and substance use disorders. • Be aware of your attitudes and behavior. • Encourage equality between physical and mental illness • Choose your words carefully. • Educate others. • Focus on the positive. • Support people. • Include everyone.

— Source: NAMI.org; Camh.ca



## Health and Wellness Tip

### Create a playlist.

Research shows that music can have a positive effect on mental health. Use your creativity to put together a playlist and then relax and reduce stress listening to your favorites.



— Adam C. Brooks, Assistant Director of Communications, Howard Center

## HC Facts and Stats

### EMPLOYMENT PROGRAMS



Project Hire, Career Connections, and JOBS are three programs that provide support to individuals with developmental disabilities and/or mental health

challenges to explore career interests and find employment.

## Health and Wellness Tip

### Consider getting a pet.

Pets or companion animals can be a great help in reducing stress. Studies show that interacting with a pet or companion animal can lower blood pressure and have a positive effect on the body's levels of stress-modulating hormones. Walking a dog or caring for a pet can be fun, reduce stress, and help you stay connected.



— Debbie Mintz, MSW, Director of Organizational Development, Howard Center

## HC Facts and Stats

### IMPAIRED DRIVER REHABILITATION

The Impaired Driver Rehabilitation Program (IDRP) offered 25 school sessions in seven languages to

# 436

individuals in Chittenden and Franklin Counties who had an impaired driving offense.



## Health and Wellness Tip

### Wash your hands often.

Make it a practice to wash your hands regularly. Even before COVID-19, medical professionals advised on good hand hygiene as a basis for good health.

— Leo Gaudreau, CHFM, CHC  
Director of Facilities, Howard Center



## HC Facts and Stats

**Westview House members enjoyed**

# 4,683

visits, including lunches, holiday and musical gatherings, field trips, and other events fostering supportive connection and peer support.

Westview House offers support and connection for adults who have been diagnosed with a major mental illness. Lunch is served every weekday. Members are supported to volunteer and seek employment.

## Health and Wellness Tip

### The *Three Good Things* Intervention.



Sometime before noon, deliberately stop and identify three things that have gone right for you so far during your day. They can be anything big or small that have brought you happiness or satisfaction because they went according to plan. In 2017, researchers Rippstein-Leuenberger, et al. demonstrated that development of a ***Three Good Things Habit*** for at least two weeks can significantly boost a person's optimism level.

— Simha Raven, MD, Chief Medical Officer, Howard Center

## HC Facts and Stats

Howard Center staff have a combined total of

# 7,973

years of experience in the field.

## Health and Wellness Tip

### Take a vacation.

Taking a break from work can make you more productive which in turn can reduce your worries about things you need to get done. The accounting firm Ernst & Young studied the use of vacation time by employees and found that performance improved by 8% for every 10 hours of vacation time they used in a year. So if you can take time away, go ahead and do it. You'll be more productive when you get back.



— Jacquie Dragon, MS, Senior Director of Human Resources, Howard Center

## HC Facts and Stats

### INDICATORS OF HEALTH & WELLNESS

# 69%

of clients were employed or in school.

## Health and Wellness Tip

### Get un-busy.

The *Johns Hopkins Health Review* reports that more than one-third of Americans don't have enough time to get things done and that being overly busy can lead to "difficulty focusing and concentrating, impatience and irritability, trouble getting adequate sleep, and mental and physical fatigue." One suggestion from the *Health Review*: Subtract, don't add. It's natural to want to add relaxing routines to your schedule, but removing a time waster can be just as effective.



## HC Facts and Stats



Mallory Pitser, Arts Collective Artist

### IN MEMORIUM

Our hearts are with all those who we lost this year.