



NewBridge

newbridge.org

Summer/Fall 2021

NewBridge Advises Parents as Another Pandemic School Year Starts

With the start of another pandemic school year, parents again are worrying about the risk of their children getting infected, and the toll COVID-19 precautions can take on learning and mental health.

"Many families are exhausted. It's difficult to manage the constant changes in direction and ambiguity about the future," said Nicole Bolognini, NewBridge Services' executive director of counseling services.

Bolognini, a licensed clinical social worker and certified clinical trauma specialist, offered advice to help parents of [young children](#) and [teens](#) cope with the latest coronavirus developments. As unwelcome as the highly transmittable Delta variant is, the situation is less dire than a year ago: vaccines are available to everyone age 12 and up, and it's likely younger children will become eligible in the near future.

"I encourage parents to reflect back to the early days of the pandemic and compare that with how much more we know now," Bolognini said. *"We continue to learn more about this virus and how to protect our families from illness."*

"All families have to weigh the risk of exposure to the virus against their need for social interaction, social support, and a sense of normalcy," Bolognini said. *"I encourage adult caretakers to discuss these issues with their partners, or those they trust the most, and formulate decisions that align with their family's values and priorities."*

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Dear Friend,

I'd expected the COVID-19 pandemic to be receding — if not behind us — by now. While the surge of the Delta variant is disheartening, keep in mind that our circumstances are better in many ways than a year ago. Most

businesses, health care services, and recreation venues are open. People can travel. Children are returning to full, in-person school days (with masks). We know much more about the virus, and have proven tools to protect ourselves: vaccinations, masks and physical distancing.

The pandemic will end, and hopefully we will have learned valuable lessons. One good outcome has been the state's support of the broader use of telehealth so health care providers can offer virtual sessions. For clients who lack transportation, struggle to find child care, or who simply are uncomfortable leaving home, this has increased their attendance, giving them the support they need. Our staff have discovered they are more tech-savvy than they knew!

If you're feeling stress over the coronavirus, sit quietly and take deep, slow breaths. Calmly consider what you have control over, and break down actions you can take into manageable steps. If you don't know what to do, reach out to others or research solutions.

You can be assured that we at NewBridge continue to do everything we can to make our spaces safe for both clients and staff during the ongoing pandemic.

Enjoy the newsletter. Know that we are so grateful to you, our supporters. Your donations invigorate our mission and change lives for the better! As always, feel free to contact me with your thoughts and questions.

Take care,

Michelle Borden
NewBridge CEO
mborden@newbridge.org

2021 NewBridge Jobs Plus Graduates Overcame Pandemic and Much More

Twenty young adults who'd dropped out of high school were honored June 23 for succeeding in earning their New Jersey high school diplomas and preparing for their futures. Dressed in caps and gowns, members of the NewBridge Jobs Plus Class of 2021 crossed the well-groomed grounds of Morristown-Beard School to applause from family and friends.

"I grew up thinking I was stupid," 18-year-old Izzy Petrucci of Mendham said from the podium. NewBridge Jobs Plus understood "my learning disability doesn't make me stupid, it makes me different. At NewBridge, I felt like being different wasn't so different."

The Class of 2021 hailed from Dover, Florham Park, Hopatcong, Lincoln Park, Mendham, Morris Plains, Morristown, Mount Olive, Parsippany, Rockaway, and Roxbury.

NewBridge Jobs Plus is the longest-running alternative education program in Morris County and has helped well over 1,000 young adults earn their high school diplomas and prepare for college, trade schools and careers since 1983. The program, located at the NewBridge Parsippany Center, is free to young adults living in Morris,



Naomi Gaskins (left) with NewBridge's Irene Candelaria

Sussex and Warren counties, and transportation is provided to Morris County residents.

Naomi Gaskins, who helped organize a Black Lives Matter rally/march in June 2020, recited an inspirational poem she'd written. Gaskins received the \$1,000 Alumni Appreciation Scholarship Award, which will help her pay for her degree at the County College of Morris.

Briana Ponce received the \$1,000 James Ryan Memorial Scholarship Award, presented by NewBridge Services Board of Trustees President Debbie King. The scholarship was created in honor of King's father, one of NewBridge's founders. Ponce is pursuing a nursing career and will attend CCM in the fall.

Lilly Di Capua of Morristown received the Perseverance Award, while Morristown resident Daniel Vega and Sean Derosé of Parsippany were

named Associates of the Year.

Petrucci received the \$1,000 Lakeland Bank Scholarship Award and will study biology at CCM. Her goal is to become a forensic pathologist.

NewBridge Advises Parents as Another Pandemic School Year Starts

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Gov. Phil Murphy has mandated that masks be worn in schools to prevent the virus' spread. Bolognini, a certified school social worker, suggested parents let children pick out their own mask to give them some control over the situation, and to teach them how to properly wear it and safely remove it.

Parents can help develop children's resiliency by encouraging them to develop ideas and pursue plans to carry them out, Bolognini said. Parents sharing anecdotes with their kids about how they handle challenges is another useful technique.

Children attune to their parents, a skill they learn from infancy, so it's important for parents to regulate their own emotions, Bolognini said. *"The more emotionally regulated we are, the better off they'll be."* Good [sleep](#), healthy eating, regular exercise and mindfulness practices contribute to well-being in kids and parents alike, she noted.

NewBridge runs a weekly teen support group for middle schoolers and high schoolers struggling with depression, anxiety, and difficulty coping with adolescent issues. For more information about enrollment, contact NewBridge's Access department at (973) 316-9333 or services@newbridge.org. NewBridge also offers individual and family counseling, as well as psychiatric services, in Haskell, Parsippany, and Sparta. All NewBridge therapy is conducted by licensed mental health professionals.

A Lasting Legacy

Leave your mark on the world by supporting the good work of NewBridge Services.

You can help secure NewBridge's future by joining the NewBridge Legacy Society. Members leave a specific dollar amount or asset to NewBridge in their will, or make a residual bequest, which provides NewBridge a portion of their estate after other bequests and expenses are paid.

Other options include naming NewBridge as a beneficiary of an Individual Retirement Account (IRA) or life insurance policy, or deeding property to NewBridge. Planned gifts can provide tax benefits to your estate. For more information, please contact NewBridge Director of Development Victoria Hess-Lowrie at vhess@newbridge.org or 973-939-2427.

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Teens Blossom in NewBridge's Summer Youth Employment Program

Thirty-two Morris County teenagers spent part of their summer break learning career and life skills and volunteering in the community as part of NewBridge Services' summer youth employment program.



"I was looking for opportunities to give back to the community as well as gain new learning experiences, and this program stood out," 15-year-old Rishika Dubey said.

The Randolph High School sophomore said the free program gave her practical training that schools don't generally offer, such as resume writing and job interview practice. *"It brings together*

a community, and people learn with real-life examples," said Dubey, who attended in person. Some attended weekly classes in Parsippany, while others participated virtually.

The teens learned about financial literacy and stress management, and participated in supervised volunteer experiences, including helping at a food bank, animal shelter, county park and Habitat for Humanity.

"It opened my eyes to understanding how many people need the food from there, and how important it is for people to volunteer," Dubey said.

Volunteering was 14-year-old Brady Hyland's favorite part of the program. *"I really enjoyed helping the community, and I felt a sense of accomplishment after,"* Hyland said. The mock interview wound up being a standout moment. *"I was very nervous going into it, but I think I ended up doing well, and helped myself for the future,"* the Delbarton School freshman said.

Both Dubey and Hyland said they would recommend the experience to peers. *"I feel this program helps me learn things that will be necessary for the rest of my life, like writing a cover letter and resume, having an interview, and dealing with problems on the job,"* he said.

Parents gave positive reviews too. Noting their teens are shy, several said they were pleased to hear their children participated in class discussions. A mother with two teens said: *"The fact that they go to class and function without complaint says a ton about you guys. Thank you."*

One focus of the program is teaching teens to become better communicators so they can initiate conversations with adults, said NewBridge Career Placement Coordinator Irene Candelaria.



"The best parts of the program is gaining advice and honest knowledge about adult life and managing and preparing for jobs," Dubey said. *"What I learned at this program, I believe will assist me a lot in life."*

RESERVE YOUR SPOT for NewBridge Services'

25th Anniversary Golf Outing on Oct. 18

We are thrilled to announce **NewBridge Services' 25th Annual Golf Outing** is on for Monday, October 18 at the elegant **Preakness Hills Country Club**. The venue in Wayne is renowned for its beautifully maintained 18-hole championship golf course.

The daylong outing includes gourmet meals, an open bar and great gifts and prizes. Take advantage of the early bird special: registration is \$400 per golfer through September 1, and \$425 afterward.

Sponsorships range from \$200 tee sponsors to \$10,000 event sponsors, providing excellent exposure for your business or organization.

Proceeds support NewBridge programs, which touch the lives of thousands of residents in northern New Jersey each year. NewBridge tackles some of society's toughest issues, including mental illness, addiction, isolation, and homelessness, with a strong emphasis on prevention and early intervention.

COVID-19 guidelines will be followed to ensure a safe, fun outing. For information, please call or email Vicki Hess-Lowrie at (973) 939-2427 or vhess@newbridge.org. Help make this NewBridge's most successful golf outing yet!

NewBridge Services' 25th Annual **GOLF OUTING**

Monday, October 18, 2021
Preakness Hills Country Club, Wayne, NJ

NewBridge
40th Year of Service

Proceeds benefit NewBridge programs and services.
COVID-19 guidelines will be followed to ensure a safe, fun outing.

Getting a Handle on Addiction



**SEPTEMBER
IS NATIONAL
RECOVERY MONTH**

The COVID-19 pandemic sparked a surge in people abusing alcohol and other substances. Women, especially, have been drinking more, while deaths caused by drug overdoses jumped nearly 30% between December 2019 and December 2020.

Anxiety, stress and boredom related to pandemic have been cited in surveys as reasons for over-imbibing. *"People who are drinking to suppress unpleasant emotions are heading into dangerous territories,"* said Derk Replogle, director of addiction services at NewBridge Services.

Heavy drinking has serious health ramifications, raising risks for liver disease, heart disease, certain cancers, and accidents. Alcohol is the third-leading cause of preventable deaths in the U.S., claiming 95,000 lives, according to the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism.

Drinking also suppresses the immune system, which can make drinkers more susceptible to contracting COVID-19 and experiencing more severe symptoms, Replogle said.

The good news is, people can recover from addiction. NewBridge Services provides outpatient treatment,

with clients attending one-on-one and/or group sessions two to three hours a week. NewBridge uses evidence-based practices to help clients alter harmful behaviors and prevent relapse. Individuals can continue working and living at home. Medication and support groups may be part of outpatient treatment.

The pandemics put David Lucci's sobriety at risk. He'd become sober after more than 20 years of abusing alcohol and opioids, but then struggled with anxiety, depression and anger when the coronavirus began to spread. In July 2020, Lucci began counseling sessions by phone, and later attended in person, learning strategies to help him cope.

"NewBridge has helped me become more confident, to rely on myself and not drugs and alcohol to get through daily life situations," the West Milford resident said.

While some people can cut back or give up alcohol on their own, Replogle, a licensed alcohol and drug counselor, offers these tips for cutting back:

- Plan how much you will drink in a week, and track how much you consume
- Don't keep alcohol in your home
- Designate several days a week as alcohol-free.
- Pursue other interests, such as a hobby or learning a new language

If you're struggling, get help. To schedule an evaluation with NewBridge, call (973) 316-9333 or send an email to services@newbridge.org.

You deserve an evening of elegance.

Enjoy fine dining, dancing and cocktails, and bid on amazing items in the silent auction.

You'll be supporting a nonprofit that makes our communities stronger!

2021 Gala Thursday, Sept. 9
Legacy of Hope



Honoring retired
NewBridge CEO
Robert L. Parker



Register Today!
newbridge2021.givesmart.com

