



MAY 2022 | MARION INSTITUTE NEWSLETTER

In support of Mental Health Awareness Month, we were invited to exhibit at this year's Bristol County Regional Alliance Annual Conference held on May 6th at White's of Westport. The event, "Healing Together", was organized by Southcoast Health, the New Bedford Health Department, and the office of Bristol District Attorney Tom Quinn. It was tragic as speakers detailed the devastating opioid crisis unfolding here and all over the country and its relationship to ongoing social inequities and trauma.



Speakers of note included Asa Morse, the Resident Agent in charge of the Drug Enforcement Administration's New Bedford Resident Office. With over 23 years of law enforcement experience, including large scale international and domestic narcotics investigations, he brought an urgency and hard core reality check to dilemmas facing our youth today. It was shocking to learn how easy it is to acquire illegal street drugs using social media sites like

WhatsApp and Snapchat and be fooled by imposter pills that contain fentanyl – the substance that is 50 to 100 times more potent than morphine. We applaud the many individuals working hard to address these issues and stand by our commitment to collaborate and support them as we collectively and holistically address the myriad factors contributing to this ongoing crisis.



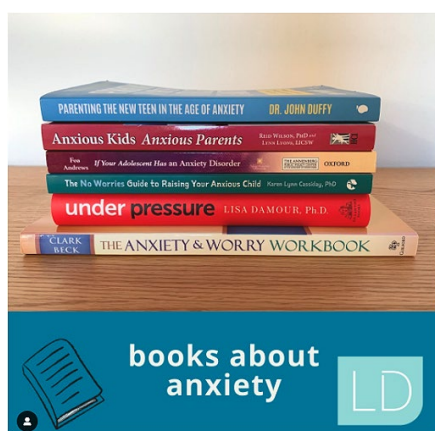
Improving Mental Health with BioMed

by Katie Mannix, BioMed Program Manager

A [December 2021 Healthy Minds Poll](#) conducted by the American Psychiatric Association suggests many Americans today are prioritizing their mental health and

recognizing the intrinsic connection between physical and mental health. While this and other findings from the poll are grounds for optimism, the results also suggest that certain segments of the population – namely adults who identify ethnically as Black or Other (not White or Hispanic), mothers, the unemployed, and young adults (ages 18-34) – are among those disproportionately reporting "fair" or "poor" mental health.

Similarly, a [recent study undertaken by McKinsey & Company](#) reveals that society's young people are reporting higher-than-ever levels of anxiety, depression, and distress - a trend exacerbated by stigma, unmet social needs, and disengagement from seeking health care.



Biological Medicine adds depth to the conversation of mental health by removing this aspect of wellness from its silo and placing it in concert with all other aspects of our health and well-being. [<<< Click here to read the full newsletter text >>>](#)

The Fiber Optics of Lyme Disease
Tuesday, June 7th, 12 noon EST
with Dr. Todd Farney, DC
Biologix Center for Optimum Health
BioBites
a virtual house call for your health and wellness

Click here to register for our June 7th BioBites event

"What's Growin' On?" May updates from Grow Education

by Adam Davenport, Grow Education Program Manager



April showers bring May flowers, lettuce, parsley, garlic, and kale to the gardens of New Bedford Public School students. In partnership with teachers and students, we have been conducting our Spring Planting Days at 12 elementary schools across the district. Each school enrolled in the Grow Education program gets a total of three planting days over the

course of April, May, and June giving students three separate opportunities to get into the gardens, get their hands dirty planting seeds and seedlings, and the chance to harvest and try some of their cultivated veggies before the end of the school year. [<<< Click here to read the full newsletter text >>>](#)



Serving with FoodCorps is a recipe for success!
FoodCorps is creating a future in which every school is a healthy school, and every child is well-nourished and ready to learn.
We're hiring! Work with GROW EDUCATION
Positions available in New Bedford!! https://foodcorps.org/apply/

Join us in Closing the SNAP-Gap

by Christine Smith, Southcoast Food Policy Council Program Manager



One of the many priorities the Southcoast Food Policy Council (SFPC) identified to work on through our strategic planning process was the SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) Gap. Research from the [2021 Southcoast Food System Assessment](#), covering Bristol, Norfolk, and Plymouth

counties, illustrated the SNAP Gap in our region to be 45%. This means that an estimated 360,219 individuals are eligible for SNAP in Southeastern MA, but only 196,912 were enrolled in the program as of February 2021. The 45% SNAP Gap is consistent across the state of MA which begs the question – why are individuals who are eligible for SNAP not utilizing this benefit?



One answer is the difficulty of applying for SNAP benefits. Many safety-net programs, such as SNAP, childcare services, veterans assistance, and others, have their own separate, lengthy application process even though they require the same basic information. [<<< Click here to read the full newsletter text >>>](#)

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