

Kites and Kindness Cookout

Transcript

00:00:12 Speaker 1

Welcome to Independent Perspective, a public affairs presentation of Western New York Independent Living (WNYIL).

00:00:18

Our guest today is Kevin Smith, director of Mental Health Peer Connection (MHPC), and I'm your host, Ernie Churchwell.

00:00:24

Welcome to the program, Kevin.

00:00:25 Speaker 2

Thank you for having me.

00:00:27 Speaker 1

It's our pleasure.

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You're here because you've got the lowdown on a special annual event held by MHPC, namely the Kites and Kindness Cookout.

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How many of those have you had thus far, would you say?

00:00:43 Speaker 2

We've had several, Ernie.

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I can't put an exact number on them.

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We've been having a MHPC cookout before I became director about four and a half years ago.

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So, it's been going on a minimum of a half a dozen years, but I'm pretty sure it's been gone a lot longer than that.

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It's just our opportunity to bring some folks together, fly some kites, share some good food, raise

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the awareness of mental health, but more importantly, just create that social connection where people can come out for some recreation and some joy

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with their fellow community.

00:01:18 Speaker 1

Before I neglect to ask, what's the date, time and place that it takes place?

00:01:23 Speaker 2

Saturday, September 27th, 11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

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It's going to be located at Cheektowaga Town Park, Shelter #1, and that is 2600 Harlem Rd.

00:01:36 Speaker 1

Who is this event being held for?

00:01:40 Speaker 2

You know, this event is for just everybody in the community, but again,

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it's, you know, I mean, for the people that we serve, it gives them the opportunity to come out, have some hot dogs, play some games, and just feel like they're a part of something.

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But more importantly, for the people who might not be engaged in services, this might be what they need to come out and just get engaged and think about ways that they may want to start engaging some sort of wellness for themselves.

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Because at the end of the day,

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We also want to promote mental health awareness and to possibly eliminate stigma and make it OK for people to say, hey, you know what?

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I want to work on my wellness, and this might be a good place to start.

00:02:29 Speaker 1

What food and activities will be provided?

00:02:32 Speaker 2

We're going to have hot dogs.

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There's probably going to be a vegetarian option.

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There's going to be some water and soft drinks.

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We have some good games that we came up with Jenga.

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Couple of others, and more importantly you can come out and fly a kite, you could bring your own or we're going to have plenty on hand to give out to anybody to participate.

00:02:54 Speaker 1

Is there a charge to participate?

00:02:58 Speaker 2

No sir this event is totally free show up and show out have some fun all.

00:03:05 Speaker 1

Right and are there accommodations for participants with physical disabilities?

00:03:10 Speaker 2

Yes, sir again we are an agency

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hired for and run by individuals with disabilities.

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And we go to great lengths to make sure all of our events are as inclusive as possible.

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And if you want to RSVP or you have some questions about accommodations, you can call Christine at 716-836-0822, extension 147.

00:03:35 Speaker 1

If you want to participate, do you need to pre-register?

00:03:38 Speaker 2

We encourage folks to register or pre-register, but it's not mandatory.

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So again, that same number for Christine.

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You can also RSVP with Christine as well, but it's not mandatory.

00:03:50 Speaker 1

All right.

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And to give people the big picture, what is the ultimate aim of MHPC?

00:03:57 Speaker 2

Our goal is to just give individuals with behavioral health disabilities as many options as possible to work on their wellness, whatever that looks like to them.

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We're trauma informed.

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We provide intentional peer support, and we want to help people with disabilities live independent and meaningful lives in the community as they see fit.

00:04:19 Speaker 1

Sounds like an exciting and valuable activity.

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And if you could remind people once more of how to get more information.

00:04:28 Speaker 2

Again, if you want to get more information or RSVP, you can call Christine at 716-836-0822.

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extension 147, or you can also reach out to me at that same number, extension 147.

00:04:41 Speaker 1

Thanks for being with us, Kevin.

00:04:44 Speaker 2

Thank you for having me, Ernie.

00:04:45 Speaker 1

You've been listening to Independent Perspective, a public affairs presentation of WNYIL.

00:04:52

Our guest today was Kevin Smith, director of MHPC, and I've been your host, Ernie Churchwell.