



Southeast MHTTC Newsletter

Volume II, Issue II - January 2020

Happy New Year!

It's officially 2020 - the start of a new decade! We are excited to share what we have in store for our center this year.

Upcoming Events

In-Person Training: Peer Voice & Suicide Risk Assessment Training
Alabama School of Alcohol and other Drugs Studies Conference
March 2020

Be sure to visit [our website](#) for event topics and dates scheduled in 2020!

Past Events

Did you miss a recent Southeast MHTTC Event? Click on the links below to access our webinar recordings and download slide deck presentations.

- Trauma-Informed Schools Part 1 & Part 2
- Preventing Suicide in Healthcare Settings: What We Are Learning
- Collaborative Assessment and Management of Suicidality (CAMS)
- What is supported housing? Does it save lives?
- Recruitment and Retention of the Mental Health Workforce Part 1 & Part 2
- The Problem of Criminalization of Serious Mental Illness Part 1 & Part 2

Criminal Justice & Mental Health

This past November, the Southeast MHTTC offered a two-part webinar on criminal justice and mental health. More specifically, the webinar series focused on the criminalization of those with serious mental illnesses and possible solutions to the issue. In this newsletter, we focus on provider-level information and resources that mental health professionals may find useful in assisting individuals with mental health disorders who are currently or formerly involved in the criminal justice system.

View the two-part webinar series below.

[The Problem of Criminalization of Serious Mental Illness: Part 1](#)

[The Problem of Criminalization of Serious Mental Illness: Part 2](#)

Over 1 million individuals with mental illness are arrested each year in the United States.¹

Mental health providers play a key role in providing support, service, and treatment for individuals with mental health disorders who are currently or formerly involved in the criminal justice system. Having a better understanding of the criminal justice system, common reasons for involvement, challenges individuals may face, and available resources can help providers better serve these individuals.²

Before



Why?

People with serious mental illness are more likely to be incarcerated due to:

- Co-occurring substance use
- Homelessness
- Lack of funding for community-based mental health treatment and support services
- Lack of access to mental health treatment
- Inadequate police officer mental health training¹



For what?

The most common charges for individuals with serious mental illness are:

- Criminal trespass
- Willful obstruction of law enforcement officers
- Probation violation
- Disorderly conduct ¹

During



Diversion Programs

The sequential intercept model identifies points, personnel, and partnerships within the criminal justice system in which individuals with mental health and substance use disorders could be diverted into treatment to avoid further system involvement. Successful programs have been implemented at various points. We list two of these programs below.

Crisis Intervention Team (CIT)

An intervention that trains law enforcement officers on de-escalation techniques. CIT officers are knowledgeable about the signs and symptoms of mental illness and mental health treatment and assess whether a situation can be resolved or if a referral for services or if further evaluation is needed. ¹

Treatment courts

A point of diversion from criminal prosecution is treatment court. These courts have their own judge, prosecution, and defense counsel. Individuals who undergo this route agree to treatment. If treatment is successfully completed, their charges are either dropped or reduced. ²

After

Individuals transitioning from jail or prison back into the community can be faced with many challenges. We list some common barriers below and resources that may be useful.



Housing

United Way

A national database that provides resources for housing.

Call 211 to get connected or visit their [website](#).



Employment

Federal Bureau of Prisons

Employment assistance resources for individuals who have been formerly incarcerated. Click [here](#) to learn more.



Education

U.S. Department of Education

A guide for those who are incarcerated or on probation or parole and are interested in starting or continuing their education or training. Access the guide [here](#).



Insurance

Healthcare.gov

Information on health care coverage for individuals who were formerly incarcerated. Read more [here](#).

Other Resources

National Reentry Resource Center (NRRC)

An informational website for resources on reentry. Click [here](#) to visit the NRRC site or for a directory of resources in your state click [here](#).

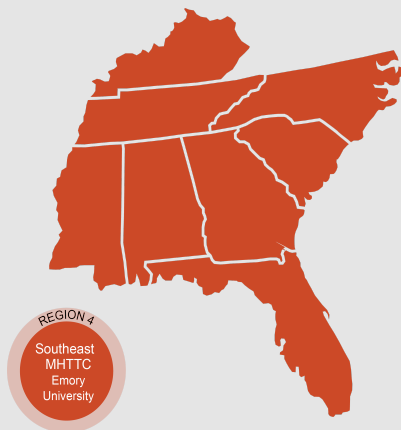
GAINS Center for Behavioral Health and Justice Transformation

Funded by SAMHSA, the GAINS center aims to expand services for individuals with mental and/or substance use disorders who are involved in the criminal justice system. Explore more [here](#).

Practicing
more self-care
in 2020

We know that practicing self-care is important for our well-being. With the new year, we encourage you to incorporate self-care into your daily routine. Check out the tips below on how to integrate self-care into a busy schedule.³

Spotlight on States



- **Identify what activities help you feel your best.** Self-care varies; one person might enjoy practicing mindfulness, and another might enjoy binge-watching a new Netflix series.
- **Check in with yourself regularly.** Ask yourself these questions. Do you feel tapped out? What do you need to take away? What would you like to add?
- **Sneak in self-care when you can.** Do you have a 10-minute break between appointments? Close your eyes and take a few deep breaths or go on a short walk.
- **Take care of yourself physically.** Get enough sleep. Eat well. Exercise.

Check out what states in Region IV are doing!

Alabama. Walker County Board of Education will now provide a therapist for its students who could benefit from individual treatment. *Read more here.*

Florida. State Board of Education approves mental health lessons for Volusia County school students. *Read here.*

Georgia. Georgia's Behavioral Health Innovation and Reform Commission begins a four-year examination of the state's mental health treatment system to find ways to improve the system. *Click here to read more.*

Kentucky. Schools in Green River District receive funding from U.S. Department of Education for mental health counselors. *Read the article here.*

Mississippi. Program of Assertive Community Treatment (PACT) in Lee County helps families recover from serious mental illness. *Read the story here.*

North Carolina. Students in Asheville push for a district-wide mental health education program. *Read more.*

South Carolina. Legislation introduced to offer mental health coverage for first responders under workers' compensation. *Click here to read more.*

Tennessee. Hamilton county participated in a workshop focusing on individuals with mental and/or substance use disorders in contact with the criminal justice system. *Click here to read more.*

References


- 1) Compton, M. & Watson, A. (2019). The problem of criminalization of individuals with serious mental illness [Powerpoint Slides]. Retrieved from <https://mhttcnetwork.org/centers/southeast-mhttc/problem-criminalization-serious-mental-illness-part-i-0>
- 2) Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. (2019). Principles of Community-based Behavioral Health Services for Justice-involved Individuals: A Research-based Guide. Retrieved from <https://store.samhsa.gov/system/files/sma19-5097.pdf>
- 3) Tartakovsky, M. (2018). How clinicians practice self-care & 9 tips for readers. Retrieved from <https://psychcentral.com/lib/how-clinicians-practice-self-care-9-tips-for-readers/>

Thank you for reading the Southeast MHTTC Newsletter!

The Southeast MHTTC Newsletter is published quarterly bringing you updates on our center and information and resources related to public mental health.

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STAY IN TOUCH

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