REBUILDING LIVES
RESTORING HOPE

YMCA Counseling Service

New York City’s YMCA | WE'RE HERE FOR GOOD.
WHY WE’RE HERE

Nurturing the potential of every child and teen
We believe that all kids deserve the opportunity to discover who they are and what they can achieve. That’s why, through the YMCA, millions of youth today are cultivating the values, skills and relationships that lead to positive behaviors, better health and educational achievement.

Improving our community’s health and well-being
In neighborhoods across the five boroughs, the YMCA is a leading voice on health and well-being. The Y brings families closer together, encourages good health and fosters connections through fitness, sports, fun and shared interests. As a result, youth, adults and families are receiving the support, guidance and resources needed to achieve greater health and well-being for their spirit, mind and body.

Giving back and providing support to our neighbors
The YMCA has been listening and responding to New York City’s most critical social needs for 160 years. Whether developing skills or emotional well-being through education and training, welcoming and connecting diverse demographic populations through global services, or preventing chronic disease and building healthier communities through collaborations with policy makers, the Y fosters the care and respect all people need and deserve.

EVERYONE IS WELCOME

We’re proud to ensure that the YMCA Counseling Service is accessible to everyone. We never want anyone to be turned away for an inability to pay. Don’t hesitate to ask about financial assistance for our services. We’re here to help.

We’re able to open our doors to all thanks to the generous supporters of our Annual Campaign. Contributions to our fundraising efforts enable us to offer a number of our programs and services at low or no cost, and to make financial assistance available and participation affordable for all. Will you help us as a donor or volunteer campaigner to ensure that everyone can be part of the Y?

Program Fees
The YMCA Counseling Service is committed to making treatment accessible to anyone who needs it. We offer programs on a sliding fee scale, and in most cases, fees are reimbursable by private insurance or Medicaid Managed Care. Deciding to seek help is difficult enough; we will work with each participant on a case-by-case basis to ensure that the costs associated with treatment do not cause undue financial hardship. No one will be denied care due to an inability to pay.

We’re Here for Good. It’s been the signature phrase of New York City’s YMCA since early 2008, and it describes the Y’s commitment to building the foundations of—and strengthening—our communities, through nurturing the potential of every child and teen, improving community health and well-being and providing opportunities to give back and support neighbors.

We’re here for you and your family. We’re here for the community. We’re here for good.

New York City’s YMCA | WE’RE HERE FOR GOOD.*
WELCOME TO THE YMCA COUNSELING SERVICE
We’re here to help.

The YMCA Counseling Service offers hope to individuals and families whose lives have been turned upside-down by addiction. Since 1980, we have provided the Staten Island community with comprehensive prevention and treatment services that promote the development of spirit, mind and body. Our state-licensed outpatient program includes addiction treatment services for adults and teens, prevention services for at-risk youth and counseling services for children whose lives have been affected by a family member’s addiction.

Additionally, we are committed to serving the immigrant population through our New Americans Welcome Center. We help immigrants achieve literacy, cultural competence and self-sufficiency with the goal of being recognized as a “safe haven” that provides multilingual information resources and referrals, and a wide range of services (instructional, vocational, recreational and family support) that will help them attain their goals.

If you, a family member or someone close to you is struggling, don’t wait to call. If we don’t have a program that’s right for you, we’ll guide you to one that is.

CARING HONESTY RESPECT RESPONSIBILITY
AND THE REASSURANCE THAT THINGS CAN GET BETTER

YMCA COUNSELING SERVICE INFORMATION

SOUTH SHORE CENTER & ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE
3911 Richmond Avenue
Staten Island, NY 10312
718-948-3232

HOURS OF OPERATION
Mon. – Fri.: 9:00AM - 9:00PM
Saturday: 9:00AM - 5:00PM
Sunday: Closed

NORTH SHORE CENTER
285 Vanderbilt Avenue
Staten Island, NY 10304
718-981-4382

HOURS OF OPERATION
Mon. – Thurs.: 9:00AM - 9:00PM
Friday: 9:00AM - 6:00PM
Sat. – Sun: Closed

Open intake hours available. Please call for times.

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We address each person’s unique situation.
At the YMCA Counseling Service, we recognize that because no two individuals are the same, no single treatment method works for everyone. During our initial evaluation, we look at every aspect of a participant’s life, working to better understand the unique circumstances that underlie the problems of each person. Our counselors “meet you where you’re at,” guiding each participant to the best course of treatment for their current situation.

We draw on what works.
Because we are committed to providing the right care to the right person, our services are not based around a single treatment philosophy. Instead, we draw on over 35 years of experience with a wide range of clinical methodologies to develop plans that meet the specific needs and motivations of each participant. Our diverse staff includes licensed social workers, licensed mental health counselors, credentialed alcohol and substance abuse counselors, psychiatrists, medical staff and other trained advocates, some of whom have overcome their own struggles with addiction.

Our Services Include:
- Individual and Group Counseling
- Family involvement and therapy
- Crisis intervention services
- Drug screenings
- Psychiatric services
- Referrals to alternative treatment programs
- Addiction medication induction and management, including Suboxone
- Coordination of care with all involved parties in a participant’s life
- Positive alternative activities
- Coordination with mandating agencies
- Medical assessment and referral services

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

OUR PHILOSOPHY
The YMCA Counseling Service’s programs are based around several key beliefs, developed from our extensive history of treating and preventing addiction. While specific treatment plans will vary from participant to participant, there is a guiding principle that drives our services:

We treat families, not individuals.
We maintain open communication with every involved person who is willing and able to offer support to our participants. From children, to high-risk teens, to persons in recovery, we serve not only the participant themselves, but also the people around them – their parents, siblings, children and family members.

The Family Association – a key component of our service – is open to the community and is a network of parents, spouses, guardians and other adult family members. This group meets weekly, providing a supportive venue where family members can learn new skills for dealing with the complex issues associated with addiction. It is an especially critical component of our youth services, and for participants in these programs, parental participation is mandatory.

Individual Counseling – Addiction is a family disease and recovery works best when it is a family process. We provide support and counseling to individuals whose lives have been impacted by a loved one’s substance misuse. Individual counseling can help individuals learn that they too can recover even if their loved one continues to struggle.

Individual and Group Counseling
Family involvement and therapy
Crisis intervention services
Drug screenings
Psychiatric services
Referrals to alternative treatment programs
Addiction medication induction and management, including Suboxone
Coordination of care with all involved parties in a participant’s life
Positive alternative activities
Coordination with mandating agencies
Medical assessment and referral services
**PROGRAM OVERVIEW**

The YMCA Counseling Service includes three categories of programming specially tailored to address different aspects of addiction and those affected by it.

Our Children’s Services and Adolescent Services are based on prevention and treatment models, and are designed to help youth who, while not yet dependent on drugs or alcohol, are at high risk for future substance abuse problems due to their current negative behaviors. Our Adult Services focus on participants for whom chemical dependency has already taken control of their lives.

“I never had peers saying, ‘you shouldn’t go get high,’ but now it’s totally different. You come in to the Y and your peers are pressuring you not to get high. It’s a whole different way of living and whole different way of coping.” – Kim, 17, college-bound, overcame a marijuana addiction.

**Community Prevention & Education Programs**

Our Community Prevention and Education Programs offer a variety of services, including evidenced-based programs, visual displays, literature distribution, and our Speaker’s Bureau, which provides speakers for schools, community agencies, church groups or any other interested community organizations. Presentation formats and topics can be tailored to meet the needs of any group.

The YMCA Counseling Service also offers a variety of prevention programs in our buildings to assist in healthy development for kids, families and our community. In addition, the YMCA Counseling Service is available for presentations throughout Staten Island to discuss our services as well as addiction prevention, treatment and recovery.

Please contact our office at 718-948-3232 to learn more about bringing the YMCA’s community services to your school or organization.

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**CHILDREN’S SERVICES**

**Little Steps℠**

In 1989, the YMCA Counseling Service pioneered a treatment model utilizing expressive art and play therapy, role playing and other therapeutic techniques to address the special needs of children (ages 5–17) whose lives have been affected by a family member’s use of drugs or alcohol.

Little Steps℠ offers a structured series of expressive group activities through which children learn to identify and change the patterns of thinking, feeling and behavior they have learned in response to their family member’s chemical dependency. Children realize that they are not the cause of their family member’s substance use and that while they cannot control or cure it, we will help them learn to cope with it. Our program provides education and focuses on the development of healthy coping skills.

**Reasons for Referral**

There are a variety of emotional, behavioral, school or family problems that may be cause for concern. You may want to consider referring a child to us if you observe any of the following signs:

- Family history of addiction
- Changes in usual behavior and mood
- Aggressive behavior
- Anger
- Chronic anxiety
- Academic failure
- Depressed mood
- Hyperactivity
- Low self-esteem
- Oppositionalism
- Perfectionism
- Physical complaints
- Separation anxiety
- Social withdrawal

Early intervention is crucial to preventing children from developing substance abuse problems of their own down the road.
Program Structure

Little Steps℠ is structured into three groups, each designed to meet the developmental needs of specific age ranges.

Little Steps℠ (ages 5-10), utilizes expressive art and play therapy to enable children to identify and express feelings such as anger, sadness and fear in a constructive and healthy manner.

Stepping Stones (ages 10-13), utilizes a mix of therapeutic games, art activities and discussion to assist children in dealing with their increased awareness of addiction and its associated dysfunction.

Steppin’ Out (ages 14-17), employs the discussion of expressive activities to help children understand the disease of addiction and its impact on the lives of early adolescents. It also helps them develop the coping, judgment and decision-making skills crucial to resiliency and self-reliance.

Program Goals

Little Steps℠ helps children to:

• Understand that addiction is a disease
• Understand that children didn’t cause their family member’s drug or alcohol use, and they can’t make them stop, but that parents/families can and do get better, if they get help
• Learn how:
  • to trust
  • to accept appropriate limits
  • to speak honestly
  • to make decisions
  • to be assertive
  • to laugh and play
  • to make friends
  • to identify and express their feelings
  • to believe in their own specialness
  • to live life on one’s own terms without the use of alcohol or drugs

Program Philosophy

Children experience their world on a feeling level, and express themselves through action. Words are necessary, but certainly not enough for recovery to take place. Their therapy must be supportive, experiential, active and expressive.

Because dependency is the central and defining feature of childhood, they need love, limits and the understanding commitment of at least one primary and supportive caregiver to their recovery.

“Now I know that the drugs caused the fighting and not me. And I also know that even though people take drugs, you can still love them.” – James, 7

It is our hope that through this program, children will discover the moral courage to be angry, the wisdom to find purpose in their past, and the creative vision to build meaning in their lives.

“With Little Steps, I can get better, but I don’t have to do it alone.” – Kristina, 10
ADOLESCENT SERVICES

The mission of our Adolescent Services is to provide an environment that empowers young people to achieve a positive, productive and drug-free lifestyle. Our program focuses on adolescents and young adults (ages 12-18) who we consider to be "at-risk" for developing a drug or alcohol problem, as well as those teens already struggling with drug and alcohol issues.

Reasons for Referral
The stresses of the teen and young adult years can make youth especially susceptible to drug or alcohol use. Signs of a possible problem include:

- Experimental or active drug or alcohol use
- Changes in attitude toward school, home or family
- Legal problems
- Changes in usual behavior and/or mood
- Changes in social relationships (i.e. “falling in with a bad crowd”)
- Behavioral changes including: depression; anger; sensitivity; defensiveness; secrecy; aggression; spending time alone, or violence
- Physical changes including: hyperactivity; sleepiness; weight loss/gain, or dramatic changes in dress

A Note to Parents:
You know your children better than anyone else does so please trust your instincts. Take action and seek help at the first sign that there may be a need to. Love your children enough to interfere; it may save their life.

Program Philosophy
Our program focuses on building individual strengths and minimizing risk factors to help adolescents grow up to be healthy, caring and responsible. Research shows the more of these assets a young person has, the less likely they are to abuse drugs, skip school, fight or attempt suicide. We strive to help young people develop as many of these building blocks as possible – which will ultimately help them succeed in school, resist danger, maintain good health, overcome trouble and grow to their full potential.

Program Goals
- To develop skills to cope with feelings/experiences
- To develop skills for surviving adversity, both today and down the road
- To learn to have fun without the use of alcohol and drugs
- To build the confidence to resist temptation and peer pressure
- To develop one’s own inner strengths
- To help establish the sense of empowerment that comes with self-reliance
- To reassure that it’s ok to get help when you need it, at any age
- To foster sobriety and recovery from each individual’s identified needs
- To build a network of positive relationships, and engage in positive attitudes and behaviors

Youth Anger Management is open to youth and teens ages 6-17. The program seeks to reduce anger, aggression and tantrums while improving coping skills. It is designed to combat unhealthy core beliefs, promote responsible behavior and enhance the quality of life of our youth and their caregivers. Groups are separated by age.

Prevention Counseling offers one-on-one counseling to children and adolescents who are displaying high-risk behaviors. The goal is to explore ways to positively cope with stress and deal with anger and peer pressure.

Strengthening Families is a family skills training program found to significantly enhance parenting skills and strengthen bonds. It helps decrease problem behaviors, delinquency and alcohol/drug abuse in children, and to improve social skills and school performance.
ADULT SERVICES

Our Adult Services help adults living with addiction take the crucial first steps toward recovery. This not only means accepting their physiological and psychological dependency, but also facing the relationship problems, economic hardships or personal insecurities that may have led to or stemmed from their use of alcohol and drugs. It means facing life on life’s terms, accepting personal responsibility - and doing so clean and sober.

Reasons for Referral
Addiction is a disease. Nonetheless, individuals are still responsible for their actions and must learn to address their problems. While there is no “cure,” treatment can and does help people regain control of their lives and escape from the downward spiral of addiction.

When someone is trying hard to hide their problem, here are some things to look for:

- Criminal justice problems
- Child welfare system involvement
- Loss of a job
- Changes in attitude toward work or social situations
- Changes in relationships with friends and family members
- Physical changes such as: hyperactivity; sleepiness; weight loss/gain; loss of appetite
- Behavioral changes including: isolation; depression; anger; sensitivity; defensiveness; aggression; spending time alone, or violence
- Serious consequences resulting from drug or alcohol abuse (i.e., medical issues, blackouts, DWI)

Program Philosophy
Recovery from drug or alcohol abuse occurs over various phases. Not every phase is equally long or equally difficult. But because drug or alcohol addiction is a lifelong illness, the recovery process is ongoing, in one form or another.

Treatment at the YMCA Counseling Service, however, is a short-term process designed to help substance abusers develop the necessary skills to successfully maintain their ongoing recovery. We offer both Intensive Outpatient Treatment and Non-Intensive Outpatient Treatment and can individualize a person’s treatment plan to meet his or her needs.

Many positive changes often come out of the treatment process itself - new friendships, the discovery of new abilities and interests, and the realization that life can be good without being viewed through the haze of alcohol or drugs. We also refer clients in need to other treatment facilities for specialized care, and work with twelve-step programs like Alcoholics Anonymous and Narcotics Anonymous to provide continuing recovery services for our participants.

“The YMCA saved my life.” – Kathy, 46
Within our Adult Services, the YMCA Counseling Service offers specific services designed to fulfill the special needs of individuals.

Co-Occuring Disorders Treatment
The YMCA Counseling Service offers specialized services geared toward the needs of those who are recovering from both addiction and mental illness. Addressing both mental health and substance issues at the same time is proven to increase the individual’s likelihood of success. Our program aims to focus on all of our participants’ needs in an effort to enhance the effectiveness of their treatment and sobriety.

Medication Assisted Treatment
Initially, many individuals utilize medication to support their sobriety on a short-term basis. These clients require specialized treatment to address the different needs they will have while utilizing medication in their sobriety. This treatment focuses on education as well as the development of a strong support network, positive coping skills and a sober lifestyle to help ease the transition into recovery.

Recovery Services
Recovery is a process which is characterized by continual growth and improvement in one’s overall health and well-being, but may also involve setbacks. Because setbacks are a natural part of life, we must build a person’s resiliency, his or her ability to cope with adversity and adapt to challenges or change. Resilience develops over time and gives an individual the capacity not only to cope with life’s challenges, but also be better prepared for the next stressful situation. Our recovery support services are open to individuals in recovery who are seeking treatment in order to maintain their sobriety.

Parenting Skills
Parenting Skills is aimed at enhancing knowledge and understanding of the multi-faceted issues involved in parenting. These classes take an in-depth look at child development, communication, discipline, child/family health, learning/play, stress, nutrition, budget, substance abuse, family violence and teen behavior.

Program Goals
• To become clean and sober
• To reassure that it’s ok to get help when you need it
• To develop skills for surviving adversity and trauma
• To build the self-confidence, self-esteem and self-awareness to prevent relapse
• To teach reliance on one’s own inner resources
• To stabilize mental health and develop healthy coping mechanisms
• To help establish the sense of empowerment that comes with self-reliance
• To foster feelings of being valued
• To create a strong support network
• To prepare individuals to develop sustainable employment and/or educational opportunities

“I always thought I could do it by myself – I’ll quit tomorrow or I’ll quit next time. I realized I couldn’t do it alone and the Y helped me.” – Andre, 32
STATEN ISLAND YMCA NEW AMERICANS WELCOME CENTER

The Staten Island YMCA New Americans Welcome Center (NAWC) serves as a multilingual information resource referral center, and provides immigrant families with a wide array of instructional, vocational, recreational, family support and social services. We are committed to serving the immigrant population of the Island, and helping immigrants achieve literacy, cultural competence and self-sufficiency. The goal of the YMCA is to be recognized by every New American as a “safe haven” that provides a wide range of services that will help them attain their goals. All services are FREE of charge.

Services include:
- English as a Second Language Classes
- Cultural Orientation
- Citizenship Preparation Classes
- Job Readiness and Computer Literacy Classes
- Legal Consultations
- Citizenship Application Assistance
- Small Business Development
- Community Outreach, Workshops and Events

Additionally, the NAWC offers its participants a flexible schedule of morning, afternoon or evening classes across Staten Island with classes ranging from beginner to advanced levels.

The NAWC has been serving New York City’s diverse, low-income immigrant community for over 30 years. For more information about our services and offerings, please contact (718) 981-4382.
YMCA of Greater New York
YMCA Counseling Service
3911 Richmond Avenue
Staten Island, NY 10312

P: 718-948-3232
W: ymcanyc.org/counseling