



JFS WORCESTER

Serving Central Massachusetts

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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MICHAELE MCGINNIS JOINS JFS COUNSELING STAFF

Experienced Clinician Adds Biofeedback to Agency's Family and Individual Services

WORCESTER, MA – (April 1, 2009) – Michaele McGinnis, LICSW, BCIAC, a family and individual counselor who brings more than 25 years of clinical experience to the treatment of clients, has joined the staff of JFS Worcester, effective today. A certified practitioner of biofeedback as well, McGinnis's expertise expands the range of services offered by JFS and positions the nonsectarian agency as one of central Massachusetts' most comprehensive social services providers. Biofeedback can be a helpful treatment for stress, insomnia, chronic pain and other ailments.

"Michaele's skills are particularly valuable in today's difficult economy," said JFS Executive Director Steve Slaten, Ph.D. "There are clear associations between financial stress and job loss, with the potential for psychiatric symptoms and somatic illness. People's relationships with family members may suffer. Some resort to counterproductive ways of coping with the added stress, such as drinking too much, over-eating, retreating into isolation or lashing out."

McGinnis's clinical experience in both traditional counseling and behavioral medicine offers JFS clients a unique approach to treating family and individual stress, chronic headache and other recurring pain, fibromyalgia, insomnia, cardiac disease and other often debilitating symptoms.

"And her fluency in Spanish adds another important dimension to the agency's diverse capabilities," added Slaten. "We are delighted to welcome Michaele to our clinical staff."

McGinnis joins JFS following a 16-year tenure in the Division of Behavioral Medicine at Fallon Healthcare System, Inc., of Worcester, and another 10 years in private and group practice. Her work includes treatment of individuals, couples and families, including children and adolescents, suffering from chronic headaches, eating disorders, anxiety, depression and stress.

Her expertise also includes treatment of panic, trauma, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), obsessive compulsive disorder and marital conflict. In addition, she is experienced in addressing sexual trauma and cross-cultural issues.

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Central Massachusetts
Agency on Aging



“JFS is a welcoming provider of family and individual therapies, and I look forward to collaborating with its highly respected clinical staff and the opportunity to learn from each other for the benefit of our clients,” McGinnis said. “Balance and ‘connecting the dots’ are crucial parts of a healthy life. I’m particularly interested in exploring the cultures of the unique groups we’re each a part of as a way of understanding how and why we behave as we do. It’s this kind of understanding that helps me help my clients.”

Along with Michaele, JFS clinicians Amy Colangelo, LICSW, and Elaine Kapperman, LICSW, specialize in treating anxiety, stress, and health related conditions in children and adults.

Biofeedback Specialist

“How we think about something has a big impact on our bodies, but we often overlook this relationship” McGinnis adds. “Problems such as traumatic injury, chronic pain and family dynamics can lead to serious anxiety, depression, eating disorders and other behavioral problems.”

One treatment for these conditions, biofeedback, is a technique in which people are trained to improve their health by learning to control certain internal bodily processes that normally occur involuntarily, such as heart rate, blood pressure, muscle tension and skin temperature. These activities can be measured with electrodes and displayed on a monitor viewable by both the client and the health care provider.

The monitor provides feedback to the client about the internal workings of his or her body. The person can then be taught to use this information to gain control over these "involuntary" activities.

McGinnis is also a frequent lecturer at Worcester-area colleges, high schools and businesses on stress management, personality and sleep disorders, heart disease and other conditions.

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JFS Worcester, also known as Jewish Family Service, provides counseling and social services to support individuals and strengthen family life. Based on traditional Jewish values of social responsibility and concern for all members of the community, JFS serves those in need without regard to race, religion or the ability to pay.

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