



Spotlight on YPC

Community Events	
EB Arts & Music Festival, Community Arts Center, East Brunswick	6/1, 11-5
Book Festival, The Woodland, Maplewood	6/7-6/8, 10-5
Fanwood FanJam Music Festival, LaGrande Park	6/30, 11-7

*Congratulations to our **five** YPC clients who successfully completed their treatment goals and graduated during the month of May! They worked so hard to achieve this. Thank you to their parents and their YPC peers for supporting and encouraging them in their journey!*

PLEASE NOTE:
 YPC will be closed on Wednesday, July 3 and Thursday, July 4 in observance of Independence Day.



Month in Review

May has been a lot of fun here at YPC as we welcomed Spring and the warmer weather! YPC clients have spent some time playing outdoors during our socialization period, which has enabled them to practice self-care skills related to exercise and physical activity.

Topics this month included emotional regulation, empathy, conflict resolution, and social skills.

Emotional regulation is the ability to respond to stressors with an appropriate range of emotions, and learning how to delay or permit a reaction that is appropriate to the situation.

Empathy is the ability to understand and share

someone's feelings. YPC clients had the opportunity to build empathy for their peers through activities that prompted discussions about the ways in which they are each similar and different. Clients talked about their feelings and provided support for each other. YPC clients also learned about various hardships that their favorite celebrities have faced, and learned that no matter how secure or successful someone may seem, everyone experiences hardships and manages these in their own ways.

Conflict resolution is a normal and healthy aspect of relationships. Clients learned how to manage conflicts in a way that is productive and serves to strengthen relationships.

Activities during this week were designed to create conflict in a safe and controlled way, so that clients would have the opportunity to practice and troubleshoot their conflict resolution skills. Clients played several live-action games to assist with building this skill. They also utilized the group therapy process to discuss interpersonal conflicts they are facing in their own lives and work with their peers to come up with possible solutions.

Social skills refers to the ability to interact with others in a way that builds relationships and enables one's needs to be communicated and met in appropriate ways.

Transformation

YPC clients made caterpillars, chrysalises, and butterflies to represent their past, present, and future. The caterpillars represent their past and the stressors or events that brought them to our program. The chrysalises represent their present and the healing they are doing now. The butterflies represent their future goals.





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This small garden was planted by YPC clients in the courtyard outside our building.

Family Activity: Gardening

Nothing brings families together quite like working on a shared project, nurturing something together, and watching your hard work pay off! One way your family can accomplish this together this summer is by starting a small garden. You don't need to have a "green thumb" to get something to grow. You also don't need a lot of outdoor space- you can create an herb garden in a kitchen windowsill or put small planters with flowers in the entryway to your home. Chives will grow almost anywhere and mint has the added benefit of keeping bugs away. Flower seeds and soil can be purchased at your local dollar store. You can use gardening as an opportunity to spend some quality time together as a family. Once you have planted the garden, assign each family member a task, such as watering, pruning, or harvesting, which will also teach your child about responsibility and team work.

Spotlight on Emotional Regulation: Practicing Mindfulness

Mindfulness is a way of bringing our minds into the present moment, and allowing ourselves to let go of any nagging worries, anxieties, or stressors that have been building up or bothering us. Research shows that practicing mindfulness on a regular basis helps us to re-wire our brains so that we can change the way we think, incorporate new habits, and live in the present moment.

YPC clients have the opportunity to practice mindfulness on a daily basis as it is incorporated into our program's routine. This helps them to come into group therapy feeling calm, focused, and ready to work. It also helps them to build a skill that will assist them with regulating their emotions when faced with other difficult situations in their lives.

There are some easy ways that you can practice mindfulness as a family.

Take a listening walk- Go for a walk as a family. You can choose the spot- a park or quiet nature trail, a city street, or a crowded mall. Listen for all the sounds that you would normally tune out. This might be leaves rustling, birds chirping, electricity humming, car engines rumbling, background music. Take turns calling out sounds as you notice them and spend a minute focusing on each sound before moving on to the next. If you notice that your mind has started to wander, simply bring yourself back to the present by listening for another sound.

Taste your food- You can do this with any food, but if you choose something with a lot of different textures it will be even more fun and enlightening. Do this together as a family during a

shared meal. Really pay attention to all 5 senses as you eat. How does the food taste? What do you feel on your hands (a cold spoon? Sticky peanut butter? Soft bread?) What do you smell? What colors and what shades of each color are on your plate? How does it sound when you chew, or when you put your glass down, or when your silverware hits your plate? You can even enhance your senses by eating your meal blindfolded!

Color scan- This is a quick and easy exercise, and it can also be used if your child is upset and escalated and having trouble regulating. Ask your child to identify 5 things of each color in the room. Doing this forces them to stop thinking about the triggering event and instead focus on the present moment. Once they have regulated themselves, you can then discuss the triggering event in a more productive way.