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and Wheeler counties

Mental Health: There is Hope for Good Mental Health

Gregory J. Row, Executive Director, Concho Valley MHMR
San Angelo Standard-Times, May 4, 2015

May is Mental Health Awareness Month and, May 3-9 is Children's Mental Health Awareness Week.

You may say to yourself, "Hmmm, that's interesting" and go about your day, your week and month. But stop for a moment and ask, "What is mental illness"? Just those two words can sometimes scare people; "just keep it quiet, maybe it will go away" or "ignore your brother, that's just the way he is".

The two words are often associated with disrespectful language; "She's crrraaazzzyy!" or "That guy is psycho!" Then there are the jokes that can be very hurtful.

However, mental illness is not something that should be misrepresented, hidden or joked about. It is an illness that affects 1 in 5 people in America and can have devastating effects on a person and their family.

According to the National Alliance on Mental Illness, a mental illness is "a medical condition that disrupts a person's thinking, feeling, mood, ability to relate to others and daily functioning. Just as diabetes is a disorder of the pancreas, mental illnesses are medical conditions that often result in a diminished capacity for coping with the ordinary demands of life."

Think about this, if a person begins displaying physical symptoms such as excessive thirst and increased urination, or

fatigue, weight loss and possibly tingling hands and feet, these could be symptoms of diabetes.

The individual, will more than likely, make an appointment with a medical doctor. The doctor will visit with the person about the symptoms they have been experiencing and probably have some tests run and lab work to check blood sugar levels.

The doctor will probably prescribe medications, have the individual change their diet, possibly refer them to a dietitian to assist with a meal plan, and suggest an exercise program. The individual may seek out others who have diabetes to visit with and learn from; such as a support group.

Like a physical illness, a person with mental illness may follow very similar steps. Perhaps a person starts to develop symptoms such as feelings of helplessness and hopelessness, or loss of interest in daily activities, appetite or weight changes, sleep changes, loss of energy and concentration problems.

These are all symptoms of depression.

The individual will go to the doctor, a psychiatrist, who is a medical doctor who specializes in conditions of the brain. The person will visit with the psychiatrist and discuss the symptoms they have been experiencing.

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The psychiatrist will perform an evaluation that assists with properly making a diagnosis. The psychiatrist, once certain of a diagnosis, will often prescribe medications. Additionally, the psychiatrist may recommend talk therapy, or counseling, to assist the person with managing their symptoms and feelings they may be experiencing.

The individual may receive additional supports such as assistance with maintaining a job or housing. An individual may seek out others with similar diagnosis and connect through a support group.

Like a physical illness, mental illness can be treated. The example of diabetes and depression both can be managed with a combination of medications and various supports. Of course, living with an illness of any kind is difficult. A lot of hard work must be done by the individual with the illness. However, a person with diabetes can live with diabetes. The disease can be managed.

The same is true with a mental illness. Depression, schizophrenia, bipolar disorder can all be managed and a person can lead a full life.

Mental illness is nothing to be ashamed of: it should not be the butt of a joke, or used as a taunt toward others, or shunned as an embarrassment. Mental illness is a serious disease and people with this disease deserve the same compassion as anyone who has diabetes, cancer, heart disease, etc.

As with many diseases, they can become life threatening if not addressed. Like diabetes, a mental illness, if untreated, can become very dangerous and potentially harmful to an individual.

Untreated Type 2 diabetes can lead to a number of life threatening health risks, including heart attack, kidney disease, and stroke. Similarly, severe depression, if left untreated, can lead to a serious life threatening event: suicide.

Someone in this country dies by suicide every 12.8 minutes.

According to the National Council on Behavioral Health, the national suicide rate has increased to 12.6 suicide deaths per 100,000. Startling numbers from the Texas Department of State Health Services state that in Tom Green County alone 52 individuals took their lives from 2011 to 2013. What's doubly tragic is that most suicides are preventable.

What can the average person do to help a friend or family member?

First, learn to identify the warning signs.

Here are some examples:

- Talking about wanting to die
- Looking for a way to kill oneself
- Talking about feeling hopeless or having no purpose
- Talking about feeling trapped or in unbearable pain
- Talking about being a burden to others
- Increasing the use of alcohol
- Acting anxious, agitated or reckless
- Sleeping too much or too little
- Withdrawing or feeling isolated
- Showing rage or talking about seeking revenge
- Displaying extreme mood swings

Second, if someone begins to exhibit any warning signs of suicide there are actions to take and resources to use:

- Do not leave the person alone
- Remove any firearms, alcohol, drugs or sharp objects that could be used in a suicide attempt
- Call the local crisis line
- Take the person to an emergency room or seek help from a medical or mental health professional

Another resource available is a course called Mental Health First Aide. MHFA is an interactive, 5-step public education program that teaches factors and warning signs of mental illness and how to handle crisis situations.

May is the month of awareness. The definition of being aware is "knowing that something such as a situation or condition, exists."

White Hat Award



The IDD Service Coordination department would like to give the White Hat Award to **Rosa Rivera, Pampa Day Habilitation Director**. She has done an excellent job with reorganizing the day-hab and making sure our clients are receiving the training and services they have asked for. She has an open door policy with the service coordinators and makes every effort to communicate with us. Thank you, Rosa. We appreciate you.

Sharon Guinn for IDD Service Coordination

Answers to last months questions:

1) April 20, 2015 4-10pm 2) Food Poisoning 3) April 27, 2015



Superman, the middle age years



"Cash? Gee, I'm new here and I haven't been trained in making change. Would you like to open a store charge?"



In observance of Memorial Day, TPC
Offices will be closed Monday,
May 25, 2015.
Wishing everyone a safe and enjoyable
holiday.

Welcome these New Employees...

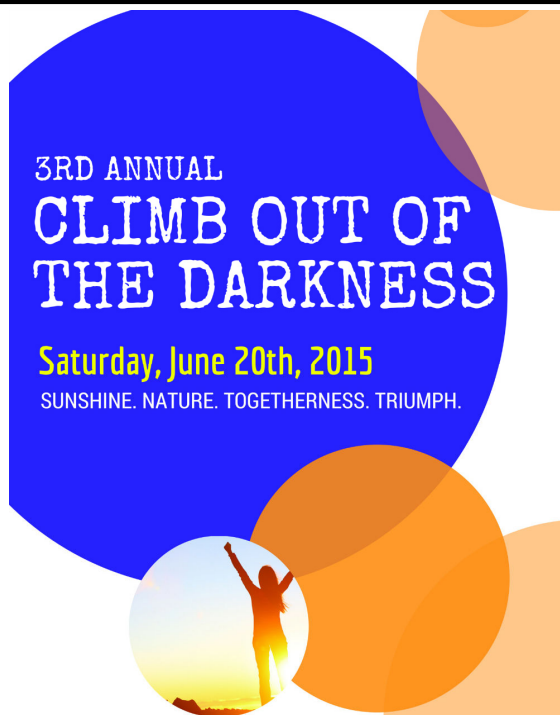
Jonathan Sisson	Somerset Group Home
Sonya Perez	Clearwell Group Home
Tevin Easter	ASCI Amarillo
Roberto Padilla	1115 Waiver - Peer Support
Katherine Duke	Adult Med Clinic
Toemica Howard	Community Living
Joy Williams	1115 Waiver - Peer Support
Amy Atwood	Browning Group Home



Postpartum Progress' Climb Out of the Darkness® is the world's largest event raising awareness of maternal mental illnesses like postpartum depression, postpartum anxiety & OCD, postpartum PTSD, postpartum psychosis, postpartum bipolar disorder, and pregnancy depression and anxiety.

Climb Out of the Darkness is held on or near the longest day of the year annually to help shine the *most* light on perinatal mood and anxiety disorders. The event features mothers and others across the globe joining together to climb mountains and hike trails to represent their symbolic rise out of the darkness of maternal mental illness and into the light of hope and recovery. We can't wait for Climb Out of the Darkness 2015, to be held Saturday, June 20th at 11am at Medi Park in Amarillo. Mark your calendars!

Help us shine the light of hope with our words and our advocacy efforts so that our fellow mothers will receive better information and better treatment, and their new families will get off to the healthy and strong start they deserve. If you have questions or would like to lead or join a Climb or become a Climb sponsor, email us at: climbout@postpartumprogress.org or visit the website at: postpartumprogress.org/climb-out-of-the-darkness/





The following teams are participating in Walk Across Texas this spring. WAT teams participated in the scheduled walked out on work on Wednesday April 29th.

1. Heart Rate Raisers
2. Honey Badgers
3. Like A Boss
4. Lollygaggers
5. Red Hot Chili Steppers
6. Texas Hot Trotters
7. Thing 1
8. Thing 2
9. Were Kind of a Big Deal
10. Wonder Walkers





Personnel Protective Equipment (PPE)

What is PPE?

Where do I find it?

When do I use it?

All are good questions! PPE is special equipment and clothing to help protect individuals from infection. It consists of non permeable gowns, mask, gloves, eye protection, shoe covers, CPR mask, etc.

These items may be used individually or all at the same time depending on circumstances. Gloves should be worn when encountering contaminated surfaces. Gloves, gowns, mask, and goggles should be worn when encountering spills and any possibility of splashes of infected substances.

PPE kits are located in all areas that have the possibility of employee exposure. Ask your supervisor where the PPE kits are located in your specific work areas. Remember to use PPE to protect yourself and your health!

Rodney Bailey RN
Director of IDD Nursing



The following employee was recognized through the Performance Enhancement Program for one or more of the following: Core Competencies, Safety, Critical Thinking, Communication, Client Rights, Continuous Quality Improvement, Professional Behavior, Customer Service:

formance Enhancement
tencies, Safety, Critical
Quality Improvement, Pro-

Laura Phillips, STAR

Reminder to supervisors: If you would like employees recognized through PEP in the newsletter, submit the PEP (or a copy) to the respective executive manager for approval.

Easter Worrell, IDD Service Coordination, answered last month's questions correctly and was randomly selected to win a \$25 gift card from Amarillo National Bank.

To claim your card, contact Joyce Lopez at 806.351.3308 or email: joyce.lopez@txpan.org.

Congratulations!





Early Childhood Intervention

And

Palo Duro Creek Golf Course



Second Annual Golf Tournament

August 9, 2015

Shotgun Start 9:00 am

Teams of 4

\$360.00 per team

Includes Breakfast, Lunch, Hole

Prizes, Silent Auction,

Team Payouts

Call Susan Stokes 282-0535

Susan.stokes@txpan.org



Sun exposure is a known cause of skin cancer. But knowing you should protect your skin for sun damage and actually doing it are two different things. Images of bronzed models of celebrities along with targeted marketing from tanning centers seem to downplay the dangers of sun exposure. It's important to understand that skin cancer is the most common form of cancer in the United States.

Protection from ultraviolet (UV) radiation is important all year round, not just during the summer months. UV rays can reach you on cloudy and hazy days, as well as bright and sunny days. UV rays also reflect off of surfaces like water, cement, sand and snow. Indoor tanning in a booth, bed, or sunlamp also exposes you to UV radiation.

When skin cells are damaged by the sun or tanning beds, they may begin to rapidly multiply out of control and form a tumor.

The American Cancer Society encourages us to learn the ABC's of skin cancer. Ask your doctor to take a look at any spots, freckles or moles you notice with:

Asymmetry: One half of the mole does not match the other half.

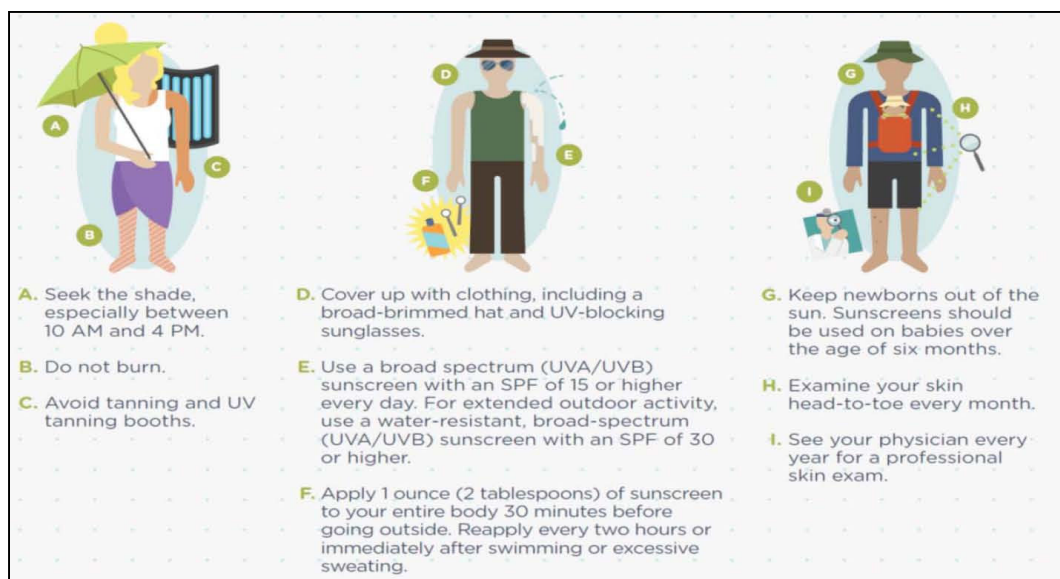
Border irregularity: The edges of the mole are irregular, ragged, blurred or notched.

Color: The color of the mole is not the same all over. There may be shades of tan, brown or black.

Diameter: The mole is larger than about 1/4 inch - about the size of a pencil eraser. Doctors are now seeing more melanomas that are smaller. A melanoma is a cancer tumor of melanin-forming cells, typically a malignant tumor associated with skin cancer.

The good news: Most skin cancers can be treated successfully if detected early. Prevention is the best option. Examine your skin head-to-toe every month and see your doctor once annually for a professional skin exam.

For more information on skin cancer detection and prevention visit www.cancer.org



Employee Recognition

Michelle Warnica, Medical Records, was recognized at the April 30th Board of Trustees Meeting for 30 years of service with the Center. She was awarded a plaque, gift card and a day off. Michelle was joined at the Board Meeting by her husband and son.

CONGRATULATIONS!



Answer the questions correctly and your name will be entered in a random drawing to be eligible to win a \$25 gift card.

1. _____ is the most common form of cancer in the United States.
2. ECI's Second Annual Golf Tournament is scheduled for _____ at 9:00 a.m.
3. PPE stands for _____.



Submit your answers to joyce.lopez@txpan.org. Deadline for responses is the 5th of the following month. You must type "Monthly Drawing" in the email subject line to be eligible. For those that do not have a computer, entries may be submitted via interoffice mail. The same requirements apply for hard copy submissions.

Articles, or suggestions for this publication may be submitted by the 1st of each month to:

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