



## May is Mental Health Awareness Month: A Note from Clarence

Mental health touches every part of our community and every one of us. In recognition of Mental Health Awareness Month, WCS President Clarence Johnson reflects on his personal connection to this work, the importance of lived experience in recovery, and WCS's long-standing commitment to mental health services.

Read the full blog on our LinkedIn page to learn more about how WCS is working to end stigma and support healing.

Sincerely,



[Read Full Blog Here](#)

## Event Recap

### Featured Spotlight: WCS Scores Big with the Bench Mob Bonus

Community support just made a slam dunk.

Wisconsin Community Services (WCS) recently received a game-changing gift thanks to the Bench Mob Bonus, a season-long

charitable initiative by the We Energies Foundation. For every Bucks game where the bench squad scored over 40 points, the Foundation pledged \$500 to WCS. The result? A powerful \$25,500 donation to fuel WCS's mission of removing barriers and creating opportunities for justice-involved individuals and families.

Now in its sixth season, the Bench Mob Bonus reflects how sports and community can team up for real impact. On April 18, Beth Straka, president of the We Energies Foundation, and Gale Klappa, chairman of the WEC Energy Group board, presented the donation in person, celebrating a season of teamwork both on and off the court.

WCS is a nonprofit dedicated to helping individuals overcome challenges related to substance use, mental health, criminal justice involvement, and employment. Our work drives real change that supports healthier, more equitable communities throughout Wisconsin.



*"Support from We Energies has an enormous impact on those we serve. Together, we are building stronger families and neighborhoods in Milwaukee." - Clarence Johnson*

This donation is part of a broader commitment from the We Energies Foundation, which contributed \$11.5 million to community causes in 2024 alone. We're proud to spotlight this incredible partnership and the shared belief that everyone deserves a second chance and a shot at success.

[Learn More About WCS Programs](#)



## Staff Spotlight

### Meet Melissa Heath - A True Change Maker

Melissa Heath began her journey at WCS as a Peer Specialist and now supervises a team of 12 within the Comprehensive Community Services (CCS) program, supporting nearly 300 individuals annually. She also oversees four supported housing sites, all of which have seen major improvements under her leadership.

Melissa launched WCS's new Peer Specialist Academy and leads the agency's Empathy Interview initiative, helping WCS stay connected to the voices

of those we serve. Even during staffing shortages, she stepped in to ensure quality care and support continued.

Beyond her programs, Melissa regularly organizes drives for clothing, food, and holiday gifts; securing over 100 gift cards last season alone.

In recognition of her outstanding work, Melissa was awarded the UWM Milwaukee Community Change Maker Scholarship. WCS is proud to celebrate her leadership, compassion, and commitment to lasting impact.



## Report Spotlight: The State of Mental Health in America

Mental Health America's 2024 report reveals that nearly 60 million U.S. adults experienced a mental health need in the past year, with over 28 million not receiving treatment. Among youth aged 12–17, 1 in 5 had at least one major depressive episode, and more than half did not receive any mental health services.

These findings underscore the urgent need for improved access to mental health care nationwide.

[Read Full Report](#)

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## Industry & Community Updates

### Substance Use & Mental Health Services Now Free Through WCS

WCS offers an array of substance use, mental health, and co-occurring treatment programs for residents in **Milwaukee County**. Services are tailored to meet the needs of youth, adults, and families.

Call 414-290-0400 or email [unlimitedpotential@wiscs.org](mailto:unlimitedpotential@wiscs.org)

### Did You Know?: Gov. Evers Has Declared 2025 to Be the Year of the Kid

Mental health and crisis services remain critical as Wisconsin's kids, families, and workforce continue to struggle finding the help they need. Recognizing that behavioral health is essential to overall wellness, Gov. Evers' budget builds on past efforts to

### From the Field: 2024 Behavioral Health Workforce Report

- 1 in 4 positions in behavioral health remain unfilled statewide
- BIPOC practitioners are still underrepresented

support Wisconsin's mental and behavioral health infrastructure, especially as levels of anxiety, depression, self-harm, and suicidal thoughts among youth across the state continue to rise at concerning rates.

[Read More](#)

- Peer support specialist programs are seeing statewide growth

[Read More](#)



## WCS on The Upswing Podcast

WCS President Clarence Johnson joined Jeff Sherman to discuss second chances, mental health, and equity. Tune in to hear why Sherman calls WCS “the community’s sleeping giant” and for good reason.

[Listen to Episode](#)



## We Are Looking for People to Join the WCS Team!

The dedicated staff at WCS works with individuals to overcome adversity by providing access to a continuum of support services. Our efforts give individuals the opportunity to improve their quality of life, empowering them to lead independent lives and experience self-efficacy. In turn, WCS has transformative power in strengthening our community as a whole. We invite you to be a part of that change.

### Youth CCS Care Coordinators

Support youth and families using the Wraparound Model of Care—trauma-informed, strength-based, and community-connected. Help young people navigate challenges and build brighter futures.

[\[Apply Here\]](#)

### Aspire Youth Care Coordinator

Empower youth through education, career support, and mentorship. Collaborate with CYFS, schools, and community partners to help young people thrive at home, in school, and beyond.

[\[Apply Here\]](#)

### Youth Care Worker – Shelter Care (Weekends)

Be a weekend hero! Support and mentor youth in our Shelter Care program with structure, activities, and care. Multiple shifts available.

[\[Apply Here\]](#)

Visit [www.wiscs.org/careers](http://www.wiscs.org/careers) to view a full list of current job openings at WCS.

## Upcoming Events

**Resource & Job Fair, hosted by WCS and the Black Male Advisory Council**

**Date:** Wednesday, July 30, 2025

**Time:** 10 am - 1 pm

**Location:** WCS North Campus, 4323 N. 27th Avenue, Milwaukee, WI

Join us for a community-focused event connecting job seekers with employers and local resources. Open to all experience levels.

**RSVP:** [HERE](#)

**What to Expect:**

- On-site interviews
- Career readiness resources
- Community service providers
- Networking opportunities

*Interested in participating or hosting a booth? Click [HERE](#)*

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