



WLCFS

**Christian Family Solutions™**

healing. helping.

# Member Connect Newsletter

Winter 2012-2013

## In This Issue:

- Crisis Counseling by Video
- Meet Our New MAP Providers
- Video Connectivity with Mac Users
- FREE Educational Presentations by Video
- Example of Our Work in Action
- Print-Ready MAP Bulletin Inserts
- Welcome to Our New Member Organizations

## Crisis Counseling by Video

In the aftermath of the horrible tragedy in Newtown, Connecticut, where a man opened fire inside an elementary school, killing 26 people, including 20 children, we are reminded that the effects of living in a sinful world will require us to deal with traumatic events like the one in Newtown. On the day of the shooting, one of our counselors, Sheryl Cowling, MSW, LCSW, made several live guest appearances on a local television and radio station and talked about the mental health impact and specifically how parents can talk with their children about traumatic events. To watch Sheryl's brief interview, please click [here](#).



Sheryl Cowling, MSW, LCSW

Sheryl's areas of specialty include working with children and people impacted by traumatic events. She is a Board Certified Expert in Traumatic Stress. We have posted an article on our website written by Sheryl, called "[Parenting Tips to Help Kids Cope After a Crisis or Tragedy.](#)"

Crises in the lives of Christians do indeed occur. Whether it is an act of violence, natural disaster, job loss, or other critical event, remember that through the Member Assistance Program, your organization has access to WELS/ELS counselors, many of whom have certification in Acute Traumatic Stress Management. Our counselors stand ready to assist WELS Christian Aid and Relief when they respond to a disaster or crisis, but we are also willing to assist individual members and can quickly and easily provide crisis counseling through a live, secure video connection.

## Meet Our New MAP Providers



*Sarah Reik, MS, LPC*

We are glad to announce that **Sarah Reik, MS, LPC**, has joined our Christian counseling team. Sarah sees clients at our clinic in Germantown, WI.

She specializes in women's issues, stress management, relationship issues, and financial counseling.

Sarah rejoined WLCFS in 2012. She received her BA in Psychology from Wisconsin Lutheran College and her MS in Counseling Psychology from UW-Madison. Prior to rejoining WLCFS, Sarah owned a private counseling practice, and she has 12 years of experience counseling individuals, couples and families. Welcome, Sarah!

We are also glad to announce that **Jeff Richardson, CSAC, ICDAC**, has joined our counseling team. He is a substance abuse counselor based in our Christian Family Counseling office in Fond du Lac, WI.



*Jeff Richardson, CSAC, ICDAC*

Jeff obtained the state of Wisconsin's Clinical Substance Abuse Counselor certification and became an Internationally Certified Alcohol and Drug Counselor for the IC&RC in 2012. He graduated from the Navy Drug and Alcohol Counselor School in 2005 and has worked in the substance abuse field, providing all aspects of treatment services to a wide range of people. Jeff has also attended seminars and workshops through Hazelden that provided him training in co-occurring disorders, Living in Balance, and the Mental Health Practicum.

Jeff has also completed the US Navy's Journeyman Instructor Training and has successfully facilitated a variety of psycho-education in the substance abuse and mental health fields. Jeff recently retired after 20 years of honorable service in the US Navy and has eagerly joined the WLCFS family. Welcome, Jeff!

*Both Sarah and Jeff are now taking clients through the Member Assistance Program.*

## Video Connectivity with Mac Users Is Here

Since the Member Assistance Program began in 2008 and counselors started connecting with WELS/ELS members by video, we have used a secure video software solution called Nefsis. The company that provides our video service recently released a new software upgrade called OmniJoin. A number of enhancements have been made, including compatibility with Mac users. OmniJoin is now compatible with both Windows and Mac.



Instead of using other secure video software alternatives for Mac users, our counselors can now use one platform that meets the highest level of security and remains very easy to connect with. Our goal is to provide members with an easy way to connect with counselors without the need to be a techno genius. OmniJoin uses standard webcams and requires no need for members to subscribe.

If you are enlisted as a telepresenter for your organization and assist members who do not have video access from home, you will receive instructions on how to connect once the transition to OmniJoin occurs in January 2013.

## FREE Educational Presentations Available by Video

To help organizations get acquainted with our new substance abuse counselor, Jeff Richardson, we are offering two free presentations. Jeff has prepared these short, practical, educational presentations for busy called workers that can be delivered by live video conferencing. At your next faculty meeting, circuit pastor gathering, conference, or other event, consider inviting Jeff to give a short 30-minute presentation. The presentations are quick and practical, and they allow for your questions and discussion. To schedule a presentation, contact Dan Nommensen at [dnommensen@wlcfs.org](mailto:dnommensen@wlcfs.org).

### **Teens & Drugs: What to Know**

This 30-minute presentation will provide basic information about the current drugs of choice for teens. It will also provide resources and assistance for pastors, teachers, lay people, and parents.

### **Addiction? What Next?**

This 30-minute presentation will assist in basic knowledge of the associated problems with addiction as well as available treatment(s).





## *Example of Our Work in Action— Just One Session Can Make a Difference*

Recently a WELS pastor contacted the Member Assistance Program Coordinator regarding some concerns he had for a member. The pastor noted that the member was acting very strangely, and it was significantly impacting his marital relationship. He suspected that perhaps the member was using illegal drugs, but the member denied it. The pastor recognized that the member's needs were outside of his area of expertise. He contacted the WLCFS-Member Assistance Program to learn more about the possibility of having his member see one of the professional Christian counselors on staff. The leaders of the rural congregation where he served were open to starting a Member Assistance Program, so the pastor received a link to an online intake. He shared that link with his member the same day, and the member completed an intake later that evening.

The next morning the member and pastor were contacted, and an appointment was scheduled for that same day with Dr. Brandon Hayes by video. In that initial appointment, Dr. Hayes met with the member and pastor and quickly identified that the member was struggling with a mental health challenge which included significant delusional thinking. The symptoms were not life threatening, but did warrant a referral to a hospital for an immediate evaluation and possibly treatment with medication. Dr. Hayes talked to the member and the pastor on the need for further treatment at a hospital facility. The pastor was coached on how to assist the member, and the pastor drove the member to the hospital. Dr. Hayes followed up with the pastor later that evening and the next day to make sure the member received the treatment he needed. Thankfully the member was treated and is now receiving local treatment from a physician in his area.

This example shows one way pastors and congregations can utilize their Member Assistance Program in a time of need. Through this partnership with congregations, WELS/ELS members can receive assistance quickly from one of our caring, Christian counselors—even if that assistance is only for one meeting.

*“We value the service of WLCFS. It’s been a wonderful blessing for those involved who are receiving the benefit of the professional services of those on the WLCFS staff. Finding competent Christian counselors who reflect our view of the Scriptures has always been a challenge for our congregations and shepherds. We thank you for your aid in assisting this very helpful and worthy effort to reach those who are in need of your services!”*

*—Pastor Donald Tollefson, North Atlantic District President*



## Print-Ready MAP Bulletin Inserts

In order to help our member organizations promote MAP, we have developed print-ready bulletin inserts for your convenience. Please click below each picture for a PDF bulletin insert that can be downloaded and printed. The inserts are available in color and black and white.

*Christian Counseling Services  
Now Available to Our Congregation*



The Member Assistance Program (MAP) is now providing confidential counseling services to our members through certified WELS Christian counselors, using secure, online video technology.

**Christian counseling staff is able to help you and your family with concerns such as:**

- Stress and adjustment disorders
- Grief and loss
- Depression
- Social anxiety
- Post-traumatic stress disorder
- Marriage/couples counseling
- Parenting/family issues
- Self-esteem issues
- Substance and alcohol abuse
- Work and/or family situations

Short-term counseling is available from any private location that has an Internet connection and a web cam. Telephone counseling is also available. **If you are interested in utilizing this new resource, please talk to Pastor.**

To learn more about video-assisted counseling and WLCFS-Christian Family Solutions, please visit [www.ChristianFamilySolutions.org](http://www.ChristianFamilySolutions.org) or call 888.685.9522.



Click [here](#) for black and white insert

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Click [here](#) for color insert

## Welcome, New Member Organizations!

St. Mark Lutheran Church, Duncanville, TX  
Gloria Dei Lutheran Church, Memphis, TN  
Abiding Peace Lutheran Church, Simpsonville, SC  
Peace Lutheran Church, Houghton, MI  
Beautiful Savior Lutheran Church, Summerville, SC  
Mount Calvary Lutheran Church, Redding, CA  
Apostles Lutheran Church, Dardenne Prairie, MO  
Jesus Cares Ministries  
Messiah Lutheran Church, Wichita, KS  
Trinity Lutheran Church, Crete, IL  
St. Andrew Lutheran Church, Middleton, WI  
Bay Pines Lutheran Church, Seminole, FL  
St. Peter Lutheran Church, Monticello, MN  
Amazing Grace Lutheran Church, Panama City, FL  
Evergreen Lutheran High School, Des Moines, WA  
Immanuel Lutheran Church, Long Valley, NJ  
St. John Lutheran Church, Montello, WI

## Available MAP Services

- Emotional counseling (individual, couple, family)
- Career counseling
- General substance abuse counseling
  - Consultation
- Educational presentations
- Senior care consultation
- Online support groups
- Crisis response

To make referrals for any of these services, please call 800.438.1772.

### MAP/WLCFS Contact Info:

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[www.ChristianFamilySolutions.org](http://www.ChristianFamilySolutions.org)