



The Northwest Catholic Counseling Center

Serving all regardless of faith or finances

May is Mental Health Awareness Month



Did you know...

Worldwide, suicide is one of the leading causes of death in late childhood and early adolescence. Though more women and girls *attempt* suicide, more men and boys *complete* suicide – a 4:1 ratio.

Oregon is ranked 15th highest in the U.S. for suicide rate. In 2017 alone, 825 people died by suicide and 530 died of drug overdose, according to CDC statistics.

Major Depressive Disorder is a recognized medical illness, and can be life-threatening. It is also highly treatable, with a combination of psychotherapy and medication being the most effective treatments.

Irritability is often a hallmark sign of depression and anxiety in children and teenagers. Other signs to look for are social withdrawal, loss or gain in appetite, sleeping too much or too little, and a dramatic drop in school or extracurricular performance.

It is estimated that as many as 20-30% of those living in the Pacific Northwest experience Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD), a form of major depression influenced by the loss of light. Simple lifestyle adjustments such as regular exercise, a broad-spectrum white light box, and a Vitamin D₃ supplement can really help! More severe cases of SAD may need treatment by your doctor.

Research continually shows that moderate to heavy social media use is correlated to depression and anxiety. Limit your time with your phones and computers, and spend time with friends and family instead.

What can I do?

If a loved one seems to be struggling with depression, ask direct questions with a caring demeanor. Ask if they have thought about suicide or self-harm. Encourage them to pick up the phone and call for a therapy appointment or a visit to their doctor. Non-judgmental compassion goes a long way!

Take a Mental Health First Aid training (www.mentalhealthfirstaid.org). This program is designed for non-mental health professionals to better respond to their friends, family, and community.

Get good sleep, and make sure everyone in your household does as well. Sleep is a fundamental building block of good mental health.

If you are a parent and struggle with your own mental health, make sure you are getting treatment for yourself. This models help-seeking behavior to your children, and allows you to be more effective in addressing their mental health.

Limit phone and computer use for yourself and your children. Virtual connections are not the same and do not provide the mental health benefits of real-life relationships.

Get Help

Do you or someone you love need quality, compassionate mental health care?

Please call our intake line at 503-253-0964 to connect with a mental health professional.

We believe money should not be a barrier to care. While we can bill insurance, we also provide sliding scale fees.

A State Certified Counseling Agency
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www.nwcounseling.org

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