

### **PCS Health Monthly Digest**

## National Health Observances

May: Mental Health Awareness Month

#### LET'S TALK ABOUT IT



by Ramona Popa, RN SoCC School Nurse on May 2023

## What is Mental Health and why is it important?

Life will bring many challenges in our everyday life. Whether it be the heavy stress load from school, conflicts with friends/relationships, or trying to identify who you are as a person, our mental health is important to maintain. It's okay to feel angry, sad, or worried sometimes. However, it's also important to seek help when needed, and take care of yourself.

Mental health encompasses our emotional, psychological and social well-being. It influences how we think, act, and feel. It's important to maintain your mental health in order to cope with the various stresses of life, be productive in what you do, have meaningful relationships, and realize your full capabilities.

#### TIPS TO MAINTAIN YOUR MENTAL HEALTH:

- Seeking professional help when needed
- Continue with routine health appointments for preventive care
- Stay up to date with immunizations
- Identify and develop healthy coping skills (e.g., deep breathing exercises, meditation)
- Connect and engage with others, such as in your community
- Get physically active, get outdoors (physical activity at least 30 minutes a day)
- Eat nutritious meals (e.g., fruits/vegetables, lean protein, whole grains)
- Get adequate sleep
- Avoid alcohol, drugs and tobacco products
- Take breaks when needed



# THIS MONTH'S **TOP STORIES**

#### **Quick Facts:**

- 1 in 6 youth ages 12-17, experienced a Major Depressive episode
- 1 out of 5 youth reported that the COVID-19 Pandemic had a negative impact on their mental health

(National Alliance on Mental illness, 2022)

#### What is a Mental Health Condition?

A condition that significantly interferes and changes how a person thinks, feels, and acts. These conditions may severely impact the person's day to day, causing a lot of distress. Mental health conditions include but are not limited to: Anxiety Disorders, Bipolar Disorder, Post-traumatic Stress Disorder, Borderline Personality Disorder and Major Depressive Disorder.



#### SIGNS THAT SOMEONE MAY BE LIVING WITH A MENTAL HEALTH CONDITION INCLUDE:

- Isolating away from others and usual activities
- Feeling numb or as if nothing matters
- Feeling helpless and or hopeless
- Having low energy or no energy at all
- Unexplained aches or pains
- Using drugs, alcohol and or smoking more than usual
- Constant problems/arguments with family and friends
- Severe mood swings that interfere with relationships
- Thinking of self harm behaviors and or doing harm to others
- Experiencing persistent thoughts that you can't seem to get out of your head
- Difficulty and inability to perform daily tasks such as going to work or school

#### Resources:

- National Suicide Prevention Life line: 1-800-273-TALK (8255), 24/7 and confidential
- SAMHSA'S National Helpline: 1-800-662 HELP (4357), 24/7 and confidential
- California Youth Crisis Hotline: (800)784-2432
- Sonoma County Dept. Mental Health Services Hotline: 707-576-8181
- The Trevor Project (LGBTQ youth): 1-866-488-7386 or text "START" to 678678 or dial 911, in case of a emergency

For more information, advice, support or resources, contact your school site nurse.

#### References:

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