



# MHA Message

There is **NO** health without Mental Health!

## From The Executive Director

### It's OK to Seek Help



Most of you will remember when Meghan Markle and Harry, Duke of Sussex, shared personal information about their lives as senior royals in an interview with Oprah Winfrey. They maintained respect for the crown in telling their experiences, sharing their story in a passive voice and not naming anyone in a derogatory manner. The thing that bubbled to the top for me was Meghan's description of her deteriorating mental well-being while in England and the total lack of resources available to her.

Coming from the mental health world, I'm appalled that getting mental health care was impossible from inside the royal family even when Meghan disclosed having suicidal thoughts. Since going public with Oprah, her experience has been disparaged and even denied by some reporters and others close to the royal family. Those of us who work in suicide prevention know better than to take it lightly when someone says they are suicidal – it's never a joking matter. I'm so glad Harry listened to Meghan and took care of her when she needed help though I am disappointed that he expressed embarrassment. Considering that Harry co-founded Head Together, a mental health campaign, with Prince William and Kate, he ought to have known that it's ok to not be ok! Shame on the family, the staff, the firm or whoever it was who told Meghan that others before her went through the same scenario and she couldn't go to a hospital. The outcome could have been very different – we should NEVER minimize someone telling us that they don't want to be alive anymore!

Recent reports that the 2019 US national suicide rate has decreased after decades of increases are encouraging, though it's still unknown what effect COVID-19 will have. Dr. Christine Moutier, Chief Medical Officer of the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention, shared, "We cannot determine which specific factors may have contributed to the decline but we do know that creating a culture open to talking about mental health and suicide prevention, educating people about what to do when they are in distress, making help available to those who seek it, using treatments that have been developed based on research, supporting those affected by suicide and passing legislation that makes suicide prevention a top national priority are all positive advancements that we've seen over the past several years that likely had a collective impact.

Those who are in distress need to be met with resources that will support their mental health including a fully funded, accessible and well-designed national system of crisis services and health care. As the nation's largest private funder of suicide research, we know that concentrated, strategic, culturally competent and evidence-based suicide prevention efforts can save lives. Through these efforts, and by all working together, we have the ability to bend the suicide curve down. We do know that thoughts of suicide are more prevalent among the general population now than before COVID-19, and for that reason we must continue to focus on prevention efforts and supporting those at risk. Suicide can be prevented, and we all have a role to play."

Please call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-8255 or 211 to get help for someone in crisis. Call MHALC at 740-522-1341 to schedule a suicide prevention training or have a conversation.

To your mental health,

Penny C. Sittler  
Executive Director

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#### MAY IS MENTAL HEALTH MONTH

It's **MEMBERSHIP** time! Mail the enclosed form to us or go to [www.mhalc.org](http://www.mhalc.org) to join today.  
Thank you for your ongoing support!

# MAY IS MENTAL HEALTH MONTH

## MAY IS MENTAL HEALTH MONTH 2021



**TOOLS 2 THRIVE**

**THERE ARE PRACTICAL TOOLS THAT EVERYONE CAN USE TO IMPROVE THEIR MENTAL HEALTH AND INCREASE RESILIENCY WHEN LIFE GETS TOUGH.**

**LEARN MORE AT [MHANATIONAL.ORG/MAY](https://mhanational.org/may)**

We all face trauma, adversity, and other stresses throughout our lives. When people think of trauma, they often think of things like abuse, terrorism, or catastrophic events (big 'T' trauma). Trauma can also be caused by events that may be less obvious but can still overwhelm your capacity to cope, like frequent arguing at home or losing your job (little 't' trauma). Trauma of any kind can be hard on your mental health but working on becoming more resilient can help you feel more at ease.

## TIPS FOR HEALING



**Process your thoughts.** During and after experiencing trauma, it's common to go into survival mode and not have energy to wrap your head around what happened. It may feel safest to bury painful feelings and avoid confronting them, but acknowledging what happened and how it has impacted you is an important part of healing. When you feel ready, take time to think about how you've been affected (and be proud of yourself for pushing through).



**Connect with people.** The pain of trauma can lead some people to isolate themselves, but having a support system is a crucial part of wellbeing. Emotional support helps us to feel less alone or overwhelmed by what's going on or has happened in our lives. Talking to someone who has gone through a similar experience or someone who cares about you can be validating - and help you feel more able to overcome the challenges you're facing.



**Don't compare your experience to others!** We often question our own thoughts or experiences, and you may convince yourself that what you experienced wasn't a big deal because "others have it worse." Everyone experiences trauma differently, and no one trauma is "worse" than another. If it hurt you, then it hurt you - and your feelings and experiences are valid.



**Take care of your body.** Stress and trauma impact your body and physical health just as much as your mind. Listening to your body and giving it what it needs will help you heal. This includes eating a nutritious diet, getting enough sleep, staying hydrated, and exercising regularly. Moving your body is especially helpful in trauma healing<sup>1</sup> - aim to do it every day, even if it's only a few minutes of stretching.



**Know it will take time.** There is no set timeline for how you "should" heal. Remove the pressure of needing to bounce back quickly and focus on taking it one step at a time. Remember: recovery isn't linear, and it's normal to have bad days and setbacks. It doesn't mean you're failing - it's just part of the process.



**Give yourself grace.** Dealing with trauma and stress is no easy feat, but it's still common to get frustrated with yourself and what can sometimes be a slow recovery process. Try to catch when you hold yourself to unreasonable standards - instead of angrily asking yourself "why am I acting like this?!", think about how impressive it is that you keep going, despite what you have faced.



**Don't feel ashamed to ask for help.** It's easy to compare how you're feeling to how you *assume* others who have been through similar experiences are feeling, and you may get down on yourself because it seems like everyone else is doing just fine. What others experience and how they cope doesn't matter in your journey - if you feel like you need (or want) help, it's important to get that as soon as you can.

## FAST FACTS

**#2**

Among people who took a screen at [mhascreening.org](https://mhascreening.org) in 2020, past trauma was the second most reported cause for mental distress among screeners after loneliness.

**3x**

People who have been through trauma are 3 times more likely to experience depression.

**53%**

Of people who took a screen at [mhascreening.org](https://mhascreening.org) in 2020 who scored with moderate to severe symptoms, over half (53%) reported past trauma as one of the three main contributors to their mental health problems.

### MAY IS MENTAL HEALTH MONTH

Join Mental Health America in exploring practical tools that everyone can use to improve their mental health and increase resiliency

**#TOOLS2THRIVE**

**1 IN 5 PEOPLE WILL HAVE A MENTAL HEALTH CONDITION IN THEIR LIFETIME.**

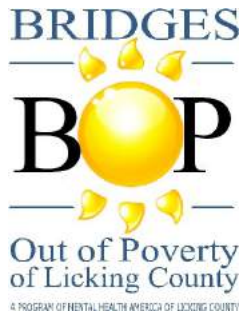


**TAKING A SCREEN IS AN EASY WAY TO CHECK IN ON YOUR MENTAL HEALTH.**



**VISIT [MHALC.ORG](https://mhalc.org)**

# PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS



The Bridges Out of Poverty (BOP) program strives toward reducing poverty in the Licking County community. Getting Ahead (GA) classes offered through BOP promote financial literacy and develop opportunities for job training and career advancement.

Program Coordinator Donna Wayt has returned to facilitating in-person Adult Probation's Day Reporting classes since April. LAPP classes are still available virtually via Zoom. Donna plans to offer in-person classes at The Main Place starting in May. Spencer House and Courage House are still using Zoom for their classes with plans to return to in-person classes in May. Community classes at the Licking County Main Library branch are also planned for May.

@mhalcBridgesOutOfPoverty

The Compeer program's mission is to reduce isolation and stigma for individuals who live with severe and persistent mental illness and to improve their quality of life.



Compeer member Scott Muto  
Recipient of United Way's  
2020 Hope Award

While virtual activities and events are still being offered through Facebook and Messenger, some in-person programming is planned starting in May. Program Coordinator Donna Wayt will offer walks while wearing masks around the square, possibly with picnics on the benches, tables or the grass. Recovery art sessions will resume at The Main Place (TMP) and take place in the large lounge area. TMP's fence in the back yard will also be available for painting giant flowers and inspirational words. TMP has generously offered to provide cleaning and art supplies for the art program. Every Thursday the recovery art session will begin with a step from Alcoholics Anonymous and daily meditation. Donna hopes to stimulate conversations about the deeper meaning of step work. Participants will focus on goal setting and actively using coping skills to demonstrate their effectiveness.


Compeer's public Facebook group: Compeer Circle of Friends



The YES Club is still making a difference in the time of COVID-19. They welcomed Michelle from The Ohio State University Extension into the clubhouse (virtually) so she could educate the members on nutrition. Michelle worked with the staff to provide interactive and tasty activities, providing real-world lessons on making healthy eating choices. They also welcomed Jennifer from The Girl Scouts of Ohio's Heartland, who worked with members on topics such as self-esteem and bullying. YES members also heard from Tamara of The Juvenile Justice Coalition in an interactive conversation about social justice.

Of course, there was fun to be had as well. They did not have their customary dance this year due to the pandemic, but they had a great Valentine's Day party in the clubhouse. Members showed off a variety of skills during their annual YES Club Olympics in events such as an Egg Toss and Mental Math. Spring break was a little different than normal but still a good time. They did crafts, started work on their raised-bed garden and had some fun reviving safe internet challenges from the past (and the video to prove it is on their YouTube channel)!

@YESClub



Self-advocacy is speaking up for yourself, asking for what you need, negotiating for yourself, knowing your rights and responsibilities, and using resources that are available to you.

The Youth Self-Advocacy program is designed to help youth with developmental disabilities cultivate self-advocacy skills as they transition from high school into adulthood.

Program Coordinator Christina Peña has offered activities via Zoom, and continues to provide resources to schools while posting resources and updates on the Youth Self-Advocacy Facebook page. She plans to return to schools next school year in the fall.

@MHALCYouthSelfAdvocacy



YES Club members enjoying basketball

# PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS



January brought a welcome return to in-person classes for the Grit Integrity Presence (GIP) program. Classes had transitioned from virtual to in class last November, but were discontinued by early December due to COVID-19 complications including school staffing issues. It has been quite a year for everyone, and it is very good to be back in person in four school districts for a total of 14 classes (compared to 25 classes pre-

COVID). The students are appreciative of the rhythm of meeting weekly again, finding much needed support for a difficult time. Classes are working through the core modules of the program which include boundary setting, voice and choice, healthy relationships, positive body image, coping skills for managing depression and anxiety, and healthy self-care and esteem. An online GIP presence through Facebook and Instagram also offer support to teens who haven't been able to participate in-person. Thank you for your encouragement and support of this program.



@GirlsInProgress is the public Facebook page

## Parent Support



### Positive Parenting Program



#### Is this for you?

*Do you enjoy parenting, but wish you knew how to deal with specific problem behavior?*

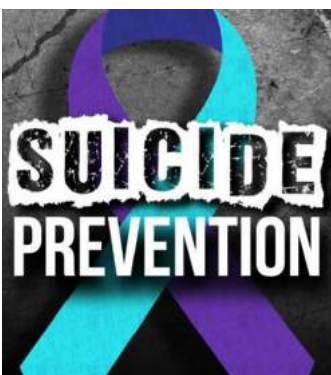
#### Triple P can help you

- . Encourage behavior you like
- . Deal with problem behavior
- . Become confident as a parent
- . Be realistic about parenting
- . Take care of yourself

For additional information on free classes being offered at various times and locations contact:

Mental Health America of Licking County  
740-522-1341 [mhalc.org](http://mhalc.org)

MHA's Parent Support program is currently offering all Triple P workshops virtually on Zoom. This is an opportunity for parents to see and talk with other parents while receiving helpful Triple P Parenting strategies that are proven to work. To register or for more information, contact Program Coordinator Kitty Roahrig at 740-919-6905 or [kroahrig@mhalc.org](mailto:kroahrig@mhalc.org).



The Suicide Prevention program is reaching out to educate youth and adults on the signs and symptoms of suicide in Licking County to help save lives. Whether it's teaching Signs of Suicide (SOS) in area middle and high schools or offering Gatekeeper Suicide Prevention training to adults, this critical program is working hard to improve the mental health of the community.

Suicide Prevention Program Coordinator Christina Peña has been facilitating the SOS program virtually as well as in-person. The program is being offered to Johnstown Middle and High schools for the first time this school year.

Support groups have returned to meeting in-person while requiring social distancing and mask wearing. The Bipolar/Depression support group meetings are held every Wednesday at the MHA office from 3:30 pm – 4:30 pm. The Survivors After Suicide support group meets on the second Tuesday of each month from 6:30 pm – 7:30 pm at the MHA office. Consider attending a group with peers where you can talk about challenges and find encouragement for your journey.

Christina continues to post updates and resources on the Suicide Prevention Facebook page [@mhalcSuicidePrevention](https://www.facebook.com/mhalcSuicidePrevention).



## It's membership time at MHA!

More than a membership, it's a partnership. On the previous pages you read about all of the amazing things MHA is doing to impact the lives of the people in Licking County, but none of it would be possible without you! By renewing your membership or becoming a new member of MHA, you can help us reach thousands of your community's members by promoting and continually reinforcing mental health and wellness through prevention, education and advocacy, and eliminating the stigma of mental health issues.

See the enclosed membership form. For more information, call 740-522-1341 or visit [www.mhalc.org](http://www.mhalc.org).

*"Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much."* – Helen Keller

### **\*Save The Date\*** *MHA's Night of Hope fundraiser*

**July 24, 2021**

**Thirty One West**

**Stay tuned for details!**



### **\*Save The Date\***

## **LOU MITCHELL MEMORIAL GOLF OUTING FOR SUICIDE PREVENTION**



**Denison Golf Club**  
**555 Newark-Granville Road, Granville, Ohio**

**Monday, August 30, 2021**

**Check in: Noon ~ Simultaneous Start: 1:00 pm ~ Dinner 6:00 pm**

**Register Online at [www.mhalc.org](http://www.mhalc.org)**



**Please contact Rhea Pierron at  
[рпиеррон@mhalc.org](mailto:рпиеррон@mhalc.org) or 740-522-1341 for more  
information on sponsoring one or both events.**

## To learn how to make a charitable contribution to MHALC from an IRA, please read the following information from Park National Bank:

### Charitable Contributions from IRAs

#### Background

The Pension Protection Act of 2006 first allowed taxpayers age 70½ or older to make tax-free charitable donations directly from their IRAs. Technically, these taxpayers were allowed to exclude from gross income otherwise taxable distributions from their IRA ("qualified charitable distributions," or QCDs), up to \$100,000, that were paid directly to a qualified charity. These gifts are also known as "Charitable IRA rollovers." The law was originally scheduled to expire in 2007, but was extended periodically through 2014 by subsequent legislation, and finally made permanent by the Protect Americans from Tax Hikes (PATH) Act of 2015.

#### How QCDs work

You must be 70½ or older in order to make QCDs. You direct your IRA trustee to make a distribution *directly* from your IRA (other than SEP and SIMPLE IRAs) to a qualified charity. The distribution must be one that would otherwise be taxable to you. You can exclude up to \$100,000 of QCDs from your gross income each year, thereby avoiding taxation on those amounts. If you file a joint return, your spouse can exclude an additional \$100,000 of QCDs. Note: You don't get to deduct QCDs as a charitable contribution on your federal income tax return — that would be double-dipping.

QCDs count toward satisfying any required minimum distributions (RMDs) that you would otherwise have to receive from your IRA, just as if you had received an actual distribution from the plan. However, distributions that you actually receive from your IRA (including RMDs) that you subsequently transfer to a charity cannot qualify as QCDs.

As indicated above, a QCD must be an otherwise taxable distribution from your IRA. If you've made nondeductible contributions, then normally each distribution carries with it a pro-rata amount of taxable and nontaxable dollars. However, a special rule applies to QCDs — the pro-rata rule is ignored and your taxable dollars are treated as distributed first. (If you have multiple IRAs, they are aggregated when calculating the taxable and nontaxable portion of a distribution from any one IRA. RMDs are calculated separately for each IRA you own, but may be taken from any of your IRAs.)

**Caution:** *The gift cannot be made to a private foundation, donor-advised fund, or supporting organization [as described in IRC Section 509(a)(3)]. The gift cannot be made in exchange for a charitable gift annuity or to a charitable remainder trust.*

If you would like additional information, please contact Park National Bank or your financial advisor.

### Tribute Gifts

*In Memory of James Michael Dever*  
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*In Memory of Jacob Ellis*  
Mr. and Mrs. Richard Aide  
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*We make every effort to accurately acknowledge our donors.  
Please call 740-522-1341 to report an error or omission, and please accept our apologies.*

# THANK YOU!

## TO ALL OF OUR DONORS

Mental Health America of Licking County would like to recognize the following individuals and organizations for their support received from July 1, 2020 through December 31, 2020.

*We make every effort to accurately acknowledge our donors.*

*Please call 740-522-1341 to report an error or omission, and please accept our apologies.*

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Williamson Insurance  
Dr. Robert Wright\*

*\* Signifies MHALC member*

“No duty is more  
urgent than that of  
returning thanks.”

—James Allen

*Thank you!*

**Partner Agencies and Funders**



## TWO MORE WAYS TO HELP MHALC



### HOW THE KROGER COMMUNITY REWARDS PROGRAM WORKS FOR ALL OF US!

Every time you use your Kroger Plus card, you will still receive fuel rewards and coupons and MHALC receives a portion of every dollar you spend. This is such an easy way to contribute to our programs.

Please follow the easy instructions below to become part of the MHALC community. If we can be of any assistance, please call our office.

- Go to [www.kroger.com](http://www.kroger.com).
- Go to the Main Menu.
- Click on Savings.
- Click on Kroger Community Rewards.
- Click on the COLUMBUS Enroll Now button.
- Put in your information and Kroger card #.

Be sure to link your card to MENTAL HEALTH AMERICA OF LICKING COUNTY, Group # AX606.

Don't forget to buy gift cards at Kroger when you are going out to eat or shopping at stores such as Lowe's, Kohl's or Best Buy or when you start your holiday shopping. **BE SURE TO SCAN YOUR KROGER CARD WITH EVERY PURCHASE!**

Thank you for your continued help and support!



### If you shop on Amazon, you can support MHALC!

Through the AmazonSmile program, 0.5% of your purchase will be donated to the charity of your choice.

Sign-up is simple:

- Go to [smile.amazon.com](http://smile.amazon.com) and sign into your existing Amazon account.
- Search and select Mental Health America of Licking County to make it your charity of choice.
- The purchasing process and products are exactly the same on AmazonSmile as they are on Amazon.

Donating has never been as quick and easy! Please share with your friends and family and help MHALC continue to provide our much needed services.