



# MENTAL HEALTH MONDAYS



## “Creating Healthy Minds to Lead Healthy Families”

On Monday, October 5, Stacey Cook, President and CEO of SalusCare; Nancy Dauphinais, Chief Operating Officer of David Lawrence Centers for Behavioral Health; Jeannine Joy, President and CEO of United Way of Lee, Hendry, Glades and Okeechobee Counties; JP Mojica, CEO of The Center for Progress and Excellence; and Dr. Paul Simeone, Vice President and Medical Director of Behavioral Health at Lee Health, discussed “Creating Healthy Minds to Lead Healthy Families” and the [Healthy Minds](#) initiative to provide parents and caregivers with the tools and resources they need to lead healthy, resilient lives and families.

[VIEW SEGMENT](#)

## What is Healthy Minds?

Dedicated to offering community resources for resilience, support and well-being, 17 behavioral health organizations across Lee and Collier counties have partnered to launch a new community initiative, called [Healthy Minds](#), to help people manage their stresses and strains.

Behavioral health organizations have seen significant increases in rates of depression, anxiety, substance use, suicidality and domestic violence over the last several months. Healthy Minds is offering a series of free mental health screenings to talk about what’s going on, share a resilience and coping skills toolkit and opportunities for referrals.

## When to Seek Help

If you’re not feeling great, or want to talk about what is bothering you, you don’t need to feel afraid, ashamed or that something is wrong with you. We are dealing with normal reactions to what have become really abnormal events in our lives.

Common signs you or a loved one could benefit from a screening:

- Excessive worrying or fear
- Extreme sadness
- Major changes in personality, eating habits, and/or sleeping patterns
- Confused thinking and trouble concentrating
- Dramatic mood swings

- Anger, frustration, or irritability
- Fatigue and lack of energy
- Feelings of guilt or worthlessness
- Avoidance of social activities

## Healthy Minds Screenings

A screening can help create a plan for you to get the help that you need. Friendly volunteers are willing and ready to receive you.

An individual who visited a Healthy Minds event shared, “Upon arrival to the Healthy Minds booth, I was welcomed and put at ease immediately. The volunteers helped me when I couldn’t help myself. Ultimately, they changed my life.”

We want to intervene before a crisis. We are seeing way too many individuals succumb to death by suicide and overdose. Feel empowered to speak up now.

Surprising symptoms also include grief and loss. For many, it’s the loss of hopes and dreams of walking across the stage to receive a diploma, moving into college dorms and attending football games and other sporting events. Sometimes people don’t feel comfortable sharing those types of feelings since they seem less serious than someone losing their life to COVID, yet we have these very real losses we want to talk about. We must validate those feelings of loss.

## Other Ways to Connect

There are more options than ever before to get help.

Virtual resources help reduce the barriers to accessing care. If you’re not able to come in-person to a Healthy Minds screening event, we also have virtual resources, care centers and telehealth assessments available.

These can be for you or someone you care for and are worried about. It’s important to check-in.

## United Way 2-1-1

We are dealing with all sorts of problems, not just mental well-being. If you feel uncomfortable coming out for a screening, you can still call United Way 2-1-1 or visit [HealthyLee.org/HealthyMinds](https://HealthyLee.org/HealthyMinds) for resources.



United Way connects callers to resources within the community. If you've been out of work, are having a hard time making ends meet and don't know where to turn, United Way can connect you to available resources through LeeCARES dollars, programs helping with utilities, and much more.

For those who have children back in school, yet have no money for school clothes, United Way recently opened a School Resource Center in partnership with The School District of Lee County. Get in touch with your school counselor or social worker and tell them you have a need. They will connect with the School Resource Center and get your student brand-new clothing and shoes. Let them have that normalcy that they normally would – it can make a big difference. We can connect you to other resources to offer the flexibility you need and the breath of air that we are all so desperately looking for.

[UnitedWayLee.org](http://UnitedWayLee.org) also offers a database of resources and even childcare scholarships for families who were financially affected.

It's hard to ask for help. Give yourself a break. If you've never asked for help before, this is the time. There are resources out there and you are not alone.

## Mobile Response

A crisis isn't scheduled.

The Center for Progress and Excellence has a mobile response team ready to respond to people having a mental health crisis or suicidal thoughts. Call the crisis hotline at 844-395-4432.

A team will respond to the location for anyone having a mental health crisis and implement de-escalation techniques, motivational interviewing and an evidence-based suicide assessment will determine if the situation qualifies for a Baker Act. Whether or not someone is placed on Baker Act, they will have access to wrap-around mental health services with a mentor and peer specialist for 30-45 days for face-to-face intervention. A case manager is also assigned for 120 days for a needs assessment in order to make referrals to resources within the community.

## RESOURCES

- Healthy Minds: [HealthyLee.com/HealthyMinds](http://HealthyLee.com/HealthyMinds)
- Resiliency Toolkit (available in English, Spanish and Creole): [HealthyLee.com/HealthyMinds-Toolkit](http://HealthyLee.com/HealthyMinds-Toolkit)
- Tips for Managing Anxiety & Stress for Providers, Parents, First Responders & People Who Have Been Released from Quarantine: [www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prepare/managing-stress-anxiety.html](http://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prepare/managing-stress-anxiety.html)



- Tips for Caregivers, Parents, & Teachers During Infectious Disease Outbreak: [store.samhsa.gov/product/Talking-With-Children-Tips-for-Caregivers-Parentsand-Teachers-During-Infectious-Disease-Outbreaks/PEP20-01-01-006](https://store.samhsa.gov/product/Talking-With-Children-Tips-for-Caregivers-Parentsand-Teachers-During-Infectious-Disease-Outbreaks/PEP20-01-01-006)
- Support for frontline workers: [www.healthcareswfl.org/direct-relief](http://www.healthcareswfl.org/direct-relief)
- Consider the Insight Timer app for free meditations, including those for sleep: [insighttimer.com](https://insighttimer.com)
- Free online class on mindfulness and many guided meditations: [palousemindfulness.com](https://palousemindfulness.com)
- SAMHSA Disaster Distress Hotline
  - o Toll-Free: 1-800-985-5990 (English & Spanish)
  - o TTY: 1-800-846-8517
- SAMHSA National Helpline
  - o Toll-Free: 1-800-662-HELP (24/7 Treatment Referral Information Service in English & Spanish)
- National Suicide Prevention Lifeline
  - o Toll-Free: 1-800-273-TALK
  - o TTY: 1-800-779-4TTY (4889)
- Dial United Way at 2-1-1 or visit [www.211.org](http://www.211.org)
- Mobile Crisis Unit Hotline - 844-395-4432

## QUESTIONS FROM VIEWERS

### **Q: Why is there a disparity in resources and funding from state-to-state in the U.S.?**

A: The two areas that really affect whether a state provides adequate or inadequate resources is how much it allocates for mental health. Florida spends about \$45 per capita (per person) for mental health services. The nationwide average is around \$170, and Maine spends the greatest at \$435. There is a huge discrepancy in what each state allocates for mental health services.

Also relevant is which states have accepted the Medicaid waiver in the Affordable Care Act. Florida is a state that did not do that, so there are fewer resources available while other states have better insurance than commercial carriers can provide.

To advocate for mental health parity and greater expenditures for mental health services, you can look up your local representatives and write a letter or call.

For those interested in learning more on this topic, on Nov. 20, former congressman Patrick Kennedy will be in Southwest Florida speaking about the journey of mental health advocacy and establishing mental health parity. More information is available here: [David Lawrence Centers for Behavioral Health's Sound Minds 2020](#).



**Q: How can community members get involved and help support mental health services throughout our region?**

A. We need advocates for all of our residents, especially now in these very tough times. Grab a friend, grab a neighbor, tell them about the Healthy Minds events and share this information. Share United Way 2-1-1. Let them know that help is there and they're not alone.

If you are interested in volunteering with the Healthy Minds initiative, [please click here](#) to register and someone will contact you. We need volunteers to greet people, hand out resources and be present in the community. Every volunteer receives training, and you can ask any questions that you might have to make you feel comfortable. All you need is a big heart and interest in helping.

If you know of someone battling with depression or anxiety and they don't wish to come out to a screening event, you may contact [The Center for Progress and Excellence's crisis hotline](#) at 844-395-4432 on behalf of a loved one, and they can come out to do an assessment.

**Q: What are some of the warning signs that help is needed? How do we know it's time to find help?**

A. The bar should be low to ask for help. If you're feeling like all you want to do is talk to somebody about what's going on with you, with friends and with family – that's enough. If you have symptoms like sadness, anxiety, panic, irritability, mood swings, withdrawal, isolation, impaired sleep, trouble concentrating, lowered interest or inability to experience pleasure – anything that is different from your baseline and how you were feeling a few weeks or months ago – this is telling you that you probably need to come in to talk to someone. There is no shame and no harm in asking for help. You'll be doing yourself and those around you a favor by taking better care of yourself.

There is no cookie-cutter indication of how or when to reach out, but if you feel "off" and can't identify what the emotion is, it's always beneficial to seek counsel and talk about your current situation.

Not sure if you need help? Take an online screening assessment, available in [English](#), [Spanish](#) and [Creole](#).

There are a lot of virtual resources, but sometimes you need to see someone in person. While it's good to know national resources, funding and insurance coverage can vary state-to-state. It is important to know about the resources available within your state and community.



**Q: What kind of response and feedback are you getting from folks who are participating?**

Attendees have been very surprised by all the resources available.

For example, we spoke with someone who had recently lost a brother, and his funeral had to be very small due to COVID. She felt like she had to hold it together and be strong for her siblings. Having someone to talk to really helped, and we were able to link her up with an in-person grief support group through Valerie's House.

For a lot of people, it's the opportunity to be able to connect, have a conversation to share some laughs together. We have experienced a great deal of appreciation and warmth. Due to COVID, we've been much more isolated. This is an opportunity to meet with other citizens in the fresh air and in an environment that's welcoming.

While it's difficult to walk up to a group of random individuals and ask for help, volunteers have been very empathetic and are welcoming people with open arms.





# MENTAL HEALTH MONDAYS

## About Kids' Minds Matter

The goal of Kids' Minds Matter is to raise awareness about the need for pediatric mental and behavioral health care services and to raise the funds required to make these services available in the region through Golisano Children's Hospital of Southwest Florida and Lee Health. An estimated 46,000 Southwest Florida children are impacted by mental and behavioral health disorders like anxiety, depression, eating disorders, psychosis, substance abuse, autism, and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder. As part of the region's strategic solution to the children's mental and behavioral health epidemic in Southwest Florida, Kids' Minds Matter is dedicated to fostering partnerships that support existing services, identifying and filling gaps in the continuum of care, and innovating new treatments.

Philanthropic support for Kids' Minds Matter has allowed Lee Health and Golisano Children's Hospital of Southwest Florida to: implement a tiered model of care that clinically aligns community, inpatient and outpatient care; hire additional psychiatrists, child advocates and other mental health professionals; offer Mental Health First Aid training to local pediatricians, emergency service providers and others who work directly with children; renovate an outpatient center in Fort Myers where a child's needs can be addressed in a therapeutic setting; and launch a first-of-its-kind Pediatric Digital Cognitive Behavioral Health diagnostic and treatment protocols interlaced with Tele-Psychology support to treat anxiety, depression and trauma. Most recently, Kids' Minds Matter introduced mental health care navigators into Lee and Collier County schools who will help families find resources and care to address their child's mental healthcare needs.

The "Mental Health Mondays" segments are a public forum, designed for open discussions that benefit a large audience, and to provide real-time resources and advice from pediatric mental health professionals and advocates. The information shared on this platform is intended for general public consumption and not intended for individual treatment. The views, advice, and resources shared by each guest speaker are solely their own and are not endorsed by Lee Health, Golisano Children's Hospital of Southwest Florida and Kids' Minds Matter. Kids' Minds Matter is dedicated to raising awareness and essential funding to enhance pediatric mental & behavioral health programs, services and access to care in Southwest Florida. To learn more about Kids' Minds Matter, visit [KidsMindsMatter.com](http://KidsMindsMatter.com).

