



PEOPLEWORKS-NM NEWSLETTER DECEMBER 2023

Featuring: PeopleWorks-NM Version 2.0

Happy Holidays from all of us
here at  PeopleWorks-NM

Welcome to the launching of Peopleworks' newsletter and Happy Holidays! The holiday time may be seen as a time of celebration and merriment, but for many, it is a time of darkness and fear and stress. The holidays highlight the hopes we have for our lives, for our family and friends, for our country – and sometimes hopes are dashed. On the other hand, this time of year is one which lends us to reflect upon the current state of our life as well as the good and difficult events of the past year.

Peopleworks is no exception. But before I summarize the events of the year, I want to provide tidbits for coping with the holidays – for those readers who may not venture far into this newsletter!

HOLIDAY COPING

01

Downsize your expectations. Things may go wrong even in best of circumstances.

02

Avoid the “Overs” – overeating, over drinking, over sleeping, over shopping, over gambling. Find a different way to experience pleasure.

03

If you feel you are in “Holiday Hell” say to yourself, “I am ok, I will survive, I am a worthwhile person.”

Thank you for supporting us. As a nonprofit we welcome donations to support our work, which are tax deductible. See our website to easily donate from the Donate button. We look forward to seeing you in the New Year.

WARM GREETINGS



“Whether you are a cheerful Elf or Scrooge this holiday season, we wish you wellness, peace of mind, and support for whatever problems you are facing. May you find meaning in the chaos.”

– Cindy



“I so enjoy facilitating our virtual Caregiver Support Group. Providing support and assistance to such a special group is priceless. Wishing all a very wonderful Holiday Season and a Caring 2024.”

– Janis



COUNSELING PROGRAM

For years, Peopleworks' counseling program has been the core service offering. In 2023 we underwent a radical transformation and unfortunately had to downsize our practice. We are back, as Peopleworks' Version 2.0, and we redesigned ourselves to meet the challenges of the industry! Currently three providers are providing sessions for EAP, commercial and Medicaid insurance clients. We see persons ages 16 to 64, and we specialize in trauma, military populations, college students, and family caregivers. However, we are able to see clients with a multitude of problems (including substance misuse, depression, anxiety) and most of our therapists have many years of experience. All therapists at this time are doing sessions virtually. A big percentage of clients are happy for the opportunity and convenience to have therapy over the computer or phone. Stay tuned, as we hope to find a provider who can also see younger teens/children!

PROBLEM GAMBLING PROGRAM

We are happy to have resumed our Problem Gambling Program in 2022, since the pandemic shutdown in 2020. Some clients who were being counseled for problem gambling continued counseling through insurance. We retain the specialty of serving older adults in this program, but are also focused on finding new ways to serve teens and college students. In general, gamblers hide their activity due to shame and stigma, and many are suffering silently. We hope to bring awareness to this problem, and to reduce the shame and stigma so that gamblers and families seek out the help they need. Compulsive gambling is an addiction, which may require treatment or some form of support in order to reduce or stop the behavior. Often financial problems result and need fixing also! Problem gambling is on a continuum, and we hope to raise enough awareness for those just crossing into problem gambling to prevent the devastating consequences. In 2023 we obtained the additional partnership of RGANM (We continue to receive donations from Sandia Casino) and expanded our programming. We created videos for our new Youtube Channel including a panel discussion about shame and stigma of problem gambling. (Check us out!) Pam Olsen tables monthly at several Senior Centers (Bear Canyon, Manzano, 4th Street and Los Volcanes) in Albuquerque, so if you want to stop by to chat about gambling (or other problems you have), feel free to do so. We also distribute our brochures to businesses and social service agencies and churches, sometimes in person! You may have heard one of our radio ads this year, if you live in Albuquerque or Ruidoso area. Finally, we have three counselors available, free of charge, to problem gamblers and their families.



“We can't thank you enough for being part of our business! We wish you the most wonderful holiday season”



Community Health Workers

Our new Community Health Worker program launched in early 2023 as a part of a Department of Community Health initiative at University of New Mexico. Based in Ruidoso and at Mescalero, our program has three staff persons: Desarae, Shannon and supervisor John Shields. Their accomplishments are multifaceted but in summary, they provide resource and advocacy to persons in the community, and are addressing mental health stigma and mapping community resources. Many hours were spent researching community resources and agencies, which were compiled in detail in binders. They spearheaded several events, including 5 community walks highlighting mental health needs and suicide prevention; a large health fair in Mescalero also focused on mental health, and open houses for resource referrals. We conducted screens for depression and gambling at the big health fair, partnering with the BCBS Care Van for privacy. Our CHWs tabled at the Native American Youth Summit, and the Women's Wellness Conference. Presentations were given to parent and youth groups about mental health stigma. In addition, information has been distributed to many businesses, healthcare facilities and social service agencies about the availability of our workers. We assisted High Mountain Youth Program in Ruidoso, who are serving homeless or at-risk youth. We worked with many clients 1:1 to provide resource assistance and problem solving. We collected over 200 mental health surveys at 3 events, and data from 140 surveys was compiled in an infographic which clearly depicted the responses. We currently partner with BeWell NM (low-cost health insurance) to provide resources alongside the enrollment counselor from BeWell during community enrollment events in November and December. Finally, we are meeting another key grant objective in educating surrounding communities about the 988 mental health line. We will continue working with this grant through June 2024.

Online Groups and Classes

Our Caregiver Support Group for family members has been a steady support to isolated and overwhelmed caregivers, many of whom reside in rural parts of NM. Our group currently meets every other Saturday, via Zoom. Caregivers have stated how helpful it is to be in conversation with others who instantly understand the challenges faced as a Caregiver. The group provides suggestions, support and resources to each other. Though Caregivers may initially be hesitant to join, they took the plunge and are glad that they did. The group is facilitated by our faithful leader, Janis McGlone, MSW, who has a wealth of knowledge about caregiving and older adult needs.

Other Groups/classes offered this year included Financial Caregiving; a three-part Money Management series; and Parenting Classes. The Money Management Class was well attended, but others were not. All classes were offered via Zoom. We will continue the Money Management series into 2024!



CHECK US OUT!

WEB: PEOPLEWORKSNM.ORG

YOUTUBE: [@PEOPLEWORKS-NM](https://www.youtube.com/@PEOPLEWORKS-NM)

FACEBOOK: [PEOPLEWORKS-NM](https://www.facebook.com/PEOPLEWORKS-NM)