Oakland Community Health Network

Developmental Disabilities • Mental Health • Substance Recovery

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OCHN Offers Mental Health Tips

OAKLAND COUNTY, MI (October 11, 2023) – Oakland Community Health Network (OCHN) is releasing tips for families and individuals to manage stress or trauma associated with recent violence. Situations of war abroad including Ukraine and the recent attack on Israel can be difficult. This is especially true if residents are concerned about family members in these areas and in their own community.

To help manage anxiety, fear, sadness, or stress associated with these traumatic events as well as graphic news reporting, OCHN is recommending the following mental health tips:

Tips for Adults:

- Be mindful to consider your amount of exposure to the news / media and ensure the news you consume is from a trusted source to limit misinformation.
- Everyone experiences events and trauma in different ways and however they think or feel after an event like this is okay. Some people respond with fear, some anger, some shock, sadness, etc.
- Encourage people to talk about what they are thinking and feeling. Don't hesitate to ask for help from mental health professionals, especially if thoughts of self-harm or suicide arise.
- Try to get back to routines and schedules to promote feelings of consistency and balance to reduce fear and provide a feeling of returning control and predictability.

Tips for Parents:

- Acknowledge what happened. If your child is talking or asking about traumatic events, it is important for the caregivers / loved ones in their life to acknowledge what happened, provide age-appropriate information, and be supportive.
- Parents may want to approach older children who may have seen the news or videos on social media and find out what they know and what their thoughts / feelings are about what happened.
- Recognize the effect this has on your child. Talk to your child about their thoughts and emotions as it pertains to the event and validate their feelings and concerns.

Tips for Community Members:

- Building and maintaining authentic relationships will help your partners and allies better understand and respond.
- Engage in implicit bias training and ongoing opportunities for meaningful dialogue.
- Establishing relationships with neighbors can create a cadre of allies who can provide support and help counter injustice in the community.
- As a community member, you have the power to stand up to injustice.

OCHN Resources:

- OCHN's non-emergency behavioral health access department is available Monday-Friday from 8 a.m. - 8 p.m. at 248-464-6363.
- OCHN's Mental Health School Navigators (MHSN) connect youth and families to behavioral health and substance use supports, as well as financial assistance. For more information about the School Mental Health Navigator Program please call 248-462-6294 or email SchoolNavigator@oaklandchn.org
- Call 988 for Crisis and Emergency Support

Resources for Discussing Injustice

- Helping Students Mark Sense of News Stories about Bias and Injustice
- Empowering Young People in the Aftermath of Hate

About OCHN

OCHN is contracted by the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services to lead a provider service network and manages care for 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 concerns, 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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