



NEWSLETTER

May 2022 Edition

Contents:

- Children's Mental Health Week Social Media Posts to Share
- Lived Experience Insights
- OCMH Updates
- Children's Mental Health in the News
- Of Interest

Welcome to the Office of Children's Mental Health (OCMH) May Newsletter!

Children's Mental Health Week – May 1-7, 2022

Social media provides a powerful way to promote awareness and acceptance of children's mental health. OCMH has partnered with [ArtWorks for Milwaukee's](#) CAPE Mental Health Movement to provide social media posts. Simply go to the [OCMH website](#) to see and access images for posting. The designs are also formatted for poster printing. Below are four images with suggested messages to accompany your post.



Post 1: Connection Saves Lives

Remember #YouAreNotAlone. Who can you #MakeTheEffort to connect with this week?

Tag someone you want to connect with this week!
#ByYourSide

It's Children's Mental Health Awareness Week!
#MakeTheEffort and reach out to a young person in your life.
#ConnectionSavesLives

Who have you been meaning to call? Reach out and remind them #YouAreNotAlone in honor of Mental Health Awareness Month



Post 2: The Little Things

What small action can you take today to show you care about a friend? #MakeTheEffort #ConnectionSavesLives

This Children's Mental Health Awareness Week, remember that your actions make a difference. #ConnectionSavesLives #YouAreNotAlone



Post 3: Connection Is Worth It

Relationships matter. How can you prioritize your friends and family during Mental Health Month? #ConnectionSavesLives

Is there someone you've been meaning to reach out to? Here's your reminder to #MakeTheEffort



Post 4: Unplug to Reconnect

What is your favorite way to connect offline? #ByYourSide #MakeTheEffort

Tag a friend you want to reconnect with during Children's Mental Health Awareness Week #YouAreNotAlone

Here's a reminder to unplug and reconnect with your friends and family! #ConnectionSavesLives

We challenge you to stop the scroll and connect with a friend #MakeTheEffort

Bringing Youth Voice to the Youth Mental Health Crisis

The youth mental health crisis began well before the pandemic with almost 60% of students in grades 9-12 experiencing depression, anxiety, self-harm, or suicidal ideation in 2019. Then, during the first year of the pandemic, insurance companies reported a 100% increase in the percentage of self-harm, substance use, and mental health claims for teens compared to the prior year. Clearly challenges for youth continue, and youth have important ideas on how to address the challenges.

During this year's Children's Mental Health week, we are pleased to be able to bring forward teen voices on how to address the youth mental health crisis. Our office first identified social isolation and excessive screen time as challenges to youth well-being. Then the youth created hashtags and images to portray people having meaningful moments together.

In addition to these youth voices, Governor Evers is adding his voice by proclaiming May 5 to be Children's Mental Health Awareness Day in Wisconsin and urging that we all reaffirm our commitment to support the mental health of our state's youth.

Sharing the youths' messages on your social media platforms is a great way to show support for the state's youth and encourage connections for better mental health.

May is Mental Health Awareness Month

Although we specifically focus on Children’s Mental Health the first week of May, the entire month of May is recognized as Mental Health Awareness month. We encourage all to promote awareness/acceptance, create space for discussion, and to seek out additional resources throughout the month. Additional resources include:

- Mental Health America’s 2022 Mental Health Month [Toolkit](#).
- NAMI (National Alliance on Mental Illness) – [Mental Health Awareness Month](#)
- National Federation of Families – [Children’s Mental Health Acceptance Week](#)

Access OCMH Children’s Mental Health Week social media images [here](#).

Lived Experience Insights

OCMH Lived Experience Partner Crystal Long shares her insights on children’s mental health awareness.

Mental Health Awareness and Obtaining Support

May is mental health awareness month, and there is such a need to elevate awareness and acceptance of mental health. As a Lived Experience Partner with the Wisconsin Office of Children’s Mental Health I hope to use my voice to do just that.

The problem

Mental health is not viewed in the same light as physical health. Oftentimes it has negative connotations which make it difficult to get the services needed. These connotations include stereotypes such as people are just seeking medication, they are looking for excuses for bad parenting, they are lazy, etc. The mental health system is already challenging to navigate, but these negative connotations make that worse. Additional barriers include an overall lack of service providers, a lack of culturally diverse representation, and varying amounts of information (from too much information to not enough). It all makes for a discouraging experience.

Is there good news?

The good news is, as a society, we have come a very long way to recognize that mental health, especially for our children, is important and needs to be taken seriously. The not so good news is our work is far from complete. The better news is there are a lot of ways we can personally contribute to generating awareness.

The most powerful tool we have is our voice. Being able to talk about our experiences and share information helps other families move forward with their own journeys. For those who haven’t yet experienced this journey, it helps them understand and be ready for what lies ahead.

Tips from me to you

- Having children with mental health challenges is not an easy feat, but not having a support system makes it that much harder. Build a support system for yourself and look for opportunities to be that support for others.
- If you have a hard time getting a mental health professional to pay attention to your needs, find a different one. Keep searching until you find someone who will not only help you with your

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BUILD CONNECTIONS AND CAPACITY
TO CREATE SYSTEMS CHANGE



immediate need, but one who will also help you pull in other professionals until your village of support is built. The saying “it takes a village to raise a child” is 100 percent true when it comes to seeking mental health help for your children.

- If you notice the approach you are taking isn’t working, change it until you get the results you need.
- Everybody’s journey is different. We all need different things at different times.

What I’ve learned on my personal journey is showing up and asking for help is not always enough. Figuring out how to get help and not receiving it is highly discouraging. It can seem daunting when you have so much going on. Don’t stop – put yourself in a position so you are seen. Keep showing up, be tenacious, and use your voice.

- *By: Crystal Long, Office of Children’s Mental Health Lived Experience Parent Partner*

OCMH Updates

Trauma-Informed Cared Video Training Series Available

All three segments of the OCMH “Exploring Race and Culture from a Trauma-Informed Care Lens” video training series are now available. Each video is 30 minutes long and features an expert panel discussion on an important series topic. Each video is available on the OCMH website and is accompanied by a toolkit that includes a discussion guide. The videos are ideal for 1-hour staff trainings – employee teams can watch the video together and then discuss the questions.



Segment 3 – “Working with People with Different Racial and Cultural Backgrounds” was released in late April and completes the series. Panel Participants include:

- **Ricky Ferrari Traner** (panel facilitator) – Prevention & Early Intervention Section Manager, Wisconsin Department of Children and Families
- **Rob Kaminski** – Lived Experience Partner, Wisconsin Office of Children’s Mental Health
- **Bojana Zorić Martinez** – Director of the Bureau of Refugee Programs and Wisconsin State Refugee Coordinator, Wisconsin Department of Children and Families
- **Pablo Navarro** – Owner/Director/Professional Counselor, Navarro Professional Counseling Services

Other parts of the series are:

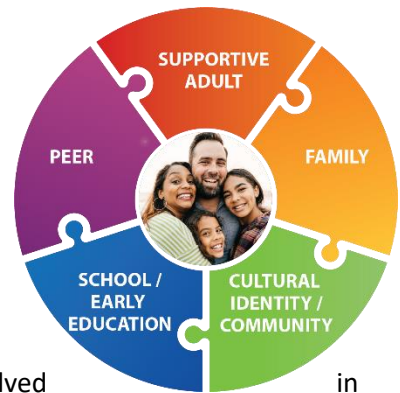
- Segment 1: White Privilege
 - Part 1: Exploring Racism and Whiteness/Embracing Truth
 - Part 2: Growing into Authentic Allyship and Racial Justice
- Segment 2: Implicit Bias

Access the videos and toolkits [here](#). With over 2,000 views, the video training series continues to prove itself as a valuable resource.

Update: Social Connectedness of Youth Impact Teams

New Collective Impact Teams will drive OCMH work on Social Connectedness of Youth. The [March OCMH Newsletter](#) explained OCMH's strategic focus on Social Connectedness of Youth and the new Impact Teams. The teams and their vision statements are:

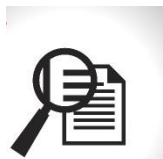
- **Family** – Children have warm, positive relationships with their family that make them feel like they belong, are safe, cared for, valued, and supported.
- **Supportive Adult** – Adults, especial older adults, connect with and establish affirming relationships with youth.
- **Cultural Identity/Community** – Young people are regularly involved in spaces that help them feel connected to one another and their culture or identity.



Prior OCMH teams (Access, Infant Toddler, Resiliency, and Trauma-Informed Care) were retired in March. April work focused on inviting prior team members to move to a new team. Additionally, new members are being recruited. May work will focus on the logistics of forming the new teams, determining meeting times, and readying for the first meetings, which we anticipate will be in June.

Children's Mental Health in the News

OCMH Senior Research Analyst Amy Marsman spotlights open access and recent research about issues affecting children's mental health.



Adolescent suicides in several US states increased during the pandemic, research shows. *CNN*, April 25, 2022. [Read Article](#) and [Research](#).

Birth to 3 Program pilots innovative efforts to advance the social emotional development of infants. *Wisconsin Department of Health Services*, April 12, 2022. [Read Article](#). [Related Resource](#) and [Related Infographic](#).

New CDC data illuminate youth mental health threats during the COVID-19 pandemic. *Centers for Disease Control*. April 1, 2022. [CDC Press Release](#). [Research Report](#) and [Related Article](#).

New online program at UW-La Crosse aims to help address Wisconsin's extreme shortage of school psychologists. *La Crosse Tribune*. March 21, 2022. [Read Article](#). [Related Research](#).

Schools across Wisconsin receive 'Get Kids Ahead' funds to improve mental health services. *Fox 11 News*. April 6, 2022. [Read Article](#). [Related Resource](#). UW to participate in Healthy Minds Survey to evaluate mental health on campus. *The Badger Herald*, April 22, 2022. [Read Article](#). [Related Survey](#). [Related Research](#).

You can talk about suicidal thoughts and depression. *USA Today*, April 22, 2022. [Read Article](#). [Related Resource](#). [Related Research](#). [Research Priorities](#).

Of Interest

Child Mind Institute's Rising Scientists Awards underscore the importance of scientific research to develop new and more accessible methods of treatment and prevention. Five high school students will be recognized. [Learn more.](#)

Advancing a Healthier Wisconsin blog offering information on where to find public health grants. [Read it.](#)

Healthy Environments for Kids Safekeeping Campaign is a toolkit of materials providing tips and resources to schools and early childhood education centers on maintaining environmentally safe and healthy facilities for kids and staff. [Access the toolkit.](#)

**YOUR FEELINGS AND
EXPERIENCES MAY NOT FIT
PERFECTLY INTO A DIAGNOSIS -
AND THAT'S OK.**

For many people who are struggling with their mental health, they may be experiencing features and symptoms that occur across diagnoses. Or they may not even be able to articulate what they are experiencing.

These feelings and experiences are valid and deserve compassion, understanding, and support.



The Office of Children's Mental Health

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