

Your Mind Matters

[Peter White Public Library](#)

Children

|

Tweens (10-12)

|

Young Adult

|

Adults

|

Intergenerational

Your Mind Matters

Sep 11, 2015

\$1-50

\$

Your name

Margaret Boyle, Programming Coord., Peter White Public Library, Marquette, Mich.

According to the surgeon general, one in every five Americans experiences a mental disorder in any given year, and 50 percent of Americans have mental disorders at some time in their lives. Yet more than half fail to seek treatment, likely due to a lack of awareness or fear of stigma.

Your Mind Matters is an informational program series held each May that's designed to raise awareness of mental health issues, highlight community resources, reduce mental illness stigmas and promote the importance of mental wellness for all. Events include Lunch & Learn, brown-bag lunchtime talks featuring therapists, psychiatrists and other mental health professionals; film screenings; and evening workshops.

The event series is sponsored by a coalition of community health organizations, advocacy groups and the library.

Advanced Planning

Your Mind Matters is designed to stimulate community conversation on mental health issues and highlight local resources where consumers can go for information while reducing the stigma surrounding mental illness. The sessions are used by the general public to learn and meet with health care providers at no charge, as well as by health care workers as continuing education opportunities.

Since the series has become an annual event, planning begins up to one year in advance. The first year of our Your Mind Matters program, we invited mental health advocates, active community members, educators and medical professionals to be on a planning committee. We met four to five times over a two-month period to brainstorm ideas and discuss program models, potential presenters and target audiences. The series was so successful that these same planning committee members agreed to provide expertise from their agencies in following years to make the Your Mind Matters series an annual event.

Meeting room space also needs to be reserved well in advance. [National Alliance on Mental Illness](#) members suggest films for the series and volunteer to facilitate post-screening discussions.

Marketing

Promotion begins in late winter through the library's quarterly newsletter, social media and website, as well as through affiliate organizations channels, local news media, fliers and brochures distributed in the library and throughout the community. Residents who take advantage of the learning opportunities often suggest future topics they are interested in. There is much positive feedback from the public and program providers to continue the series.

Budgeting

The program can be run at very little cost, thanks to the willingness of presenters to provide content at no charge. Promotional costs for posters, fliers and brochures can be reduced with electronic submissions. Film screenings require public performance rights, which are covered by our annual licenses. Music and art events can add additional costs depending on the performer/presenter requirements. Serving refreshments encourages attendance but also adds to the cost. Lunch & Learn attendees bring their own lunch or buy from the library café.

Day-of-event Activity

Set-ups for events are dictated by the type of event and can be managed by one or two staff members. Lunch & Learn sessions are set up with tables and chairs in a workshop-style to encourage conversation and make it easier for attendees to enjoy their meals. Typically, presentations require a screen, projector and laptop for PowerPoint presentations. Films and concerts are set up theater-style for better viewing. Exhibits require more complex set-ups.

Program Execution

The library typically hosts 10 to 15 Your Mind Matters events each May with a total average attendance of just over 200 people. Feedback has been very positive from both presenters and attendees with regular requests to continue the series. Occasionally there is an additional program in early October (Mental Illness Awareness Week) at the request of our NAMI affiliate or by one of the mental health providers.

Early on, program evaluations were passed out on paper forms to program attendees. Since the series has become a regular library offering, most evaluations are verbal or through electronic and social media. Feedback has been consistently positive over the last seven years.

Advice

A music event or art exhibit that draws in a large variety of people is a great way to kick off a mental health series. Teens attended popular films and concerts, but not in great numbers. Partnering with teen advisory boards, school clubs and high school guidance counselors (who are very active with addressing mental health issues in schools) might help address issues more relevant to this demographic.

The Lunch & Learn sessions were consistently attended with audiences of 15 to 30 people. Popular topics at these lunchtime talks were about post-traumatic stress disorder, addiction, bipolar disorder, obsessive-compulsive disorder and depression.

Evening workshops on mindfulness, relaxation, art therapy and suicide prevention had attendance numbers in the same range. Film screenings saw the best attendance (with 50 to 75 people) when the movie was a recent release, such as "Silver Linings Playbook" (2012), "Call me Crazy: A Five Film" (2013) and "The Anonymous People" (2013). Music events, such as live jazz or blues concerts, are always well attended because of the broad appeal.

Your Mind Matters began at our library in conjunction with the powerful exhibit "[Fine Line](#)" by photographer Michael Nye that we hosted in our building for a two-month period. Highlighting the fine line between where mental health ends and mental illness begins, the exhibit consisted of 45 stunning black-and-white portraits of people who suffered from mental illness, each accompanied by a listening station of that person telling his or her story.

Supporting Materials

[Download this Program as a PDF](#)

- Feedback (Coming Soon!)
- [Programming Librarian Facebook Group](#)

More Programs

Aug 13, 2013

Young Adult (17 - 20)+ |

[Image](#)



[National Conversation About Mental Health](#)

Audiences:

Audience

Young Adult (17 - 20)

Adults (21 and up)

Intergenerational

Dec 17, 2012

Children (9 and under)+ | ☐☐

[Image](#)



Partnerships for Pet Therapy Events

Audiences:

Audience

Children (9 and under)

Young Adult (17 - 20)

Adults (21 and up)

Intergenerational

May 11, 2015

Children (9 and under)+ | ☐☐

[Image](#)



[Yoga in the Library](#)

Audiences:

Audience

Children (9 and under)

Young Adult (17 - 20)

Adults (21 and up)

Intergenerational