

APRIL 2014

CARTERSVILLE NEWS



SPRING into ACTION!

TESTIMONIALS

Welcome to the first issue of "Willowbrooke at Tanner/Cartersville News." The staff and administration wish you a happy and sunny spring season!

For many individuals, however, the year is still young and not so sunny. The beginning of a new year can bring about overwhelming emotions and feelings they were able to mask during the holiday season. The need for treatment for depression, substance use and family intervention almost doubles each year in January.

The staff of Willowbrooke at Tanner/Cartersville is specially trained to assess and treat emotional and substance use disorders and would like to offer assistance and information following this and any stressful time of year.

"My child was having difficulty in school due to his behaviors and acting out. I called the number for a free assessment. The staff was responsive and determined the appropriate treatment for my son. The psychiatrist was great, my son loves the program and the school reports significant improvement in school!"

~ **Mother of Patient**

"I felt hopeless due to my drinking and depression. I had lost my career, I was having problems with my family and my depression became worse. After my treatment, I understand I have the ability to re-invent myself. Willowbrooke at Tanner staff helped me realize I can change my life and believe there is hope."

~ **Patient**

DEPRESSION and ALCOHOL

By Donna Johnson, CAS, ICADC, ICCJP, ICCDP, LADC

Some people drink to “drown their sorrows” after a breakup, job loss or other major life stress. Alcohol does have a sedative affect on your brain. A drink on occasion is one thing, but heavy drinking can also be an indication of depression.

Studies are finding a strong link between serious alcohol use and depression. Nearly one third of people with major depression also have an alcohol problem. Research also shows that children who are depressed are more prone to develop alcohol problems once they reach adolescence. Women are more likely to medicate with alcohol, and depression is a huge trigger for alcohol use among women.

Alcohol increases the risk for depression due to heavy neurotoxic effects on the brain. Researchers have pinpointed a genetic link related to both depression and alcohol use. This gene is involved in brain functions, including memory and attention, and it puts some people at risk for alcoholism and depression. Not everyone metabolizes alcohol in the same way. As a result, everyone will be different in how alcohol impacts them. Those with a genetic predisposition to alcoholism also have a greater probability of depressive symptoms.

Alcohol will only worsen the depression people feel. People who are depressed and who abuse alcohol have more frequent and severe episodes of depression and are more likely to think of suicide. Many people drink to manage feelings of past trauma and other emotional feelings. Left untreated these feelings will only worsen and can lead to suicidal thoughts.

This time of year is critical to identify these symptoms and get the help needed to manage the symptoms. Willowbrooke at Tanner/Cartersville offers medical oversight, detox and specialized therapy to manage the intense emotions. We also teach individuals skills to remain clean and sober and begin to enjoy life again.

What Can You Do?

Alcohol abuse and depression are both serious problems that should not be ignored. If you think you or someone you know has a problem you need to seek help.

Willowbrooke at Tanner/Cartersville offers free confidential assessments and can determine the level of care and treatment needed. Don't suffer unnecessarily. Please call us at 770.456.3266.



Do I Need Help for Depression?

- Inability to function in everyday life, being irritable, sleeping a lot
- Fatigue
- Normal activities take all your energy
- Persistent sadness, crying and feeling of emptiness or anxiety
- Feeling blue, feeling worthless, problems sleeping
- Weight gain or losing weight, problems concentrating and thinking
- Body pains and feeling hopeless, harmful thoughts

For help, please call Willowbrooke at Tanner/Cartersville at 770.456.3266 for a free assessment.

Random Alcohol Facts

- Motor vehicle accidents are the leading cause of death among teenagers in the U.S.
- Alcohol is absorbed into the bloodstream and travels from the stomach to the brain. The liver metabolizes it into a non-toxic substance. Excessive use of alcohol can cause the liver to stop functioning.
- Excess alcohol in the blood slows down the respiratory system and can cause coma or death because oxygen no longer reaches the brain.
- Alcohol content:
 - Beer 2-6 percent alcohol
 - Wine 8-20 percent alcohol
 - Vodka 40-50 percent alcohol
 - Liqueurs 15-60 percent alcohol
- Perceived availability of alcohol by 12th graders is as high as 95 percent.
- As little as two drinks can impair coordination for up to 10 to 12 hours.
- Cost of a typical DUI is \$10,000.



Willowbrooke at Tanner/Cartersville
958 Joe Frank Harris Parkway, Suite 103
Cartersville, GA 30102
770.456.3266
www.WillowbrookeAtTanner.org

SELF-INJURY and ADOLESCENTS

By Donna Johnson, CAS, ICADC, ICCJP, ICCDP, LADC

Self-injury is the act of deliberately destroying body tissue to change a way of feeling. Self-injury has become more popular recently with adolescents. Recent reports indicate these behaviors can be "contagious" and can impact the culture of schools and communities.



These behaviors can be replicated as adolescents see the attention it's getting or that it's a way to fit in with peers.

Forms of self-injury may include carving, scratching, branding, cutting, hitting and burning. Some adolescents may self-mutilate to take risks, rebel, reject their parents, state their individuality or merely be accepted by peers. Others, however, may injure themselves out of desperation, anger or to show hopelessness and worthlessness or even suicidal thoughts.

Self-injury is a complex behavior resulting from many factors. Adolescents have difficulty talking about their feelings which contributes to feeling hopeless. Some teenagers may feel like steam in the pressure cooker has been released. Certain brain chemicals are released during self injury giving a brief relief from intense feelings for a few moments.

Ways to teach adolescents to not self-harm:

- Identify feelings and talk them out rather than acting on them.
- Practice breathing techniques, journaling, drawing, positive images or rubber bands.
- Stop and think about effects or self injury, self-soothing techniques, positive stress management and improving social and coping skills.

Willowbrooke at Tanner/Cartersville staff are trained to teach adolescents to self-manage these feelings and behaviors. These behaviors can be very serious and assessment and treatment is needed. To learn more or for a free assessment to see how we can help, please call 770.456.3266.