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Help is available for families in Kennebec County and surrounding areas recovering from substance use disorders hoping to rebuild their parenting skills and reconnect with their children.

A free 17-week “Nurturing Parenting for Families in Recovery” class hosted by Crisis & Counseling Centers along with [Kennebec Valley Community Action Program \(KVCAP\)](#) kicked off earlier this month and co-sponsors want families to know that it is not too late to register.

AUGUSTA, ME - On June 15, Crisis & Counseling Centers launched its 2021 Summer/Fall “Nurturing Parenting for Families in Recovery” class series for parents and caregivers in recovery from substance use disorders, as well as those who are actively using. The free 17-week series of classes are hosted by Crisis & Counseling Centers’ Parent’s Case Management program along with KVCAP’s Kennebec Family Enrichment Council.

The Nurturing Parenting for Families in Recovery class will teach parents realistic and practical skills, as well as help them explore the effects of substance use on themselves and their families, their parenting style, and their relationship with their child. The class also provides a sense of community that is vital for those in recovery.

The Nurturing Parenting for Families in Recovery course is based on the philosophy of Nurturing Parenting created by Dr. Stephen J. Bavolek, a leader in the field of parent education, based on his extensive research. By doing exercises centered on self-care, finding hope, and key parenting skills participants will rebuild trust with their children. A panel of community providers will also be offered as well as resources that can aid participants in their recovery and parenting journeys. There are 17 sessions, all about 90 minutes, which will take place on Zoom on Tuesdays 3:30 pm to 5:00 pm, June 15th - October 5th.

Elisa Sousa, manager of community case management at Crisis & Counseling Centers, who has a background in special education and social work, is looking forward to co-leading the class:

“I’m just excited to talk to folks in recovery and be a small part of their journey along the way. I’m always hopeful and optimistic that maybe there’s one topic or one little seed of wisdom that we can give to them that will really help them move towards whatever their life goal is,” Sousa said.

This class is ideal for parents, caregivers, expectant parents, and parents that are working on reunification who are in recovery from a substance use disorder, or who are actively using and live in Kennebec county and surrounding areas. The class is open to those who are dealing with all types of substance use disorders. The class is also open to family members who are raising children that have been affected by substance use disorders. While parents/caregivers with children of any age are welcome, the class is designed for those who are actively parenting. The course covers 20 topics and interested parents/caretakers are encouraged to join at any time. Participants will learn about stress management, guiding behaviors, boundary skills and gain a deeper understanding of the feelings of grief, loss, and guilt that may come with recovery from a substance use disorder.

As Sousa explains it, parenting while in recovery or while actively using is challenging:

“It’s not always comfortable to have conflict or feel like you’re having conflict even with your own young children. And so you tend to maybe want to just give into something because parenting is hard.” Sousa continues, “I would definitely say speaking from personal experience it’s one of the most difficult jobs on the face of the earth, because it takes a lot of grit and persistence and it’s not easy. It’s not easy to sit with another person being angry with you or upset with you. When you’re in recovery, there’s a lot of that.”

If you or a loved one is interested in participating in this free program please contact Elisa Sousa at (207) 446-4778 or Jenny Freudlich at (207) 895-1580 for more information or to register. Register online at CrisisAndCounseling.org/events

Major funding for this program was provided through funding for Kennebec Valley Community Action Program’s prevention councils by the [Department of Health and Human Services Office of Child Family Services](#) and supported by the [Maine Children’s Trust](#). Additional funding was provided by individual donors who support the work of Crisis & Counseling Centers.

About Crisis & Counseling Centers: Crisis & Counseling Centers is a 50-year-old multi-service mental health and substance abuse agency headquartered in Augusta, Maine, that provides a comprehensive treatment continuum which includes: Crisis Mobile Resolution and Crisis Stabilization Unit services; mental health, substance use disorder and co-occurring disorders treatment; statewide parent/caregiver support through its G.E.A.R. Parent Network program; Children’s Targeted Case Management; PATH Case Management services; Parents Case Management for pregnant women or parents struggling with substance use disorder; correctional behavioral health care services; medication management; and OPTIONS, a

substance use harm reduction program. More information is available online at CrisisAndCounseling.org

If you're thinking about suicide, are worried about a friend or loved one, or would like emotional support, the Maine Crisis Line is available 24/7 by calling (888) 568-1112.

About Parent's Case Management: The Parent's Case Management provides parents who have a previous or current substance use disorder the support and resources to help build a substance-free future for their children. Their services include trauma screening, coordination and advocacy, parenting groups, and treatment groups.

About Kennebec Valley Community Action Program: KVCAP provides the people of Kennebec, Somerset, Lincoln and Sagadahoc counties with services and resources that help individuals and families achieve greater economic independence. As a leader, or in partnership with others, KVCAP provides guidance to the community in responding to emerging human needs in the areas of early care and education, energy and housing, transportation, health and social services, and workforce development. KVCAP's mission is to strengthen individuals, families, and communities by providing direct services and by partnering with others to create sustainable solutions to poverty in an ever-changing environment.

About Community Action: Community Action changes people's lives, embodies the spirit of hope, improves communities, and makes America a better place to live. We care about the entire community, and we are dedicated to helping people help themselves and each other.

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