



Member Connect

Winter 2016

Available **MAP**
Services

Emotional counseling
(individual, couple, family)

Career counseling

Premarital counseling

General substance abuse counseling

Consultation

Member assessments

Educational presentations

Elder Care Navigation

Online support groups

Online support group facilitation

Crisis response

tScreen

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

MAP/WLCFS

CONTACT INFO

Dan Nommensen

800.438.1772

dnommensen@wlcfs.org

ChristianFamilySolutions.org

WLCFS-Christian Family Solutions Welcomes New CEO

Welcome, Mark Klug



What a blessing it is to be part of an organization that has been healing and helping people in need through the ministry of Jesus Christ for 50 years. As the new CEO of WLCFS-Christian Family Solutions, I am excited to work with a very dedicated and talented organization to grow this ministry and reach even more people in need.

I can relate to the fact that it can sometimes be hard to fully understand how God guides your life in ways that position you to grow and spread his Word. As a son of a WELS pastor, I attended a Lutheran elementary school and high school. This Christian education gave me a strong understanding of the commitment that our Synod has in fostering strong Christian family values. Both schools instilled in me a foundation of the Christian principles that are also the foundation of the ministry of WLCFS-Christian Family Solutions.

I valued this Christian foundation as God led me along an interesting career path. In the mid-'90s, I was asked to join a small, struggling behavioral health hospital. In time, I was asked to lead their national outreach initiatives, head up the marketing and outreach department, and develop business initiatives to grow the organization. I marvel at how God has helped me develop professionally through such a varied work experience and then placed me with an organization that has such a strong commitment to Christian counseling and care.

As I was led to connections at WLCFS-Christian Family Solutions, I became aware of the exciting opportunity to use the lessons I learned from past successes to complement the agency's future goals. I have always been passionate about helping individuals in need, and what an opportunity it would be to not only help others physically and mentally, but spiritually as well!

I look forward to this new and exciting chapter at WLCFS-Christian Family Solutions. Please join me in praying for continued growth and God's blessings as we heal and help people in need through the ministry of Jesus Christ.





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NEW ADDITIONS

Dr. Jennifer Londgren Joins the Career Counseling Team



Dr. Jennifer Londgren, WLCFS-Christian Family Solutions therapist in Mankato, MN, is now offering career counseling services. Dr. Londgren has been with WLCFS since 2013, providing outpatient mental health services for individuals and families. Dr. Londgren has experience with career counseling and has taught a course on career and life decision-making for Minnesota State University in Mankato, MN. Dr. Londgren joins WLCFS career counselors Dan Neuwirth and Thad Jahns as they provide services to those who find themselves without employment.

Dr. Londgren notes, "Sometimes people only need one meeting to help confirm they are on the right track to reach their employment goals. For those who have never faced a time of unemployment, they may need additional time to help understand resume writing, networking, or basic job search strategies. Whatever the needs are, this service is available and can be customized to what would be most helpful for people as they appreciate the gifts God's given them and apply those gifts to a new job or career."

The cost for career counseling services is \$75 per hour, and services are available in person in Milwaukee and now in Mankato, MN, or through a secure video connection anywhere in the country. For those who are unable to afford career counseling services, members can contact their pastor and consider making use of their Member Assistance Program to remove the financial obstacle.

As one member states about his experience with WLCFS career counseling: "I have been working since I was 13 years old—never without a job. I had no idea what to do and had never even seen a resume before. I felt ashamed and even stopped attending church. I didn't even want to tell my pastor. Thankfully he came to visit me, and with his encouragement I met with the counselor. I was helped to see that my new full-time job was to get a full-time job. I now have a new position and could not be happier. Many thanks to my pastor and the counselors at WLCFS."

If you would like to make a referral for career counseling services, call 800.438.1772 and talk to Dan Nommensen or Stephanie Randazzo. Learn more about career counseling and other services through MAP [here](#).

Member Assistance Program Adds New Intake Specialist



As the Member Assistance Program continues to grow with over 400 WELS/ELS organizations participating, we have added a new staff member, Stephanie Randazzo, to our intake team. Stephanie and Dan Nommensen will now assist pastors, teachers, or principals with referrals and help members schedule appointments. Stephanie joined WLCFS in 2015 as a part-time intake specialist for Christian Family Counseling while she was a student at Wisconsin Lutheran College. This past December Stephanie graduated with a degree in communications and is now working full time at WLCFS. She is looking forward to helping our WELS/ELS members get connected to the services available through their organization. We welcome Stephanie to our MAP team!





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NEWSLETTER CONTENT AVAILABLE

Short Article Ideas for Your Church or School Newsletter

If you are looking for an article for your school or church newsletter, check out our [blog page](#). You will find a number of short, practical articles on a variety of mental health-related topics that you can use for your newsletter. The articles are free to reproduce. We ask that you simply note the author's name and give credit to WLCFS-Christian Family Solutions for the article.

Want to sign up to receive our monthly e-blog newsletter? On the home page of ChristianFamilySolutions.org, enter your e-mail address into the "Sign Up for Our E-Newsletter" section on the bottom left side.

Sample Blog

'Tis the Season...for Video Games

written by

Brandon Hayes, Ph.D., LP, CATSM

Clinical Director at Christian Family Counseling

'Tis the season...for the release of the latest and greatest video games for Xbox One, Xbox 360, Sony Play Station, and the Wii. There is little doubt that video games have become the dominant entertainment medium for American youth. A recent study found that nearly 70% of all households in the U.S. have at least one gaming system, not including their computers. Thankfully, the majority of those who enjoy playing video games report that it does not have a negative impact on their life; however, between 5-10% of gamers report that their playing causes problems for them in their lives, whether it be social, financial, physical, or academic. If you notice someone in your life is having problems resultant from video gaming or suspect problems controlling his or her gaming, here are some tips:

- Track gaming patterns and consequences
- Limit "screen time" to 1-2 hours/day
- Make gaming a weekend activity
- Establish structure and routines for free time

Identify potential underlying issues behind excessive gaming:

- Self-esteem, relationship issues, depression, anxiety
- Keep consoles out of bedrooms
- Identify alternative interests to gaming

Please feel free to contact Christian Family Counseling at 800.438.1772 or assistance@wlcfs.org with any questions, or, if you suspect there is a gaming issue, please call to set up a time to speak with one of our counselors.





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TEENS 4 TEENS UPDATE

Update on Teens 4 Teens and Counseling Services for High Schools and Prep Schools

The first semester of the 2015-2016 school year is finished, and we were thankful for the opportunity to continue assisting students who are identified and referred by principals/deans/teachers for emotional health concerns. We are frequently asked about how our services became so successful in such a short period of time. How is it possible that we are able to provide Christian counseling services to Area Lutheran High Schools and Prep Schools around the country? How was it possible to launch a new screening program at three high schools this past fall? How is it possible that we now have counselors on-site at four high schools—soon to be five? **In the first semester of this school year, we provided 980 services for 187 students.** The Lord has provided for the needs of our services in many ways. We owe our thanks to him for guiding and providing for our Member Assistance Program and our Teens 4 Teens development efforts. Here are a few blessings we can specifically point to that have brought us to where we are now:

- **Christian counselors**—We needed more counselors to help meet the need, and the Lord answered our call as we were able to add new staff over the last year and a half—with more joining us in the near future.
- **Cooperation of high schools**—It's great to have excellent Christian counseling services available, but if principals, deans, or teachers are not willing to recognize students in need and make a referral, the students will continue to struggle emotionally and academically. The acceptance of our services and willingness to collaborate with counselors has been outstanding.
- **Funding**—Nothing happens without it! We've provided counseling services for high schools through the Member Assistance Program since it began in 2008—but only when schools had some extra funding available. Thanks to our Teens 4 Teens funding efforts, services are being provided to schools at no cost.

These are great blessings! Now the next question we have received is, "How can we help?" Related to the blessings above, schools can help us identify WELS/ELS counselors who might be willing to join our team and help us meet the demand for services. Schools can continue to collaborate by not only making referrals, but by taking advantage of educational presentations for students, staff, or families. Finally, schools can help by partnering with us in our efforts to fund our services through our Teens 4 Teens fundraising initiative. Funding is needed for both immediate use and to help build an endowment that will enable us to provide Christian counseling well into the future. If you are aware of donors who might be interested in this ministry of support for our high schools, or if your school is interested in designating WLCFS-Christian Family Solutions as a mission partner, please contact Dan Barnas.



Dan Barnas

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MENTAL HEALTH RISK SCREENINGS COMPLETED AT THREE HIGH SCHOOLS



Thanks to a generous grant from the Antioch Foundation, WLCFS-Christian Family Solutions developed and implemented a new screening program called [tScreen](#) this fall at three Area Lutheran High Schools. At each school a team of WLCFS counselors spent two to four days on-site and provided a screening for freshman students. **Why is a screening important at our schools?**

- 20% of teens struggle with emotional health concerns
- 59% of parents were unaware of their teen’s emotional health concerns before screening
- 66% of teens suffer in silence from not receiving help for their emotional health concerns
- Emotional health problems can interfere with academic success, relationships, spirituality, and well-being and can lead to symptoms of depression, anxiety, alcohol or drug use, or suicide

The screening included a computer-administered assessment and a brief interview with a counselor. The assessment instrument used can be administered to children and teens from 5th through 12th grade and assesses particular risk factors such as loneliness, safety, relationship with parents and teachers, and worry. These underlying risk factors could lead to the development of emotional concerns.

The screenings were made available to students with parental consent. The parent(s) of each child were contacted after the screening with the results, and they also received a follow-up letter summarizing the results. In addition to the screening, counselors provided educational presentations for students and faculty on a variety of mental health-related topics.



Dr. Joshua Mears led each screening team at West Lutheran High School, St. Croix Lutheran School, and Shoreland Lutheran High School. Dr. Mears notes, “The vast majority of the teens screened are doing well, and there was no risk found. For others, the opportunity to privately sit down with one of our counselors and ask for help was essential. Undoubtedly, there were students who were suffering in silence and are now receiving the help needed.”

Other members of the screening teams included:

Dr. Jennifer Londgren



Heather Wegner



Ashley Perushek



Jessica Landini



This new screening service through the Member Assistance Program will be available to grade schools and high schools starting in the fall of 2016. For information on how your school can benefit, please visit [tScreen](#), or contact Dan Nommensen at 800.438.1772, ext. 1201 or dnommensen@wlcfs.org.





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AWAY AT COLLEGE AND GETTING HELP



It is certainly not uncommon for new college students to experience a certain amount of anxiety or stress as they make a transition to college. In some cases, the students could be attending a college in another state and also making that transition to dorm life. Included in that list of stressors is dealing with overt criticism on a student's Christian beliefs. Thankfully many resources of support do exist, including [WELS Campus Ministries](#). In one instance a referral was made by a pastor who was concerned about a member who was away at college. The pastor had been e-mailing her and encouraging her in the Word. He also decided to make a referral through the Member Assistance Program, and the student took him up on the offer. A few sessions were available for the student, and one was held jointly with the student, counselor, and pastor. As another example, a pastor recently made a referral of a college-age member who is studying at a university overseas. How awesome it is to see the availability of support for our young people—no matter how far they travel.

Have a Referral to Make? What's the Process?

Contact us at 800.438.1772 or assistance@wlcfs.org. Ask for Dan Nommensen or Stephanie Randazzo. Provide the name of the member and reason for referral. Provide the member with your organization's online intake link so they can read the informed consent, enter their general contact information, and take a brief assessment. Once the intake has been completed, we will call the member and schedule an appointment.





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WELCOME, NEW MAP ORGANIZATIONS

Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, Burton, MI
St. Luke Lutheran Church, Saginaw, MI
Beautiful Savior Lutheran Church, Clarksville, TN
Zion Lutheran Church, Crete, IL
Calvary Lutheran Church, Thiensville, WI
Resurrection Lutheran Church, Verona, WI
Lamb of God Lutheran Church, Columbus, OH
The Springs Lutheran Church, Sparks, NV
Amazing Grace Lutheran Church, Portland, OR
Messiah Lutheran Church, South Windsor, CT
Holy Word Lutheran Church, Austin, TX
Saviour of the Nations Lutheran Church, Vancouver, British Columbia
Abiding Savior Lutheran Church, Weslaco, TX
Trinity Lutheran Church, Abita Springs, LA
Grace Lutheran Church, Scroggins, TX

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