



# THE SUMMER TIMES

**WARM DAYS AND BRIGHT MOMENTS AT MIRAVISTA**



# A MONTH INTO SUMMER, LET'S NOT FORGET ABOUT ADOLESCENT MENTAL HEALTH



BY  
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***Mental health  
matters in every  
season. A month into  
summer, it's worth  
remembering: when  
school is out, support  
must stay in.***

It's been a month since school let out for the summer. The daily grind of early alarms and packed lunches has been replaced by late mornings, camps, part-time jobs, and plenty of screen time. For many teens, summer brings a welcome break. But for others—especially those

facing emotional or mental health challenges, these unstructured weeks can be anything but carefree.

We talk often about “learning loss” during summer break. But what about the loss of structure, connection, and routine that schools provide? For adolescents, these aren't just conveniences, they're lifelines. Teachers, counselors, and trusted adults offer stability, and their absence over the summer can leave vulnerable youth feeling isolated and unsupported.

Recent national data highlights what many parents and providers already know: youth mental health is in crisis. According to the CDC, more than 40% of high school students report persistent feelings of sadness or hopelessness. And anxiety and depression diagnoses among adolescents have risen sharply in the past decade, with anxiety increasing by more than 60% and depression by nearly 45%.

At MiraVista Behavioral Health Center, we see the effects of this seasonal gap firsthand—and we're here to help fill it.

“We want families to know that help is available—and accessible,” says Shelley Zimmerman, Hospital Administrator at MiraVista. “Our direct admission process allows adolescents in need of inpatient mental health care to be admitted without the delays and stress of an emergency department visit. It's a more compassionate, streamlined approach to care.”

Our adolescent inpatient program, serving youth ages 13 and older, remains fully open and active throughout the summer months. Because we know that mental health doesn't take a break—and neither do we.

Parents, caregivers, pediatricians, and community leaders: If you know a young person who's struggling emotionally, please don't wait. Early support can make all the difference.

**To learn more about our services or to refer a teen for care, visit  
[www.miravistabhc.care](http://www.miravistabhc.care).**



## HEAT WARNING FOR THOSE TAKING MENTAL HEALTH MEDICATION

As temperatures continue to rise across the region, MiraVista Behavioral Health Center is reminding community residents who may be taking medication to support their mental health to be extra cautious in summer heat.

According to MiraVista Behavioral Health Center Medical Director, Dr. Kenneth Richmond, “Increased temperatures can affect the impact of medications. It is important for anyone on medications, including those which may be prescribed for a mental health condition, to talk with their health care provider about how extreme temperatures and exposure to sun may change how they feel, cause certain side effects and what they can do during periods of increasingly hot weather to be safe.”

<https://www.miravistabhc.care/heat-warning-for-those-taking-mental-health-medication/>



## ACCESS TO INPATIENT CARE NOW MORNING, NOON AND OVERNIGHT

MiraVista Behavioral Health Center is proud to announce the expansion of its mental health services to include 24-hour admissions for individuals in need of inpatient psychiatric care. Coupled with the recent launch of MiraVista’s Direct Admissions process, this important advancement ensures more timely, compassionate, and seamless access to lifesaving treatment for those facing urgent mental health challenges.

“At MiraVista, we understand that mental health crises don’t adhere to a schedule — and neither should the care available in response,” said MiraVista Hospital Administrator, Shelley Zimmerman. “Our 24-hour admissions capability, combined with our Direct Admissions process, reflects a commitment to providing immediate support, minimizing barriers to care, and restoring hope for individuals and families across our community, the Commonwealth, and New England.”

<https://www.miravistabhc.care/new-direct-admissions-enhances-timely-entry-into-treatment/>



## NURSE SHERRIL JOSEPH: A BEACON OF HOPE AND EMPATHY

Sherril Joseph, a Registered Nurse at Mira Vista Behavioral Health Center, embodies the power of empathy and compassion in healthcare. As a Staff Nurse/Nursing Supervisor at the psychiatric hospital, which serves both adolescents and adults, she plays a critical role in delivering hands-on care to those struggling with mental health challenges. But her impact goes beyond medical expertise—her personal experiences and a deep understanding of mental health are at the heart of the care she provides.



Joseph's approach is built on the foundation of shared understanding. Her goal is to foster an environment where patients feel safe to talk about their challenges, knowing they are not alone. As a mother of three boys and a Caribbean native, Joseph draws on her own life experiences to connect with her patients on a personal level, helping them navigate the complexities of mental health with empathy and care.

While the medical work Sherril performs is rewarding in itself, a recent experience with a young patient left an indelible mark on her heart. After being discharged from the hospital, a teen patient created a stunning portrait of her. The artwork was created without her knowledge, and when upon seeing it, was deeply moved by the thoughtful gesture.

<https://www.miravistabhc.care/nurse-sherril-joseph-a-beacon-of-hope-and-empathy/>

## WHEN SCHOOL'S OUT, MIRAVISTA IS ALL IN!

Mental Health matters every season and with summer in full swing, MiraVista recognizes that youth mental health doesn't take a summer vacation. Mental Health is a priority for adolescents year-round and it's essential to recognize that mental health needs do not take a seasonal break. In fact the absence of the school routing during vacations can sometimes exacerbate existing challenges for adolescents.

Why mental health support during out-of-school time is critical:

<https://www.miravistabhc.care/adolescent-mental-health-doesnt-take-a-vacation/>



SLEIGH YOUR NEXT CAREER MOVE

it's **Christmas**  
in **July**

**Virtual Hiring Event for RNs**  
**Thursday July 31, 2025**  
**11:00am - 1:00pm**

At MiraVista, we believe that the joy of the holiday doesn't need to wait for December. This July, we're bringing all the warmth, cheer, and generosity of the holiday season to your job search—with a virtual nursing hiring event designed to help you find the career you've been wishing for.

**Gift Yourself a Career That Gives Back**

When you join our team, you'll be part of a community that delivers hope, healing, and compassionate care—every day. MiraVista could be the best gift you give yourself this year.

**We're Checking Our List—and Hoping You're on It**

Join us online to meet our Talent Acquisition Team, explore RN opportunities across all shifts. And because it is Christmas in July...we're giving up to a \$15,000 sign-on bonus for eligible roles! Plus, a special gift just for attending.

Learn more or register [miravistabhc.care](https://miravistabhc.care). Can't make the event? No worries, reach out to **Alicia Morel** at [amorel@miravistabhc.care](mailto:amorel@miravistabhc.care) or **413-246-1641**.

From the comfort of your couch to a career that feels like ho ho home! Don't miss this chance to unwrap a new nursing career.



**MIRAVISTA**  
BEHAVIORAL HEALTH CENTER





# VISTA VOICES, STORIES OF RECOVERY PODCAST WITH GUEST JACKIE HAFNER, M.ED, LSWA

On the most recent episode of Vista Voices, we were honored to welcome Jackie Hafner, Program Coordinator for the Hampden-Wilbraham Partners for Youth Coalition—a community-wide collaboration dedicated to promoting safe, healthy, and positive youth development in Hampden and Wilbraham.

Jackie brings years of dedication to the field and a deep belief in the power of prevention. During the conversation, she highlighted the Coalition's core mission: that preventing and reducing youth substance use is a shared responsibility, and it starts with strong partnerships and active community engagement.



As we head into the heart of summer, Jackie emphasized the importance of keeping youth connected, active, and engaged—offering practical insights into how community members can work together to create supportive environments where young people can thrive. We're grateful for the opportunity to highlight her voice and the incredible work being done by the Coalition to build resilience and foster well-being in our youth.

Catch the full episode and be inspired by the work happening right in our own backyard. And if you or someone you know would like to be a guest on Vista Voices to share your perspective or passion for recovery and community wellness, reach out to Kim Lee at [klee@miravistabhc.care](mailto:klee@miravistabhc.care).

<https://open.spotify.com/episode/5khV8xr9u3G508ann6HUF4...>



## THAT REMINDS US!

MiraVista Behavioral Health Center recently had the pleasure of accepting an invitation from Reminder Publications to appear on its thoughtful and engaging podcast, "That Reminds Us."

During our conversation, we explored a range of important topics including mental health awareness, the significance of men's mental health, and MiraVista's innovative direct admission process—an approach that allows individuals to access inpatient care without first going through the Emergency Department. We also discussed the critical role that collaboration and community connection play in ensuring people receive the behavioral health support they need, when they need it.

We are grateful to the Reminder Publications team for recognizing that mental health deserves a seat at the table—and a microphone in the conversation. Their invitation underscores what we strive to show every day: that compassionate care, quick access, and open dialogue can change lives.

Which reminds us... thank you for the opportunity to share our work, our voice, and our vision for a healthier, more hopeful tomorrow. To listen to the podcast, please click here:

<https://rss.com/podcasts/sothatremindsme/2071241/>

# FINDING BALANCE, ONE BREATH AT A TIME

In recognition of International Yoga Day, we're reflecting on the power of movement, mindfulness, and community in the journey of substance use recovery.

Participants in MiraVista's Intensive Outpatient Program (IOP) had the opportunity to take part in a special chair yoga session led by Angelica Lopez, owner of Mitra Healing Yoga whose calming presence and thoughtful guidance offered more than just physical movement — it offered a moment of peace, grounding, and reconnection.

For individuals in recovery, yoga can be a powerful complement to treatment. It teaches stillness in the midst of chaos, helps regulate emotions, reduces cravings, and rebuilds a sense of trust between the body and mind. More than that, it can foster confidence, clarity, and connection — all essential for sustained healing.

We extend our heartfelt thanks to Angelica for sharing her practice with our group and for helping create a space where our participants could breathe deeply, stretch gently, and be fully present — even if just for an hour.

To the courageous individuals in our IOP: thank you for showing up, for trusting us, and for choosing recovery every day. It's an honor to walk this path alongside you, and to celebrate the tools — like yoga — that can help support your continued growth and wellness.

To learn more about MiraVista's Intensive Outpatient Program or any of its substance use treatment options including same-day/walk-in access to Opioid Treatment, please visit: [www. Miravistabhc.care](http://www.Miravistabhc.care) or call 413-319-3027.

**When you're ready, we're ready.**



# RECOGNIZING EXCELLENCE: SHOU-TEE OUT AWARDS AT MIRAVISTA



At MiraVista, we know that some of the most meaningful moments happen quietly — in passing conversations, during handoffs, or in the way colleagues step in to support one another through the work we do every day. That's why we created the SHOU-TEE Out Award — to acknowledge team members who bring their best to MiraVista and to each other. Whether it's a small act of kindness, a steady presence during a busy shift, or a gesture that lifts up a co-worker, these efforts matter.

Each week, one name is drawn from our SHOU-TEE Out nomination boxes located throughout the hospital. These nominations come directly from fellow staff, and each one speaks to the impact that strong teamwork, patience, and respect have on our environment and culture.



## We're proud to congratulate our newest SHOU-TEE Out Award recipient: Joy Gibbs, RN!

Joy was nominated by Ali Acevedo, who said "Joy is always caring for patients' needs and wants the best. She is the best overnight nurse!"

Joy, thank you for the positive tone you help set on your unit and across MiraVista.

We also continue to celebrate recent SHOU-TEE Award recipients:

- **Anthony Horne, LPN**
- **Constance Marsh, Mental Health Technician**

Each of these individuals reflects what we strive for at MiraVista: compassion, reliability, and a deep commitment to the people we work with and care for.

While only one nomination is drawn each week, so many are being recognized by your peers. Here are just a few of the thoughtful words that staff have written:

"They make every shift better just by being on it."  
"Supportive, kind, and never too busy to help."  
"They bring steady energy that helps the whole team."

**Congratulations to all!**



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newsletter online

