

## December 2022

### Upcoming Events

NH Mental Health Peer Alliance, Tue Dec 20, 10 AM.

Come, let your voice be heard. The Alliance is made up of adults with lived experience who want to improve mental health services in NH, organizing to advocate, educate, and inform. Please use this link <https://meet.goto.com/709997085> to join us.

Board of Directors, Wed, Dec 28, 5 PM.

Members and staff welcome and encouraged to attend Through this link: <https://meet.goto.com/160387205>

Community Meeting, Mon, Dec 12, 10:15 AM

Whether offering ideas for new groups or getting updates on Step Up/Step Down, this a chance for our entire community to gather and be involved in making Connections even better. We need your voice!  
<https://meet.goto.com/709997085>

reaching for connection. rooted in recovery.

connections  
peer support center



Member Art 2022



Member Art 2022



## Welcome to the Warm Line, Chrissie!

We are pleased to report that Chrissie, a member of the community here at Connections as accepted a position with us as a warm line operator and group facilitator in the center.

Her training and experience paired with her skills and excitement has culminated in a great gift here. Chrissie has experience as a peer as well as a staff member for triaging calls to different services. She brings with her a passion for art and crafting as well. Thank you Chrissie for coming aboard!

# OUR VOICES

## Portsmouth Housing and our Community

At the start of the pandemic, Connections began talking with Daphne Rivera at The Portsmouth Housing Authority to bring some resources into the Feaster and Margeson properties. We found a moment last week on Tuesday.

We offer aromatherapy at Connections. The project is simple, yet it seems to bring a smile to many faces. We fill a rollerball with crystal chips, grapeseed oil, a scent, and then it is finished off with a sticker or a label.

Humans have an entire memory system that is wrapped up in our sense of smell. An apple pie can shoot us back to our fifth birthday. The issue is not that good memories can be brought back. It's the parts of our lives that we would prefer to forget. Our aromatherapy tool assists in making sure our brain isn't hijacked with a horrible triggered memory that can really hurt us.

These little bottles are small enough to carry. If a smell we don't want to experience pops up, we have the little roller ball to remind us that we are in this present moment. The other way that this tool can help is to bring it with us to a safe place and train our brain that this scent is from that safe place. This is useful when going into a difficult situation. Our aromatherapy can keep us grounded and in the present moment.

We have the power to push away difficult triggers that slams us down when we aren't prepared. There are many wellness tools that are offered both on site and in the community. Because of the great turn out we will continue bringing resources to Margeson and Feaster and develop this program more.

## Having a Safety or a "Just In Case" Plan for the Holidays

The holidays are filled with excitement and fun, but at the same time we may feel triggered or alone. Add our Warm Line Service to your safety plan for supportive listening and compassion.

It can feel depressing or disappointing around this time of year for many people. Having a solid and concrete plan may remind us that we have other resources available to "get through" the holidays.

Whatever the situation may be, there are always opportunities for new beginnings. Your plan can include safe people you can contact, transportation options, and activities for if it snows or if you get stuck somewhere.

Connections peers and peer staff can support you. Bring your ideas and concerns and we can help you craft a plan.

## Upcoming Services for Dual Recovery at CPSC

There has been a consistent increase in overdoses to fentanyl over the last decade. Presently it is the leading cause of death for those individuals in the 18-49 year old population country wide. To add to our curriculum starting in January there will be some specific meetings added to our schedule. We will be hosting at least one early morning Narcotics Anonymous meeting for those people wanting to meet before work. There are not any in Portsmouth in the earlier part of the day.

We will add a Dual Recovery/Harm Reduction Meeting for those people with both a substance use disorder and a mental health concern. This is not a 12-step meeting, but rather an educational and sharing session to support this incredibly important population. There will be information available for MAT in the area as well. So many dually diagnosed people have incredible stories of survival and recovery, but at times can feel lonely and vulnerable. Their resourcefulness and resilience is a strength, and recognizing that a support for their recovery is very important too.

There will also be an after dinner meeting of the SMART recovery model. SMART stands for "Self-Management and Recovery Training." This program offers behavioral skills training to look at addiction as an activity that can be changed. There are workers on staff who are certified in this training and materials will be available to those who choose to give it a try.

We will continue to offer noon time Al-anon meetings on Wednesdays. This is a group dedicated to those family members and friends of those struggling with addiction and alcoholism. This has been scheduled for several months now. There have been several guests and continues to reach out to this membership.

Finally, a GRASP group will be offered to those individuals who have lost a loved one to overdose or substance use. This group will be a closed group for those who have experienced this and the facilitator has had experience and a year or more since their own loss. We listen and teach each other ways to manage the pain and confusion. GRASP stands for Grief Recovery for Those Who Have Lost Due to Substance use.

Please contact us with any questions and we hope to hear from you!

# CONNECTIONS PEER SUPPORT



544 Islington St, Portsmouth, NH 03801 (603)-427-6966  
 Center Hours: 8:30-5:30 Mon-Thurs, 8:30-4:30 Fri  
 Warmline Telephone Support: 5-10 PM 7 days a week

## Monday

## Tuesday

## Wednesday



9:15 AM Check-in **5**  
 10:15 Budgeting  
 11:00 Complex PTSD/ACES  
 11:30 BYO Lunch/ Walking Group  
 1:15 Wellness Toolbox  
 \*1:15 ONLINE ONLY Hearing Voices

9:15 AM Check-in **6**  
 10:15 IPS Topics  
 11:00 Meditative Art  
 11:30 BYO Lunch/Check-in/ TED Talk  
 1:15 Assertiveness and Self-Advocacy  
 1:00 Peer Advocacy/Feaster\*\*  
 3:00 Peer Advocacy/Margeson \*\*\*

9:15 AM Check-in **7**  
**10:15 SPECIAL GUEST - COAST TRANSPORTATION**  
 11:00 Hearing Voices  
 11:30 Community Lunch  
 Check-in/Walking Group  
 12:00 Al-Anon Meeting  
 1:15 Positive Thinking

9:15 AM Check-in **12**  
**10:15 Community Meeting**  
**CLOSED FOR THE REST OF THE DAY FOR STAFF TRAINING**

9:15 AM Check-in **13**  
 10:15 IPS Topics  
 11:00 Meditative Art  
 11:30 BYO Lunch/Check-in/ TED Talk  
 1:15 Assertiveness and Self-Advocacy  
 1:00 Peer Advocacy/Feaster\*\*  
 3:00 Peer Advocacy/Margeson \*\*\*

9:15 AM Check-in **14**  
 10:15 Blogging Group  
 11:00 Hearing Voices  
 11:30 Community Lunch  
 Check-in/Walking Group  
 12:00 Al-Anon Meeting  
 1:15 Positive Thinking

9:15 AM Check-in **19**  
 10:15 Budgeting  
 11:00 Complex PTSD/ACES  
 11:30 BYO Lunch/ Walking Group  
 1:15 Wellness Toolbox  
 \*1:15 ONLINE ONLY Hearing Voices

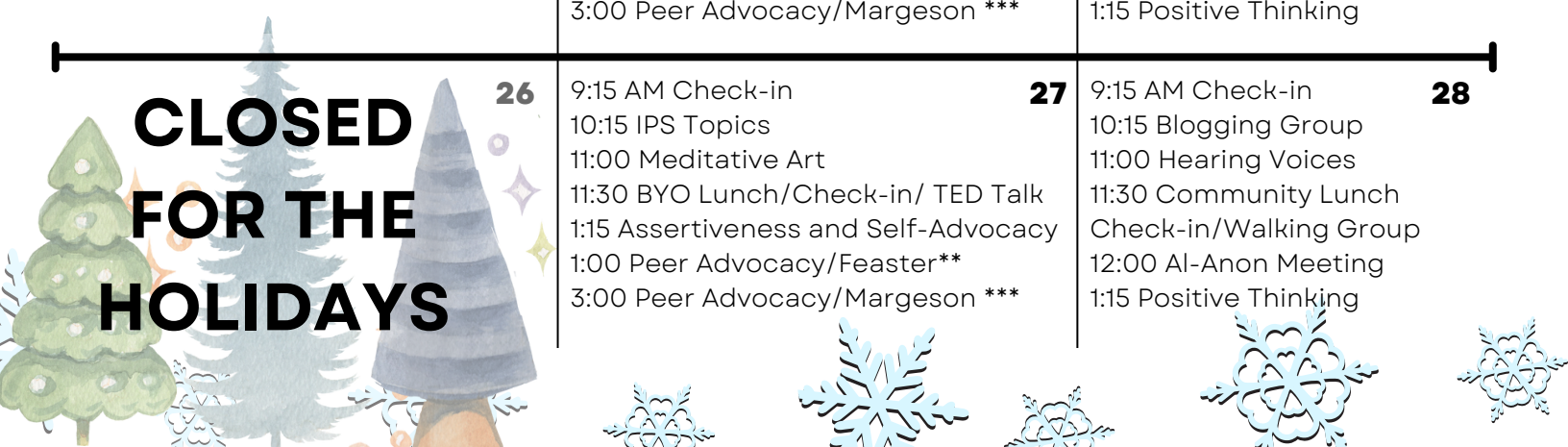
9:15 AM Check-in **20**  
 10:15 IPS Topics  
 11:00 Meditative Art  
 11:30 BYO Lunch/Check-in/ TED Talk  
 1:15 Assertiveness and Self-Advocacy  
 1:00 Peer Advocacy/Feaster\*\*  
 3:00 Peer Advocacy/Margeson \*\*\*

9:15 AM Check-in **21**  
 10:15 Blogging Group  
 11:00 Hearing Voices  
 11:30 Community Lunch  
 Check-in/Walking Group  
 12:00 Al-Anon Meeting  
 1:15 Positive Thinking

**CLOSED FOR THE HOLIDAYS** **26**

9:15 AM Check-in **27**  
 10:15 IPS Topics  
 11:00 Meditative Art  
 11:30 BYO Lunch/Check-in/ TED Talk  
 1:15 Assertiveness and Self-Advocacy  
 1:00 Peer Advocacy/Feaster\*\*  
 3:00 Peer Advocacy/Margeson \*\*\*

9:15 AM Check-in **28**  
 10:15 Blogging Group  
 11:00 Hearing Voices  
 11:30 Community Lunch  
 Check-in/Walking Group  
 12:00 Al-Anon Meeting  
 1:15 Positive Thinking



# DECEMBER 2022 SCHEDULE

For more information, including group descriptions, please visit our website: [connectionspeersupport.org](http://connectionspeersupport.org) - Or call us at (603) 427-6966

## Thursday

## Friday

9:15 AM Check-in **1**  
 10:00 LGBTQ+ Support  
 10:15 Anxiety and Depression  
 11:30 Community Lunch  
 Check-in/Walking Group  
 1:15 WRAP Topics

9:15 AM Check-in **2**  
 10:15 Women's Group  
 11:15 Decision Making  
 11:30 BYO Lunch/Walking Group  
 1:15 Crafts: Aromatherapy

9:15 AM Check-in **8**  
 10:00 LGBTQ+ Support  
 10:15 Anxiety and Depression  
 11:30 Community Lunch  
 Check-in/Walking Group  
 1:15 WRAP Topics

9:15 AM Check-in **9**  
**10:30 GINGERBREAD HOUSE TRIP**  
 11:15 Decision Making  
 11:30 BYO Lunch/Walking Group  
 1:15 Crafts: Quilling

9:15 AM Check-in **15**  
 10:00 LGBTQ+ Support  
 10:15 Anxiety and Depression  
 11:30 Community Lunch  
 Check-in/Walking Group  
 1:15 WRAP Topics

9:15 AM Check-in **16**  
 10:15 Women's Group  
 11:15 Decision Making  
 11:30 BYO Lunch/Walking Group  
 1:15 Crafts: Decorative Lettering

**HOLIDAY PARTY** **22**



**CLOSED FOR THE HOLIDAYS** **23**



9:15 AM Check-in **29**  
 10:00 LGBTQ+ Support  
 10:15 Anxiety and Depression  
 11:30 Community Lunch  
 Check-in/Walking Group  
 1:15 WRAP Topics

9:15 AM Check-in **30**  
 10:15 Women's Group  
 11:15 Decision Making  
 11:30 BYO Lunch/Walking Group  
 1:15 Crafts: Zentangle

**All services free of charge.**

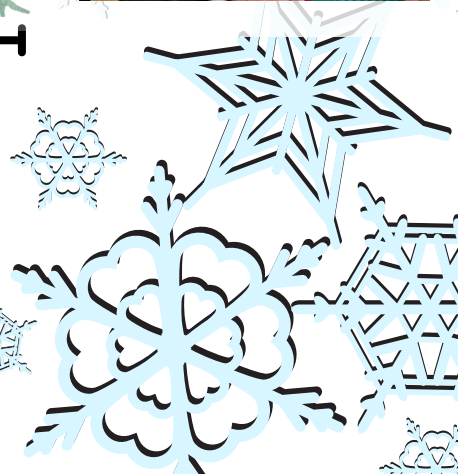
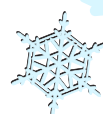
**No referral needed.**

**We offer transportation.**

**Groups available in person or online.**

**In case of bad weather, the center may close but groups still run online.**

**Masks are optional.**



# COMMUNITY RESOURCES



## Are you in crisis?

There is help available. 24/7 call, text and chat access to trained crisis counselors who can help you or a loved one experiencing suicidal, substance use, and/or mental health crisis, or any other kind of emotional distress.

**NH Rapid Response** can meet you where you are, provide follow up appointments, or refer you to inpatient options 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

**New Hampshire**  
Rapid Response Access Point  
1 (833) 710-6477



## Are you looking for services?

To connect with local resources in the Seacoast area, go to [www.211nh.org](http://www.211nh.org) OR call 211

## Join us Wednesday, December 7th for a special presentation by COAST Transportation!

COAST provides a broad range of public transportation services; connecting and coordinating a robust network of transportation options for everyone. Call/Text: (603) 743-5777 or visit online at [coastbus.org](http://coastbus.org)



## Community Calendar

### Portsmouth's annual Holiday Parade & Tree Lighting is back!

Saturday, December 3, 2022

- 5:00 Portsmouth Middle & High School Holiday Ensemble
- 5:30pm Tree Lighting in Market Square
- 6:00pm Parade step off from Islington Street/Summer Street

**Elf The Musical** presented by The Ogunquit Playhouse at The Music Hall beginning Wednesday, November 30 to Sunday, December 18.

**First Night Celebration** December 31st from 2:00 PM - 8:00 PM in downtown Portsmouth, First Night is known as the alcohol free, alternative community celebration on December 31st.

# PUZZLE

## Winter Wonderland

J I W T E Z C W B T P G T Z R A O F C V  
B Y W N J C H C Q Y S Z M G S I T U R M  
U Q D A V Y E Y Q H C V L K Z I J A T S  
G S M S L L E B Q H S C P G A B M H X T  
F N T D D P R X S L E D I T H G I L Z V  
Q N P W L C E A K I D F D I S L C Y V E  
R Z V I L T A N Y F T J H N Q O T T W K  
N S H M J G K N C S J T L E A J R K E A  
S O F I R L U K E F A X A M I L K F Z L  
K G I N G E R B R E A D S B C R R T B F  
Q K R T I L R B R H R E N W I J S A Z W  
Z X E X I L V W M E P J O K C W T Q G O  
P O P F S D K D O B R L W B L R E C U N  
X B L A Q M A F A T N I M R E P P E P S  
L R A J V C U R F H D G A P R A O X A R  
X T C M O K C B T B C S N P A S Y Q I T  
O N E R P Y W Z L S E I K O O C P L U Q  
Z N S N E T T I M E G E C T O D J Z N G  
A C N G B P A D H A M O I O E O R C A J  
Z Z S U Q F H P Y C C U X C P J J K F G

GINGERBREAD  
LIGHT  
TRADITION  
HAT  
COOKIES  
FROST  
BELLS

COCOA  
CHEER  
SNOWMAN  
MITTENS  
ICICLE  
PEPPERMINT  
WREATH

SNOWFLAKE  
JOY  
SLED  
FIREPLACE  
GIFTS  
GARLAND