

# SCCMHA Provider News

## April 2021

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## A Message From the CEO, Sandra M. Lindsey

Greetings SCCMHA Network Providers. I hope this message finds you and yours safe and well. On behalf of SCCMHA Administration, our Board of Directors and everyone at SCCMHA, thank you for all that you do to provide care, treatment, and other supports to consumers and their families during this unprecedented time.

The access to COVID-19 vaccinations for at risk and priority sub-populations that want them is on track, especially for those living and working in long term care and adult foster care settings. SCCMHA along with our great partner Great Lakes Health Clinics, are working on promising plans for making vaccinations available very soon to vulnerable consumers living on their own or with family. I would encourage everyone to strongly consider vaccination for themselves and to also promote vaccinations for your family members as soon as they become available to you. No matter which vaccine is being administered; Pfizer or Moderna, the best one is the one you can get in your arm the quickest. All of them have very high efficacy and protection that will keep you from getting sick from COVID-19. The very promising and recent research on these vaccines, is suggesting that once vaccinated, besides protecting yourself, you cannot be a carrier of COVID -19 to expose and infect others.

Expanded vaccination availability, however, needs to be tempered by the reality that infections are on the rise in Michigan and with COVID -19 variants already in our state that increase the degree of contagion, we must remain vigilant. Masking, social distancing and hygiene procedures must continue.

Besides managing the oftentimes frustrating day to day challenges and aspects of the COVID-19 pandemic, regular business must move forward, adjusted of course for exposure and infection mitigation safety.

By the time this newsletter is issued, it is very likely that the Saginaw County Board of Commissioners will have voted to enact a Saginaw County Emergency Declaration at a special meeting on April 8<sup>th</sup>. Such a declaration will at a minimum continue the flexibilities issued by the State of Michigan with regard to the Open Meetings Act, allowing public governing bodies like county commissions, school boards, city councils, CMH boards and a host of public municipal bodies to continue to conduct their meetings virtually.

With regard to regular business, our network continues to move toward increasing much needed in-person care and treatment across the service array. Now that we have mastery over safety procedures and adequate personal protection equipment, we must continue to open up further to in-person service.

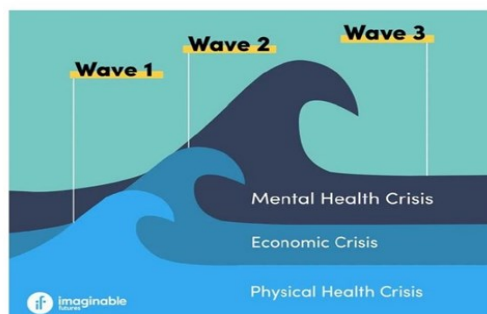
The duration of the pandemic combined with the sequence of shut down orders for schools and businesses, public gatherings of all kinds, the related isolation, economic crisis, and job losses have all taken their toll and a behavioral health crisis is emerging quickly. According to the Centers for Disease Control from a research study this past summer, 40% of U.S. adults reported struggling with mental health or substance use concerns. Priority populations for concerns included young adults, racial and ethnic minorities, essential workers and unpaid adult care givers. Regrettably completed suicides and suicide attempts are also on the rise.

Think about these related events as a series of waves of crises as represented in the info graphic below:

### Pandemic Impacts: Prolonged and Mounting Mental Health Crisis

New first responder data from the National EMS Information System (NEMSIS) shows:

- Significant increases in mental distress, overdose rates, and suicides.
- Mental health and overdose calls to first responders doubled in 2020 compared to both 2018 and 2019.
- Suicides have seen an increase



*Continued on next page*

**Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 1-800-273-TALK (8255)**

In response, there are a number of new initiatives, large and small, coming online now and other major behavioral health infrastructure projects in development. The following is a sample of some of these new initiatives:

## **Michigan Crisis & Access Line (MiCAL)**

The Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) is leading an initiative with diverse stakeholder input called the Michigan Crisis & Access Line or MiCAL. This is a large and complex project, aimed at fortifying behavioral health infrastructure to address this third wave of increases in demand for mental health and substance use disorder treatment and resources.

MiCAL will Create a Two-Part State-Wide Crisis Line System:

1. Public service for anyone, anytime, anywhere: Michigan Crisis & Access Line (MiCAL) per (PA 12 of 2020), that will also connect to local Mobile Crisis Response and new Crisis Receiving and Stabilizing Facilities. The new MiCAL Provider under contract to MDHHS is Common Ground in Oakland County. Development is being informed by the SAMHSA Best Practice for Crisis Service. More background information can be found at this link: <https://www.samhsa.gov/find-help/implementing-behavioral-health-crisis-care>
2. MiCAL will also connect to more intensive crisis services that are fully integrated with ongoing treatment both at the payer and provider level for persons with significant mental health and substance use disorder issues, like CMHSPs.

Note: the newly developing MiCAL project will also connect and coordinate with the new National Crisis Line telephone exchange “988” by the summer of 2022”. The new national service will also absorb the current National Suicide Prevention Hot Line.

## **New Crisis Stabilization Units (A brand new service in Michigan\*)**

Last year the Michigan Legislature (PA402 of 2020) codified Crisis Stabilization Units (CSUs) in the Michigan Mental Health Code. This new statute requires MDHHS to develop new care and facility standards, while implementing and overseeing a certification process for CSUs. At present, the plan is for these programs to be for 72 hour holds for individuals waiting for psychiatric inpatient admissions or assessment time to divert them from the need for this level of care. No new funding to support the effort has yet been appropriated. MDHHS is at present, exploring funding opportunities to carry out the legislation. Meanwhile, a set of cross functional stakeholder discussions to inform planning are underway. These facilities would not be licensed as Adult Foster Care facilities. Instead, new standards would be developed by MDHHS and programs certified by a yet un-named division of MDHHS. This is a very different service from Crisis Residential Services (CRUs), provided in our SCCMHA Network by Hope Network called Saginaw Meadows, where the site is a licensed AFC and lengths of stay are longer.

## **SCCMHA Mobile Response\* and Stabilization Services: Expanding to 24/7 Services and Adding Adults to Service Eligibility**

The SCCMHA clinical leadership has planning underway to rename the current Mobile Urgent Treatment Team to Mobile Response and Stabilization Services. In addition, the service will move to 24/7 operations and serve adults as well as children and youth. Four new mental health clinician positions are being created to cover the midnight shift with additional staffing enhancements to day time hours on Saturdays and Sundays. This unit will work closely with Central Access and Intake, Crisis Services, and law enforcement. Building out the service is likely to take until the end of the fiscal year. There will be much more to come as planning and implementation strategies progress.

This is just a sample of new initiatives underway to prepare to meet the behavioral health crisis related to COVID-19 but also to better address the needs of citizens post-pandemic and well into the future.

Again, thanks to all of you for your partnership with SCCMHA and all that you do to support those we serve, their families, and the greater Saginaw community every day.

Regards,



Sandra M. Lindsey, CEO

## Mental Health First Aid

### May is Mental Health Awareness Month!

Written by: Alecia Schabel

Mental Health First Aid teaches suicide prevention and how to identify, understand, and respond to signs of mental illness and substance use disorders. This training gives you the skills you need to reach out to provide initial support to someone who may be developing a mental health or substance use problem and help connect them to the appropriate care. SCCMHA has provided Mental Health First Aid training since 2014. The course is very popular in Saginaw and the surrounding communities among teachers, first responders, faith-based communities, business communities, direct care workers, healthcare workers, Social Service workers, veterans, neighbors, friends, families, and people in recovery – anyone can take this very valuable course! The course offers any interested person knowledge about how to respond to a mental health crisis by taking away the fear and hesitation when starting a conversation about mental health with adults or youth. The safety net begins there with asking, listening, and conquering the isolation that places people at greatest risk.

Mental Health First Aid Training typically costs \$170 per person but is available FREE for those who take the training or sign up in May during the celebration of Mental Health Awareness Month.

Free courses are offered virtually through Zoom (unless identified as \*Live) on these dates:

#### Adult Mental Health First Aid

May 11, 2021

May 20, 2021 \*Live

May 21, 2021

June 24, 2021

#### Youth Mental Health First Aid

May 5, 2021 \*Live

May 27, 2021

June 29, 2021

#### Public Safety Mental Health First

Aid Training \*\*reserved for

May 18, 2021 First Responders

\*Live – course is held at SCCMHA Albert & Woods Professional Development and Business Center  
1 Germania Platz, Saginaw, MI 48602. \*\*\*COVID Safety Guidelines will be strictly enforced.

More details can be found here:

<https://www.sccmha.org/news-information/announcements/mental-health-first-aid-training.html>

You can find additional materials on Mental Health First Aid at the end of this newsletter.



*Mental Health  
First Aid Training  
is being offered  
for FREE during the  
Month of May!*

## COVID-19 Vaccination Resources

Written by: Jenna Brown

Vaccination is an important step in keeping yourself, your family, and community safe from COVID-19, while helping to end the pandemic. Registration forms for the COVID-19 vaccination can be found on your local Health Department's website. Saginaw residents may visit [www.mysaginawhealth.org](http://www.mysaginawhealth.org) to register. If you are not able to register online or do not have a family member to help, you can call the Saginaw County Commission on Aging at 989-797-6880 to reserve your vaccination. If you need further help navigating the registration process, the COVID-19 Hotline is available to help. This option is available Monday through Friday 8am to 5pm and Saturday and Sunday 8am to 1pm by calling 888-535-6136 and pressing 1.

**Great Lakes Bay Health Centers** is offering two opportunities to receive the COVID-19 vaccination. Anyone 18 years of age or older can **walk-in** to the locations below at the listed times. No appointment is necessary\*.

- 3023 Davenport, Saginaw, MI 48602 - **Saturday, April 17th, 10:00am - 2:00pm**
- UAW Local 699 - 1911 Bagley St, Saginaw, MI 48601 - **Every Tuesday 8:00am - 4:00pm**

\*If you would like to register for the Tuesday clinics, visit [www.GreatLakesBayHealthCenters.org](http://www.GreatLakesBayHealthCenters.org)

As of April 5th, The Michigan Department of Health and Human Services has identified anyone above the age of 16 as eligible for the COVID-19 vaccination.

A great resource to find a vaccination site with available doses is [VaccineFinder.org](http://VaccineFinder.org). Simply type in your area code and a list will display with all vaccination sites in your selected radius. Select one that has vaccinations in stock and the link will take you to the next step for registration. You can also filter locations by which COVID-19 vaccine the site has in stock, Moderna or Pfizer.

The below are the main businesses have been making appointments and administering COVID-19 Vaccinations locally\*\*:

**Meijer** - You can register for a vaccination online at [clinic.meijer.com](http://clinic.meijer.com), by texting "COVID" to 75049, or by calling your local Meijer Pharmacy. If you register by text, you will receive a text message to reserve your vaccination date. If you register online or by phone, you will receive a call to reserve your vaccination date.

**Walmart** - You can register for a vaccination online at [Flu Shots & Immunizations - Walmart.com](http://Flu Shots & Immunizations - Walmart.com)

**CVS** - At the time of this newsletter, all Michigan Appointment are fully booked. To check if new appointments have been scheduled, you can visit [COVID-19: Vaccine information | CVS Health](http://COVID-19: Vaccine information | CVS Health)

**Walgreens** - You can register for a vaccination online at [COVID-19 Vaccination | Walgreens Find Care](http://COVID-19 Vaccination | Walgreens Find Care)

**Kroger** - You can register for a vaccination online at [Kroger - COVID-19 Vaccine Appointments - Schedule Now](http://Kroger - COVID-19 Vaccine Appointments - Schedule Now).

**Rite Aid** - At the time of this newsletter, all Michigan Appointment are fully booked. To check if new appointments have been scheduled, you can visit [riteaid.com](http://riteaid.com).

\*\*The above list of providers is meant to serve as a resource to help individuals find a vaccination site that may be able to provide a vaccination more quickly than the health department and in a more convenient location. Due to high demand, some locations may not be scheduling vaccinations at the time you try to register.

**Regardless of current vaccination/appointment availability, the Health Department and Meijer will take your contact information to reach out when a vaccination is available.**





## Congratulations Linda Moten-Elliott!

Every year, the employees of Covenant HealthCare's Emergency Care Center nominate essential partners for the Team of Excellence Essential Worker Recognition Award. The recipient of the award is someone that the employees feel embodies the Covenant mission of providing extraordinary patient care and makes an outstanding positive contribution to the organization. Congratulations to Linda Moten-Elliott on being the recipient of this recognition. Linda is a Crisis Intervention Therapist here at SCCMHA. We appreciate all that she has done to achieve excellence and care for consumers during this past year.



## Day Services Updates

Written by: Jennifer Keilitz

Day Services is ever changing right now.

**Bayside Clubhouse** has increased capacity for face-to-face services for consumers who wish to return. Transportation is still limited due to social distancing restrictions, however, if consumers would like to return please have them contact the clubhouse to discuss. Bayside clubhouse is also taking new referrals if consumers wish to attend clubhouse. If you are unsure of what is offered at the clubhouse, please feel free to contact them at 989.799.1266.

**Community Ties North and South** opened to limited face-to-face services on April 12, 2021. The program has reached out to consumers and families to discuss. Limited transportation will be provided. Virtual activities are still being offered.

**Guardian Angels** is continuing to offer face-to-face services and limited transportation services to their programming site. Virtual activities are still offered for those consumers who wish to participate.

**Friends for Recovery - Drop in Center** is still allowing up to 15 members in the building in the morning and up to 15 members in the building in the afternoon. No transportation is offered at this time.

**SVRC Community Inclusion and Skill Building** has been offered virtually for some months now and opened to face-to-face on April 5, 2021. The first week focused on safety as they returned to face-to-face. Some discussion will center around interactions with others during this time of COVID-19. They will also be discussing physical wellness and caring for nature.

We hope to continue to bring you updates as we continue to obtain vaccinations and work toward safe interactions in the various day services that are provided.

## CARF Accreditation

During the COVID-19 pandemic, four of our external providers worked hard to receive CARF accreditation. Congratulations and well done to the below providers, that all received the three year accreditation:

### Disability Network of Mid-Michigan

Audited in December 2019. Accreditation valid until February 28, 2023.

### Hope Network

Audited in October 2020. Accreditation valid until May 2023.

### Saginaw Psychological Services, Inc

Audited in September 2020. Accreditation valid until June 2023.

### Training & Treatment Innovations

Audited in November 2020. Accreditation valid until April 30, 2023.

If your provider has received any accreditations that you would like to share, please notify Jenna Brown at [jbrown@sccmha.org](mailto:jbrown@sccmha.org) or Jennifer Keilitz at [jkeilitz@sccmha.org](mailto:jkeilitz@sccmha.org).



## Validation Process for Providers on Heightened Scrutiny

Written by: Monique Taylor-Whitson

Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) has started their validation process for providers that are on the Heighten Scrutiny list. These concerns were initially captured during the 2017 surveys that sent out to providers. Mid-State Health Network (MSHN) will contact all providers that are on the heighten scrutiny list with the specific survey questions that need to be verified. MSHN will contact providers via encrypted email and the MSHN tool attached to these emails provide great detail in regards to what areas require validation and what specific documentation is deemed acceptable in order to come into compliance. SCCMHA wants to ensure our Provider Network is supported in this process, so feel free to contact Monique Taylor-Whitson, CMHSP HCBS lead with any questions or assistance needed in this process. She can be reached at 989-797-3491 or [mtaylor-whitson@sccmha.org](mailto:mtaylor-whitson@sccmha.org).

## Veteran and Military Family Navigator

Written by: Kristie Wolbert

In October of 2020, Saginaw County Community Mental Health Authority (SCCMHA) submitted and was awarded a grant for a Veteran and Military Family Navigator. The goal of this grant is to provide a contact, for veterans and military families with mental health and/or substance use disorder needs, who has a thorough understanding of military culture and the services provided by the Veteran's Health Administration (VHA)/Veteran's Benefit Administration (VBA), community mental health providers and other community partners.



**Don Leslie**  
*Veteran and Military  
Family Navigator*  
Phone: (989) 928-1573  
Email: [dleslie@sccmha.org](mailto:dleslie@sccmha.org)

The primary mission of the Veteran and Military Family Navigator is to identify, engage, and connect veterans and military families to mental health and substance use disorder resources. Navigators can go into the community and meet with veterans where they are at; allowing interactions to take place in a more comfortable setting for the veteran. Navigators offer veterans peer to peer support while they engage in services. The navigator helps "walk" the veteran through the intake process answer any questions and address any concerns along the way. Other areas where Navigators can provide assistance include linking the veterans and/or their families to VA benefits, education assistance, housing, caregiver supports, and other state and federal assistance programs.

Veteran Navigators stay informed as to what the current veteran benefits are and what resources are available to them in the community. They assist in assuring that veterans and their families have access to accurate, understandable, and complete information to make choices regarding the services that are available in the Tri-City area and direct them to the services determined to best meet their needs.

The SCCMHA Veteran and Military Family Navigator serves veterans and their families living in Saginaw, Bay, and Midland counties. One of the main features of the Navigator program is the peer-to-peer support. All Veteran and Military Family Navigators are veterans themselves.

SCCMHA's Veteran Navigator is Don Leslie. Don served five years active duty in the U.S. Army as a Human Intelligence Collector. The peer-to-peer support aspect of the program can be especially useful in not only getting a veteran into services but keeping them engaged.

## First Choice of Saginaw

Written by: Jenna Brown

Every year, First Choice of Saginaw fundraises and collects donations to provide SCCMHA consumers living in adult foster care homes a gift card during the holiday season. These consumers live on a limited income, often less than \$50 per month, to cover their needs. Consumers are able to spend the gift card on anything they choose, whether it be to meet a current need or fulfill a personal wish!

There is now a new way to support First Choice of Saginaw through **Kroger Community Rewards**! By signing up, anytime you make a purchase using your Kroger Shopping card or alternative shopper ID, Kroger will make a donation to First Choice of Saginaw. This program does not cost anything to participate in and will **not** affect your Kroger Fuel Points. Simply log in to your Kroger Account, select My Account from the Account drop down, select Community Rewards, search for First Choice of Saginaw, and click Enroll.

If you shop on Amazon, **AmazonSmile** is another easy way to support First Choice of Saginaw, at no additional cost to you. For every purchase you make, AmazonSmile will donate a percentage of the sale amount to First Choice of Saginaw. To sign up, visit [smile.amazon.com](https://smile.amazon.com), choose First Choice of Saginaw as the organization you want to receive donations, and start shopping! Please note, you must shop through AmazonSmile instead of the regular Amazon site for purchases to qualify for donation.

First Choice of Saginaw also has a wish list on our AmazonSmile page. Items that are needed for fundraising activities and the gift card distribution event will be posted on this site. If you would like to send us an item on our wish list, simply order it from our page and Amazon will ship the item directly to First Choice of Saginaw.

Personal donations to First Choice of **cans & bottles** for return can be regularly dropped off at the SCCMHA A&W Building on Wednesdays from 8am-5pm at the loading dock area. If you would like to donate your cans & bottles, please place bags at the loading dock and ring the bell to notify staff. You do not need to wait for a staff member to come to the door.

With the generous support of donors, over the past 16 years, First Choice of Saginaw has been able to distribute **4,842** gift cards to consumers during the holiday season. Thank you to everyone who has helped make a positive impact on the lives of consumers living in specialized residential settings.

For more information, see the brochure at the end of the newsletter or visit the First Choice of Saginaw website at: [First Choice of Saginaw \(saginawfc.org\)](https://saginawfc.org)





## Virtual Audit Reviews

Written by: Monique Taylor-Whitson

The Auditing Unit will start completing Virtual Audit Reviews for Specialized Licensed Residential providers. These reviews are expected to start in the late spring/early summer timeframe of 2021. Providers will be contacted via email or phone call as normal to schedule their virtual site review via Zoom or Doxy.me. Auditors will send out your notification letters, audit checklists, and a virtual guide that has been created to assist you with this transition. This new process requires that several forms of documentation are sent to the provider prior to the virtual review occurring. This allows Auditors the opportunity to review required proof documentation via desk review and discuss any findings with the provider during the virtual review, which helps to make the most out of the time we have together. This also helps to reduce the amount of time the virtual review will take. Auditors estimate a four (4) hour window for this review to occur. Providers are expected to prepare for this review by reviewing the audit checklist and the virtual review guide and ensuring appropriate staffing is available to assist where applicable during the virtual review. Areas such as medication reviews, staff and consumer interviews, emergency bags, tour of the home, etc. will be areas that occur via virtual review. When contacted by the Auditor, providers are encouraged to ask questions on the procedure and stay in communication throughout the process for any concerns that may arise. As mentioned above, documentation will need to be submitted as Auditors will not come on-site to review documents. Therefore, providers are encouraged to use encrypted email, fax, or drop off documents at the A&W site when providing the requested documentation. Auditors are able to make copies if the provider wishes to drop off originals.

As with any change, there will be adjustments that need to be made along the way. Auditing asks for providers to show patience and understanding as we embark on this journey together. Auditing would like to extend our gratitude to you and your programs and we appreciate the opportunity to work with you all to ensure quality care is being provided for our consumers. Feel free to contact the Auditing Unit for any questions at [auditing@sccmha.org](mailto:auditing@sccmha.org).

## Home Manager Trainings - Save the Date!

New Home Manager training is tentatively scheduled for June 29th and June 30th, 2021 from 8:00am - 5:00pm at Albert and Woods Professional Development and Business Center: 1 Germania Platz, Saginaw, MI 48602. You will be required to follow all SCCMHA PPE and safe distancing requirements. A formal announcement is coming soon!

For future planning, Home Manager Renewal training is tentatively scheduled for September 15th and October 19th, 2021. You will have your choice of which date you would like to attend.

## Residential Directory

This year SCCMHA will be updating our Licensed Residential Provider Directory. At the end of April, a questionnaire will be sent to all providers to make sure we have your updated information to include in the directory. This questionnaire asks for program specific information that helps consumers choose the best placement that matches their needs. Please be on the lookout for this questionnaire to arrive towards the end of April/beginning of May. The final directory will be distributed to SCCMHA consumers, staff, and community partners.

## Sun Safety

As the weather gets nicer, more time is spent outdoors, and the UV index increases, please remind consumers of the importance of sun safety. For more information, refer to the Sun Care Tips and Facts Flyer on the next page, courtesy of the Office of Recipient Rights.





# Sun Care Tips and Facts

## Who needs sunscreen?

EVERYONE! Sunscreen use can help prevent skin cancer by protecting you from the sun's harmful ultraviolet rays. Anyone can get skin cancer, regardless of age, gender or race. In fact, it is estimated that one in five Americans will develop skin cancer in their lifetime.



## FACTS



Even on cloudy days, up to 80% of the sun's UV rays can reach your skin.

Water, snow and sand can reflect and intensify the sun's damaging rays.

### Practice Safe Sun

- ◆ Seek shade, especially from 10am to 2pm when the sun's rays are the strongest.
- ◆ Dress to protect yourself from the sun by wearing a long-sleeved shirt, pants, a wide-brimmed hat and sunglasses.
- ◆ Apply a broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen with an SPF of 30 or higher to all skin not covered by clothing. Remember to reapply every 2 hours or after swimming or sweating.



## **It's your right ...**

**... to not be neglected or abused**

**... to not be retaliated against or harassed**

**... to have your complaints heard**

**... to be treated with dignity, respect and confidentiality**

**... to be fully informed about your treatment and participate in its planning**

**While you receive mental health services, you have many rights. You should know what they are. To know more, contact:**

**Tony Navarre**  
Recipient Rights Advisor  
(989) 797-3583

**Kentera Patterson**  
Recipient Rights Advisor  
(989) 797-3462

**Office of Recipient Rights**  
**FAX: (989) 797-3595**



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## CONVERSATION STARTERS ABOUT

# MENTAL HEALTH



### "ARE YOU OKAY?"

Ask the question and mean it. Show you are listening by sitting alongside the person, maintaining an open body position and maintaining comfortable eye contact.



### "ARE YOU THINKING ABOUT SUICIDE?"

If you are concerned that someone is considering suicide, ask the question directly. Asking a person if they have been thinking about suicide or have made plans will not increase the risk that they will complete suicide.



### "I'VE NOTICED THAT..."

Open the conversation by explaining behavior changes you have noticed. For example, "I've noticed you have been showing up to work late a lot lately." Then, express genuine concern.



### "DO YOU WANT TO TAKE A WALK?"

Engaging a friend, family member or loved one you are concerned about in a healthy activity like taking a walk together can be a great way to start a conversation. Doing an activity while you talk can take some of the nerves and discomfort out of the conversation.



### "HOW ARE YOU, REALLY?"

Sometimes when someone says they're fine, they're not. Know the warning signs to look for so you can know when to offer extra support.

10

## TIPS FOR TALKING ABOUT ADDICTION



1

**TALK WITH THEM IN A QUIET PLACE**  
when both of you are sober and calm.

2

**LET THE PERSON KNOW YOU ARE CONCERNED**  
and willing to help.

3

**CONSIDER THE PERSON'S READINESS**  
to talk about their substance use.

4

**IDENTIFY AND DISCUSS THEIR BEHAVIOR**  
rather than criticize their character.

5

**EXPRESS YOUR POINT OF VIEW**  
by using "I" statements like, "I have noticed..." or, "I am concerned..."

6

**LISTEN**  
without judging the person as immoral or "bad."

7

**TREAT THE PERSON WITH DIGNITY AND RESPECT.**  
Period.

8

**DO NOT FORCE**  
the person to admit they have a problem.

9

**DO NOT LABEL OR ACCUSE**  
the person of being an "addict."

10

**HAVE REALISTIC EXPECTATIONS**  
of the person. Their behavior will not change right away.



MENTALHEALTHFIRSTAID.ORG



# SAY THIS, NOT THAT:

AVOIDING AWKWARD  
CONVERSATIONS ABOUT  
MENTAL HEALTH



## DON'T SAY:

"Snap out of it!" or "Get over it!"



"Lighten up!" or "Just put a smile on your face!"



"You don't seem that bad to me."



## SAY:



Remind the person that their mental health challenge is a real health problem and they are not to blame for feeling "down."



Acknowledge that the person is not "faking," "lazy," "weak," or "selfish."



Offer information about their mental health challenges and suggest appropriate resources in your area.

GET TRAINED IN MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AID  
MENTALHEALTHFIRSTAID.ORG

## IMPROVE YOUR LISTENING WITH NON-VERBAL SKILLS



Pay close attention to what the person says.



Maintain comfortable eye contact. Don't avoid eye contact, but do avoid staring.



Maintain an open body position. Don't cross your arms over your body, as this may appear defensive.



Sit down, even if the person is standing, as this seems less threatening.



It's best to sit alongside and angled toward the person rather than directly opposite him or her.



Do not fidget.

Nonverbal communication and body language express a great deal. Good nonverbal skills show you are listening, while poor nonverbal skills can damage the rapport and negate what you say. Keep these nonverbal cues in mind next time you have a conversation with someone who may need help.

BE THE **1** TO MAKE A **DIFFERENCE**

Want to make a difference?



Take



MENTAL  
HEALTH  
FIRST AID®

MENTALHEALTHFIRSTAID.ORG

## How To Support the First Choice Program

If you would like to support this very important program you may make donations of any amount to **First Choice of Saginaw**.

Please forward all First Choice donations to "First Choice of Saginaw", 500 Hancock, Suite 200, Saginaw, MI 48602.

A First Choice of Saginaw pledge form has been included with this brochure for your convenience.

Additional information can be obtained by contacting:

### **First Choice of Saginaw**

Phone: (989) 799-6451

Email: [info@saginawfc.org](mailto:info@saginawfc.org)

Or by visiting the First Choice of Saginaw website at:

**[www.saginawfc.org](http://www.saginawfc.org)**



For additional information,  
please contact:

First Choice of Saginaw  
Phone: (989) 799-6451  
Fax: (989) 799-0206  
Email: [info@saginawfc.org](mailto:info@saginawfc.org)  
Website: [www.saginawfc.org](http://www.saginawfc.org)

### Why this is an Important Need

SCCMHA serves persons with serious disabilities which result in a significant life functioning impact. Persons served have extremely limited resources, and are often receiving minimal disability coverage which barely covers their basic housing, necessary care and supervision costs. These individuals often have less than \$50 per month that must pay for other necessities or needs, including medical co-pays and any personal care items or expenses, including clothing. Many individuals have no family resources to assist them with any unmet needs.

Imagine how you would live your life if you had such limited funds- \$50 or less per month – to cover your necessities and occasional personal wants. Often individuals who suffer from serious disabilities are unable to afford an appropriate and warm winter coat, let alone a small radio, or an occasional magazine or book. Many consumers already take advantage of available local resources for reduced cost or used items, but this often does not adequately meet the individual needs of the person and still involves the use of their severely limited personal funds.

### The Purpose of the First Choice Campaign

The goal of The First Choice of Saginaw program is to collect enough funds to provide each consumer on a limited income,

who is receiving services from SCCMHA and living in an adult foster care home, with a gift card during the holiday season. These individuals will then be free to spend this gift card on whatever they want. Their “First Choice” gift card may be used to meet a current need or to help them obtain a personal wish.

The bottom line is that it's  
their own Choice!

### The Success of First Choice

The success of the First Choice program is directly related to the generous contributions made by SCCMHA staff, stakeholders and the residents of Saginaw County.

The First Choice of Saginaw program is very pleased with funds raised through the last thirteen years of campaigns. Over \$223,000 has been raised and converted into over 4,500 gift cards!

The First Choice of Saginaw program appreciates everyone who has made a contribution in 2005-2020. Numerous providers and consumers have communicated to the First Choice committee regarding the positive impact this small token has had on their spirit and lives.

**We'd greatly appreciate your  
support in this project to improve  
the quality of life for individuals  
with disabilities!**



### **Contribution/Pledge Form—2021 Campaign**

Yes, I would like to submit a financial donation in the amount of \$\_\_\_\_\_, enclosed.

Yes, I would like to submit a pledge in the amount of \$\_\_\_\_\_ to be forwarded to SCCMHA by  
\_\_\_\_ March 31, 2021      \_\_\_\_ June 30, 2021  
\_\_\_\_ September 30, 2021      \_\_\_\_ December 31, 2021

I am unable to participate at this time but may wish to participate in the future.

I/my organization would like more information on First Choice of Saginaw, please contact me.

Name\_\_\_\_\_

Title\_\_\_\_\_

Organization\_\_\_\_\_

Address\_\_\_\_\_

E-mail\_\_\_\_\_

Phone\_\_\_\_\_

#### **Please forward completed forms to:**

First Choice of Saginaw  
500 Hancock Street, Suite 200  
Saginaw, MI 48602

#### **Please make checks payable to:**

**First Choice of Saginaw**

First Choice of Saginaw is a legal, charitable, tax-exempt organization under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.