

## **BODY LANGUAGE – WITH FEELING**

There was a lot of movin' and groovin' going on this summer in Wilkinsburg, at Milestone's Specialized Partial Hospitalization Program for people who are deaf.

**Jennifer Macioce**, LCSW, Milestone's Director of Day Treatment and Deaf Services, was looking for a way to inject some variety into the expressive therapies offered to Milestone clients. The solution is a new phenomenon known as "Bodiography Movement Therapy," which teaches emotional expression through movement.

"I received the Bodiography newsletter," said Macioce, "and I felt this would be a perfect compliment to our other activities."

Macioce reached out to Bodiography founder Maria Caruso, who offered to work with Milestone. The result was a test run of four weekly sessions this summer.

Bodiography movement therapy facilitator **Holly Kepins** said she finds working with Milestone clients "rewarding, because it helps them expand ways they express themselves – and lets them know they are not alone in their feelings."

During the course of one recent session, clients focused on the topic of depression, using movement to personify terms such as lonely, frustrated, tired and confused. In concluding the session, Kepins asked participants how they felt.

One client responded "This helps me to think positively." Smiles were visible throughout the room.

Macioce's plan is to have members of her staff get certified in movement therapy, so this program may be implemented on an ongoing basis.

"Anything can be choreography when people inject their own ideas," Kepins explained.

Indeed. Milestone's expressive movement sessions are creating a whole new outlet for those we serve.

Clients who partake in Milestone's program also have the opportunity to engage in wellness initiatives, expressive art and group social support.

"The Deaf community is so used to communicating through sign language," Macioce explained. "It's wonderful to watch our clients build upon each other's ideas to take their communication to deeper level and create meaningful movement."

*To learn more about Milestone's Day Treatment and Deaf Services, please contact Jennifer Macioce at 412-473-8059.*

# # #