

Lived Experience Insights

OCMH Lived Experience Partner shares their insights on suicide.

"As a Black young person who's dealt with suicide ideation, I know exactly what my peers are enduring daily. If I had succeeded in my attempts at suicide, I wouldn't be here to write this, and I wouldn't be here to help do the work to better the mental health of young people across the state. It is so important that we find ways to address this issue. We have to let young Black folks know that their lives matter, that their Black life matters."

- Tiangelique Dunigan, Office of Children's Mental Health Lived Experience Partner

LIVED EXPERIENCE PARTNERS
BUILD CONNECTIONS AND CAPACITY
TO CREATE SYSTEMS CHANGE



Supporting Parents so Children Thrive

The Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention Board funded parent listening sessions in Spring 2021 to learn about the support, resources, services, and programs parents need to ensure that all Wisconsin children thrive and grow up in safe, stable, and nurturing families and communities. The study produced 10 key takeaways:

1. Parents are struggling to navigate systems and policies that are meant to help them, especially parents of special needs children, single parents, and Native American parents that leave the reservation to travel to the city in search of better employment and housing.
2. Trusted and affordable quality child care and housing are needed. The absence of this is stressful to parents and families.
3. Meeting the basic needs for the family prevents parents from being present in the lives of their children and functioning as nurturing, loving, engaged parents.
4. There are critical mental health services gaps that need to be addressed.
5. Addiction support for individuals and families is needed.
6. Parents across the state worry about the safety of children, bullying, and the lack of programming for teens, especially non-sports related programming.
7. Historical Trauma, addiction, and mistrust are impacting the wellbeing of Native American families, while racism, discrimination, and injustice are major concerns among all groups.
8. Intentionality is needed to address the diverse needs of LGBTQ+ children and families.
9. There is a critical lack of resources and service options for parents in rural Wisconsin.
10. Bilingual (Spanish/English) programs and services are critically needed to increase access and help bridge the communication/cultural gap between parents and children.

New DPI Mental Health Literacy Units of Instruction Available

It isn't just a great resource available on the Department of Public Instruction (DPI) website – the new Mental Health Literacy Units of Instruction is the result of many requests for mental health literacy resources that are accessible. Too often other resources were expensive and too extensive. There was a need for universal mental health promotion that could fill a gap in mental health resources.



Enter the Mental Health Literacy Units of Instruction. This free resource provides lesson plans for third grade through high school:

- Grades 3-5 – Managing My Mental Health
- Grades 6-8 – Advocating for My Mental Health
- Grades 9-12 – Let's Talk about Mental Health

The lessons are focused on skills to address well-being and to talk about mental health. The units are skills-based and focus on self-management, advocacy, or interpersonal communication.

One of the unique aspects of this new resource is it was driven by people in Wisconsin. It was co-created by parents and youth with lived experience, mental health experts and advocates, as well as educators and school staff who determined what to include. National health education experts then wrote the curricula.

Since mental health is typically included in health courses, the hope is that health teachers and school services professionals will pair together to implement the curricula. The resources are ready-to-go and scripted for easy use.

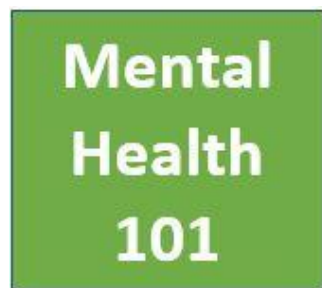
A parent/caregiver companion guide will be released later this school year. This will provide materials for students to take home and have family discussions on mental health.

Access the Mental Health Literacy Units of Instruction [here](#). Encourage your school district to download and utilize these instructional units this academic year.

Mental Health 101 – It's all about Relationships

By: Tracey Stanislawski, Birth to 3 Practitioner, OCMH Lived Experience Partner

When your child is transitioning to a school setting, there may be a lot of unknowns and questions that arise. You may wonder if your child will have friends or if the teacher will understand your child the way you do. You are your child's best advocate and know your child best. Your words matter! A few ways to ease that transition is to introduce yourself and your child to the teacher. Begin by building a strong relationship. A simple note or phone call is a good way to start. Share what is important to you and what you want the teacher to know. You can start by sharing your child's likes and dislikes, your goals for your child, and best times and ways to contact you. Ask the teacher what they expect from your child and ways to support that at home. Find out the best ways and times to contact the teacher. Starting the relationships with your new school goes a long way in supporting your child. When your child watches you build bridges, they learn to build them too!



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OCMH Updates

Youth Listening Session – The Impact of Social Media

In partnership with Milwaukee Office of Violence Prevention and the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention, OCMH is coordinating two virtual Listening Sessions in September. Youth ages 13 – 24 are invited to share their thoughts, concerns, and ideas on the impact of social media.



- **Young adults ages 19-24** – Wednesday, September 22, 2021, 5 – 6:30 pm (\$50 e-gift card for attending)
- **Teens ages 13-18** – Wednesday, September 29, 2021, 5 – 6:30 pm (\$30 e-gift card for attending)

All teens/young adults in these two age groups in the State of Wisconsin are invited to attend. Register to attend [here](#).

Help us spread the word and promote this event on social media and networks. [Youth Listening Session Flyer](#). [Youth Listening Session image](#).

Peer Support Networks at School – A Strategy for Improving Student Well-being

Our August fact sheet on [Rebuilding Peer Connections](#) highlighted the importance of peer relationships for youth well-being. Peer connections have been suffering during the pandemic even among students attending in-person classes. Our fact sheet suggests a number of strategies to improve peer connections, including peer support groups at school. OCMH has begun tracking the number of Youth Mental Health Peer Groups across Wisconsin and [mapped](#) a total of 117 so far. The types of peer support groups we have found are: [Sources Of Strength](#), [NAMI Raise Your Voice](#), [Redgen](#), and [Hope Squad](#). Each group has a slightly different model for engaging youth and focusing activities. If there is a peer support program in your area that we have missed on our map, let us know by emailing us at OCMH@wisconsin.gov.

At the [Coalition to Expand School-Based Mental Health](#)'s Summit in June, Wendy Harris, Project Coordinator for Healthy Teen Minds in Northeast Wisconsin, led a [Wellness Contagion In Schools: A Data-Driven Strategy](#) workshop that featured an overview of Sources of Strength and how to get it started at your school. Healthy Teen Minds has provided trainings to more than a dozen schools in their area and are currently recruiting additional schools to be trained during this school year. The Coalition to Expand School-Based Mental Health announced recently that Sources of Strength trainings are being scheduled for November in southwestern Wisconsin. Here's a [link](#) to find out more.

As our Children's Mental Health Collective Impact Initiative focuses on social connections, we are pleased to see so much activity around improving students' peer connections.

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Legislative & Policy Update

A few bills related to children's mental health were introduced over the summer.

- **AB 446 / SB 454.** Under current law, school boards and independent charter schools must annually assess pupils enrolled in four-year-old kindergarten to second grade for reading readiness using an assessment of literacy fundamentals selected by the school board or independent charter school. This bill defines the type of assessments to be used and requires reading plans for students at risk. (Lead sponsors: Rep. Kitchens, Sen. Bernier)
- **AB 333 / SB 475.** Decrease from 50% to 25% the matching funds required for crisis grants to municipalities and limit grants to \$100,000. (Lead Sponsors: Rep. Steineke, Sen. Wanggaard)
- **AB 479/ SB 340.** Increase by 25% Medical Assistance payment for behavioral treatment services for children with autism. (Lead Sponsors: Rep. Murphy, Sen. Jacque)

Children's Mental Health in Professional Literature

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



Reluctancy towards Help-Seeking for Mental Health Concerns at Secondary School among Students in the COMPASS Study. [Read the article.](#)

Global Prevalence of Depressive and Anxiety Symptoms in Children and Adolescents During COVID-19 – A Meta-analysis. [Read the article.](#)

Do Positive Emotions Make You More Prosocial? Direct and Indirect Effects of an Intervention Program on Prosociality in Colombian Adolescents During Social Isolation Due to COVID-19. [Read the article.](#)

Perinatal mental health: a review of progress and challenges. [Read the article.](#)

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

Of Interest

September is Suicide Prevention Month

Suicidal thoughts can affect anyone regardless of age, gender, or background. As Suicide Prevention Awareness Month, September provides a time to raise awareness on this topic. For information

[NAMI](#) – “Together for Mental Health” and [Prevent Suicide Wisconsin](#). The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline is 800.273.8255.



Qualified Treatment Trainees (QTT) Grants Program

Wisconsin mental health agencies that currently hire or may hire post-graduate QTTs can apply for a Wisconsin Department of Health Services Division of Care and Treatment Services grant to fund costs

related to increasing the number of placements available to post-graduate QTTs in the state of Wisconsin. For [information](#). To access the [application](#). Or email OttGrants@uww.edu

Replacing School Police with Services that Work

As students return to school across the nation, the Bazelon Center releases a report that calls on states and localities to re-imagine school safety to include mental health support and remove police in schools. Read the [report](#).

Just Recovery for Racial Equity Innovation Funding

This provides support for community partners that are working to mobilize communities towards mitigation and recovery from COVID-19 and those working to elevate community. Funding by the MATCH group at the UW Population Health Institute. [Learn more](#).

Gov. Evers Awards \$50 Million in Beyond the Classroom Grants

Over 100 out-of-school and childcare providers across the state have received Beyond the Classroom grants to help increase enrollment capacity, provide additional learning opportunities, or increase mental health support for school-age children during the 2021-2022 school year and summer months of 2021 and 2022. Read the [article](#).

Children's Mental Health in the News

Drug overdose deaths increased in Wisconsin during the COVID-19 pandemic. Read the [article](#).

Teens are Advocating for Mental Health Days off School. Read the [article](#).

City of Madison unveils program that will send specialists to non-violent mental health calls instead of police. Read the [article](#).

American Rescue Plan Act: Proposed Funding for Mental Health and Substance Use Services. Read the [article](#).

The Office of Children's Mental Health
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