



Aionkwatakari:teke

(A-YOU-GWA-DA-GA-RI-DE-GEH)

"For us to be healthy"

Vol. 18, No. 1

Kahnawake's Only Health and Wellness Newsletter

Enniska/February 2013



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Aionkwatakari:teke

Aionkwatakari:teke is a newsletter published six times a year by Communications Services of Kahnawake Shaktiia'takehnhas Community Services (KSCS). Our purpose is to provide information on health and wellness issues that affect Kahnawa'kehró:non. All community members are welcomed and encouraged to submit articles provided that they are comprehensive to the general public, informative and educational. Slanderous material will not be accepted. Views expressed in the articles may not necessarily reflect those of KSCS. We reserve the right to edit all articles. All questions concerning this newsletter should be directed to:

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This newsletter is intended to complement, not replace the advice of your health care provider. Before starting any new health regimen, please see your doctor.



Editor's Notebook

Wow. Idle No More. What a way to end the year! What a way to begin the year! As I write this editorial, the meeting between the Prime Minister and Aboriginal "leaders" resulted with only the promise to meet again and no commitment from Harper to address Bill-C45, the omnibus bill that, in part, sparked the movement.

What's remarkable about the Idle No More movement is the role social media has played. Twitter, Facebook, blogs, YouTube, and email have all played important roles in shaping the movement and taking the message global, from solidarity flash mob round dances to teach-ins, and rallies in places far and wide. It's been inspiring to both participate in and to sit back and watch.

We've seen the role social media played in the Arab Spring, in the Occupy movement, in the Quebec student movement (sometimes called the Maple Spring). Some of these movements have resulted in change (deposing the leader in Egypt or sparking a snap election in Quebec) and others—I'm looking at you Occupy—not so much. Idle No More is saying this is our time. How much change this movement results in...is largely up to us and can happen at a macro—and micro—level. Exciting times ahead!

Sken:nen,
 Marie David

Cover: Photograph by Akwiranoron Martin Loft, courtesy of KORLCC. Cover design: Marie David.





Mental Health: A Positive Balance

BY TYSON PHILLIPS, COMMUNICATIONS

What is the definition of mental health? There are many interpretations according to KSCS Psychology Consultant/ Psychologist Joe Beltempo and psychology assistants, Jonathan Rice and Katrina Smeja.

“The most important element of mental health is to have a positive mind,” explained Joe. “It all starts from our minds: our emotional, physical and spiritual being is all connected, similar to the medicine wheel.” Katrina agrees, saying that some components to good mental health include having positive self-esteem, having an optimistic outlook on life, having a healthy mind and body, and being open to new experiences.

All three agreed that having positive balance in your life should help you in having good mental health. “Within the medicine wheel, everything connects to each other. When something negative breaks into that connection, it is not good and it disrupts the positive balance,” said Joe.

“There are five areas that help people stay mentally healthy: relationships, communication, respect, responsibility, and conflict resolution,” said Jonathan. Relationships cover all your interactions, including those with your family, co-workers, children, neighbours, significant other, etc. “If you have a good mind, you will attract good

relationships,” said Joe. “Surrounding yourself with positive people is healthy. It’s unhealthy when you are with negative individuals, for example, people who engage in harmful gossip,” Joe points out. Substance abuse can also cloud the mind, and the person will not have a clear way of thinking.

Good communication skills can aid in problem solving as Katrina points out. “People who can come together and resolve problems in a respectful manner are an example of successful communication. If people just yell at each other, the problem just gets worse. There will be no resolution as it creates a very negative environment,” she continues. “This is where respect comes in. If you show respect to others, respect should be shown to you as well. This also connects to relationships. Everyone should be respectful to each other and provide emotional support.”

“We all need some stress in our life,” Joe admits. “With a healthy mind, you can cope with life’s positive stresses. This leads to finding good ways to deal with conflict resolution. Dealing with stress in a negative manner will make you very unhealthy. Everyone has stress in their life, but when it becomes too much for a person to handle, it is not good for mental health,” said Joe.

The last area is responsibility with the emphasis on the personal. “It is your responsibility to take care of yourself and

to make sure you are following a healthy lifestyle,” Joe said. “It would be great if we can all have positive behaviours all the time. This positive behaviour will spread to the people around you. It is also your responsibility to fix a negative situation,” he points out. “Some examples are telling a child to share their toys or stopping a co-worker from spreading hurtful gossip in the workplace,” he said. “If we can follow these suggestions, we will have a better outcome.”



BY MARY MCCOMBER, PREVENTION

Substance Abuse & Violence

Substance abuse, addictions, and violence can leave lasting effects on individuals and families. But what are the larger issues? Did the substance abuse cause the violence or was the potential for violence already there? These questions can be difficult to answer as the impact of substance abuse and a person's tendency to violent behaviour may vary from person to person.

We know that legal and illegal substances can affect the mood and behavior of an individual. Therefore, it's important to become educated on these issues.

Addictions and violence can cause distress in families. Young people can be traumatized when they are the victims or witnesses to violence at a young age. They may use substances to cope and the early onset of substance abuse can have a lasting effect on their lives.

The connection between mental health issues and substance use or misuse is complicated. "Substance use can be a risk factor for increased mental health problems or mental health problems might be a risk factor for increased substance use." (Mental Health First Aid Canada).

Here is a brief look at some substances and their potential connection to violent acts. It's important to note that each individual is different and the effects may vary. Substances can act as a major disinhibitor of psychological controls. For this reason, drugs should only be taken under medical control and should not be mixed with other

substances. Illegal drugs are not safe; there are no safety controls and dangerous additives can cause even more consequences:

Alcohol

- Commonly associated with domestic disturbances. It doesn't make a person "violent/aggressive but it may lead to aggressive behavior because it disinhibits psychological controls that normally constrain aggressive impulses." (Fauteaux 178).
- Is a depressant and can cause a person to pass out or not feel physical pain. It may also further complicate the depression.
- Can cause greater impulsivity and, with cognitive impairment, aggression.
- Diminished rational functioning can make a person overreact or become a "mean drunk".
- A person may also blame bad behavior on alcohol, feeling they have a license to be reckless.

Amphetamines and Cocaine (speed)

- Amphetamines and cocaine are stimulants and cause an increase in energy and can induce an exaggerated sense of power and physical strength.
- Release dopamine into the brain, causing a "rush" activating adrenaline; it then increases blood

pressure and over stimulates the central nervous system (CNS).

- Can excite a person (hyper/paranoid/anxious); induce rapid mood swings from euphoria to agitation and can lead to aggression.

Opiates

- Heroin and other opiates like oxycodone and morphine are known for their short term euphoric and pain killing properties. There is a high risk of developing dependence and use of these substances needs to be monitored by a physician.
- Directly affect endorphins (the "feel good" brain chemicals). The brain may stop producing its own endorphins and one may become dependent. It may cause or exacerbate depression.
- A person addicted to opiates may become aggressive as they obsessively and frantically need the next fix. (Fauteaux 181)

Barbiturate

- A sedative that has been used to calm emotionally pained or anxious persons. Though not generally associated with violence, it can happen due to impulse control issues.

Marijuana

- A hallucinogen not usually associated with violence; however, high levels



Getting to Know the New EHS Inspector

BY KAREN PADDA, EHS

of tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) can lead to aggression, especially when phencyclidine (PCP/angel dust) is added. Side effects include paranoia, hallucinations, and anxiety and can lead to agitation to the point of violence.

Inhalants and Steroids

- Can cause brain damage, which can lead to aggressive behavior. Steroids, such as those used for body building, may cause an intensification of anger.

From: Defusing Angry People

If you or someone you know has problems with violence, addictions or mental health, you are not alone. You can find help, start by calling KSCS at 450-632-6880 ask for the intake worker.

Sources: Kevin Fauteaux, Ph.D, MSW, M.Div. Defusing Angry People .New Horizon Press, NJ.2011.

Mental Health Commission of Canada. Mental Health First Aid Canada.2010.

On September 4th, 2012, I joined KSCS Environmental Health Services as the new Environmental Health Officer (EHO). I was born and raised in Vancouver, British Columbia and began my career in Edmonton, Alberta. From there, I worked in Renfrew, Ontario for two years and now live on the west island of Montreal. Here are some facts about me:

I have been in the working field for almost five years and I have been married for just over a year. My zodiac sign is Libra and the last movie I saw was *Batman: The Dark Knight Rises*.

Did I always want to be a Public Health Inspector/EHO? I can't say I knew exactly what an Environmental Health Officer was back in high school but I knew that dad's best friend was one. In university, I knew I wanted to work in a science related field but wasn't sure to what degree, so I ended up doing Computer Science and Biology. But when it came to my career, sitting in a lab or programming all day just wasn't my cup of tea. So environmental health it was!

After completing the program in Edmonton, Alberta, I became a certified Public Health Inspector which just happened to satisfy my need for a science-inclined career and my other need to be out and about within the community.

Environmental Health Officers work to solve problems. They play an important role in the community, and should be considered a resource and an asset. They are much more than restaurant inspectors. If you have any questions related to public health, stop by our office or call me at 450-635-4314.

Kanien'kéha Lesson

SUBMITTED BY MARY MCCOMBER & BEATRICE TAYLOR

- Karihwakwenienstátshera (Respect)
- Nahó:ten kén:ton ne karihwakwenienstátshera? (What does respect mean?)
- Sherihwakweniénstha'k (Be respectful)
- Kerihwakweniénstha (I am respectful)
- Taietewataterihwakwénienste (We should respect each other)



Eating Disorders

An Introduction

BY JOËLLE EMOND, DIETICIAN, KMHQ

Our society's preoccupation with body image is reflected in the fact that, at any given time, 70 per cent of the women and 35 per cent of men are dieting.

More seriously, over half a million of Canadians are afflicted with eating disorders, most of them being adolescent and young women. The media glamorization of so-called ideal bodies coupled with the view that dieting is a normal activity makes it difficult to detect eating disorders. Take your first step in the journey to wellness by learning about them!

When someone has an eating disorder, their weight is the prime focus of their life. Their all-consuming preoccupation with calories, grams of fat, exercise and weight allows them to displace the painful emotions or situations that are at the heart of the problem and gives them a false sense of being in control.

Warning signs include low self-esteem, distorted body image, preoccupation with food, wanting to be perfect, and inability to concentrate. Three chronic eating disorders have been identified:

Anorexia nervosa is the name for starving yourself because you are convinced you are overweight. It may involve refusal to keep body weight at or above the normal weight for one's body type, dieting to extremes, excessive exercise, feeling overweight despite dramatic weight loss, loss of menstrual periods and extreme preoccupation with body weight and image. Anorexia nervosa has

the highest mortality rate of any psychiatric illness with about 10 per cent of the diagnosed individuals dying within 10 years after the onset of the disorder.

Bulimia nervosa is characterized by excessive eating, and then ridding yourself of the food by vomiting, abusing laxatives or diuretics and exercising obsessively. This behavior is often called "purging." A person who suffers from this disorder can have it go undetected for years, because the person's body weight will often remain normal. "Binging" and "purging" behavior is often done in secret and with a great deal of shame attached to the behavior. It is the most common eating disorder.

Binge-eating disorder, or compulsive eating, is often triggered by chronic dieting and involves periods of overeating, often in secret and often carried out as a means of deriving comfort. Symptoms include periods of uncontrolled, impulsive or continuous eating and sporadic fasts or repetitive diets.

Children learn mainstream attitudes towards food and weight at a very young age. Prevent the development of food and weight preoccupations by being a role model for your family.

- Avoid labelling food "bad" or "junk food". Labels like this can make you feel guilty for eating 'bad food' and lead to restricting, and then bingeing episodes. Use different labels for food like "occasional food" and "everyday food" to reflect the

fact that a healthy diet includes both regularly eating nutritious food and occasionally eating less nutritious, high calorie food.

- Do not use food as a reward or punishment. If you do so, you are sending the message that food leads to love and acceptance. This may encourage children to seek out food for comfort or self punishment.
- Give children healthy choices, and teach them to make informed decisions about what they eat. Emphasize the positive aspects of healthy eating, rather than focusing on the effects of unhealthy eating.
- Remind children to eat when they are hungry and stop when they are full. Respect their choices. Do not make them finish their plate if they are full and do not limit food if they are hungry.
- Teach children that their self-worth is not related to how they look. Emphasize their talents and qualities. Don't focus on their physical appearance or laugh at jokes that make fun of a person's size or body.
- Live with a positive attitude to body image, not with a focus on food and weight. Show how you can be happy, healthy and active at any body size. Avoid complaining about your body, particularly in front of children or talking about diets, calories and weight. Criticize the culture that promotes unhealthy body image, not yourself.

International Women's Day

MARIE DAVID, COMMUNICAITONS

Source: Abramovitz, Beth A., and Leann L. Birch. "Five-Year-Old Girls' Ideas About Dieting are Predicted by Their Mothers' Dieting." *Journal of the American Dietetic Association*. 100.10 (2000): 1157-1163. Print.

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Information compiled and sourced from the Canadian Mental Health Association, the Public Health Agency of Canada, and other sources.

Malala Yousafzai is a 15-year-old student activist from the Swat district of Pakistan. You might have heard about her. She was shot in the head and neck by Taliban operatives late last year. Her crime according to the Taliban: advocating education for women.

Malala wants to be a doctor. In many areas of the world this desire does not result in violence or death. She survived, but the Taliban have threatened to carry out their threat if Malala returns to Pakistan.

When her shooting made the news, I remembered I knew Malala. I had seen her in a slideshow video from an NGO raising money to educate girls in areas like Pakistan. She spoke passionately about getting an education and wanting to become a doctor. She has a beautiful smile and when news of her senseless shooting hit the Internet, I wanted to reach out to hug her and protect her.

Then there's the case of Maria Santos Gorrostieta, a former mayor of a small town in Mexico who vowed to put the needs of her people first, a vow that put her at odds with drug lords waging a turf war in the area. She survived an assassination attempt in 2009 (she lost her husband), only to be kidnapped and killed in November 2012. Her killers will probably never be put to justice.

In the U.S., one out of every three Indigenous women report being the victim of sexual violence (Guardian). In Canada, over 580 Indigenous women have disappeared or been murdered over

the last three decades (NWAC Sisters in Spirit Report 2010).

These stories are just some of the reasons there is an International Women's Day every year on March 8th. The observance began in the United States in 1909 and grew out of the oppression and inequality that women faced during those times.

There are a few days where the spotlight can be shone on the violence and oppression that women face: International Women's Day on March 8th, Memorial March for Missing & Murdered Indigenous Women on February 14th, Sisters in Spirit vigil on October 4th, the National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women in Canada on December 6th, and Human Rights Day on December 10th of every year. You can help by reading up on the issues, attending a vigil, signing petitions and writing letters to MP's. Don't turn a blind eye to violence and model respectful behaviour.

Native Women's Association of Canada.
"What their Stories Tell Us: 2010 Research Findings from the Sisters in Spirit Initiative." Oshwekon: NWAC, 2010. PDF.

Wolfe, Lauren, and Lauren Chief Elk. "Comment is free Sexual violence is tearing Native American communities apart." *Guardian*. UK. 08 Sep 2012, n. pag. Web. 15 Jan. 2013.

Bagnall, Janet. "Janet Bagnall: The bravery of Maria Santos Gorrostieta." *Gazette Montreal*. 30 Nov. 2012, n. pag. Web. 15 Jan. 2013.



Stretching & Sweating

BY CHRISTINE TAYLOR, PROMOTION & EDUCATION

Last issue, I wrote about Bikram yoga from a beginner's perspective. It's always good preparation to know what you're getting into before you try anything, so I felt it important to pass on some of the tips that I have learned over the years.

There are over 500 Bikram yoga studios all over the world and more are being opened everyday. Celebrities like Lady Gaga and David Beckham—as well as many professional athletes—swear by the practice for injury prevention and/or injury rehab. Students are practicing for their own reasons, from wanting to lose weight, to relaxation, to physical as well as mental well-being.

I am a member of Bikram Yoga Montreal, who has three Montreal area studios, and have been doing a work-study program for a couple of years. I really enjoy being part of this community of dynamic people.

Bikram requires specific conditions, particular to the heat and progression of the postures; there are rules and etiquette that are posted at each studio. Whether you go to a Bikram yoga studio in Thailand, Florida or Vermont, each class is the same: 26 postures, two breathing exercises, within 90 minutes

of 105 degree temperatures. The dialogue is consistent throughout to ensure that the carefully crafted series is consistently taught and will work all major systems, from bones to skin; kind of like quality control.

You get a cardio workout; strengthen your spine and gain strength and flexibility through the training. All levels—from beginners to more experienced yogis—are in the same class. Some classes seem more difficult than others; it all depends on how I feel that day. Bikram yoga, or any yoga really, is a beautiful and healthy practice that can benefit anyone. It's never too late; you're never too sick or tired to start learning.

You can read up on these postures and how each of them benefits your health in books or on the Internet. Yoga teachers are key; they are well trained and welcome questions before and after class. It's important to let them know if you have any health issues or recent injuries. They can suggest modifications in order to speed your healing without aggravating any injury.

It's recommended that you do Bikram a minimum of three times per week to get the best results, but it's entirely up to you. I find that I feel best

when I am practicing more often. It's 90 minutes of time that I concentrate on my mind, body and spirit so that I can continue to try and help others. This is an essential part of my self care.

After three years of practicing Bikram yoga, I am a complete devotee. I love the heat, the challenge, and how good I feel! This is why I like to share it with anyone that wants to try it, hoping they get as much from it as I do but whichever type of yoga you choose to practice, any yoga is good yoga! Namaste.



April: Cultural Awareness Month

BY LISA KAWENNANÓ:RON PHILLIPS INTERIM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, KORLCC.

The Kanien'kehá:ka Onkwawén:na Raotitióhkwa Language and Cultural Center (KORLCC) announces the 2nd annual Tsi Niionkwarihò:ten Niwenhni'tò:ten Cultural Awareness Month in Onerahtókha/April 2013.

Throughout the month of Onerahtókha/April, a number of educational and recreational activities will take place in conjunction with other community organizations, spotlighting different areas of our rich culture and history. The objective is to provide community members with opportunities to build and strengthen their cultural knowledge and to celebrate their distinct identity as Kanien'kehá:ka people.

Last year's event was a huge success with events hosted and/or sponsored by KORLCC and community organizations such as KSDPP, the Kahnawake Youth Center, MCK, Step by Step Child and Family Center, Kahnawake Survival School, the Kahnawake Library, Kateri School, The Eastern Door and K103. Events included Ribbon Shirt Day, an all Kanien'kéha front page of The Eastern Door, a speaker series, and a Mini Sing hosted by Kahnawake Survival School

in collaboration with all community schools.

To date, the events that KORLCC has planned include:

- **April 2nd: Kid Day** from 9:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m. @ KORLCC-storytelling and games for children of all ages.



Photo by Akwiranoron Martin Loft, courtesy of KORLCC.

- **April 3rd: Traditional Clothing Sale** @ KORLCC library. Come and purchase and/or place orders with community seamstresses, bead workers, etc.

- **April 10th: Wahta Radio**

Show: On-air live on K103 from 9:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m. with the participation of elders, community schools, Ratiwennahní:rats students, and community members. Everyone is encouraged to listen and come by KORLCC's library to participate in the live broadcast.

- **April 15th-18th: Beadwork** with Kahtehrón:ni and Sweetgrass Singers from 6:00 p.m.-9:00 p.m. @ KORLCC, for children 6-12 years of age.
- **April 16th-17th: Puppet Making 101** with Konwennenhon Delaronde Deer, creator and puppeteer of Tóta tánon Ohkwári.

- **April 18th: Elders' Jamboree** from 10:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m. @ KORLCC, come by and enjoy a day of storytelling, music, and a great lunch, all in Kanien'kéha.

- **April 24th: Outdoor Crafts Demonstration** from 9:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m. @ KORLCC. Information booths and craft demonstrations highlight canoe making, arrow making, survival skills, etc. This was a successful event last year that was well-attended.

- **Each Friday of the month** will be Ribbon Shirt Day.

- **A community-wide Word Tree** activity will take place the entire month and a tree will be placed in a public area within the community displaying the Kanien'kéha words that have been gathered.

All of the above activities are KORLCC initiated events. Community organizations were invited to participate and planning meetings began at the end of January. Anyone wishing to host an event may contact KORLCC. For more information on any of the activities or to reserve a spot, contact KORLCC at the number below.

A final calendar of events will be released to the community through our web site, www.korkahnawake.org, and through the Eastern Door. For information, please contact Lisa Kawennanó:ron Phillips at 450-638-0880.

Healing From Trauma: Violence, the Media, & PTSD

BY ARNOLD LAZARE, EMERGENCY PLANNING MANAGER

By now, everyone is aware of the horrible events that occurred at the Sandy Hook school in Connecticut. A question that has arisen is: can one prepare children for events like these?

The answer is twofold; although we can't predict events, we can reassure our children that we will do everything to protect them but with similar events increasing the attitude of "it won't happen here" is definitely not a wise one to take.

The challenge for many schools today is "How do we ensure the safety of the children without turning it into a fortress or prison?"

In the Connecticut case, the school had been proactive by attempting to control access to the building—as Kahnawake schools currently do—but the perpetrator's desire to inflict carnage was greater.

The Kahnawake education system is taking appropriate steps to find a "balance" and their efforts should be supported. This involves staff, students and parents taking the implemented emergency plans and procedures seriously.

News of the shooting and its aftermath flooded mainstream media in the days following the event. It's difficult to shield children from the gruesome details but what can we do to reduce its negative affect on our children?

Our best defense is to gauge how the children are coping and to be aware of the possible effects that exposure to the tragedy may have.

Post Traumatic Stress Disorder in Youth

Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) is the development of symptoms following exposure to a traumatic event. Anything that involves some kind of extreme traumatic stress can lead to development of PTSD.

Typically, it involves direct personal experience of threatened or actual death or serious injury; witnessing a stressful event; or learning about an unexpected or violent death or injury to a family member or close friend. Traumatic events can be experienced directly through assaults, serious car accidents, personal assaults and abuse, natural disasters like earthquakes; terrorist attacks, and military combat.

You don't have to be hurt to experience PTSD. Witnessing any type of personal or environmental disaster, being diagnosed with a life-threatening illness, or being threatened with an assault can lead to PTSD.

Most people feel stressed after going through something traumatic. Strong emotions; feeling easily irritated; and trouble sleeping, eating, or concentrating all can be part of a typical and temporary reaction to an overwhelming event. Frequent thoughts and images of what happened, nightmares, or fears can be a part of recovering from stress.

Good care and support after a traumatic experience can help these symptoms run their course, allowing a person to move on.

But PTSD is different. With PTSD, the symptoms of stress are intense and last for longer than a month. For some, the symptoms begin soon after the trauma while others have a delayed response.

What Are the Symptoms of PTSD?

Whether it occurs right after the trauma or later, PTSD has certain characteristic symptoms that usually develop within three months of the traumatic event. People with PTSD generally experience some or all of these symptoms:

- Reliving the traumatic event. Having nightmares, flashbacks, or disturbing mental images about the trauma. (e.g.. Any time a child sees a dog, they may believe it will attack them. The fact that there may be no "real" threat is not important because perception is their reality)
- Avoiding reminders of the trauma. Avoiding people, places, or activities that remind them of the stressful event. Avoiding talking about what happened.
- Emotional numbness. Feeling numb or detached; not feeling the same way about other people or the world. This could be caused by the overproduction of certain chemicals that block sensation during extreme stress.

- Hyper-vigilance. Becoming easily startled, on edge, jumpy, irritable, or tense. This may be due to high levels of stress hormones in the body. Difficulty concentrating and trouble sleeping may also be part of this hyper-alert state.

Who Develops PTSD?

People of any age—kids, teens, and adults—can develop PTSD. But not everyone who experiences a serious trauma develops it. In fact, most people do not. Many recover from life-threatening traumas without developing PTSD. This ability to cope and bounce back is called resilience.

What makes some people more resilient than others? Researchers have found that certain things can help us recover faster from trauma. Everything from someone's belief in his or her ability to overcome problems, to the types of hormones a person's body produces may play a role in how we cope with extreme stress.

We do know it is important to have friends, family, or a support group or counselor to talk to when you experience a trauma.

How Is PTSD Treated?

PTSD doesn't just go away on its own. Without treatment, symptoms can last for months or years, or they may come and go. Treatment and support can make all the difference.

Mental health professionals (psychologists, psychiatrists, and counselors) who specialize in treating anxiety problems are usually experienced in working with people who have PTSD.

Therapy may involve gradually talking it through in a safe environment and learning coping skills that help with anxiety, fear, or panic. This can include relaxation techniques and techniques to resolve other problems, such as sleeping difficulties. Sometimes, medications can help reduce symptoms of anxiety, panic, or depression.

Healing From Trauma

Sometimes, people avoid seeking professional help because they're afraid that talking about an incident will bring back memories or feelings that are too painful. It can be difficult to talk about a traumatic event at first but doing so in a safe environment with the help and support of a trained professional can often lead to long-term healing.

Working through the memories and worries can help reduce symptoms like nightmares and flashbacks. It can also help people avoid potentially harmful behaviors and emotions, like extreme anger or drug use.

So how do you find the right person to help you? The best way is to ask a parent or adult you trust. People who are close to you know you well and understand your needs. A support system of family and friends is key to recovering from PTSD. A doctor or school

counselor may also be able to help you find a mental health professional who specializes in anxiety problems and there are lots of resources available in our area.

Seeking professional help in overcoming PTSD is a step that makes some people worry that it means they're "crazy." But often it's the best thing you can do to manage your stress. PTSD is like many other issues: you are under stress, and stress management can help you reduce unwanted worries and difficulties.

With PTSD, the stress response system isn't switching off as it should. A stress system that is faulty or over-vigilant is like a motor running for too long and can lead to burnout (such as the inability to study or enjoy activities). A therapist can help someone deal with the feelings of guilt, shame, or anger that may accompany PTSD—and discover inner strengths that can make them feel better.

PTSD is treatable. Some people may discover hidden strengths they didn't know they had or a support network they didn't know existed during the process of healing from the trauma. Others find that treatment helps them develop new insights into life and how to cope with other problems.

For more information contact KSCS at 450-632-6880 or the Community Protection Unit at 450-632-0635.

Arnold Lazare is with the Community Protection Unit.

The Back Page....

"Be that strong girl that everyone knew would make it through the worst, be that fearless girl, the one who would dare to do anything, be that independant girl who didn't need to rely on anyone but herself to make it, be that girl who never backed down."

~ Unknown

Spring Break Tips

BY CHRISTINE TAYLOR, PROMOTION & EDUCATION

Every year students and families take a much deserved break from work and school. Destinations range from the beach to the snow-capped mountains. Before you start packing your bags, there are a few tips that can help in making it fun but safe, as you burn off some steam or get some well needed rest.

Travel agent: They are good sources of information about your planned destination.

Flying/driving: Make sure you have all your documents in order: tickets, passports, identification, license, registration and insurance. An itinerary is also recommended to let those at home know when and where you are. Tip: make a copy of the itinerary and leave a set at home with family or friends in case of emergency.

Medical insurance: Make sure you're covered. If you don't have medical coverage, buy it from the travel agent or your local bank.

Hotels: Make sure you know where you are staying. Always note the fire exits and evacuation plans for an emergency. Use the hotel safe for any valuables that you will not need to carry: tickets, ID's, extra cash, and any documents you need to return home.

Alcohol: Be smart and responsible. Pace yourself and be aware of the dangers of alcohol poisoning. Bear in mind that alcohol is the most widely abused drug when it comes to assault and sexual assault.

At the beach/on the slopes: Make sure there are proper lifeguard/ski patrols in the area. There can be riptides and undertow dangers in the ocean, and avalanche and unmarked dangers on the ski slopes. Always wear protection: sunscreen on the beach; helmets are recommended while skiing, snowboarding or riding bicycles or motorcycles in warmer countries. Pack some bug repellent if you are in a tropical destination.

Partying: The general rule of thumb is to arrive and leave with your friends. Have a plan to meet up and check in with each other. Always carry protection. Set your boundaries before you go out. Use common sense and always let your friends know where you are and with whom. Remember that you can always say no to sexual advances.

Most of these tips are common sense but when students and families are letting off steam and having fun when alcohol is added to the mix; there are always dangers. Have fun but play it safe.

February

- Heart Month
- Psychology Month
- Eating Disorders Awareness Week
- White Cane Week
- 2 Groundhog Day
- World Cancer Day
- Sexual & Reproductive Health Awareness Week
- 14 Valentine's Day
- 14 Memorial March for Missing & Murdered Indigenous Women

March

- Juvenile Arthritis Awareness Month
- Natl. Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month
- Natl. Kidney Month
- Natl. Nutrition Month
- Red Cross Month
- Brain Awareness Week
- Poison Prevention Week
- 8 International Women's Day
- 10 Daylight Savings Time
- 29 Good Friday

Do you have questions or suggestions? Is there a topic you would like to see covered in a future issue of the newsletter? Contact us and let us know.

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