

CENTER STREET CENTER

I recently had a client tell me about an experience with her daughter in which a quick trip to a public bathroom nearly ended in the disappearance of her youngest daughter. Within 5 minutes her daughter's hair had been shaved and her clothing changed. Had the Mother not gone to check on her, her little girl would have vanished. How is this possible in the Lehigh Valley or anywhere in the 21st century? Yet it is. Her story rocked me to the core. I knew about human trafficking but was shocked at how close to home it was and how quickly a child can be snatched.

Human trafficking refers to the illegal trade and exploitation of people. It is a serious violation of human rights and a form of modern-day slavery and it's a \$150 billion industry worldwide. And shockingly, the U.S. is one of the top 3 countries of this heinous crime. Although PA is not one of the more at risk states, we do have our share of human trafficking here in the Lehigh Valley. Human trafficking involves the recruitment, transportation, harboring, or receipt of individuals through force, fraud, or coercion. Victims are often snatched or lured with false promises only to find themselves trapped in exploitative situations.

Two main forms of human trafficking are labor trafficking which involves the exploitation of individuals through forced labor or involuntary servitude and sex trafficking in the sexual exploitation of individuals, primarily women and children.

Efforts to combat human trafficking in the Lehigh Valley have the Child Exploitation and Human Trafficking Task Force as well as the Lehigh Valley Anti-Trafficking Collaborative. Additionally, Valley Youth House helps those dealing with trafficking from the youngest of victims to age 21. Center Street Center helps with trauma victims as well. If you suspect a case of human trafficking, call the National Human Trafficking Hotline at 1-888-373-7888 or your local police.



LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR

I am grateful for the help of our local elected officials, House of Representative Steve Samuelson, Senator Lisa Boscola and Congresswoman Susan Wild. These individuals have been instrumental in helping our office recently with a couple of complicated PA government applications. The ability to tap into our local representatives was extremely helpful and all three offices made themselves available to us. Legislative Intern Nolan Barr from Senator Boscola's office, Constituent Services Adviser Damaris Garcia from Representative Samuelson's office, and Staff Assistant, Ellie Landau from Congresswoman Wild's office have all gone above and beyond as well to help Center Street Center. I look forward to a continued relationship with our local elected officials!

En buena salud | In good health Dr. Tracy E. Hill

Did You Know?

Did you know that according to research published in the *Journal of Experimental Psychology: General*, people often share fake news so that they are not left out of their social circles? Fake news can foster political polarization, foment division between groups and individuals, and encourage malicious behavior.



The study found that over nearly 300,000 digital social engagements, group members who did not conform to the behavior of other group members by sharing fake news were subjected to reduced social interaction over time. and social costs were higher for not sharing fake news versus other content. The work of Lawson, Anand and Kakkar illuminates the role of conformity pressure as a critical antecedent of the spread of misinformation. These results elucidate a worrying mechanism by which group membership encourages the spread of misinformation and impedes the diversity of perspectives available online, providing insight to policymakers considering the regulation of social media and how to combat the rise of fake news.

Should social media be allowed to censor what we see and hear or should we allow freedom of speech in all venues? To stay informed, it's important for individuals to consider more than one source for their news and information. And remember, social media is not a reliable news source.

SELF CARE

The weather has significantly changed and it is now hot and humid. It is important to keep hydrated at all times, get plenty of rest, and find respite from the heat when possible. Hydration is best in the form of plain old H2O. Sodas, juices and other beverages are not meant to hydrate the body.

BLENDED FAMILIES

Parents often have different rules and run their homes differently from each other. It is important that parents respect the rules in the other parent's household even though they may do things dissimilarly. Children learn to adapt to each residence and neither one is typically better or worse than the other.

PSYCH SPOTLIGHT

Breathing meditation known as cyclic sighing shows the greatest benefits in increased mood, lower respiratory rate, and decreased anxiety compared to mindfulness meditation which demonstrated the least positive results, according to Cell Reports Medicine.