

Growing Strong



January 2019

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

- MARIJUANA: DOES LEGAL MEAN SAFE? 2
- GENEROSITY OF SPIRIT 3
- COMMUNITY HOPE FUND 3
- RESOLVE TO BE MORE ACTIVE IN 2019 4

Township of Ocean
 Department of Human Services
 601 Deal Road
 Ocean, NJ 07712
 732-531-2600



The **Human Services Council** serves as an advisory board to the Department of Human Services, Township Manager and Township Council on matters concerning the human service needs of residents. Guests are welcome.

The meeting schedule for the first half of 2019 is:

- Wednesday, Jan. 9, 2019
- Wednesday, April 3, 2019
- Wednesday, June 5, 2019

All meetings take place in the Township of Ocean Senior Center, 615 West Park Ave., behind the West Park Recreation Center at 7 pm. Please note meeting dates are subject to change. Please call 732-531-2600 to confirm.

NEW YEAR, NEW BEGINNINGS

Happy New Year!

If everyone who made a resolution for the start of 2018 had kept theirs, 53 percent of people would have saved more money, 45 percent would have lost weight and gotten in shape, and 23 percent would have read more books. Imagine... we would be a richer, thinner, and smarter community! But alas, by February, more than 80 percent of resolutions had fallen by the wayside.

Nonetheless, the very process of making a resolution involves an honest "taking stock" of our lives. In photography, printing, and digital media, "resolution" refers to the detail an image holds. The more resolution, the sharper the focus, the clearer the picture, and greater the ability to expand the image. So too with us, resolutions allow us to sharpen the focus by attending to what is meaningful. We clarify the picture of ourselves by attending to what we need more of or less of. As in photographs, resolution also allows us to expand the picture of our lives and our part in the community and the world beyond ourselves while maintaining clarity and focus. The making of a resolution is a great first step!



HELP KIDS MAKE — AND KEEP — NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTIONS

Making resolutions with your children can be a fun opportunity for family bonding. Here are some tips from *Parents.com* on how to make New Year's resolutions a positive experience for kids and to help them keep in touch with their goals all year long.

Be Resolution Role Models

It's important to practice what you preach. If you make resolutions, you have to walk the walk and talk the talk to be most effective. Bring your own resolutions to the kitchen table.

Keep a Positive Approach

Start by going over the positive things your kids accomplished last year. Avoid pointing out shortcomings. Focus on what they're doing well and explore together some of the great things they want to do this year.

Narrow Down the List

Avoid the pitfall of too many resolutions! Two or three concrete, specific and manageable goals are best. Have your child

write down her top three resolutions, leaving space between each one for inserting smaller steps. Help your child make them realistic and age-appropriate.

Take Turtle Steps Toward Big Resolutions

Turning a good intention into a habit is one of the most important skills we can teach our kids. Help them break their resolutions down into easy "turtle steps." Self-discipline is like a muscle that grows slowly. If your child's resolution is "I'm going to keep my room neater," he should write down six tiny, easy steps and practice one each week.

Follow Up but Don't Nag

Don't worry about lapses. Expect them. A lapse is forgetting for a day or two, or having a week in which a turtle step didn't work. Or maybe you went on vacation and couldn't practice. That's not failure; that's just trying. Remember, no big change is ever accomplished perfectly.

Continued on page 2



MARIJUANA: IF IT'S LEGAL, DOES THAT MEAN IT'S SAFE?

When marijuana is smoked or vaporized, THC quickly passes from the lungs into the bloodstream, which carries it to organs throughout the body, including the brain. Its effects begin almost immediately and can last from 1 to 3 hours. Decision making, concentration, and memory can be affected for days after use, especially in regular users. If marijuana is consumed in foods or beverages, the effects of THC appear later—usually in 30 minutes to 1 hour—and may last for many hours.

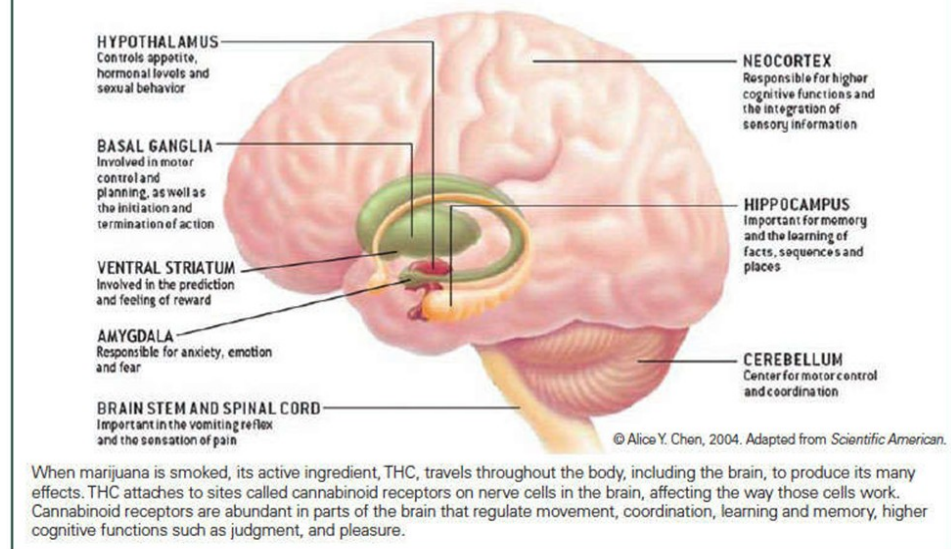
As it enters the brain, THC attaches to cells, or neurons, with specific kinds of receptors called *cannabinoid receptors*. Normally, these receptors are activated by chemicals similar to THC that occur naturally in the body. They are part of a communication network in the brain called the *endocannabinoid system*. This system is important in normal brain development and function.

Most of the cannabinoid receptors are found in parts of the brain that influence pleasure, memory, thinking, concentration, sensory and time perception, and coordinated movement. Marijuana activates

the endocannabinoid system, which causes the pleasurable feelings or "high" and stimulates the release of dopamine in the brain's reward centers, reinforcing the behavior. Other effects include changes in perceptions and mood, lack of coordination, difficulty with thinking and problem solving, and disrupted learning and memory.

Certain parts of the brain have a lot of cannabinoid receptors. They are the hippocampus, the cerebellum, the basal ganglia,

Marijuana's Effects on the Brain



and the cerebral cortex. As a result, marijuana affects these functions:

Learning and memory. The hippocampus plays a critical role in certain types of learning. Disrupting its normal functioning can lead to problems studying, learning new things, and recalling recent events.

Coordination. THC affects the cerebellum, the area of our brain that controls balance and coordination, and the basal ganglia, another part of the brain that helps control

movement. These effects can influence performance in such activities as sports, driving and video games.

Judgment. Since THC affects areas of the frontal cortex involved in decision making, using it can make you more likely to engage in risky behavior, such as unprotected sex or getting in a car with someone who's been drinking or is high on marijuana.

Read more at:
teens.drugabuse.gov/drug-facts/marijuana

Resolutions (continued from page 1)

Make Family Resolutions Together

Resolutions bring families closer, especially when you set goals together. Families could plan to do one charitable thing a month and brainstorm about what that might be. You could pick up trash in the park or donate clothes and toys to a shelter.

Make Resolutions a Ritual

Families can make sharing resolutions even more meaningful by adding an element of ritual. A main rule in creating new rituals is to engage as many of the five senses as possible. For sound, play the family's favorite music. For smell

and taste, enjoy a treat while writing resolutions, such as hot chocolate with marshmallows or warm cider with cinnamon. For touch and vision, find small objects to symbolize what might happen to a person in the next year, such as a small globe for travel, a football for sports, a book for doing well at school, and so on.

Above all, remember New Year's offers a clean slate and an opportunity for families to spend positive quality time together.

Found at: <https://www.parents.com/holiday/new-years/resolution/8-ways-to-help-kids-make-new-years-resolutions/>

Counseling

Positive Treatment for Positive Change

The Department of Human Services provides counseling services for youth & adults. There is no charge for most services for Township of Ocean residents.

Individual, couples & family counseling
Comprehensive assessments

Grief counseling

Parent education

Anger management

Substance abuse evaluations, counseling & referrals

Call 732-531-2600 Monday-Friday
Day and evening appointments available

601 Deal Rd. Ocean OceanTwp.org

THE GENEROSITY OF SPIRIT IN THE TOWNSHIP OF OCEAN

"Alone we can do so little. Together we can do so much."

Helen Keller

In 2018, the Community Hope Fund and the Human Services Department held the annual Thanksgiving Food Drive and Holiday Adopt-a-Family program. These programs were



Brownies volunteered at the Thanksgiving Food Drive

predated by 30 years of quiet, generous giving during the holidays. Individual residents for many years had approached those in the municipal government charged with



Thanks to all the Ocean families that delivered boxes of food.



Ocean Police Explorers did a lot of heavy lifting at the Food Drive.

service to people in need asking for opportunities to give. One man would call and ask, "Do you have a family that needs help this year?" A business in town would provide gift certificates for turkeys to ensure that many



These high schoolers sorted and packed donated food.

families could celebrate Thanksgiving. Police officers would reach into their own funds and buy gifts for children in need.

Over the years, the needs grew and so did the outpouring of giving. The Human Services Department and the Community Hope Fund coordinate the charitable efforts and insure that those in need are reached. This year 115 families received food from the food drive. Approximately 60 volunteers sorted and delivered the food. Children in all the schools of



Volunteers from the National Honor Society at the Thanksgiving Food Drive.

Ocean collected food and packed it. The Police Explorers and the high school's National Honor Society helped load cars on delivery day.

The Adopt-a-Family program provides Holiday gifts for children of families in need. Residents and businesses volunteer to purchase and deliver gifts for families. Forty families were helped by the Adopt-a-Family program this year.

THE COMMUNITY HOPE FUND IS DEDICATED TO YOUTH & FAMILIES

How do we provide low cost child care and other programs for youth in Ocean? How are we able to provide Thanksgiving meals and holiday gifts for families in need in our community?

We couldn't provide these important services without the Community Hope Fund, an all-volunteer, non-profit organization dedicated to promoting youth development and serving the charitable needs of individuals and families in Ocean and the greater Ocean community. Funds raised from donations and community events help the CHF support youth programs and charitable initiatives like the Thanksgiving Food Drive and the Adopt-a-Family programs.

In addition to the grants that CHF provides for Township programs that benefit youth, the fund also gives to organizations that promote youth development. Grant applications are accepted until the end of May, and grants are disbursed in August.

For more information the Community Hope Fund or to make a donation, go to: <http://oceantwp.org/CommunityHopeFund>.



Community Hope Fund chairwoman Denise Parlomas (right) and Mayor Christopher Siciliano accept food drive donations from the staff of Wegmans.

RESOLVE TO BE ACTIVE IN THE NEW YEAR

The federal government recently released new evidence-based recommendations for youth and adults to safely get the physical activity they need to stay healthy.

New evidence shows that physical activity can help manage more health conditions, such as decreasing pain for those with osteoarthritis, reducing disease progression for hypertension and type 2 diabetes, reducing symptoms of anxiety and depression, and improving cognition for those with dementia, multiple sclerosis, ADHD, and Parkinson's disease.

Recommendations for youth

Children ages 3 through 5 should be active throughout the day to enhance growth and development. Adults caring for children this age should encourage active play and aim for at least 3 hours per day

Each day, youth ages 6 through 17 need at least 60 minutes of moderate-to-vigorous activity. Most activity can be aerobic, like walking, running, or anything that makes their hearts beat faster. They also need activities that make their muscles and bones strong, like climbing on playground equipment, playing basketball, and jumping rope.

Adults: Move more and sit less

To attain the most health benefits from physical activity, adults need at least 150 to 300 minutes of moderate-intensity aerobic activity, like brisk walking or fast dancing, each week.

Adults also need muscle-strengthening activity, like lifting weights or doing push-ups, at least two days each week.

The first key guideline for adults is to move more and sit less. There is a strong relationship between increased sedentary

behavior and increased risk of heart disease, high blood pressure, and all-cause mortality. All physical activity, especially moderate-to-vigorous activity, can help offset these risks.

What if I can't exercise 150 minutes a week?

Any amount of physical activity has some health benefits. Adults can benefit from small amounts of moderate-to-vigorous physical activity throughout the day. Even only 10-minute bouts of physical activity counted toward meeting the guidelines.

Exercise for healthy aging

The benefits of regular physical activity occur throughout life and are essential for healthy aging. Adults ages 65 years and

older gain substantial health benefits from regular physical activity. Even if you have never exercised, it is never too late to start being physically active. Being active makes it easier to perform activities of daily living, including eating, bathing, toileting, dressing, getting into or out of a bed or chair, and moving around the house or neighborhood.

Physically active older adults are less likely to experience falls, and if they do fall, they are less likely to be seriously injured. Exercise can also preserve physical function and mobility, which may help maintain independence longer and delay the onset of major disability.

Exercise can improve physical function in adults of any age, those who are overweight or obese, and even those

who are frail. When older adults cannot do 150 minutes of moderate-intensity aerobic activity a week because of chronic conditions, they should be as physically active as their abilities and conditions allow. Be sure to speak to your health care professional before starting any new physical activity.

HOW MUCH PHYSICAL ACTIVITY IS ENOUGH?

3
HOURS

For young children ages 3-5, encourage 3 hours of active play throughout the day

60
MINUTES

Youth ages 6 -17 need at least 60 minutes of moderate-to-vigorous activity daily

150
MINUTES

Adults require a minimum of 150 minutes of activity per week. This should include both aerobic and strength building activities

Source: CDC



KNITTED WITH LOVE

The knitters of the First United Church of Oakhurst created these charming bears, blankets, hats and sweaters for the holiday Adopt-a-Family program.

They will provide warmth and comfort for families in need in Ocean.

Residents, community organizations and businesses got into the spirit of the holiday season with generous donations of toys, clothing, gift cards, movie passes and treats for local families.

On behalf of the Community Hope Fund, we'd like to express our gratitude to all of the generous donors and volunteers who give their time, energy and resources to help improve the lives of our neighbors.

We wish you all a very happy 2019!