



COMMUNITY RELATIONS & ADVOCACY COMMITTEE

Wednesday, November 6, 2024

4:00 P.M.

2012 West 25th Street, United Bank Building / 6th Floor - Ohio Room

Committee Mission Statement: *To establish mental health and addiction as a permanent civic priority, enhance the public's perception of people with mental illness and addiction, increase community support and future funding opportunities, and broaden communication, cooperation and partnerships with people living with mental illness and addiction, family members, organizations, other governments and the public.*

AGENDA

1. **Call to Order** – *Sadigoh C. Galloway, MSW, LSW, LICDC-CS, Committee Chair*
2. **Public Comment on Agenda Items** – *Sadigoh C. Galloway, MSW, LSW, LICDC-CS*
3. **Approval of Minutes:** September 4, 2024 – *Sadigoh C. Galloway, MSW, LSW, LICDC-CS*
4. **Legislative Update** – *Latoya Hunter Hayes, Chief of External Affairs*
5. **ADAMHS Board 2025 Annual Meeting Brunch, Awards Ceremony and Client Art Show** – Not to Exceed \$35,000 – (Action Requested) – *Latoya Hunter Hayes*
6. **Care Response Pilot Program Communications Update** – *Latoya Hunter Hayes*
7. **Coping with the Holidays Booklet** – *Latoya Hunter Hayes*
8. **Roads to Recovery '24 Conference Recap** – *Carole Ballard, Director of Education & Training*
9. **Media Tracking Report** – *Ian Jameson, External Affairs Officer*
10. **Social Media and Website Tracking Reports** – *Joicelyn Weems, External Affairs Officer*
11. **New Business**
12. **Follow-up**
13. **Public Comment Period**
14. **Upcoming November 2024 and January 2025 Board Meetings:**
 - Committee of the Whole Meeting: November 13, 2024
 - General Meeting: November 20, 2024
 - Community Relations & Advocacy Committee Meeting: January 8, 2025
 - Finance & Oversight Committee Meeting: January 15, 2025
 - General Meeting: January 22, 2025

Community Relations & Advocacy Committee

Sadigoh C. Galloway, MSW, LSW, LICDC-CS, Committee Chair

Ashwani Bhardwaj, Committee Vice Chair

*Reginald C. Blue, Ph.D. ▫ Gregory X. Boehm, M.D. ▫ Erskine Cade, MBA ▫ James T. Dixon
Patricia James-Stewart, M.Ed., LSW ▫ Linda D. Johaneck ▫ Katie Kern-Pilch, MA, ATR-BC, LPC-S (R), LPAT
Kathryn Y. Parks, MBA, MA, LPC, LICDC ▫ Harvey A. Snider, Esq.*

ALCOHOL, DRUG ADDICTION & MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES BOARD OF CUYAHOGA COUNTY

COMMUNITY RELATIONS & ADVOCACY (CR&A) COMMITTEE

SEPTEMBER 4, 2024

Committee Members Present: Sadigoh C. Galloway, MSW, LSW, LICDC-CS, Committee Chair, James T. Dixon, Linda D. Johaneck, Katie Kern-Pilch, MA, ATR-BC, LPC-S (R), LPAT, Harvey A. Snider, Esq. / Other Board Directors: J. Robert Fowler, Ph.D.

Absent: Ashwani Bhardwaj, Reginald C. Blue, Ph.D., Gregory X. Boehm, M.D., Erskine Cade, MBA, Patricia James-Stewart, M.Ed., LSW, Kathryn Y. Parks, MBA, MA, LPC, LICDC

Board Staff Present: Scott Osiecki, Chief Executive Officer, Latoya Hunter Hayes, Richanda Jackson-Birks, Ian Jameson, Douglas Nichols, Linda Lamp, Clare Rosser, Jessica Saker, Joiceyn Weems

1. Call to Order

Ms. Sadigoh C. Galloway, Committee Chair, called the meeting to order at 4:01 p.m. Ms. Latoya Hunter Hayes, Chief of External Affairs, read into the record the Committee Mission Statement: *"To establish mental health and addiction as a permanent civic priority, enhance the public's perception of people with mental illness and addiction, increase community support and future funding opportunities, and broaden communication, cooperation and partnerships with people living with mental illness and addiction, family members, organizations, other governments and the public."*

2. Public Comment on Agenda Items

No public comment on agenda items was received.

3. Approval of Minutes

The minutes from the May 1, 2024 Community Relations & Advocacy Committee were approved as submitted.

[J. Robert Fowler, Ph.D., arrived.]

4. Legislative Update

Mr. Scott Osiecki, Chief Executive Officer, provided an update regarding the following legislation:

Senate Bill (SB) 105: Ohio Revised Code (ORC) 340 Modernization:

SB 105, also known as the ORC 340 Modernization, was introduced on Wednesday, April 5, 2023, and is currently pending in the Community Revitalization Committee. The Boards, along with the Ohio Association of County Behavioral Health Authorities (OACBHA), continue to collaborate with the Ohio Council of Behavioral Health and Family Service Providers to reach an agreement on the bill's language. The primary unresolved issues concerning the Boards involve contracting and the Request for Proposal (RFP) provision. The groups are still working through differences in a few areas, with hopes of finalizing an agreement on the language that can be presented to members of the Senate.

Ohio Recovery Friendly Workplace:

On Friday, August 30, 2024, Governor Mike DeWine announced the launch of the Ohio Recovery Friendly Workplace program, led by the Governor's RecoveryOhio initiative. This new program is designed to create job opportunities for people recovering from substance use disorders or mental health conditions, combat stigma surrounding addiction and mental illness in the workplace and provide a boost to Ohio businesses. Companies that integrate recovery-friendly practices into their operations and core values will have the opportunity to earn the official designation as an Ohio Recovery Friendly Workplace.

The program has the potential to transform lives by offering meaningful work to individuals seeking a fresh start while providing additional support systems for current employees. It aims to reduce stigma related to mental illness and addiction. To qualify as an Ohio Recovery Friendly Workplace, businesses have various options for implementing

supportive practices, such as creating policies that facilitate the hiring of individuals in recovery and collaborating with local ADAMHS Boards to share job opportunities.

Companies are also encouraged to provide support systems that make employees feel comfortable seeking help for addiction or mental health challenges. Additional practices include training leaders to recognize signs of substance use and encouraging them to help employees seek treatment, offering access to life-saving naloxone and providing training on its use, promoting mental health and wellness education programs, and raising awareness of the 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline. A plan is underway to inform the community that support is available for training, harm reduction, and promoting 988.

City of Cleveland Tanisha's Law Legislation:

Cleveland City Councilwoman Stephanie Howes Jones and Councilman Charles Slife are planning to introduce legislation, drafted with assistance from the Case Western Reserve University (CWRU) law clinic, to codify the Care and Co-Response Programs in the City of Cleveland in memory of Ms. Tanisha Anderson. They are scheduling a meeting to discuss this legislation with various partners, including the ADAMHS Board, Cleveland Public Health, Public Safety, Emergency Medical Services (EMS), Law, and Cuyahoga County. The aim is to ensure that all parties are comfortable with the legislation and can move forward collaboratively to provide a humane response to individuals in crisis, treating them with dignity and respect while connecting them to appropriate and timely care.

The proposed legislation would establish a Division of Crisis Response, administered by a Commissioner of Crisis Response within the Department of Public Health. It defines the Care Response and Co-Response Programs, outlines partnerships with the ADAMHS Board and other agencies, and includes reporting requirements. Additionally, the legislation would codify the Consent Decree's Crisis Intervention Training Requirements.

Mr. Osiecki addressed questions from the Board Directors concerning the legislative update.

5. Care Response Pilot Program Communications Update

Ms. Latoya Hunter Hayes, Chief of External Affairs, reported that care response is a health-first approach that deploys teams of behavioral health professionals and peers with lived experience on mental health crisis calls. Over the past several years, R Strategy Group has worked with the ADAMHS Board, Magnolia Clubhouse, and experts and advocates in Cuyahoga County and across the state and country to move care response forward.

R Strategy Group is serving as a consultant to assist the Board in managing the advertising campaign in addition to their current work managing communications and community engagement related to the Care Response Pilot in Cleveland zip codes 44102 and 44105, as well as spearheading a Community Advisory Committee. R Strategy Group is working with the Board to present clear and consistent communications regarding care response, increase the community's knowledge and awareness to gain buy-in for the care response initiative, and remain responsive and adaptable to feedback and lessons learned during the pilot.

The marketing campaign for the Care Response Pilot Program will feature online ads targeting approximately 60,000 residents in the 44102 and 44105 zip codes, running for seven to ten weeks following the program's launch in October 2024. A direct mail campaign will also be conducted in the target area, including a magnet (still to be designed) that will provide details about the Care Response Program. Additionally, advertisements will be placed on buses and at bus shelters across 10 locations for six months, and on 10 billboards for three months. Beyond this, virtual meetings will be held with providers and community organizations to inform them about the program and to encourage them to help spread the word. In addition to the marketing campaign, Ward Club meetings are being scheduled for late September in the targeted pilot area to inform the public and council members about the Care Response Pilot Program.

The Community Advisory Committee (Care Committee) will include clients and family members from the targeted zip codes, as well as behavioral health providers and advocates. Comprising about 10 to 12 individuals, this committee will help the Board gain insight into how the community has experienced the Care Response program so far and highlight any concerns. While not functioning in an official advisory role, the committee will provide valuable feedback on the program's impact. Ms. Hunter Hayes noted that a press release was issued on Thursday, August 29, 2024, inviting

applicants to join the Care Committee. Applications are currently open until Monday, September 23, 2024, and the Board has received 19 responses so far.

Ms. Hunter Hayes presented several images, highlighting one that was used to inform individuals that applications were open. A press release was issued, and the information was shared across all the Board's social media channels, distributed through the Board's e-blasts, and shared with the Board's partners and providers to help spread the word. Ms. Hunter Hayes also highlighted an image with the Care Response logo, which includes FrontLine Service, and responded to questions from the Board Directors.

6. Overdose Awareness Day Recap

Ms. Hunter Hayes shared that the Board applied for the Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (OhioMHAS) State Opioid & Stimulant Response (SOS) 3.0 Grant and was approved for the full amount of \$20,000 on Tuesday, July 23, 2024. The Board was approved for \$20,000 from OhioMHAS for advertising and informational materials for an Overdose Awareness Day event called "Waves of Awareness." Stella Maris, Inc., served as the local coordinator for the Overdose Awareness Day event and has contracted with a variety of vendors for promotional materials for the event. The Board entered into an agreement with Stella Maris, Inc., to serve as a title sponsor and to utilize the grant funds for approved purposes. "Waves of Awareness" was a day-long event scheduled for Saturday, August 31, 2024, in Cleveland's Public Square.

Ms. Hunter Hayes shared that 2,500 individuals attended the event, a significant increase from the 1,700 attendees in 2023. The event began at 5:00 p.m. with a video slideshow on the main stage, accompanied by the ringing of the bells from the Old Stone Church. A short program followed, featuring public officials and community speakers. Members of the Ohio National Guard installed 5,000 purple flags on the lawn, symbolizing the nearly 5,000 Ohioans lost to accidental overdose last year. Up to 60 community providers, along with the MetroHealth Mobile Recreational Vehicle (RV) for health screenings, were on site to offer resources and information. The day included food trucks, music, "Yoga in the Park," and messages of hope, with testimonies from the stage throughout the event. It concluded at dusk with a candlelit Walk of Remembrance and the "Light Up Cleveland" event, which illuminated Public Square, Terminal Tower, and Progressive Field in purple lights.

7. OhioMHAS Week of Appreciation Update

Ms. Hunter Hayes reported that the Board is participating in a statewide Provider Week of Appreciation to recognize the dedication of mental health and addiction services professionals. She noted that OACBHA has provided the Board with \$1,500 in mini-grant funding from OhioMHAS to support and show appreciation to those who work directly with individuals living with addiction and/or mental illness, including first responders and others who may experience burnout or secondary trauma due to their work. The Week of Appreciation will take place from Sunday, September 15, 2024, through Saturday, September 21, 2024.

The Board will host a wellness-themed event on Thursday, September 19, 2024, from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at its administrative office. Providers have nominated several frontline staff members for recognition, with 13 organizations responding and 37 nominees. RSVPs will be accepted until Friday, September 7, 2024. Lunch and light refreshments will be provided, along with activities such as yoga, reiki, chair massages, and jewelry-making (art therapy). Participants will also receive additional tokens of appreciation.

Ms. Katie Kern-Pilch asked if Board Directors could attend the OhioMHAS Week of Appreciation event on Thursday, September 19, 2024. Ms. Hunter Hayes confirmed that Board Directors are welcome to attend. Ms. Kern-Pilch expressed her gratitude to Board staff for their efforts in organizing the event. Ms. Hunter Hayes also shared that Mr. Osiecki will be giving the opening remarks for the event.

8. Trauma-Informed Education Coalition Faith Leader Session Recap

Ms. Hunter Hayes noted that on Tuesday, August 20, 2024, the Board hosted an informational and feedback session on emotional and psychological trauma for faith leaders. The session aimed to help Board staff explore the possibility of organizing a larger event to equip spiritual leaders with tools to recognize the impact of trauma within their congregations.

Dr. Joan Duvall Flynn, Chair of the Trauma Informed Care Coalition based in Philadelphia, gave a presentation on trauma-informed care and how it can be integrated into congregational settings.

Ms. Hunter Hayes shared that the feedback from attendees was positive, with many expressing interest in the Board organizing a larger event involving multiple faiths. She also mentioned that a representative from The MetroHealth System discussed the possibility of partnering with the Board for a future event.

Mr. Osiecki noted that Rev. Benjamin F. Gohlstein, Sr., Chair of the Faith-based Outreach Committee, recommended the session and suggested Dr. Joan Duvall Flynn as the presenter. Ms. Patricia James-Stewart shared a testimonial about her church and praised Board staff for their efforts with this initiative.

9. Roads to Recovery Conference Update

Mr. Doug Nichols, CIT Training Officer, announced that the Board's Roads to Recovery Conference is set for Monday, October 21, 2024, at the Holiday Inn Cleveland-S Independence. The keynote and plenary speakers have been confirmed, and 50 individuals have expressed interest in participating in the workshops. The number of workshop presenters has been narrowed to 35. The schedule and materials for the conference are finalized, and a facility walkthrough has been completed to ensure that space and Information Technology (IT) needs are addressed.

Mr. Nichols also noted that additional Education and Training staff have ensured that Continuing Education Units (CEUs) will be available to attendees upon request. He further mentioned that moderator pamphlets are prepared and volunteers will serve as moderators to ensure each breakout session runs smoothly. Board staff anticipate that 350 participants will attend the conference, and registration is currently open.

Ms. Hunter Hayes announced that the Board has secured 37 sponsors for the conference.

10. Suicide Prevention Month

Ms. Richanda Jackson-Birks, CIT Training Officer, provided an update on September as Suicide Prevention Month. She noted that September was first designated as National Suicide Prevention Awareness Month in 2008. Since then, it has been a time to recognize those affected by suicide, raise awareness, and connect individuals with suicidal ideation to treatment services. Numerous activities and events have been scheduled for community engagement. Ms. Jackson-Birks highlighted that National Suicide Prevention Week is an annual campaign in the United States designed to inform and engage health professionals and the public about suicide prevention and warning signs. This week runs from Sunday, September 8, 2024, through Saturday, September 14, 2024, and includes sharing resources and stories of hope and awareness. Additionally, World Suicide Prevention Day is observed on Tuesday, September 10, 2024, as a day of remembrance for individuals who have died by suicide.

Ms. Jackson-Birks also shared that Sunday, September 8, 2024, is recognized as 988 Day, a day dedicated to raising awareness about the 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline. It is an opportunity to promote the importance of the lifeline, emphasize its role in providing immediate crisis support, and encourage more people to use and share the resource. It also serves as a platform to discuss ongoing improvements in crisis intervention and mental health services, as the system continues to evolve to meet the increasing demand for mental health support.

Ms. Jackson-Birks reported that Question, Persuade, Refer (QPR) is an evidence-based practice model that teaches three simple steps anyone can learn to help prevent suicide. QPR training sessions aim to increase awareness about suicide, dispel myths and misconceptions, and identify warning signs. The Board will offer one-and-a-half-hour training sessions on suicide prevention to as many individuals as possible in Cuyahoga County. Upon completion of this training, participants will become certified gatekeepers, equipped to recognize suicide risk and assist individuals in accessing necessary resources. Currently, the Board's Education and Training Unit has scheduled a hybrid QPR training with Hyland virtually on Tuesday, September 10, 2024, and a virtual QPR session on Wednesday, September 18, 2024. Those interested in attending a QPR session should register through the Board's website.

Additionally, on Thursday, September 26, 2024, Board staff will collaborate with the Community Behavioral Health Center to facilitate a QPR training, and another QPR training will be held with Cleveland Heights on Monday, September 30, 2024.

Mr. Harvey Snider noted that he has received numerous positive comments about the advertisement the Board placed in the newspaper. He reported that the ad has been well-received and highly effective, and he commended Board staff for their efforts.

Ms. Kern-Pilch recounted a tragic story about an officer in Parma, Ohio, and how both the Parma Police Department and the community have responded to honor the individual. Ms. Jackson-Birks added that the Board's Education and Training Unit offers a one-hour training on suicide awareness as part of the Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) training for law enforcement. They have also provided suicide prevention training for administrative staff at CWRU. Ms. Kern-Pilch expressed her appreciation for the Board's proactive approach.

11. Media Tracking Report

Mr. Ian Jameson, External Affairs Officer, reported that the ADAMHS Board had a total of 50 media mentions for the term of Wednesday, May 1, 2024, through Tuesday, September 3, 2024. 31 of these mentions were positive and 19 were neutral. There were no negative media mentions. There was a total of 93 media mentions in 2024. Of these, 65 were positive and 28 were neutral. There were no negative mentions.

Key highlights during this period include the First CALL Program, a collaborative effort with Shaker Heights and neighboring suburbs; the expansion of the Hitchcock Center for Women; the closure of St. Vincent's psychiatric unit; and a mention by News 5 of the Board's Annual Meeting. Mr. Jameson also highlighted "The Truth About Lethal Means, Suicide Prevention, and Mental Health" panel held at the City Club, where Ms. Erin DiVincenzo, Director of Prevention and Children's Behavioral Health Programs, participated as a panelist. (The Media/Press Clipping Report May 1, 2024 – September 3, 2024 is attached to the original minutes stored in the Executive Unit.)

12. Social Media and Website Tracking Reports

Wednesday, May 1, 2024, through Saturday, August 31, 2024, Social Media Report

- Ms. Jocelyn Weems, External Affairs Officer, provided committee members with an overview of the social media statistics. She reported that for the timeframe Wednesday, May 1, 2024, through Saturday, August 31, 2024, the Board had 1,251,705 impressions on social media, 3,293 engagements (likes, comments, retweets, mentions, etc., which is a decrease of 16.9% from the last quarter), gained 167 new followers and 687 post link clicks (a decrease of 56.5% from last quarter). (The Profile Performance Report May 1, 2024 – August 31, 2024 is attached to the original minutes stored in the Executive Unit.)

Wednesday, May 1, 2024, through Saturday, August 31, 2024, Website Report

- Ms. Weems reported that 40,238 individuals visited the Board's website a total of 69,010 times since Wednesday, May 1, 2024. The most viewed pages were the home page, RFP page, and the crisis page. Of the visitors, 96% were new and 4% were returning. The site received 127,910 page views, with the home page, RFP page, and the crisis page being the top three pages visited during this timeframe. 54% of users arrived via Google searches, 34% directly by typing in the URL, and the remaining 12% through social media, referrals from other sites, or email links.

Ms. Weems distributed a handout containing Zoom statistics, detailing unique viewers, total users, and maximum concurrent views for the Board Directors' meetings held from Wednesday, January 24, 2024, to Wednesday, July 31, 2024. She highlighted that the Board meetings had 90 unique participants. The General Meetings consistently attracted double-digit views, while the Finance & Oversight (F&O) Committee was the second most popular.

Mr. Snider asked about organic searches on the internet. Ms. Hunter Hayes explained that an organic search refers to users entering keywords or phrases into a search engine (such as Google, Bing, or Yahoo) and receiving unpaid,

algorithm-based results. These results are ranked according to factors like relevance to the query and website quality, rather than paid advertisements or promotions.

Ms. Hunter Hayes stated that Board staff have begun promoting the Board Director meetings on social media. Ms. Kern-Pilch expressed her gratitude to the Board staff for their documentation efforts. Board Directors concurred.

13. New Business

Ms. Katie Kern-Pilch shared that art therapy is now officially recognized in Ohio with the passage of legislation included in House Bill (HB) 33. This law establishes a framework for licensing, regulation, and professional standards for art therapists, formalizing art therapy as a recognized mental health service in the state.

14. Follow-up

No follow-up was received.

15. Public Comment Period

No public comment was received.

16. Upcoming September and October Board Meetings:

- Finance & Oversight Committee Meeting: September 18, 2024
- General Meeting: September 25, 2024
- Faith-based Outreach Committee Meeting: October 9, 2024
- Committee of the Whole Meeting: October 16, 2024
- General Meeting: October 23, 2024

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 4:43 p.m.

Submitted by: Linda Lamp, Executive Assistant

Approved by: Sadigoh C. Galloway, MSW, LSW, LICDC-CS, Community Relations & Advocacy Committee Chair



Agenda Process Sheet
Date: November 6, 2024

- Community Relations & Advocacy Committee** **Faith-Based Outreach Committee**
 Finance & Oversight Committee **Committee of the Whole**
 Special Meeting **General Meeting**
-

Topic: 2025 Annual Meeting Brunch, Awards Ceremony and Client Art Show

Contractual Parties: Venue TBD
Videographer TBD
Keynote Address TBD

Term: December 1, 2024 – June 30, 2025

Funding Source(s): ADAMHS Board Operating Budget

Amount: Contract not to exceed \$35,000

- New Program** **Continuing Program** **Expanding Program** **Other** 2025 Annual Meeting

Service Description:

- 2025 Annual Meeting Brunch, Awards Ceremony and Client Art Show to be held during May 2025 at a venue to be identified at a later date.

Background Information:

- The Annual Meeting has traditionally attracted between 350 and 500 guests and is held during May, which is Mental Health Awareness Month.
- The ADAMHS Board sells tickets to the event to defray the cost of the food and service charge. The contract we enter into will not exceed \$35,000 and the cost to the Board should be less than \$15,000.
- The 2024 Annual Meeting was held at the Holiday Inn Independence and offered a centrally located space with free self-parking and easy highway and bus access and can easily hold up to 500 guests.

Number of Individuals to be served:

- Between 350 and 500 people.

Funding Use:

- To defray the cost of the Annual Meeting expenses not covered by ticket sales.

Client & System Impact:

- During the Annual Meeting, the Board provides a yearly update to the community and acknowledges exceptional accomplishments in the community through the presentation of awards to clients, family members, legislators and professionals. It also showcases client art.

Metrics <i>(How will goals be measured)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of people in attendance at the Annual Meeting • Total cost to the Board after ticket sales
Evaluation/ Outcome Data <i>(Actual results from program)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approximately 600 people attended the 2024 Annual Meeting • \$19,381 amount was raised through ticket sales • Holiday Inn Independence Cost was \$21,141 • Awards and honoree video cost \$5,994 • Keynote speaker costs \$12,000 • Total cost to the Board \$19,754

Recommendation to Board of Directors from Board Staff and/or from Board Committee(s):

- Authorization of the 2025 Annual Meeting Brunch, Award Ceremony and Client Art Show in May 2025, allowing the ADAMHS Board to contract for a venue, a videographer and a keynote speaker in an amount not to exceed \$35,000.

COPING WITH THE HOLIDAYS



ADAMHS
BOARD OF CUYAHOGA COUNTY
ALCOHOL, DRUG ADDICTION & MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

Introduction

The holiday season can be a time of joy, celebration, and togetherness, but it can also bring stress, anxiety, and overwhelm. This booklet is designed to provide you with practical strategies and tactics to help you cope with the holidays and make the most of this special time of year. Whether you're dealing with family gatherings, financial pressures, or simply managing your own expectations, these tips will assist you in navigating the holiday season with confidence and ease.

The Alcohol, Drug Addiction and Mental Health Services (ADAMHS) Board of Cuyahoga County and the Suicide Prevention Coalition collaborated to highlight topics of special concern for mental health wellness during the holidays. With the right coping strategies and mindset, we can all make the most of this holiday season.

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Tips for Overcoming Holiday Stress

The holidays can be a stressful time, but there are ways to reduce and cope with that stress. Here are a few:

- **Have reasonable expectations and be flexible.** Real life doesn't look like holiday movies!
- **Avoid toxic people whenever possible.** Every invitation doesn't have to be accepted.
- **Practice your breathing.** Deep breaths can help reduce stress and tension.
- **Think about priorities for holiday preparations.** What matters most to you? As pressures mount, relax and focus on your priorities.
- **Get enough sleep.** The National Sleep Foundation recommends adults (ages 18-64) get seven to nine hours of sleep each night.
- **Spend time with people who are supportive and care about you.** Consider reconnecting with someone you have lost touch with.
- **Limit alcohol consumption.** Excessive drinking can increase depressive symptoms.
- **Don't be afraid to try something new!** Trying new things can be fun and memorable. Try to be flexible and open to celebrating the holidays in new ways.

10 Ways to Take Charge of Your Holiday Plans

Taking charge of your life will help you reduce stress. For some people, being assertive is hard, but it's worth it! Setting limits during the holidays can help avoid financial problems, depression and physical illness.

Here are 10 ways you can take charge of your holiday plans:

- 1 Know your needs and ask people to help you meet them.
- 2 Don't put higher expectations on yourself than you put on others.
- 3 Have a plan of action to help you enjoy the holidays. (Who, What, When and How)
- 4 Think positively about yourself, family, friends and your situation.
- 5 Take advantage of free activities like light displays and music.
- 6 Try not to compare yourself to others.
- 7 Plan ahead. Give yourself plenty of time to coordinate activities.
- 8 Count your blessings - try to see the cup as half full rather than half empty.
- 9 Remember that people are more important than gifts or possessions.
- 10 Pat yourself on the back for getting through another holiday.

7 Holiday Self-Care Tips

For many, the holiday season means planning and taking care of others. However, this leaves little time for taking care of oneself. Below are a few tips on practicing self-care during this holiday season.

- 1 Regularly schedule time to engage in self-care activities**, such as exercise, meditation or a hobby you enjoy.
- 2 Practice gratitude for the people and events in your life.** Consider keeping a gratitude journal or telling important people in your life why you appreciate them.
- 3 Tune into the emotions you are experiencing.** Emotions may be positive, negative or a combination of the two. Call "time outs" for yourself and check-in on your feelings. Remember that you're not alone with what you're feeling. You can talk to trusted family and friends about it.
- 4 Try to understand why you might be experiencing negative thoughts or feelings.** Are you expecting too much from yourself? Feeling overwhelmed? Give yourself space you to cope in those moments.
- 5 Monitor your stress level and notice what triggers your stress response.** Is it certain people? Specific activities? Have a list of activities to relax. Perhaps this is taking a walk, doing a few minutes of yoga, watching a favorite movie or playing with a pet.
- 6 Be present.** Practice mindfulness and meditation. Try taking a minute to be present in your environment. Take notice of the smells, sounds and sights of the holidays. Notice the differences between the holiday season and other times of the year.
- 7 Take care of your physical health.** Ensure adequate sleep. A nutritious diet is important: try to balance holiday foods and treats with healthy eating.

Grieving During the Holidays

Coping with loss during the holidays can be difficult no matter how recent your loss is. Remember, it's not about getting over, it's about getting through.

- **Love does not end with death.** Holidays may result in a renewed sense of personal grief – a feeling of loss unlike that experienced in the routine of daily living. Sounds, sights and smells of the holidays may trigger memories of the loved one who has died.
- **Talk about your grief.** Don't be afraid to express your feelings about your loss. Ignoring your grief won't make the pain go away and talking about it openly may make you feel better. Check-in with friends and relatives who care and will listen without passing judgement. They can help you to feel understood and not as isolated. If you are not ready to talk yet, let others know that.
- **Be aware of your physical or psychological limits.** Feelings of loss can leave you fatigued. The emotional stress may be exhausting, and low energy may naturally slow you down. Listen to what your body and mind are telling you. Take care of yourself – physically and emotionally.
- **Talk about the person who has died.** Include your loved one's name in your conversations during the holidays. If you are able to talk openly, other people may recognize your need to remember your loved one who has died and be able to talk about them.
- **Do what feels right for you during the holidays.** Well-meaning family and friends often try to prescribe what is good for you during the holidays. Instead of going along with their plans, focus on what you want to do. Discuss your wishes with a caring, trusted friend or family member. Talking about those wishes may help you clarify what it is you need and want to do during the holidays.
- **Plan ahead for holiday celebrations.** Structure your holiday time. This will help you to anticipate activities rather than just reacting to whatever happens. Getting caught off guard may create feelings of panic, fear and anxiety during a time when your feelings of grief are already heightened. As you make your plans, leave room to change them if you feel the need.

Children, Teens & The Holidays

The holiday season can cause stress for children and teens too, and not all children and teens respond to stress in the same way. Watch for behavior changes in your child.

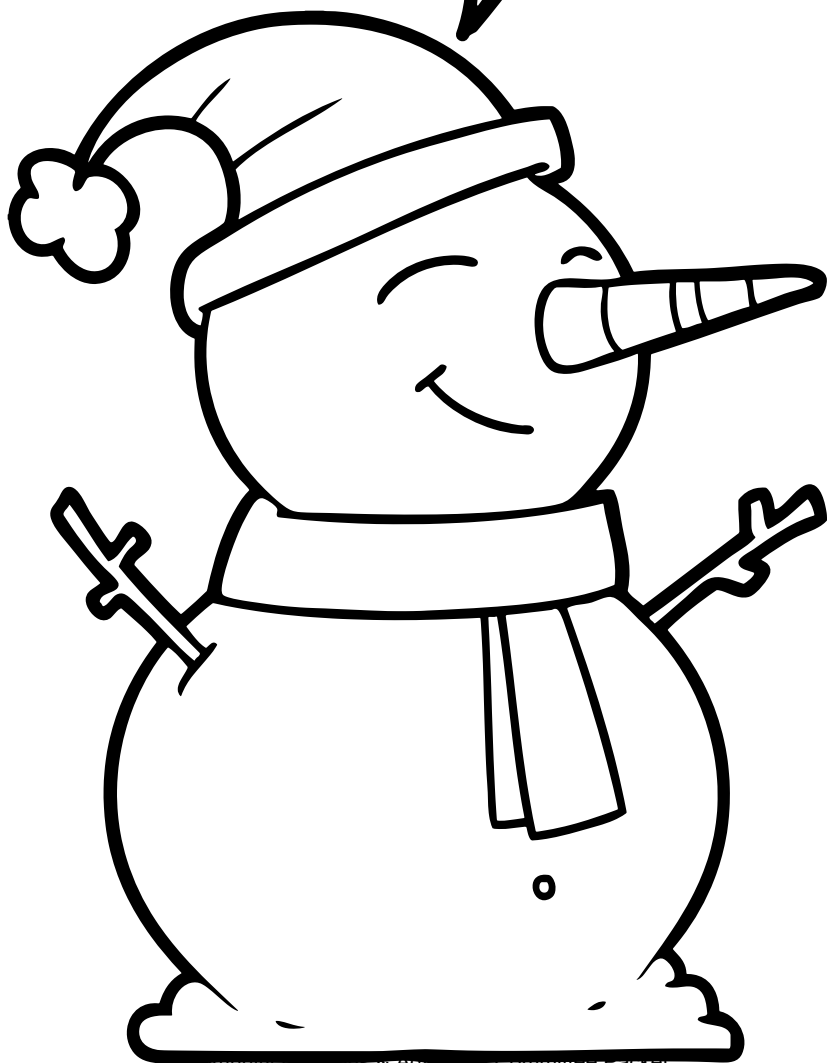
Some common changes to watch for include:

- Excessive crying or irritation in younger children.
- Returning to behaviors they have outgrown (for example, toileting accidents or bedwetting).
- Excessive worry or sadness.
- Unhealthy eating or sleeping habits.
- Irritability and “acting out” behaviors in teens.
- Poor school performance or avoiding school.
- Difficulties with attention and concentration.
- Avoidance of activities enjoyed in the past.
- Unexplained headaches or body pain.
- Use of alcohol, tobacco or other drugs.

Reach Out for Help: If you or your child are feeling too overwhelmed or are in crisis, reach out to connect with care. In Cuyahoga County, you can call the 24-Hour Mental Health/Addiction Crisis Information & Referral Hotline: 216-623-6888 or 988. The Crisis Text Line is also available by texting “4hope” to 741-741.

Community Relations & Advocacy Committee Packet

IF I FEEL MAD OR SAD I TAKE A FEW
MINUTES TO RELAX & BREATHE.
THAT HELPS ME COOL DOWN.



Coping Skills for Kids Word Search

T	P	T	A	K	E	B	R	E	A	K	T	R	A
A	L	K	C	L	S	C	E	A	U	S	D	O	E
L	A	L	E	A	M	T	C	O	L	O	R	E	O
K	Y	A	O	E	C	S	E	A	O	M	X	E	R
T	G	W	J	E	I	S	E	A	H	G	U	A	L
O	A	E	B	N	M	U	S	I	C	I	A	C	E
S	M	R	G	E	E	H	T	A	E	R	B	N	L
O	E	A	L	A	O	L	K	E	E	D	L	H	I
M	O	E	M	D	A	B	K	N	M	E	T	A	M
E	G	O	A	R	K	O	Y	O	G	A	M	E	S
O	R	N	W	R	I	T	E	H	A	A	E	A	T
N	C	E	J	O	U	R	N	A	L	T	A	T	A
E	R	E	A	U	P	D	K	H	T	H	L	W	L
O	E	O	C	D	P	E	X	E	R	C	I	S	E

TAKE BREAK
 BREATHE
 TALK TO SOMEONE
 WALK
 EXERCISE
 YOGA

WRITE
 JOURNAL
 READ
 MUSIC
 SING
 DANCE

SMILE
 LAUGH
 COLOR
 PLAY GAME

Children, Teens & The Holidays

- **Manage Your Own Stress.** Children and teens react, in part, on what they see from the adults around them. When parents and caregivers deal with the holidays calmly and confidently, they can provide the best support for children. Be a role model. Connect with others, take breaks, get enough sleep, exercise and eat well.
- **Keep Your Routines (as best as you can).** It's important to keep regular routines even during the holidays.
- **Manage Expectations.** Be up front, let kids know what they can and can't expect during the holidays.
- **Talk to Them.** Be honest, focus on the positive and give them space for their feelings. Be available to answer questions they may have.
- **Reassurance and Resilience.** Reassure children that everything will be okay even if things don't go as planned. Share with them how you deal with stress so that they can learn from you how to cope with stress.
- **Spend Time Together.** Real time, where you are sharing an activity and doing things that involve actual interaction. Play games together. Bake cookies. Have a dance party. Read together.
- **Create a New Holiday Tradition/Rituals:** Make homemade gifts or new decorations, create things you can do together every year that are meaningful and fun. Get children involved in helping others - donate to a toy drive, deliver a note to a neighbor, or call or write a family member.

Dealing with Loss or Change

The holidays can be painful for those who have lost a loved one or have gone through divorce, especially children. Coping with separation and loss is magnified during the holidays. People may feel pressured to celebrate the holidays while their world seems to be falling apart.

How to Help Someone Deal with a Loss

- Allow them to talk about their feelings and memories, and try to get them involved in new activities. Respect a person who is not ready to talk about their loss yet.
- Change your traditional pattern in some way, and create new rituals and family traditions.
- Don't let a person spend too much time alone. If a person becomes depressed, help is available from the crisis hotline 24/7. Call: 216-623-6888 or 988.
- Remember, many people think of their pets as part of the family, and their loss can be painful, too.

Getting Through Divorce

- After divorce, be sure to let children know that the holidays will continue, but in a different way. Decide ahead of time how the holidays will be divided, and include children in the planning.
- Make sure you and your children have realistic expectations. Never put children in the middle of disagreements or ask them to choose sides.
- Try to get plenty of rest, exercise and eat healthy to help your ability to cope. Remember, tired children are more easily stressed and moody.
- Plan fun activities. If memories are too painful, try starting a new tradition to enjoy together. Take one day at a time. Rely on support from friends and family. It will get easier with time.

Tips for Individuals in Recovery

The holidays can be challenging for individuals in recovery from substance use disorders (SUD). Here are some tips if you are in recovery:

- Put your recovery/sobriety first.
- Surround yourself with others in recovery, especially before or after stressful events.
- If you are in a 12-Step or other recovery support group, plan on going to more meetings during the holidays.
- Practice self-care and an attitude of gratitude.
- Make a plan and share it with your support system. Plans can include, an exit for stressful events, how to turn down a drink, or how to avoid a negative or hurtful family member.
- Remember - it is OK to say "no" to going somewhere that may threaten your recovery/sobriety or well-being.
- Ask for help and support when you need it.

Hosting a Recovery-Friendly Holiday Party

- If you have a loved one in recovery, ask them prior to an event how you can be supportive.
- Always have non-alcoholic beverage options.
- Be understanding if your loved one must leave early or can only stay for a short while.
- Remember - you can't cause, cure or control someone's illness or recovery. Instead, be kind, supportive and understanding.

Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD)

SAD, also known as the winter blues, is a type of depression that comes and goes with the four seasons. It typically manifests during the cold autumn and winter months when the days are shorter, darker and chillier. Some tips that may alleviate SAD symptoms include:

- **Light Therapy.** There are devices that simulate natural light. You should consult with your health care provider before trying any new therapies.
- **Stay Active.** A daily walk in the middle of the day could be as helpful as light therapy for coping.
- **Create Social Situations.** During the winter, a lack of regular social interaction can leave you feeling down. Try to push yourself to connect with others through phone, video or even writing letters. Once you make the effort, the social interaction can lift your spirits.

Supporting Older Adults During the Holidays

The holiday season is a happy and joyous time for most, but many older adults find the season hectic, confusing and even depressing depending on their mental, physical and emotional condition. Here are some ways you can support the older adults in your life this holiday season:

- **Spend quality time with the older adults in your life.** There is a lot to learn from them. Call, send a letter or spend time in-person.
- **Plan.** Make sure to plan ahead, and involve the older adults in your life in the planning. What are their hopes and expectations?
- **Be thoughtful.** Many older adults experience memory loss, so keep this in mind when you're telling stories or rehashing events from the past.
- **Explore old memories.** Older adults love to share happy, humorous and light-hearted memories so ask them to share memories if they are able to.
- **Fight the downside.** Depression has a way of sneaking up on you. If you or an older loved one have symptoms of depression for two weeks, talk to your doctor.
- **Help the older adults in your life by monitoring their medication intake and alcohol consumption.** During the hectic holiday season, it can be easy for older adults to forget to take their medications or drink a little too much. Look out for their best interest at all times.

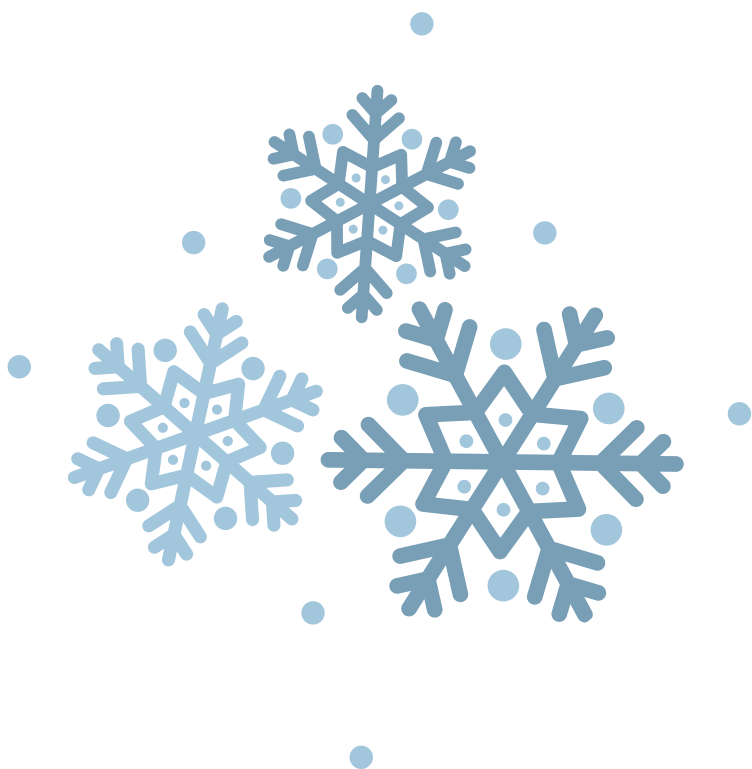
10 Meaningful & Inexpensive Ways to Celebrate the Holidays

There are plenty of meaningful and inexpensive ways to celebrate the holidays. Here are some ideas:

- 1 Have a cookie baking competition or gingerbread house contest.
- 2 Read stories, watch a movie or check out holiday light displays.
- 3 Have children sing to their grandparents and other family.
- 4 Create a playlist of favorite holiday songs that everyone can add to and listen to even if you are not all together.
- 5 Make a homemade gift or decoration.
- 6 Look back at family photos and add some new ones to your collection.
- 7 Plan a holiday sweater competition.
- 8 Play holiday-themed charades or check out some of the games available for free online.
- 9 Have each person write on a piece of paper something he/she appreciates about each member of the family and one gift (that can't be bought) that he/she will give each member. For example, a child might write, "Dad, I really appreciate the fact that you take time to help me with my homework. My gift to you will be at least 15 minutes to relax when you get home." Then, everyone takes turns reading what they wrote.
- 10 Share some of your favorite recipes; write them on pretty cards and mail them as gifts. You could share them by email also.

Conclusion

The holidays can be a wonderful time for making memories and connecting with loved ones. By applying the strategies and tactics outlined in this booklet, you can reduce stress, build resilience, and make the most of the holiday season. Remember that it's okay to seek help and support when needed, and that self-care should always be a priority. With the right tools and mindset, you can create a holiday season that is truly meaningful and fulfilling.



Reach Out If You Need Help, Resources are Available

If you or someone you know is in crisis or if the stress of the holiday season becomes too much, please seek help. You can get help from these resources:

- ADAMHS Board of Cuyahoga County's 24-Hour Mental Health/Addiction Crisis Information & Referral Hotline: 216-623-6888 or 988
- United Way 2-1-1
- Crisis Text Line: text "4Hope" to 741-741
- 24-Hour National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 988
- 24-Hour Warm Line: 440-886-5950 Need a listening ear? Call the Warm Line, and a peer-supporter will listen and talk you through a hard holiday season.
- OhioMHAS Careline: 1-800-720-9616

About the Suicide Prevention Coalition

The coalition is composed of organizations, community members and survivors dedicated to instilling hope, raising awareness, providing education and promoting resources in an effort to reduce the incidence of suicide and suicidal behavior. The Coalition is chaired by Mark Onusko, PsyD, Behavioral Health Prevention Specialist. If you would like to join the Coalition, please contact Mark by email: onusko@adamhsc.org.