

Andy Hagler is the Executive Director of The Mental Health Association in Forsyth County – a local non-profit, non-governmental advocacy agency --- and has held this position since May 1997.

Since taking the Association's helm, his agency provides an array of non-clinical mental health programs and services such as:

- Client & Family Support Groups
- Representative Payee Services
- Mental Health Information & Referral/Access Services
- Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) mental health trainings to law enforcement officers
- Client, Family and Legislative Advocacy Services
- “Mental Health 101” Community Education Services
- Community Screening Events for Depression and Anxiety
- Community Partnerships and Collaboratives to address and fill in gaps in existing mental health and related community-based services

As part of the agency's strategic plan, two areas that The Mental Health Association in Forsyth County are going to focus on in the next few years for programs and services include: (1) Outreach to the African-American community and (2) Bullying and teen depression and suicide.

Andy received his undergraduate degree in Early Childhood Education from East Carolina University in 1980. From 1980 -1984, Andy was a second and third grade schoolteacher at Belhaven Elementary School in Belhaven, North Carolina. He then earned a Master's Degree in Counseling from The University of North Carolina at Greensboro (UNCG) in 1987. Subsequently, Andy was hired full-time at UNCG in the Office of Disabled Student Services where he provided academic accommodations for college students with a variety of disabling conditions. In 1991, during his tenure at UNCG, Andy pursued and earned a second Master's in Public Affairs.

From 1992 – 1997, Andy was the Executive Director of The Arc of High Point – formerly the Association for Retarded Citizens of High Point.

A native of Charlotte, Andy primarily grew up in Washington, North Carolina but has lived in a number of communities – large and small – throughout North Carolina.

Andy has served in various volunteer capacities with the United Way of Forsyth County, and, most recently, Andy serves as the Partner Agency Representative for the United Way of Forsyth County's Campaign Cabinet for their 2009 Fundraising Campaign and again in 2010.

Other community organizations Andy and the Association are involved with include: Forsyth Mental Health Community Collaborative, Mental Health Court Collaborative and the Human Rights Committee of CenterPoint Human Services.

Andy's passion is to advocate on behalf of persons with mental illness and to educate the community about mental illness. Andy's professional and personal mission is to strive to eradicate the stigma and discrimination persons with mental illness and other disabling conditions face each and every day.

Andy lives in Winston-Salem in the West End Community.