

There is no doubt that 2020 has handed out multiple changes. While some of us have felt able to navigate these changes with reasonable ease, for others of us these changes have been extremely difficult. Whatever your truth is, it is important to pay attention to both your emotional wellness and that of those around you. People who have good overall mental health can still experience emotional distress and mental illness.

Mental health is easy to take for granted. It's not like a broken arm or a heart attack where there is an obvious physical change or pain to alert you to the issue. There are signs, of course, but as they are not always visible you have to know what to look out for.

Common signs of mental illness in adults and adolescents can include the following:

- Excessive worrying or fear
- Feeling excessively sad or low
- Confused thinking or problems concentrating and learning
- Extreme mood changes, including uncontrollable "highs" or feelings of euphoria
- Prolonged or strong feelings of irritability or anger
- Avoiding friends and social activities
- Difficulties understanding or relating to other people
- Changes in sleeping habits or feeling tired and low energy
- Changes in eating habits such as increased hunger or lack of appetite
- Difficulty perceiving reality (delusions or hallucinations, in which a person experiences and senses things that don't exist in objective reality)
- Inability to perceive changes in one's own feelings, behavior or personality ("lack of insight")
- Overuse of substances like alcohol or drugs
- Multiple physical ailments without obvious causes (such as headaches, stomach aches, vague and ongoing "aches and pains")
- Thinking about suicide
- Inability to carry out daily activities or handle daily problems and stress
- An intense fear of weight gain; concern with appearance

Mental health conditions can also begin to develop in young children. Because children are still learning how to identify and talk about thoughts and emotions, their most obvious symptoms are behavioral, which may include the following:

- Changes in school performance
- Excessive worry or anxiety, for instance fighting to avoid bed or school
- Hyperactive behavior
- Frequent nightmares
- Frequent disobedience or aggression
- Frequent temper tantrums

It is important that we attend to our mental and emotional needs so that the quality of lives does not suffer needlessly. Poor mental health could affect functioning in areas such as work, school, relationships, and physical health.

Don't be afraid to reach out if you or someone you know needs help. Learning all you can about mental health is an important first step. Reach out to your primary care doctor, health insurance, or county mental health authority for more resources.

### WHERE TO GET HELP

There is no wrong door to open when seeking help. Here are some options for finding support for mental health.

Whether you have Private Insurance, Oregon Health Plan or no insurance, please choose an option below to start your referral process to get matched with the right service:

1. Call Linn County Mental Health at 541-9687-3866 (press #0) Monday – Friday 8:30am – 5:00pm; or
2. Contact your Primary Care Physician for a referral to a therapist; or
3. Ask your school for a referral to a mental health counselor and/or voucher for services; or
4. Go to <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/therapists/oregon>, filter according to your insurance, and then review therapist profiles; or
5. Contact your insurance company for a list of local counselors covered under your plan.

### PHONE NUMBERS YOU MAY FIND HELPFUL:

<u>HOTLINE</u>	<u>PHONE NUMBER</u>	<u>TIME</u>
National Suicide	800-273-8255 (TALK)	24/7/365
Teen Help	800-852-8336 (TLC-TEEN)	6-10pm PST
Trevor Project	866-488-7386	24/7/365
National Domestic Violence	800-799-7233 (SAFE)	24/7/365

### TEXT LINES YOU MAY FIND HELPFUL:

- Text 741741 to connect with a Crisis Counselor (24/7)
- Text "TEEN" to 839863 for Teen to Teen Support (6-9pm PST)
- Text 678-678 to connect with the Trevor Project (24/7)

### WEBSITES YOU MAY FIND HELPFUL:

<https://www.nami.org>

NAMI is the National Alliance on Mental Illness, the nation's largest grassroots mental health organization dedicated to building better lives for the millions of Americans affected by mental illness.

<https://www.crisistextline.org/>

In addition to our text line which provides free, 24/7 support via text message, our website offers information and resources for a variety of concerns.

<https://teenlineonline.org/>

TEEN LINE is a nonprofit, community-based organization helping distressed youth address their problems. It is our mission to provide peer based education and support before problems become a crisis, using an international hotline, community outreach and online support.

<https://www.thetrevorproject.org/>

The Trevor Project, a suicide prevention and crisis intervention hotline for LGBTQ youth, offers phone, text, and chat services.

<https://www.thehotline.org/>

Information and support for individuals affected by domestic violence. Some people who reach out to us identify as survivors of abuse, some as concerned friends or family members, some as abusive partners seeking to change themselves.