HEALTHY HEARTS & MINDS

CCYSB YOUTH SUICIDE PREVENTION

JULY 2025

What's Inside:

DIGITAL DETOX: WHY TAKING A BREAK FROM SCREENS MATTERS FOR TEENS

In today's world, our phones, tablets, and laptops are always just an arm's reach away. Whether it's scrolling through TikTok, texting friends, or gaming online, teens are more connected than ever—and sometimes, that constant connection can take a toll.

A digital detox means taking a break from screens and social media to reset your mind and reconnect with the world around you. It doesn't have to be extreme—small changes can make a big difference in your mood, sleep, focus, and self-esteem.

Why Detox?

Too much screen time can sneakily affect your mental health. You might notice:

- 😴 Poor sleep from late-night scrolling or blue light
- 💭 Increased anxiety from constant notifications and comparison
- 💬 Feeling disconnected from in-person relationships
- 🤯 Information overload leading to stress and burnout

Social media isn't all bad—but if you find yourself feeling worse after being online, it might be time to check in with your digital habits.

Signs You Might Need a Digital Detox:

- You feel anxious or irritable without your phone
- You check your device out of habit, not intention
- You're comparing yourself to others online and feeling down
- You're missing out on real-life experiences because you're glued to a screen

Tips for Taking a Healthy Break:

1. Start small – Try a "no phone" rule for the first 30 minutes after you wake up or during dinner.
2. Use screen time settings – Most phones let you set limits for apps.
3. Create phone-free zones – Like your bedroom or the bathroom.
4. Replace screen time with something fun – Read, go for a walk, journal, try a hobby, or hang out with friends IRL.
5. Do it with a friend – Challenge each other to unplug and check in about how it's going.

Remember:

Taking a break doesn't mean giving up your phone forever. It's about finding balance—so your tech works for you, not against you. When you take time to step away, you might be surprised how much more present, calm, and in control you feel.

Your mental health matters. Even a short digital detox can give your brain a much-needed breather. 💙

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JULY 25 – AUG. 2

Carroll County Agriculture Center
706 Agriculture Dr.
Westminster, MD 21157

JULY IS MINORITY MENTAL HEALTH MONTH – LET'S TALK ABOUT IT!

Did you know that July is Minority Mental Health Awareness Month? This month is all about making sure that everyone—no matter their race, ethnicity, culture, or identity—gets the support they need for their mental health. That includes you.
Mental health is how we think, feel, and deal with stress, emotions, relationships, and challenges. Just like we take care of our bodies, we also need to take care of our minds. But for some kids and teens, especially those from minority communities, getting mental health support isn't always easy.

What Is a Minority?
A minority is any group of people who might be different from the majority in a community. This could mean being Black, Indigenous, Latino, Asian, Middle Eastern, multiracial, part of the LGBTQ+ community, an immigrant, or speaking a different language at home.
These differences are beautiful and important—but sometimes, they come with extra stress. Kids and teens in minority groups might:

- Feel like they have to hide parts of who they are
- Be teased or bullied for how they look, dress, or speak
- Hear harmful stereotypes or experience racism
- Not see therapists or counselors who understand their background
- Feel alone or misunderstood when it comes to their emotions

That's why Minority Mental Health Month exists—to bring attention to these struggles and to remind everyone that mental health care should be fair and welcoming to all.

It's Okay to Ask for Help
Everyone has tough days. It's okay to feel anxious, sad, angry, or overwhelmed. What's most important is knowing you don't have to deal with those feelings by yourself.
Here's what you can do if you're struggling:

- Talk it out with someone you trust—like a parent, older sibling, teacher, or counselor
- Write it down in a journal or draw how you feel
- Move your body—go for a walk, dance, or play a sport
- Take breaks from social media or anything that feels too overwhelming
- Look for stories of people like you who are open about mental health —you're not alone!

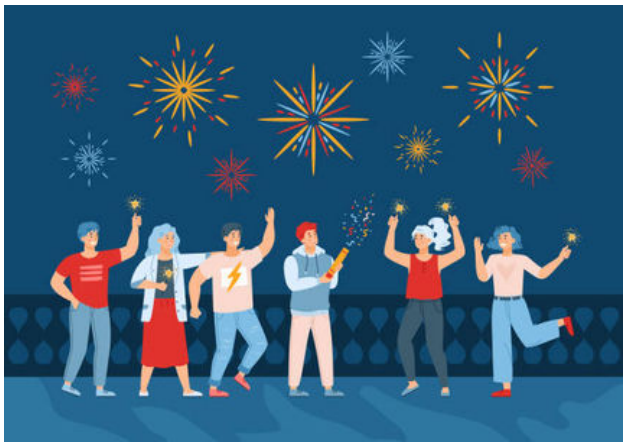
Celebrate Who You Are
Your culture, background, and identity are your superpowers. They make you strong, unique, and valuable. It's important to find spaces where you can celebrate who you are and feel supported just as you are.
You can:

- Learn about your family's history or traditions
- Share your culture with friends through music, food, or language
- Join school clubs or groups that reflect your identity
- Create art, stories, or music that express how you feel

Be There for Others Too
Part of mental health is helping each other. If you see a classmate being left out or teased for being different, speak up or let an adult know. If a friend seems down, ask how they're doing. You don't have to "fix" anything—just listening and showing you care can mean a lot.

Mental Health Is for Everyone
This month is a reminder that mental health care should feel safe and welcoming for every child and teen—no matter their race, culture, or identity.

Let's keep talking about feelings, sharing our stories, and making sure everyone knows: You are not alone. You are important. You belong.



FIREWORK FEELINGS – A COPING SKILL FOR JULY

Theme: Celebrate your emotions like fireworks—big, bright, and totally okay.

How it Works:
Just like fireworks come in all shapes and colors, our feelings can be loud, quiet, colorful, or overwhelming. This activity helps kids and teens recognize and express emotions safely and creatively.

Steps:

1. Draw Your Firework Feelings

- Grab markers, chalk, or crayons and draw fireworks on paper (or outside on the sidewalk).
  - ❤️ Red = Angry
  - 💙 Blue = Sad
  - 💛 Yellow = Happy
  - 💚 Green = Calm
  - 💜 Purple = Confused
  - 🧡 Orange = Excited
  - You can even add your own colors and feelings!

- Label the Fireworks

- Write how you're feeling today under each firework. "This one is my stress about school," "This one is my excitement for the pool," etc.

- Pop and Breathe
  - Pretend to "pop" each firework by gently clapping your hands or tapping your chest. With each one, take a slow, deep breath in...and a long exhale out.
  - Say: "Even big feelings are okay. I can handle them."

- Optional Add-On: Firework Jar
  - Write each emotion and a calming strategy on a small slip of paper. Put them in a jar and pull one when you're having a tough moment.

Why it works:

- Visualizing feelings helps name and tame them.
- Connecting to a fun July theme adds playfulness to emotional regulation.
- Deep breathing with movement supports nervous system regulation.

Safety Plans Work

There is hope.

1. Write 3 warning signs that a crisis may be developing.

_____

_____

_____

2. Write 3 internal coping strategies that can take your mind off your problems.

_____

_____

_____

3. Who/What are 3 people or places that provide distraction?
(Write name/place and phone numbers)

_____ Phone _____

_____ Phone _____

_____ Phone _____

4. Who can you ask for help? (Write names and phone numbers)

_____ Phone _____

_____ Phone _____

_____ Phone _____

5. Professionals or agencies you can contact during a crisis:

Clinician: _____ Phone _____

Local Urgent Care or Emergency Department:
Address _____ Phone _____

Call or text 988 or chat 988lifeline.org

6. Write out a plan to make your environment safer.
(Write 2 things)

_____

_____

988 SUICIDE & CRISIS LIFELINE

Modified from Stanley & Brown (2021)

PEP22-08-03-007

Crisis Resources

National Suicide & Crisis Lifeline:
9-8-8 (Call or Text)
Chat: https://988lifeline.org/chat

The Trevor Project
thetrevorproject.org
1-866-488-7386
text 678-678

Carroll County Mobile Crisis:
410-952-9552

To access assessment and treatment services at CCYSB call
410-848-2500 x 1
or
Walk-in Assessment Hours:
Tuesday: 8:30am-11 am & 2-5pm
Wednesday: 11:30am-2pm
(We have a limited number of assessment slots available each day. See our website for arrival and check-in details)

CARROLL COUNTY YOUTH SERVICE BUREAU
"It Starts With the Heart."

The Governor's Office of Crime Prevention, Youth, and Victim Services, on behalf of the Children's Cabinet, funded this project under award number CCIF-2023-0005. All points of view in this document are those of the author and do not necessarily represent the official position of any State or Federal agency

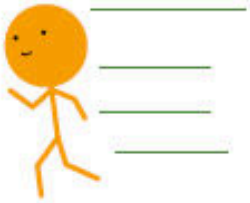
MENTAL HEALTH CHECKLIST

Have I eaten regular meals?

Did I drink plenty of water?

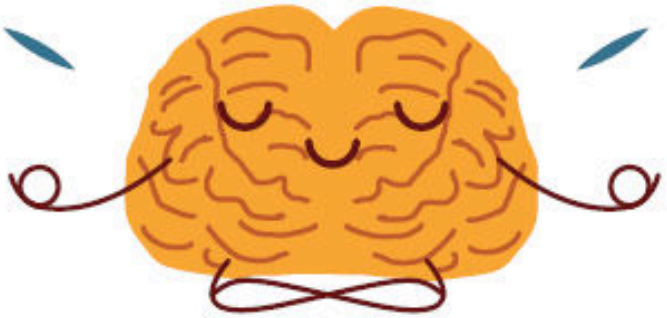
Have I showered?

Am I getting enough sleep?



Have I moved my body today?

Have I spent time outside in fresh air?



Have I connected with a friend or family member?

Have I been thinking kind thoughts to myself?

Did I do something kind for someone else?

Did I take a break from screens and social media?

What am I grateful for today?