



Broome County Suicide Awareness for Everyone

A local suicide prevention coalition in Broome County whose mission is to reduce the number of suicides and suicide attempts by increasing public awareness and providing educational and training resources.

Destigmatizing Men's Mental Health

Mental health is a topic that carries a stigma, but the stigma associated with men's mental health is worsened by social and cultural pressures. Ignoring men's mental health and teaching men that it's not normal to struggle or that if they do, it means they are weak, is the norm. All of this impacts how men perceive mental health; how those around them understand and react to it; and how or if men seek support for it.

Time for change

Men experience the same emotions as women, but they are often taught that it's a sign of weakness to express their feelings or to struggle with mental health issues. We hear things like, "take it like a man", or "man up", but it's time for us to recognize that suppressing these emotions is unnatural and unhealthy; and teaching young boys to do this is setting them up for failure. We need to normalize sharing emotions regardless of gender and encourage the men in our lives to seek support if they are struggling. We need to change the messages they hear. It is normal, natural, and healthy for a man to cry or to feel scared. It shows strength when we express and share our feelings and it shows strength to seek support.

The reality is men are just as likely as women to experience issues with their mental health. 10% of women compared to 11% of men struggle with mental health issues (teentalk.ca, 2017). However, men face higher rates of addiction than women and **75 % of suicides are completed by men** (CMHA, 2007). Mental health issues can also present differently in men;



they are more likely to experience physical symptoms related to their mental health. This makes it harder for the individual, friends or family members, and even medical professionals to identify or recognize what is happening. In addition to this, men are not only less likely to access mental health supports, they are also less likely to reach out to friends or family (teentalk.ca, 2017). This means men and boys are being left behind.

How can we help?

We need to encourage men to share how they are feeling and to reach out for support. We need to give them a safe place to do this and support them when they do. We need to validate men and their experiences by letting them know that we understand it is not easy to be a man in this society and that they have a lot of pressures on them. We need to include men in the discussions relating to struggles with parenting, abusive relationships, and childhood trauma.

We need to teach young boys and girls that it is important for men to show and share their emotions. We need to teach them that it is not a sign of weakness to seek support, but a sign of strength. It is important to make these conversations a regular thing, to normalize them, and to set the example for them.

Men's mental health week is a great time to think about how we are taking care of the men and boys in our lives and what we are teaching them. These men are our fathers, brothers, husbands, friends, and sons... and they deserve to be supported.

Adapted from:
www.skinnerpsychotherapy.com

Since that day [that I opened up about my emotions], it's just been so much easier to live and so much easier to enjoy life. -Michael Phelps



ALZHEIMER'S & BRAIN awareness month

alzheimer's association

However, Alzheimer's is actually the sixth leading cause of death among the U.S. population.

A new study shows just how devastating a diagnosis of mental decline can be: Researchers found that rates of suicide rise sharply in the months after such news is delivered. The study

"Alzheimer's and Brain Awareness Month" is declared each June by the **Alzheimer's Association** to help raise awareness about the disease.

Many people know that Alzheimer's disease causes debilitating memory loss.

of almost 148,000 older U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs patients, mostly men, looked at diagnoses for mild cognitive impairment (MCI), which is often (but not always) a precursor to dementia. "Risk of suicide attempt was 73% higher in patients recently diagnosed with MCI and 44% higher in those recently diagnosed with dementia" compared to patients without such diagnoses, researchers reported.

The message to patients and those closest to them is clear: "Following a diagnosis, patients, their loved ones and providers should be conscious of an increase in symptoms of depression, such as, increased social withdrawal, increased feelings of sadness, and increase in suicidal thoughts, to name a few."

Adapted from: <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2021-03-suicide-spike-dementia-diagnosis.html> and <https://www.unityhealthcare.com/june-is-alzheimers-and-brain-awareness-month-showing-support-for-those-living-with-dementia/>

11 Exercises for Mental Sharpness



Research shows there are many ways you can boost your mental sharpness and help your brain stay healthy, no matter your age. Here are some exercises that offer brain-boosting benefits:

1. Jigsaw puzzles

No matter the size, working on a jigsaw puzzle is an excellent way to strengthen your brain.

2. Try your hand at cards

Research has shown that a quick card game can lead to greater brain volume. Try learning one of the tried-and-true games, solitaire, bridge, gin rummy, and hearts.

3. Build your vocabulary

Try this: keep a notebook with you when you read, write down one unfamiliar word and look up the definition, try to use that word five times the next day.

4. Dance

Learning new moves can increase your brain's speed and memory. Take

a dance class, or try Zumba.

5. Use all your senses

Try doing activities that engage all five senses. Bake a batch of cookies, or visit a farmer's market while you focus on smelling, touching, tasting, seeing, and hearing all at the same time.

6. Learn a new skill

Learning a new skill may help strengthen the connections in your brain and can help improve memory function in older adults.

7. Teach a new skill to someone else

One of the best ways to expand your learning is to teach a skill to another person.

8. Listen to or play music

Listening to music can help boost your creative thinking. Learning to play music can happen at any age and is a fun new skill to learn.

9. Take a new route

Choose a different route to get to work each week. Your brain can benefit from this simple change.

10. Meditate

Daily meditation can calm your body, slow your breathing, and reduce stress and anxiety. It can also help fine-tune memory and increase your brain's ability to process information.

11. Learn a new language

It's never too late to reap the rewards of learning a new language.

According to researchers, you can boost your memory and improve other mental functions by becoming a student of a new language at any time in your life.

The bottom line is that focusing on your brain health is one of the best things you can do to improve your concentration, focus, memory, and mental agility, no matter what age.

Adapted from: www.healthline.com/health/mental-health/brain-exercises#focus

SUMMER

Bucket List

20 fun things to do

<input type="checkbox"/> go to the beach	<input type="checkbox"/> go on a roadtrip
<input type="checkbox"/> eat popsicles	<input type="checkbox"/> have a craft day
<input type="checkbox"/> camp out	<input type="checkbox"/> play mini golf
<input type="checkbox"/> make s'mores	<input type="checkbox"/> go bowling
<input type="checkbox"/> watch the sunset	<input type="checkbox"/> read more books
<input type="checkbox"/> eat breakfast outside	<input type="checkbox"/> tech-free day
<input type="checkbox"/> go fishing	<input type="checkbox"/> ride bikes
<input type="checkbox"/> swim in the lake	<input type="checkbox"/> dessert for dinner
<input type="checkbox"/> have a picnic	<input type="checkbox"/> have a water fight
<input type="checkbox"/> drive-in movie	<input type="checkbox"/> watch fireworks

www.kindlyunspoken.com

If you or a loved one is in crisis, seek emergency help immediately by calling **911** or call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at **1-800-273-TALK (8255)**.

Text **GOT5** to **741741** for the Crisis Text Line

NYS Emotional Support Help Line: **1-844-863-9314**

Suicide Prevention Lifeline: <https://suicidepreventionlifeline.org/>

Download the FREE **HOPE - Broome County Mental Health App** for more information and resources.



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#Broomehas
Hope