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Attn: Community Editors

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Contact: Suzanne Weinert
248-758-1991
weinerts@oaklandchn.org

Caitlin Toth
248-277-5416
tothc@oaklandchn.org

OCHN Releases Tips for Coping with Triggers

OAKLAND COUNTY, MI (April 22, 2024) – Oakland Community Health Network (OCHN) is releasing tips for coping with triggers following the release of a Hulu documentary that explores the trials of James and Jennifer Crumbley. The mass shooting that occurred in Oxford in November of 2021 continues to impact members of our community, and OCHN urges individuals and families to be aware of potential triggers and coping mechanisms ahead of anticipated increased media coverage.

Triggers refer to the experience of having an emotional reaction to a disturbing topic in the media or a social setting. Coping skills are strategies to deal with triggers and reduce their negative impact. For individuals with a history of trauma or abuse, triggers are stimuli that can cause people to reexperience their trauma. Triggers can also have a greater impact on those who live with mental health concerns and/or substance use disorders.

Triggers vary widely from person to person and can be internal or external. An internal trigger comes from within the person. This can be a memory, a physical sensation, or an emotion. External triggers come from the person's environment and can be a person, place, or a specific situation.

Tips for coping with triggers:

- Lean on your friends and family for support
- Express your feelings through writing or talking
- Maintain a healthy routine, including exercise and nutritious meals
- Practice mindfulness, deep breathing, and meditation
- Step back and think about the cause of your emotions
- Acknowledge your feelings and give yourself time and space to work through them
- It's OK to avoid watching the documentary if you find the content upsetting
- Be mindful that others may be discussing the documentary on social media – it's OK to keep scrolling!
- If you're engaged in behavioral health treatment, reach out to your treatment provider if you notice worsening symptoms

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Tips for talking with youth about triggers:

- Observe and be aware of warning signs like changes in behavior
- Consider the youths perception of the event/trigger
- Talk about their feelings and validate their emotions
- Help them connect the dots between the stimuli and their emotions
- Cue the youth the practice coping skills such as exercise and breath work
- Check in and create a sense of normalcy and routine

If you or someone you know needs immediate assistance, call or text the Suicide & Crisis Lifeline at 988. Non-emergency Access services can be reached at (248) 464-6363. OCHN Mental Health Schools Navigators can connect youth and families to behavioral health and substance use supports. For more information call 248-462-6294 or email schoolnavigator@oaklandchn.org. To learn more about OCHN, visit www.oaklandchn.org

About OCHN

OCHN is contracted by the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services to lead a provider service network that assists approximately 29,000 Oakland County citizens at more than 400 service sites across the county. People who receive public behavioral health services through OCHN's provider network include those who have an intellectual or developmental disability, mental health challenge, or substance use disorder. Most of these individuals have Medicaid insurance coverage.

OCHN's goal is to ensure these individuals are aware of and have access to services and supports that will improve their health and quality of life, as well as ensure their engagement in full community participation. Its mission to "inspire hope, empower people, and strengthen communities" reflects an unyielding belief in a "Valuable System for Valued People." Programs and supports provided by OCHN's service network are available at www.oaklandchn.org.

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