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A Monthly Insight into Mental Health Trends

# Mental Health **newsletter**

current topics >>>

## How to Minimize Stress



1. Take a self-compassion break
2. Mindfulness, meditation, yoga
3. Exercise
4. Human connection
5. Spending time in nature
6. Laugh more
7. Improve sleep
8. Listen to music, sing
9. Get creative
10. Advocate for yourself
11. Eat/drink things that provide your mind and body with energy and make you feel good long term
12. Keep a journal
13. Seek counseling

## International Stress Awareness Week!

*How is stress impacting your relationships, health, work, and overall well-being?*

“In terms of high blood pressure, recurring fight or flight responses can give rise to hypertension, which can make you more

more susceptible to heart attacks and strokes if it isn’t addressed,” Dr. Daniel Atkinson explained.

Many people shrug off stress as though it is a rite of passage or something that we want to happen because it makes us more productive or is a sign that we are successful. But as you

can see from what Dr. Atkinson says, stress is much more serious than many give it credit. Chronic stress has also been linked to headaches, upset stomachs, chest pains, problems with sex and sleep, depression, panic attacks, and negatively impacts our relationships. Oftentimes, people bottle up or keep their stress to themselves, which makes it difficult for their partners, family, and

friends to understand what they are going through and to provide support. People also tend to retreat, isolate, withdraw from loved

ones, become aggressive, short-tempered or angry, blame, and become less affectionate. which are all behaviors that can cause tension in relationships or even bring an end to the relationship entirely. At work, increased stress has been shown to make workers more prone to error, poor work performance, mental health issues, burnout, and conflict in the workplace. On a larger economic scale, stress causes more accidents, absenteeism, employee turnover, diminished productivity, and direct medical, legal, and insurance costs which is costing the United States over \$300 billion every year. We should all begin to care more about stress and reducing stress in all areas of our lives.

According to the WHO, 12 billion workdays are lost annually due to stress, depression and anxiety, at a cost of nearly \$1 trillion/year to the global economy.

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set the stage >>>

# Setting the Stage for Happiness

## Think On This:

What's something you want to learn?  
How can you begin to take steps to advance this new skill?

## Try This:

Embrace your silly side by texting your friend a ridiculous question and seeing how they respond. It could be anything from "What flavor of ice cream would you be?" to "If you were a time-traveling wizard, what's the first thing you would do?"

## Remember This:

You can do anything you put your mind to!



## November 19<sup>th</sup> is Survivor Day

I purposely do not say we celebrate this day because it is not always a day of celebration for all survivors, but instead may be a day to mourn, support, educate, heal, or honor those who are lost to suicide. This day was designated to be right before Thanksgiving because this time of year, filled with holidays, is often a difficult time for survivors. Here are some tips on how to support survivors of suicide loss in your life:

1. "I don't know what to say, but I'm here for you"
2. Refrain from saying, "I understand what you're going through"
3. Do not ask intrusive questions about how the person died
4. Avoid pat advice and hurtful clichés
5. Do not place value judgments on the suicide
6. Do not assign or imply blame
7. Be proactive about offering help
8. Don't be afraid to talk about the person who died
9. Be patient
10. Don't disappear

# International Survivors of Suicide Loss Day



# Career Development Month

*Many people believe that career development discussions should not begin until high school, but that is the farthest thing from the truth. We should be exposing students to many different careers starting at a young age. It takes people a long time to decide what they want to do...which makes sense since there are tens of thousands of careers which exist around the world! How can we explore all of that in just 4 short years? For many of us, we may still be figuring out what we want to do, where we want to work, or have already had several career changes in our lives.*

*Career development is not just about finding a career or preparing for the work force. It is also about how we can further develop and improve our pre-existing careers and occupational skills. Try asking yourselves this month, how can I become a better teacher, counselor, supervisor, administrator? We all have room for improvement and growth...so during this year's Career Development Month, let's strive for just that!*

- **Teach students how coursework can directly translate to the job market;**
- **Reach out to your minority, low-income, and first-generation college students to learn what specific resources they need during this uncertain time;**
- **Utilize the winding down of the semester to provide diversity and equity training to better support your students who may be facing mental health, home, and other challenges that have been exacerbated because of the pandemic;**
- **Offer workshops on how to “nail the virtual interview” utilizing virtual career fairs;**
- **Hold small group student sessions so you can gauge what your students are wanting out of your office, what programming they need, and what they are worried about;**
- **Set up virtual mock interviews, resume reviews, cover letter workshops, and virtual job searching workshops.**

## ask the experts >>>

**Q:** *Why is knowing my family health history important?*

**A:** *A family health history can identify people with a higher-than-usual chance of having common disorder.*

Has your mother or sister had breast cancer? Does your mother, father, sister, or brother have diabetes? Did your mother, father, brother, or sister have colorectal (colon) cancer before age 50? If you answered “yes,” you are more likely to get the same disease as your parent or sibling and should consider earlier screening. Talk to your doctor about when to start screening and what other steps to take to prevent the disease or find it early. Finding disease early can often mean better health in the long run. Collect your family health history by talking to your family and asking questions, recording the information they provide, and sharing the information with your doctors.



## Adoption Awareness Month

*The Children's Bureau's National Adoption Month campaign seeks to increase national awareness of adoption issues, bring attention to the need for adoptive families for teens in the foster care system, and emphasize the value of youth engagement.*

## Signing on the dotted line...

So how do you adopt or become a foster parent in New Jersey? Learn about the guidelines and laws [HERE!](#)





# happy **thanksgiving**

“For many students, Thanksgiving is a time to express gratitude and be with family. Teachers often include fun activities related to the holiday in their classrooms. When teaching about Thanksgiving, it is important not to misrepresent Native American cultures. Native traditions have developed over thousands of years and are distinct and complex. They are also specific to each individual tribe. Projects and crafts that attempt to adapt or copy Native traditions tend to perpetuate stereotypes of Native Americans. For example, we discourage adopting "Native" costumes into your classroom. Instead, incorporate Native knowledge into your lesson plans with the provided resources [HERE](#). We encourage you to celebrate the vibrancy of Native cultures through Native American art, literature, and foods while you celebrate Thanksgiving.

Native perspectives are especially important to include when teaching the history of the "First Thanksgiving". Giving thanks is a longstanding and central tradition among most Native groups that is still practiced today. The First Thanksgiving is often portrayed as a friendly harvest festival where Pilgrims and generic, nameless "Indians" came together to eat and give thanks. In reality, the assembly of the Wampanoag Peoples and the English settlers in 1621 had much more to do with political alliances, diplomacy, and a pursuit of peace.

The Wampanoag Peoples had a long political history dealing with other Native Nations before the English arrived. The Wampanoag shared their land, food, and knowledge of the environment with the English. Without help from the Wampanoag, the English would not have had the successful harvest that led to the First Thanksgiving. However, cooperation was short lived, as the English continued to attack and encroach upon Wampanoag lands in spite of their agreements. Interactions with Europeans and Americans brought accelerated and often devastating changes to American Indian cultures. As with all lessons that discuss Native American culture and history, it is important to include accurate details, be tribally specific, and practice cultural sensitivity when teaching about Thanksgiving. Just as they were before the English arrived, Native Americans like the Wampanoag Peoples are dynamic and active participants in all aspects of society.”

coming soon >>>

## In The Next Issue

*National Stress-Free Family*

*Holidays Month*

*International Day of Persons With Disabilities*

*Human Rights Day*

## Native American Facts BY THE NUMBERS

### 6.9 MILLION

The nation's American Indian and Alaska Native population alone or in combination with other race groups in 2019.<sup>1</sup>

### 10.1 MILLION

The projected American Indian and Alaska Native population alone or in combination with other race groups on July 1, 2060 (2.5% of the total population).<sup>2</sup>

### 1.7%

5.2 million people (1.7% of U.S. Population) identified as American Indian or Alaska Native alone combination with one or more other races.<sup>3</sup>

### 0.9%

Of these 5.2 million people, 2.9 million (0.9% of U.S. Population) identified as American Indian or Alaska Native alone.<sup>4</sup>

### 324

The number of **distinct federally recognized American Indian reservations** in 2019, including federal reservations and off-reservation land.<sup>5</sup>



### 20

In 2018, 20 counties (0.6 percent) had an **American Indian and Alaska Native population of 50,000 or more**.<sup>6</sup>

Los Angeles County, California had the **largest American Indian and Alaska Native population** in 2018 (231,340).<sup>7</sup>

## INFRASTRUCTURE

American Indian and Alaska Native lands contain approximately **5% of all renewable energy resources**.<sup>8</sup>

**75% of existing roads on tribal lands are not paved.** Lack of road maintenance has been cited as contributing to low school attendance by students from reservations.<sup>9</sup>



American Indians and Alaska Natives attend **post-secondary education at a rate of 17%, in comparison to 60% among the total U.S. population**.<sup>10</sup>



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