

Evolve:
Avita Community Partners
Emerging Adults Support Services

About Avita:

- Avita's mission is to improve quality of life for persons with behavioral health and developmental disabilities.
- Our goal is to assist in the development of safe, stable, meaningful lives for all.
- We achieve this by providing person-centered care, partnering with families and communities, and nurturing the unique skills of our staff members.

Services include:

- Behavioral health assessment, care coordination, psychiatric evaluation and treatment, individual, family, and group counseling, community support, psychosocial rehabilitation, case management, nursing, medication management, child and adolescent clubhouses, supportive housing, crisis stabilization, peer support, substance abuse outpatient, intensive treatment residential, women's treatment and recovery, specialty services for the deaf community

Avita Service Locations:

- Services are provided across 13 counties in northeast Georgia.
 - Banks, Dawson, Forsyth, Franklin, Habersham, Hall, Hart, Lumpkin, Rabun, Stephens, Towns, Union and White counties.

Evolve!

- Evolve Program provides services to individuals in:
 - Dawson, Forsyth, Habersham, Hall, and Lumpkin Counties
- Evolve resources are available to Avita clients in all 13 counties that Avita serves!
- Assisting Emerging Adults in their transition to adulthood

- How?
 - By providing much needed services
 - Group Events
 - Helping non-Avita clients bridge the gap to mental health services.

Why does Evolve focus on Emerging Adults?

- What is an “Emerging Adult?”- ages 16-26 years old. Experiencing major life changes.
- Major life changes occur:
 - Graduating high school
 - Going to college
 - Joining workforce
 - Moving out
 - Join the Military
- At risk
- National Recognition:
 - These changes during the transition to adulthood are challenging to all young adults, but even more so to those struggling with mental illness and/or substance abuse problems.

Challenges for Emerging Adults

- People in this age group might experience:
 - The onset of many mental illnesses such as schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, depression, anxiety, many more
 - Substance abuse (which can start as experimentation during their earlier teenage years)
 - Suicidal ideation

Mental Illness Overview:

- Understanding Schizophrenia
 - Ongoing, severe and debilitating brain disorder

- Onset usually occurs between the ages of 16-26 for both men and women (earlier for men, and later for women)
- 1% of world population will have it in their lifetime (that's over 73 million people!)
- Symptoms:
 - Positive or Psychotic symptoms are unusual behaviors that are an addition to their normal behaviors. Such as:
 - Hallucinations
 - Delusions
 - Negative symptoms aren't as obvious and are actions/signs that subtract or take away from the persons normal behaviors. Such as (but not limited to):
 - Unmotivated
 - Doesn't take care of appearance
 - Doesn't experience joy, pleasure, or show feelings
 - Doesn't speak much, won't start conversations
 - Other Symptoms might include:
 - Strange behavior
 - Sleeps too much/little
 - Hostile
 - Unable to pay attention/cope
 - Disorganized thoughts/writing
 - Not caring about self/others
- Risks for those with Schizophrenia
 - *Remember: Most people with this disorder are NOT violent!
 - Smoking (higher rate than average)
 - Drug/Alcohol abuse (neg. effect on treatment)
 - Homelessness
 - Suicide:10% die by suicide (higher rate than general population)
 - Higher rates among young men with illness

- Treatment of Schizophrenia
 - With the assistance of medication and therapy, many people with schizophrenia are able to greatly improve their quality of life.
- Bipolar Disorder:
 - Did you know...
 - Roughly 5.7 million Americans have been diagnosed with bipolar disorder
 - Bipolar disorder usually becomes apparent during late adolescents through early adulthood.
 - It can be difficult to diagnose:
 - Sometimes people can go a long time before experiencing any symptoms (even as long as 5 years!)
 - Symptoms of Bipolar Disorder
 - Experiencing extreme differences in mood and behavior ranging from severe depression to severe mania.
 - Stages:
 - Severe Depression
 - Depression:
 - Symptoms of depression:
 - Feeling sad/guilty/worthless
 - cannot enjoy activities
 - Not eating/eating too much
 - Too much/too little sleep
 - Agitation
 - Little to no energy
 - Can't pay attention
 - Thoughts of suicide
 - Depression can go on for weeks/months or even longer.

- Mild Depression
- Calm/balanced mood
- Hypomania
 - Symptoms of hypomania:
 - Similar to the Mania phase
 - During this stage, the person can be creative/productive and able to uphold social interaction (which isn't present during severe mania)
 - Hypomanic mood/behaviors usually last for **at least 4 days**
- Mania
 - Symptoms of mania:
 - Overly-high self-esteem
 - Talkative/Racing Thoughts
 - Restlessness/overly active
 - Impulsive spending
 - Outbursts
 - Task-jumping
 - Risky behavior
 - Change in appetite /substance abuse
 - Manic mood/behaviors usually last for **at least 7 days**
 - Dangers for people with bipolar disorder
 - Alcoholism: Effects 50% of men and 30% of women with bipolar disorder
 - 10-15% of teens with repetitive bouts of depression will later develop bipolar disorder
 - Teens and young adults are more likely to experience mixed periods (experiencing both depression and mania together) and rapid cycling

- Treatment for Bipolar Disorder
 - It's difficult to diagnose
 - Current medications help reduce symptoms when taken as directed
 - Therapy (group and individual) helps set goals and understand their symptoms.
- Depression:
 - Symptoms:
 - Feeling sad/ guilty/worthless
 - cannot enjoy activities
 - Not eating/eating too much
 - Too much/too little sleep
 - Agitation
 - Little to no energy
 - Can't pay attention
 - Thoughts of suicide
 - Treatment: Therapy and medication can greatly reduce the symptoms and allow the individual to cope.
- Anxiety:
 - Symptoms:
 - Difficulty controlling worry
 - Restlessness or feeling on edge
 - Easily fatigued
 - Having their minds go blank
 - Hard time concentrating
 - Irritability
 - Muscle tension
 - Sleep problems
 - Treatment: Therapy and medication can greatly reduce the symptoms and provide ways to cope with anxiety.
- Substance Abuse/Drugs
 - Risk Factors:

- Addiction
- Death:
 - as the result of suicide, homicide, accident, and illness
- Depression
- Withdrawal
- Rise in criminal activity for the individual
 - arrests
 - 39% of teens were under the influence of drugs when arrested
 - 57% admitted to using drugs in the last month
 - 82% of incarcerated teens polled admitted to using drugs/alcohol heavily before their arrest
- Financially draining
- Impaired judgment, learning and memory
- Suicide
 - Facts:
 - 2nd leading cause of death for people ages 10-24 years old.
 - Bully victims are 2 to 9 times more likely to consider suicide than non-victims.
 - Common Factors seen in those who complete suicide:
 - Those who are at higher risk of suicide express their state of mind as feeling:
 - Hopeless
 - Isolated, alienated
 - Like they don't belong
 - They don't feel effective
 - That they are a burden to others
 - No fear of death
 - Self-harming behavior (self-injury, risky behavior, etc.)

- History of mental illness, including depression, bi-polar disorder, schizophrenia, etc.
- **Warning Signs**
 - Threatening or talking about harming or killing themselves.
History of suicidal thoughts/attempts
 - Seeking out ways to kill themselves such as pills, firearms, etc.
 - Hopelessness, worthlessness, withdrawn
 - Anxiety
 - Rage or uncontrolled anger/agitation
 - Reckless/risky behavior
 - Increase in alcohol and/or drug use
 - Giving away possessions
 - Dramatic mood changes and changes in behavior
- **Suicide Prevention:**
 - NEVER ignore a person's suicidal actions, expressed thoughts, threats, or warning signs! Stay with them and get help!
 - Teenagers are more likely to have thoughts about suicide than other ages groups.
 - Hotlines are available **24/7** to suicidal individuals as well as their concerned their families and friends
 - National Suicide Prevention Hotline Number:
 - **1-800-273-TALK (8255) or Text "Help" to 741741**

How Evolve can help!

- Help with challenges people face in their day to day lives:
 - Temporary/emergency housing
 - Transportation assistance:
 - such as gas cards, drivers licenses fees, bus passes, bikes, etc
 - Furthering Education and Employment Assistance:

- GED testing fees
- College Application fees
- Appropriate clothing for job interviews
- Appropriate clothing for current job
- Services:
 - If they aren't already Avita clients, we can help *bridge the gap* and help them find the right support and services that work best for them
 - Individual Involvement
 - Emerging Adults relate better to individuals in their age group
 - Individualized 'Plan of action' for each person
- Referrals from:
 - Schools
 - Churches
 - Colleges
 - Clinics
 - Legal system
 - Support Groups
 - More!
 - Their support systems
- Evolve Events!
 - Evolve provides community outreach events for this age group as well as anyone else who is interested in learning more!
 - By doing this we're providing them with a safe outlet to ask questions and to be informed!
 - Providing them with Life-Skills
 - related activities where they can learn and have fun!
 - Events include topics including:
 - Evolve hosts monthly events that are open to those we serve as well as anyone else in the community who interested in attending.
 - Events include:
 - Skills for life!

- Budgeting help
- decision making
- future planning
- interview prep
- coping skills
- In Tune with Nature!
 - We've gone on nature walks where we discussed relief from stress and anxiety. Here we've introduced different coping skills such as the practices of mindfulness, meditation, and yoga.
- Events on Local Campuses
 - Evolve hosts booths on local college campuses focusing on topics such as stress, suicide prevention awareness, drug abuse awareness and prevention, minority stress, and more!
- Future Events to include (but are not limited to):
 - Employment resources and assistance
 - Healthy Food Prep on a budget
 - Public Speakers
 - Learning about local resources
 - Resume assistance
- Keep up with our events:
 - Check out our online calendar to keep up with current events in each county!
 - www.tinyurl.com/evolveevents
 - Or use the QR Code on our event flyer!



Feel free to contact me!

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Additional resources

CDC

DSM-V

American Foundation for suicide prevention, 2013

<http://afsp.org/about-suicide/risk-factors-and-warning-signs/>

<https://www.drugabuse.gov/publications/drugfacts/understanding-drug-abuse-addiction>

<http://www.ojjdp.gov/pubs/drugid/ration-03.html>

<https://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/topics/bipolar-disorder/index.shtml>

<http://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/topics/schizophrenia/index.shtml>