

The Justice and Mental Health Program (JAMH)



A REASON TO HOPE. THE MEANS TO COPE.
THE SCHIZOPHRENIA SOCIETY OF ONTARIO

**Caregivers Best Practices Day
For Professionals
Friday March 4th, 2011**

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Schizophrenia Society of Ontario

Background: Justice and Mental Health Program

- Established September 2007 – only province-wide support offered to families
- Increasing criminalization of people with mental illness
- No existing program to support families and caregivers in this situation

Facts

- Family members are caregivers
- More likely to be subjected to violence by an untreated mentally ill relative compared to general population
- Increased levels of stress, distress, depression, anxiety, trauma
- Increased stigma on family when involved in justice system

Realities for Families

- Dual role of victim and caregiver
- Double stigma of illness and criminalization
- Emotional and psychological effects
- Major life disruption
 - Navigate access to treatment in addition to legal issues
- Systemic Barriers

JAMH Pillars

- Support
 - Information and Navigational Support
 - Court support (GTA)
 - Peer support & ANCRSS
 - Counseling
- Education
- Advocacy
- Partnership

Restoring Hope and Moving Forward

- Stories from family members about coping with serious mental illness
- Importance of peer support, education and telling your story
- Locate the resource at www.schizophrenia.on.ca – “Hot Links”

Restoring Hope and Moving Forward

We had to struggle alone for the first 7 years of my son's illness. My aim is to educate as many people as I can in hopes that this eases the burden of their journey through the traumatic and unpredictable maze known as the mental health and criminal justice system.

- Anne Smith*, mother of an individual living with schizophrenia.



Thank You!

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