



NEWSLETTER

October 2021 Edition

Contents:

- Improving Outcomes for Emerging Adults in the Criminal Justice System
- Lived Experience Insights
- Mental Health 101 – What are Eating Disorders?
- OCMH Updates
- Legislative & Policy Updates
- Children's Mental Health in Professional Literature
- Of Interest

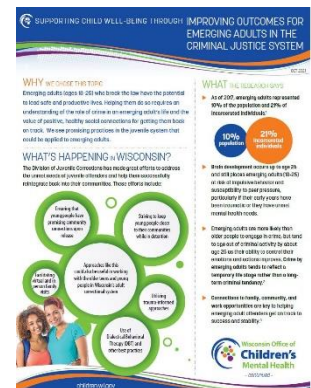
Welcome to the Office of Children's Mental Health (OCMH) October Newsletter!

Improving Outcomes for Emerging Adults in the Criminal Justice System – Topic of October Fact Sheet

Emerging adults (ages 18-25) who break the law have the potential to lead safe and productive lives. Understanding the role of crime in their life and the value of positive, healthy social connections are critical for getting them back on track.

Important facts:

- Brain development occurs up to age 26 and still places emerging adults (18-25) at risk of impulsive behavior and susceptibility to peer pressure, particularly if their early years have been traumatic or they have unmet mental health needs.
- Crime by emerging adults tends to reflect a temporary life stage rather than a long-term criminal tendency.
- Emerging adults represented 10% of the population and 21% of incarcerated people.



The Division of Juvenile Corrections has helpful approaches for juveniles that could be useful in working with emerging adults in Wisconsin's correctional system. These include:

- Ensuring that young people have promising community connections upon release.
- Striving to keep young people closer to their communities while in detention.
- Utilizing trauma-informed approaches.
- Facilitating virtual and in-person family visits.
- Use of Dialectical Behavioral Therapy (DBT) and other best practices.

Approaches like this could be useful in working with emerging adults in Wisconsin's adult correctional system.

What we can do:

Policymakers

- Ensure all minors are held in juvenile facilities until they reach the age of 18.
- Apply some of the practices used for juvenile offenders to the emerging adult population.
- Use "emerging adults" as a category in Wisconsin's correctional reporting systems to better track the needs, risks, and services offered to this age group.

Communities

- Assist emerging adults with re-entry by offering programs and incentives to help them continue their education and professional skills.
- Start a “Ban the Box” initiative with local employers to ensure individuals with a criminal background are not discriminated against in their employment journey.
- Create spaces and opportunities for families to remain connected during incarceration of emerging adults.

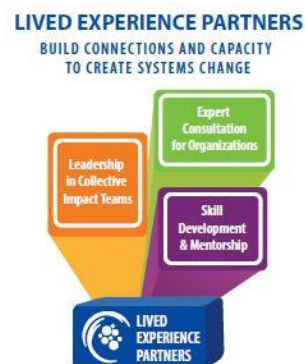
To read the [Fact Sheet and citations](#).

Lived Experience Insights

OCMH Lived Experience Partner shares their insights on young adults in the justice system.

“The families I know who have experience in the justice system don’t want to relive it. The court system divides the family. Parents aren’t valued in the process. We get it, they are technically adults now, but our kids still need our help. Counties and services are in and out of young people’s lives but parents are always there. Family is extremely important for the well-being of everyone.”

- Robert Kaminski, Office of Children’s Mental Health Lived Experience Partner



Mental Health 101 – What are Eating Disorders?

*By Elizabeth Hamlin, MD, Medical Director, Adult Inpatient Eating Disorders
- Rogers Behavioral Health*

Eating disorders are conditions where someone has a disturbed relationship with food and eating that leads to changes in how they eat. Eating disorders are both physical and psychological. In some eating disorders, people become very worried about food and weight. They become terrified of or disgusted by eating. In other eating disorders, people substitute food for other emotional needs, which often leads to overeating. Sometimes, this overeating is followed by attempts to get rid of the food by vomiting or exercise. In addition to having a disturbed relationship with food and eating, people with eating disorders also have a disturbed relationship with their own bodies, and they become very focused on the way they believe their bodies look or feel, even when this is very different from how others may view them. When not treated, eating disorders can lead to serious physical and psychological harm or to death.



(more)

OCMH Updates

Youth Discuss the Impact of Social Media

In partnership with Milwaukee Office of Violence Prevention and the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention, OCMH held two Youth Listening Sessions in September. Youth from across the state shared their thoughts on social media. One session was for teens ages 13-18 and another for young adults ages 19-24. Our November newsletter will have a recap of what these young people had to say.



Legislative & Policy Update

Safe Harbor Legislation (SB 245 / AB 185). Currently, children who are forced into commercial sex practices can be prosecuted for the crime of prostitution, causing victimization and burdening a child with a criminal record even though if they are under the age of 18 they cannot legally consent to sexual relations. This bill prohibits the prosecution of minors for prostitution. On September 23rd, the Senate Committee on Judiciary and Public Safety held a hearing on the bill. The bipartisan support demonstrated at the Senate hearing offers promise that this legislation which has been introduced in multiple previous sessions may pass before the session ends.

Children's Mental Health Infrastructure and Behavioral Health Integration (HR 4943, HR 4944). Over the summer, two bills were introduced in the House by Representative Lisa Blunt Rochester (D-DE-AL) and Brian Fitzpatrick (R-PA-1) that would increase funding for children's mental health. [H.R. 4943 Children's Mental Health Infrastructure Act](#) establishes a HRSA grant to strengthen behavioral health infrastructure and expand capacity for pediatric behavioral health service delivery. [H.R. 4944 Helping Kid's Cope Act](#) creates a HRSA grant to support better coordination and integration of community-based mental health services while expanding care options to improve access. Funding is flexible to allow communities to address their most urgent needs and includes training funds for the pediatric behavioral health workforce across disciplines. The Children's Hospital Association's [Strengthening Kids Mental Health Now](#) proposals led to the introduction of these bills.

Children's Mental Health in Professional Literature

OCMH Research Analyst - Advanced Kate McCoy spotlights new, open access articles about children's mental health.



Equity-Focused, Trauma-Informed Policy Can Mitigate COVID-19's Risks to Children's Behavioral Health. [Read the article.](#)

Police Exposure and the Health and Wellbeing of Black Youth in the U.S. [Read the article.](#)

2021 Statement of Child and Adolescent Mental Health Principles by Coalition of Mental Health Organizations. [Read the article.](#)

Improving Integration of Behavioral Health into Primary Health Care for Adolescents and Young Adults. [Read the article](#)

More articles are available on the [OCMH Website](#).

Of Interest

Mental Health America's 2021 Back to School Toolkit, "Facing Fears, Supporting Students," aims to help students, parents, and school personnel recognize how feeling unsafe can impact mental health and school performance, and what can be done to help young people who are struggling with their mental health. [Access the toolkit.](#)

Department of Health Services Non-emergency medical transportation services for Medicaid members – Beginning November 1, 2021, Wisconsin Medicaid members who participate in eligible programs will be working with a new vendor, Veyo, to get transportation to their covered health care appointments. [Learn more.](#)

Well Badger's new tool available – The Children's Mental and Behavioral Health Resource Navigator is a free, confidential, online tool designed to help parents, caregivers, and professionals navigate mental and behavioral health services and support for children ages 0 to 21. [Access the tool.](#)

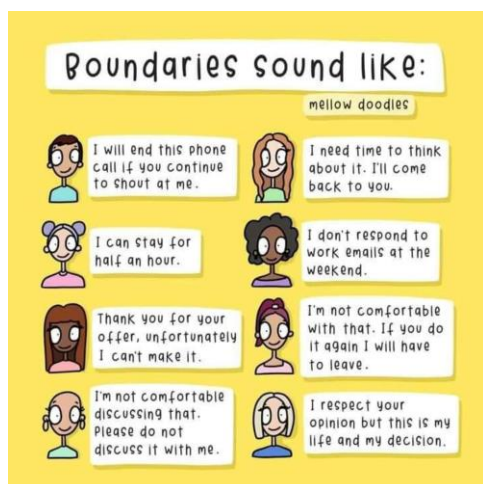
Student AODA Mini-Grant's – The Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse (AODA) Student Mini-Grant competition is open for student groups to submit applications for the 2021-22 school year. Amounts may not exceed \$1,000 each. Applications are due electronically to the Department of Public Instruction by 4 pm October 15, 2021. [For information.](#)

October is Cybersecurity Awareness Month – Do Your Part. #BeCyberSmart! This theme encourages individuals and organizations to own their role in protecting their part of cyberspace, stressing personal accountability and the importance of taking proactive steps to enhance cybersecurity. [Learn more.](#)

Youth Justice Action Month – Since 2008, youth justice advocates around the country have come together each October to raise awareness and inspire action on behalf of young people impacted by our criminal justice system. [For information.](#)

LGBT History Month – Every day in October LGBT History Month recognizes the achievements of men and women in the LGBT community. LGBT History Month encourages informative discussions to learn more about the leaders in the movement who drove equality forward. [For information.](#)

October 10th is World Mental Health Day – The goal is to raise awareness of mental health issues around the world and to mobilize efforts in support of mental health. [Learn more.](#)



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