Media usage among kids has reached all-time highs, with teens reporting an average of nine hours of entertainment media use, and four and a half hours of "screen time" each day.

Parents can and should play a role in monitoring and guiding their children in the digital age, said experts at a Courant Conversations interactive panel on Oct. 18 at the Connecticut Science Center.

Laura Saunders, PhD, ABPP, staff psychologist in Young Adult Services at the Institute of Living, was one of three panelists at the event.

“We talk about generational differences, but the things that teens like to do — they’re looking for friends; they’re seeking validation from friends — these are all things that existed pre-cell phone and pre-Facebook,” said Michael Robb, chief of research at Common Sense Media. “The thing that’s different is the way technology enables you to seek out some of these things.”

For parents, many of whom never had social media or mobile devices during their adolescence, it can be hard to understand the challenges faced by today’s teens.

“There’s a level of empathy we need to have for kids as they’re navigating this because it’s tricky,” Robb said.

Although parents can’t keep up with the endless array of apps and technologies that come out on an almost daily basis, they can help monitor and guide...
Not everyone gets called “a true champion” and a “giant” in the field when they retire from their job — but that’s just what Karen Kangas, E.Ed, was called when she stepped down after an illustrious 19-year career with the state Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services. My predecessor as DMHAS commissioner, Thomas A. Kirk, Jr., thought enough of Karen that he wrote a special tribute to her on the DMHAS website, calling her “one of the most effective and influential individuals ever in Connecticut’s public/private healthcare system for persons with a mental illness and/or substance use disorder.”

That’s high praise, but in Karen’s case, it’s well deserved. Indeed, it probably doesn’t go far enough in describing the profound impact she has had in advocating and improving the lives of those in recovery.

That’s why I am so enormously pleased that Karen has agreed to join our Behavioral Health Network team. As of this week, Karen assumes her new role as Director of Recovery and Family Affairs, continuing her distinguished history of working in the area of advocacy for individuals with mental health disorders and substance abuse disorders.

In her new role, Karen will spend time initially on inpatient units throughout the BHN and in different programs assessing the “recovery orientation” of our programs and services. She will serve in an advisory capacity across the BHN to ensure that we are delivering quality care that is also focused on recovery.

I have known Karen for more than 15 years, and we worked closely together at the state Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services during my time as DMHAS Commissioner and prior. She is an outstanding advocate for those in recovery, and I know she will be a great support for our managers and clinicians who provide care for those recovering from mental health and substance abuse issues.

She began her career with DMHAS at Fairfield Hospital over 25 years ago. She took on increasing responsibility to ensure that patient rights and individual preferences were taken into consideration throughout the DMHAS system. Her final position at DMHAS was as the Director of Recovery Affairs where she served as a member of the Commissioner’s Executive Leadership Team until her retirement from state service.

Karen then became the Executive Director for Advocacy Unlimited, a strong advocacy agency in Connecticut that continues to bring recovery-oriented care into the system. As part of her tenure, she developed the Recovery University curriculum that is utilized in helping others in recovery become peer support specialists. This work has greatly increased the numbers of individuals with lived experience working in the field of Behavioral Health.

Karen has also spent significant time at the national level as a champion for Recovery. She was tapped frequently by SAMSHA (the Federal agency responsible for behavioral health) to participate in reviewing grant applications, assisting with policy formation and presenting in many different states on the issue of Recovery. She has a well-deserved reputation as a “thought leader” in Recovery.

Please join me in welcoming Karen to the BHN team.

Pat Rehmer, MSN, ACHE, is Hartford HealthCare senior vice president for behavioral health and president of the Behavioral Health Network. Her column appears monthly in BHNews.

It’s National Breast Cancer Awareness Month!

We’re Connecting You to Healthier with lots of activities, including the Pink Party, the Night of Lite Laughter, support groups, and mobile mammogram locations.

Find details about these events and more at www.hartfordhealthcare.org/breastcancerawareness
How to survive a stressed-out Presidential election

To the future candidates to-be-named for the 2020 presidential election, we have a request: Don’t freak us out again! Please.

We’ve had enough stress and anxiety from the Trump-Clinton election vitriol and apocalyptic hysteria here in 2016 to last a millennium. Believe us.

The fallout of the election is among the few things about it that is not partisan. According to a recent Stress in America survey by the American Psychological Association, 59 percent of Republicans and 55 percent of Democrats say it’s stressful. Big time.

Generationally, people 71 and older (59 percent) and millennials age 19 to 37 (56 percent) are most affected, with Boomers age 52 to 70 (50 percent) and Gen Xers age 38 to 51 (45 percent) not far behind in reporting the election as a "somewhat" to "very significant" source of stress. Likewise, all races and ethnicities are affected: Hispanic (56 percent), white (52), Native American (52), black (46) and Asian (43).

“There has been much media coverage highlighting negative attributes and indiscretions of both candidates,” says Carrie Pichie, Ph.D., Natchaug Hospital director of ambulatory services, “leading to more ambivalence from Americans regarding how to vote. More than ever before, polls have shown that many Americans are not in favor of either candidate, leading to a feeling of uncertainty about the future of America.

Pertinent topics to society today which have been linked with violent acts, such as racism, sexism and other forms of discrimination, have been at the forefront of the election. Some Americans have even verbalized concerns regarding ‘violence and uprisings’ based on the outcome of the election.”

Stress that lasts this long isn’t good for your health. How many of you have experienced headaches, elevated blood pressure, upset stomach or difficulty sleeping? To survive this year’s election, the American Psychological Association recommends:

- Taking a break from television news coverage and social media. Keep away from hostile or inflammatory exchanges on Facebook or Twitter.
- If you want to get political, focus on your state or local elections. Volunteer in your community in support of a cause you support.
- Letting your friends and co-workers know you’d rather not talk about politics.
- Having faith in the future. Despite the threat of “the end of American civilization,” the post-election climate should start to feel a little more normal. Believe in our democracy!
- Voting. Despite the stress of this election, voting shows that your voice matters and will be heard through the unending hostility.

“Citizens look for stability and predictability in the leadership of their country, and that is certainly faltering at present,” says Pichie. “Focusing on what one can control is most helpful in dealing with stress, as well as limiting exposure to the reasons for the stress.”

If fear or anxiety starts interfering with your daily life, entities across the Behavioral Health Network provide assessment and treatment services for children, adolescents and adults.

The spectre of supervision helps keep teens ‘within a certain boundary’

continued from page 1

their children on proper usage.

“I err on the side of supervision,” Saunders said. “That doesn’t mean I’m standing over their shoulder, but they don’t have a developed super ego. If teens and tweens know that people are at least keeping an eye on them, they tend to stay within a certain boundary.”

Keeping kids safe online is the priority, but it’s also important that teens are allowed to express themselves as part of their development, said David Ryan Polgar, co-founder of the Digital Citizen Summit.

“The idea of social media is to increase our ability to connect and have conversations,” Polgar said. “You don’t want to prohibit typical expression. There’s a fine line between encouraging respectful behavior and being repressive.”

Much like preparing a teen for adult responsibilities such as driving, Robb suggested that parents prepare teens to be responsible digital citizens.

“They’re eventually going to be on the internet without your supervision,” Robb said. “So you need to be preparing them from an early age about how to be a good citizen online; to be thoughtful about when and where they post, on what platforms, on what sites.”

Saunders also advocates for regular breaks from smartphones, tablets, computers and televisions so that teens can develop key social skills.

“Taking breaks from screen time is what helps us learn to read people,” she said. “There’s nothing like a conversation where you’re looking at someone and making eye contact, reading their face, reading social cues.”

“It’s about having some kind of balance.”
Benefits open enrollment period now under way

As healthcare professionals, we take care of others every day. Open enrollment is our time to review our benefits options and choose the right plans for us and our families. This is your time. The Hartford HealthCare open enrollment period for 2017 benefits is happening now and runs from Oct. 17-28.

So which health plan is right for you?

A **Consumer Driven Health Plan (CDHP)** puts you in control of how you spend your healthcare dollars. Premiums are generally lower than traditional health insurance plans and Hartford HealthCare makes a contribution to an account where you can set aside pre-tax funds to help pay for care if and when you need it.

A **Point of Service Plan** offers predictable co-pays when you visit the doctor or pharmacy. You generally pay higher premiums for this type of plan.

Both plans require you to pay an up-front deductible, which is the amount you must pay out of pocket before your health plan kicks in. Aetna keeps track of your spending. When you have a claim (or fill a prescription if you have a CDHP) Aetna applies the amount to your up-front deductible.

To learn more, visit hhconnect.org/benefits from home or work. From outside the HHC network, log in with the same user name and password you use to log into your desktop at work.

Crisis intervention training now offered every two weeks for new hires

Starting with the first New Employee Orientation (NEO) of fiscal year 2017, Crisis Prevention Institute (CPI) Non-violent Crisis Intervention (NCI) training has been centralized. NCI classes will be offered at one of three sites throughout HHC every two weeks on the Tuesday or Wednesday immediately following NEO.

Each class will be assigned two or three NCI instructors who will be prepared to teach up to 25 new employees. The classes will be held on a rotating basis at one of the following sites:

- Institute of Living, Clarke Social Room, Staunton-Wil- liams Rehabilitation Building, 200 Retreat Ave., Hartford
- HHC Administrative Building, 11 Stott Ave., Norwich
- MidState Medical Center, Pomeroy Avenue, Meriden

Human resources staff or others are responsible for registering and informing staff of NCI training.

All CPI courses will be posted on HealthStream. Anyone without access or needing assistance with registration may contact Amanda Carchidi at ext. 69961 or amanda.carchidi@hhchealth.org. For more information on NCI or other training initiatives, contact Olga Dutka, director of professional and clinical education at olga.dutka@hhchealth.org.

About BHNews

BHNews is published every other Friday, except for the weeks of Independence Day, Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Year’s.

Story ideas or submissions may be sent to matt.burgard@hhchealth.org or amanda.nappi@hhchealth.org. Articles must be submitted as a Word document. Every effort will be made to run the article in its entirety, but due to space constraints and style requirements, editing may be necessary.

Deadline for the next edition of BHNews is Tuesday, Nov. 1, at noon.
Dr. Sharfstein to receive 2016 Burlingame Award

The Institute of Living’s annual C. Charles Burlingame, MD, Award, one of the most prestigious annual psychiatric health awards in the nation, will be awarded Nov. 2-3 at a special dinner and lecture attended by leaders from several of the most distinguished psychiatric hospitals in the country.

The recipient of the 2016 Burlingame Award recipient is Steven S. Sharfstein, MD, who earlier this year retired as president and CEO of the Sheppard Pratt Health System in Baltimore after more than three decades as a leader and innovator in establishing modern and comprehensive centers for psychiatric care. Sheppard Pratt and the IOL are both members of The Ivy League of Psychiatric Hospitals, an informal organization consisting of the six remaining earliest asylums in America. Both organizations share a long history of leading service in the field; others include the Westchester Division of New York Hospital; Brattleboro Retreat in Vermont; Butler Hospital in Rhode Island; and McLean Hospital in Massachusetts.

As a leading voice and advocate for humane and effective psychiatric care, Dr. Sharfstein was selected as the 29th recipient of the Burlingame Award, with a dinner in his honor scheduled to take place Nov. 2 at the Hartford Golf Club in West Hartford. Dr. Sharfstein will also deliver a special lecture on the future of psychiatric hospitals at IOL Grand Rounds at 8 a.m. the following morning, Nov. 3, at the Hartford Room, Commons Building, at the IOL. Because of his status as a leader of one of the Ivy League institutions, Dr. Sharfstein’s selection presented an opportunity for leaders from each of the other institutions to attend the award program as part of the Ivy League’s annual leadership meeting, which has taken place every year for over a century. Leadership at each of the institutions were invited to come to the IOL the day of the dinner to hold an initial meeting before going to the award dinner; they also will attend the lecture the following morning before meeting briefly once more.

“We were tremendously excited to be able to recognize Dr. Sharfstein and the contributions he has made for people with psychiatric issues,” IOL Psychiatrist-in-Chief Harold I. (Hank) Schwartz, MD, said. “It is also very gratifying to celebrate our award program in 2016 with the leaders of the Ivy League institutions.”

Recovery University now taking applicants

The Institute of Living is hosting an upcoming Advocacy Unlimited Recovery University Course starting on Wednesday, Nov. 16.

Recovery University is an 80-hour advanced training and certification program for persons with mental health histories. Upon successful completion of the course and the certification exam, graduates will be state-certified as Recovery Support Specialists, Peer Delivered Services.

Many behavioral healthcare and mental health organizations and agencies, including the Connecticut Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services, are offering positions for Recovery Support Specialists and require certification from Recovery University.

Registration for the Hartford course opens on Oct. 21. For more information on applying, visit http://www.mindlink.org/recovery_university_schedule.html.

Addiction has met its MATCH

Hartford HealthCare’s Behavioral Health Network now offers Medication Assisted Treatment Close to Home (MATCH™) for people struggling with opioid and other addictions. MATCH™ makes treatment convenient, with schedules built for the working professional. The program, with Suboxone®, Naltrexone and other medications, also includes confidential, private support services and small relapse-prevention groups.

Call 1.855.825.4026

Hartford HealthCare Behavioral Health Network
Connect to healthier.™
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MATCH™ LOCATIONS INCLUDE:

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Bushford | 680 South Main St., Suite 204

DAYVILLE
Natchaug | 1 Dog Hill Rd.

GLASTONBURY
Bushford | 110 National Dr.

GROTON
Natchaug | 1353 Gold Star Hwy

MANSFIELD
Natchaug | 189 Storrs Rd.

NEW BRITAIN
The Hospital of Central Connecticut, 7 Cedar St.

VERNON
Natchaug | 428 Hartford Tpke.

Call 1.855.825.4026
Family Resource Center Support Groups

The IOL Family Resource Center (FRC) holds regular support groups. For additional information, please contact the FRC at 860.545.7665 or 860.545.1888. All programs are free of charge and, unless otherwise noted, are held in the Massachusetts Cottage, First Floor Group Room at the IOL Campus, 200 Retreat Ave., Hartford. The upcoming IOL FRC Support Group schedule is as follows:

- **Support Group For Those Coping With A New Or Chronic Medical Condition.** Oct. 21, 28, Nov. 4, 11, 18, 25 (Every Friday), 1 - 2 p.m. in the Center Building, First Floor Conference Room. For young adults ages 17-26 struggling with a new diagnosis, chronic medical conditions, physical symptoms or limitations. The group will help with difficult losses and limitation due to a medical condition, and build a positive, future-oriented focus with realistic goals. To RSVP, please call Elizabeth Alve-Hedegaard, APRN, at 860.545.7050.

- **Depression Bipolar Support Alliance Group (DBSA).** Oct. 24, 31, Nov. 7, 14, 21, 28 (Every Monday), noon – 1 p.m. in the Todd Building, Bunker Room and Oct. 26, Nov. 2, 9, 16, 23, 30 (Every Wednesday), 7 – 8 p.m. in the Commons Building, 2nd Floor, Litchfield Room. Peer run support group for those who have been diagnosed with depression or bipolar disorder.

- **Alcoholics Anonymous.** Oct. 25, Nov. 1, 8, 15, 22, 29 (Every Tuesday), 12:30-1:30 p.m. Join us for coffee and a one-hour topic discussion. To learn more, contact the AA General Service Office at 212-870-3400 or P.O. Box 459, New York, NY 10163.

- **Yoga.** Oct. 25, Nov. 29, Dec. 27, 5 - 6 p.m. in the Commons Building, Hartford Room. Open to adult staff and family members. Mats are provided or bring your own! The class begins with breathing exercises and gentle stretches, followed by a series of poses and ends with relaxation and meditation. Instructor: Valerie Raggio, LCSW, Yoga Fit, Level 1 Certified. To RSVP or inquire, call the FRC at 860.545.7716 or email patriciac.graham@hhchealth.org

- **Depression: An Introduction To The Disorder.** Oct. 25, Dec. 6, 6:30 – 7:45 p.m. This program is for family and friends of individuals who suffer from depression. It will present a basic understanding of major depression, its treatment, and ways in which family members might better cope with the illness.

- **Social Support Group — LGBTQ Issues (Lesbian/Gay/Bisexual/Transgender/Questioning).** Oct. 26, Nov. 9, 23, Dec. 14, 28 (Second and fourth Wednesday of each month), 5 – 6:15 p.m. in the Center Building, Young Adult Service Group Room. Support group for 16- to 23-year-olds who identify LGBTQ issues as being prominent in their lives. The goal is to discuss support strategies to manage life challenges.

- **Al-Anon Parent Group.** Oct. 26, Nov. 3, 10, 17 (Every Thursday), 7 - 8 p.m. One hour topic discussion.

- **Dementia Support/Educational Group Meeting.** Nov. 1, Dec. 6 (First Tuesday of each month), 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. in the Donnelly Conference Room, First Floor. Please join us as we bring together experts and those who want guidance, direction, and support. Space is limited — reservations are required by calling 860.545.7665.

- **Managing Schizophrenia.** Nov. 1, 6:30 – 7:45 p.m. This presentation will discuss the impact that symptoms of schizophrenia have on everyday activities, and provide tips on what you can do to make things better at home.

- **Survivors Of Suicide Support Group.** Nov. 2, Dec. 7 (First Wednesday of the month), 7 – 8:15 p.m. For those who have lost someone close to them by suicide. Please call the RSVP numbers with questions or concerns. 860.545.7716 or 860.545.7665.

- **Support Group For Families Dealing With Major Mental Illness.** Nov. 3, 17, Dec. 1, 15 (First and third Thursday of each month), 5:15 - 6:30 p.m. in the Center Building, First Floor Conference Room. For family and friends of individuals who have schizophrenia, bipolar or other related disorders. Share your success and struggles. Learn to care for yourself while caring for others.

- **Youth Psychosis Family Support Group.** Nov. 3, 17, Dec. 1, 15 (First and third Thursday of each month), 5:15 - 6:30 p.m. in the Center Building, Young Adult Service Group Room. For parents with youth up to age 18 who have psychotic symptoms such as: hallucinations, delusions, paranoia, disorganized thoughts and behavior or are diagnosed with schizophrenia and other disorders. Join us to receive guidance on how you can help.

- **Anxiety Disorders: An Introduction.** Nov. 8, 6:30 – 7:45 p.m. This lecture is for families and friends of individuals who have an anxiety disorder or a related disorder. Participants will acquire a basic understanding of anxiety disorders, their treatments and suggestions to help them better cope with the illness.
The Hartford HealthCare Center for Healthy Aging at Windham Hospital held its official ribbon cutting opening Thursday. Staff and administration were joined by local dignitaries as guests applauded and later toured the facility. The center, a partnership between Windham Hospital, Hartford HealthCare at Home and Natchaug Hospital, is designed to help seniors and their families connect to crucial health and behavioral health resources.

**Center for Healthy Aging marks grand opening**

**Positive Parenting**

*Parenting Children and Teens*

In a relaxed and supportive atmosphere, parents discuss behavior challenges and learn effective, research-based methods of communication and discipline. Parents will learn to use positive reinforcement to successfully change behavior while improving their relationship with their child. Parents can expect to see the following outcomes in their children:

- Improved Self-Esteem
- Increased Cooperation
- Improved Family Atmosphere
- Improved Parent-Child Communication

These courses are provided free of charge, courtesy of Natchaug Hospital

**2016-2017 Schedule**

*Parenting Children and Teens*

**Mondays** 6 - 8 p.m.

- November 21 – December 19, 2016
- February 27 – March 27, 2017
- April 24 – May 22, 2017

**LOCATION:** Natchaug Hospital, 189 Storrs Rd, Mansfield Center, CT

**TO REGISTER:** Call Joe Freeman, MDiv, LCSW (860) 696-9500

Single parents, grandparents, foster parents and other caregivers are welcomed.

Couples are encouraged to attend together.

**What’s your ‘best practice?’ HHC wants to know**

As Hartford HealthCare mobilizes to improve our patient/customer experience, we know that great things are already happening in our offices, on our units and in our patient rooms every day.

The next step is to make sure that these “best practices” are shared across the system so that we can create one exceptional experience at every location that displays the HHC logo.

The HHC Patient Experience Council would like to hear about what you are already doing and what new ideas you have to improve patient experience. Please help us to spread our best practices by submitting yours for review.

All submissions should explain how the practice relates to least one of the HHC 2016 Experience focus areas — Service, Communication and Environment. To learn more, please visit our Patient & Customer Experience page on HHC Connect to find answers to your frequently asked questions (FAQs) and an electronic submission form.
Students and staff shine at open house

Rushford Academy and Rushford at Stonegate, located on the campus in Durham, held an informational open house Thursday, Oct. 13, for community providers and local school districts to learn more about their respective programs for young people.

Students and staff at both facilities worked collectively to beautify the campus, including the construction of a bench; added repairs and maintenance; re-landscaping the front of the school building; decorating the residential unit; and numerous other tasks that were accomplished.

Clinicians worked with their groups to prepare information about registering to vote — with a specific 7 Challenges spin on the information (shown at right). Among those who attended the event were Laura L. Francis, First Selectman of Durham, and Ben Florsheim, assistant to U.S. Sen. Chris Murphy of Connecticut.

In addition, Kelvin Young, assistant executive director of the Toivo program at Advocacy Unlimited, participated in the event. Many of the boys wore shirts and ties as they led visitors on tours, and one of them thanked Young for the “opportunity to have this experience.”

Sharing Rushford’s message

Melissa Curtis, account manager for Rushford and the Behavioral Health Network, helped share information about Rushford’s range of services at the annual conference for the Connecticut Association of Family Physicians at the Aqua Turf Club in Plantsville on Oct. 19-20. She handed out informational materials and answered questions about Rushford services to primary care and family practitioners from across the state.

Anything to share?

Are you interested in sharing your clinical experience or knowledge with co-workers throughout the HHC Behavioral Health Network? Consider submitting an article to the Clinical Corner. For more information, e-mail amanda.nappi@hhchealth.org or matt.burgard@hhchealth.org.
At Apple Harvest Fest

Rushford was proud to continue connecting with the Glastonbury community by providing information on its range of services and programs at the annual Glastonbury Apple Harvest Festival at Riverfront Park on Oct. 15-16. Shown here are Melissa Curtis, left, account manager for Rushford and the Behavioral Health Network, and Michelle Voegtle, Glastonbury clinical supervisor, who were among several Rushford employees who helped distribute brochures and other information during the festival.

Now open in Avon: Discreet and convenient addiction services.

Outpatient services for adults 18 and over:

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For more information, call 1.877.577.3233

We care about you!

Health & Wellness Fair

for Rushford clients and staff

Featuring more than a dozen health and wellness agencies from across Connecticut

Tuesday, Nov. 8 | 10 am – 1 pm

Rushford Cafeteria
883 Paddock Ave, Meriden
Door Prizes and Raffle • Refreshments will be served

Help Rushford help others!

We are currently interviewing for membership on the

Rushford Client Advisory Council

The Rushford Advisory Council is a volunteer collaborative partnership between Rushford staff and our clients and their families to help make Rushford’s great client service even better.

We are seeking members from across Rushford’s programs, services and locations.
The council meets on the second Wednesday of every month at 5 p.m. at Rushford’s Paddock Avenue location in Meriden.

If you have a client or client family member who might be interested in providing ongoing constructive feedback about their experiences with Rushford, please contact Caitlin.Swartz@hhchealth.org.

Rushford
A Hartford HealthCare Partner
Find flu shot schedules at https://intranet.hartfordhealthcare.org/inside-hhc/hhc-initiatives/flu-prevention-program