

MENTAL WELLNESS

PLAYBOOK

March 2022

SELF-HARM AWARENESS MONTH

1 MAR

Self-Injury Awareness Day

8 MAR

Internat'l Women's Day

18 MAR

World Sleep Day

GET SOME Zzzz's!

Yawning, drowsy, unable to concentrate? Maybe, you are not getting enough sleep. According to the CDC, more than a third of Americans are not getting enough sleep on a regular basis.

Daily Recommended Hours of Sleep:

- 7-9 hrs for adults ages 18-65 yrs
- 12-18 hrs, including naps, for infants ages 4-12 mos
- 11-14 hrs for children ages 1-2 yrs
- 10-13 hrs for children ages 3-12 yrs
- 8-10 hrs for teens ages 13-18 yrs

For teens, due to the hormonal changes in the brain during this time, the body's circadian rhythm (an internal biological clock) is reset, telling the person to fall asleep later and wake up later. This may result in teenagers staying up late and waking up late.

Chronic conditions such as obesity, diabetes, high blood pressure, heart disease, stroke, and frequent mental distress may develop as a result of sleeping less than the recommended time.

You can improve your sleep by:

- Keeping your bedroom dark
- Maintaining a temperature range from 60-67 degrees
- Turning off electronics before bedtime
- Choosing healthy foods & avoiding alcohol
- Getting enough exercise

Ultimately, good sleep hygiene is a high priority in our physical and mental health!

*This newsletter is brought to you by your 82d MDG Mental Health Clinic.
For questions or concerns regarding your mental health or alcohol consumption, please call or visit our clinic.
Ph: (940) 676-6075 | M-F 0730-1630*

Wellness tips, inspiration & resources

NON-SUICIDAL SELF-HARM

The concept of self-harm, self-injury or non-suicidal self-injury (NSSI) is surrounded with the stigma of being a "cry for attention." This notion is far from the truth. Self-harm, self-injury or NSSI are behaviors where an individual hurts themselves on purpose due to various emotional distress. These individuals may have experienced trauma, be dealing with intense emotions, or living with a mental health condition. Some find that the physical pain they inflict helps provide temporary relief from their emotional pain by releasing unbearable anguish or emotional numbness.

Self-harm can go on for weeks, months or even years, and can happen with suicidal thoughts. However, self-harm is typically defined by hurting oneself without suicidal intent. Most often, people who engage in self-harm target their arms, legs and front of the torso because these places are easily reached and can be hidden under clothing. A person who is self-injuring may experience feelings of guilt and shame and attempt to conceal their actions.

Common Self-Harm Behaviors Are:

- Cutting, scratching, or burning the skin
- Carving words or symbols into the skin
- Inserting needles or other objects under the skin
- Picking at and deliberately interfering with healing of wounds
- Hitting or punching oneself
- Breaking bones
- Pulling hair

Warning signs that may present themselves are: cuts, bruises, scratches or burn marks, wearing long sleeves or pants in hot weather, emotional outbursts and impulsive behavior, withdrawing from relationships and expressing feelings of hopelessness or worthlessness.

Here's how to help someone who is engaged in self-harming behavior:

1. **Process your feelings:** Acknowledge and deal with your own feelings about self-injury behaviors. If you are unable to talk to the person who is self-injuring, try to find someone else who can talk to them.
2. **Create a safe space:** Offer privacy in a place with minimal distractions.
3. **Gently express concern:** Self-injury is a very private thing and is hard to talk about. Do not demand to talk about things the person is not ready to discuss. You can approach by saying, "Sometimes, when people are in a lot of emotional pain, they injure themselves on purpose. It that how your injury happened?"
4. **Offer nonjudgmental support & be an active listener:** Tell the person you are concerned about them and ask whether you can do anything to alleviate the distress. Do not minimize the person's feelings or problems. Do not promise to keep it a secret. Keep in mind that stopping self-injury should not be the focus of the conversation, but rather what can be done to make the person's life more manageable or their environment less distressing.
5. **Help them make a plan to get help:** Tell the person that you care and want to help. Encourage the person to seek professional help. Let them remain in control over seeking help as much as possible. Suggest and discuss options for getting help rather than directing the person what to do. Praise for any steps the person takes towards getting professional help.