

MENTAL HEALTH MATTERS:

Pulling together, helping families in Texoma

By: Lindsey Hughes, LPC-Intern, Special to the Herald Democrat

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About two weeks ago I saw a joke being passed around on the internet which said, “I feel like the world has sent us all to our rooms to think about what we’ve done.” As someone who spent a considerable amount of my teen years being grounded, it feels all too real. As I read recent news reports of crystal-clear waterways in Italy and a sharp decrease in air pollution across the world, I am filled with hope for a new, brighter beginning ahead.

Though, as I continue reading about the struggles across the globe, my thoughts turn to the mental and emotional well-being of those here in our local community. Feelings of fear, stress, isolation, and anxiety can be detected in news reports or walking through the barren grocery stores. However, these struggles and concerns were present prior to COVID-19 and have not cleared up like Italy’s waterways. In fact, for many, these experiences have only intensified because, as a species, we humans are not meant to live in isolation. We are designed to stay connected for our best well-being.

Although people are affected differently, no one is untouched by the widespread impacts of this pandemic and the Child and Family Guidance Center (CFGC) is standing on the front lines to help mitigate the mental and emotional toll on our community.

To assist local families, the Child and Family Guidance Center (CFGC) is offering Teletherapy to existing and new clients and is waiving sliding scale fees to uninsured clients through May. CFGC also recognizes that some people just need a listening ear and a little help navigating the many resources that are available in this community. For these individuals, the new Tele-Support Program was created. The Tele-Support Program has a goal of creating quick, convenient, and free access to connect with an Associate Therapist to be able to process the emotional impact, learn effective coping skills, and provide local resources without the time commitment required to begin the traditional therapy process.

Now, more than ever, is the time to pull together ... even when we cannot be together. It is a time to be creative and establish these safety nets of connection to build the resilience of our community. We will get through this and we will be stronger for it in the end. The world might have sent us all to our homes for a timeout, however, our collective strength, resilience, and deep Texoma community roots have remained unchanged and the Child and Family Guidance Center is ready and waiting to extend a helping hand or a listening ear. We Are Here.

If you are interested in services, please call 903-893-7768 or go to **www.cfgcenter.org**.

Lindsey Hughes is a Licensed Professional Counselor-Intern (LPC-Intern). She is a full-time staff therapist at the Child and Family Guidance Center and has been with CFGC since early 2019. Lindsey specializes in Play Therapy and enjoys working with a wide range of clients and client concerns. The views and opinions expressed here are the author's own and do not necessarily reflect those of the Herald Democrat.

<https://www.heralddemocrat.com/news/20200410/mental-health-matters-pulling-together-helping-families-in-texoma>