

ExpertCare CHRONICLE

APRIL 2020

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*"Spring adds new life and
new beauty to all that is."*

— Jessica Harrelson



APRIL GIVEAWAY



We hope to provide a little entertainment to one lucky Caregiver with our prize this month.



We will draw one winner at random to win a Viking Pro (2-in-1) Laptop Tablet with Detachable Keyboard.



Congratulations to March Winners

Kolleen E. Miller &

Peta-Gay T. Tomlin-McDonald

We hope this prize makes dinner time a little easier!

OCHN Offers COVID-19 Mental Health Tips

OAKLAND COUNTY, MI (March 16, 2020) – As public health officials strategically plan to protect the physical wellbeing of individuals during the Coronavirus (COVID-19) challenge, Oakland Community Health Network (OCHN) is encouraging people to also take care of their mental health. The agency, which is contracted by the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) to oversee and manage public behavioral health services in Oakland County, offers the following suggestions to reduce COVID-19 related anxiety and stress.

Monitor and Minimized Overexposure to Media Reports: While important to stay informed about changing events regarding COVID-19, OCHN, mental health experts are encouraging people to take a break from news coverage. This is especially true if viewing of the news is causing additional stress and anxiety, or interfering with participation in daily activities.

Talk to Children: Parents should have age appropriate conversations with children about changes in their lives because of COVID-19. This includes school closings and the cancellation of extracurricular activities. It is important to reassure them that these actions are meant to keep them safe and are temporary. Kids also need to know that once determined safe by health experts, they will return to school and their normal routines. Parents whose children are experiencing persistent and overwhelming stress from the COVID-19 situation should contact OCHN's Crisis Helpline at 800.231.1127, which is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. They can also contact a healthcare provider.

Community Support: Avoiding large gatherings of people, does not mean avoiding people completely. Check in on neighbors, especially those who are elderly or live alone. Develop a neighborhood community outreach plan to offer support where needed and to those who need it most. This could include assisting working parents with childcare issues because of school closings.

Stay Connected: Social distancing can cause people to feel lonely and isolated. Make a conscious effort to stay connected with friends, family members and loved ones. Phone calls, texting, and social media allow people to stay close from wherever they are. Letter writing is another option to stay in touch.

Resources and Stress Relief Techniques

- **Online Mental Health Resources:** like myStrength is free of charge when using the code OCCMHA to register.
 1. Visit www.myStrength.com.
 2. On the myStrength.com home page, click on “Sign-up.”
 3. Enter the following Access Code: OCCMHA
 4. Complete the myStrength sign-up process with a brief Wellness Assessment and personal profile.
 5. **Go Mobile!** Using the access code above, get the myStrength app for iOS and Android devices at www.mystrength.com/mobile
- **Box Breathing Techniques:**
 1. Sit comfortably in a chair with both feet flat on the ground
 2. Slowly exhale all the air you can
 3. Slowly inhale for a count of 4
 4. Hold your breath for a count of 4
 5. Exhale for a count of 4
 6. Hold your breath for a count of 4
 7. Repeat these steps until you are ready to stop
- **Ground Techniques:**
 1. Sit comfortably in a chair with both feet flat on the ground:
 - a. List 3 things you can see
 - b. List 3 things you can hear
 - c. List 3 things you can feel
 2. Pick up or touch items near you:
 - a. Think about the weight of the item
 - b. How well does it fit in your hand?
 - c. Is it cool or warm to the touch?
 3. Hold a piece of ice:
 - a. How does it feel?
 - b. How long does it take to melt?
 - c. How does the melting water feel on your skin?
 4. Move your body:
 - a. Jumping Jacks
 - b. Jumping up and down
 - c. Jogging in place
 - d. Yoga
 - e. Stretching



Stress Relief Techniques Continued

5. Do math (it shifts the section of your brains primary function to help center you):
 - a. Count backwards from 100
 - b. Do multiplication tables in your head
 - c. Pick a number and find as many ways as you can to make it (20: 5x4, 10+10 etc....)

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7. Recite things from memory:
 - a. Your favorite songs
 - b. Poems
 - c. Movie or TV show lines

8. Sit with your pet:
 - a. Pet them if you can
 - b. Notice how their fur feels
 - c. If you can hold them, notice how they feel in your lap

9. Make mental lists:
 - a. Your favorite foods
 - b. Your favorite TV shows or movies
 - c. Your favorite books

10. Make plans for the future, when this has passed (because it will pass):
 - a. What friends will you want to meet up with?
 - b. Where would you want to go?
 - c. What is something you want to try that you haven't done yet?

11. Listen to music:
 - a. Where were you when you first heard the song?
 - b. What does it mean to you?
 - c. Do you know the words? If so, sing along!!





*Employee Milestone
Anniversaries*

*We would like to recognize and
congratulate the employees
below for reaching a milestone
anniversary in March.*

*15 Years
Christine Gregg*

*10 Years
Dewand Guyton
Sanaa Zora*

*5 Years
Wanda Mitchell
Victoria Matthews
Mary-Sunithi Echols
Myrna Fournier*

*Thank you for demonstrating a
continued commitment to
ExpertCare and the clients we service.
You make a difference!*



**Northville's Mod Market Supports
Teens and Adults with Autism and
Related Challenges**



Posted: 8:14 AM, Mar 08, 2020

<https://www.wxyz.com/>

Updated: 11:53 PM, Mar 09, 2020

NORTHVILLE, MICH (WXYZ) — Mod Market is an inclusive artists market, unique gift shop and coffee bar featuring art from more than 60 artists, 45% of whom are individuals with autism or related challenges.

It's located at 150 Mary Alexander Ct, in Downtown Northville.

To learn more, visit:

<https://www.livingandlearningcenter.org/mod-market/> or call 248-719-7619.



2020
Thursday Night Live!
6:30pm-8:00pm

New Gateways, Inc
5195 Pontiac Lake Rd. in Waterford
\$2 Admission- Caregiver must stay on the premises

February 6th- Cupid Shuffle
March 5th- Luck of the Irish
April 2nd- Bunny Hop
May 7th- Detroit Tigers
June 4th- Born in the USA
September 3rd- Detroit Red Wings & Lions
October 1st- Costume Party
November 5th- Western Turkey Trot & Canned Food Drive
December 3rd- Snow Ball

*A little
progress each
day adds up
to big results*

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Sib4Sib was founded in November 2016 by a teen named Jessica Goldberg. Jessica's brother struggles with mental health. For over ten years, she had dealt with the anger, frustration, and resentment that accompanies living with someone who struggles with mental health. After searching for an outlet for her frustrations to no avail, Jessica decided to take matters into her own hands. As a teen, Jessica made it a point to create a group that would make other teens feel safe and comfortable to share their stories.

Sib4Sib Junior is a support group for individuals ages 8-11 who have a sibling who struggles with mental health. After participants eat dinner, the facilitator begins a fun activity that is rooted in a psychological strategy or is designed to prompt conversation. These activities range from slime making, to reading a comic book specifically about siblings of individuals with disabilities. Participants will leave each session with a new coping skill and feeling part of the sibling community. Sib4Sib Junior participants also fill out a "Parent Feedback Sheet" to assist in communication with parents about what participants did and what they did/did not enjoy. The facilitator is always available after the session if a participant or parent would like to touch base with the facilitator individually.

Next meeting dates: April 23 & 30



Yoga Class for Adults with Special Needs

Tuesdays, 11am
Troy Location
Beginning March, 17

Benefits include:

- Flexibility
- Confidence
- Socialization
- Endurance
- Body Awareness
- Increased physical strength
- More peace, joy, & Calmness

Students must be 18 years & older

Pre-registration required
Contact Marie to sign up
(248)941-7130
mbdemres@gmail.com

Red Lotus Yoga
1901E Big Beaver Rd, Troy, MI
48083

Vans releases new Autism Awareness Collection designed with sensory-inclusive elements



(CNN) Parents are rejoicing over the new line of shoes Vans has released that are designed specifically with autism spectrum disorder in mind.

The new footwear collection features sensory-inclusive elements such as a calming color palette and features that focus on the senses of touch, sight and sound, the company announced Wednesday.

"Since 1966, Vans has stood as a champion of individuality and self-expression," reads their press release. "With this project, Vans celebrates the unique aspects of all people."

Connie LaBouff told CNN she was almost brought to tears when she saw the collection. Her son Logan, 8, was diagnosed on the autism spectrum when he was 3.

"He has limited expressive language and has always struggled with shoes," she said.

Most of the shoes in the collection are designed as slip-ons for easy-on capabilities. One designed exclusively for kids and toddlers also offers a single strap hook-and-loop closure to ensure fit.

"The single strap hook and loop will allow him to put his shoes on and adjust them to the tightness he personally needs," LaBouff said. "The reinforced toe means that he will be able to wear a pair he is used to longer without the anxiety of changing shoes."

Joyce Skogen, whose daughter is on the spectrum, echoes LaBouff's sentiment for the new collection.

"As the mother of a child on the spectrum it has been difficult finding clothes and shoes that meet my daughter's needs," Skogen told CNN. She said the slip-ons offer her daughter some independence.

"I appreciate it when manufacturers bring to light issues that are important to the general public."

Vans will be donating a minimum of \$100,000 of the proceeds from this collection to A.skate Foundation, a non-profit that teaches skateboarding to children with autism.

GETTING TO KNOW THE EXPERTCARE OFFICE STAFF

We thought it would be nice to introduce ourselves and tell you a little bit about each of our office staff. Each month we will feature a new interview with someone from our office.

MEET Julianne Ray



ECare: Tell our Caregivers and Consumer families a little bit about you.

Julianne: I'm a mom to two wild children, a boy and a girl. I love helping and working with others. When I'm not preoccupied with those things, you may find me working on cars and spending time with the important people in my life.

ECare: What is on your bucket list?

Julianne: To build a custom race car.

ECare: What is your position at ExpertCare?

Julianne: Recruiter Assistant

ECare: What are your job responsibilities?

Julianne: Receive referrals, contact families and Support Coordinators to start services, as well as perform Quality Checks, Performance Reviews, and Exit Interviews.

ECare: How long have you been working at ExpertCare?

Julianne: I worked nearly four years as a Caregiver with ExpertCare and recently transitioned to this position within the last couple months.

ECare: If you didn't have to sleep, what would you do with the extra time?

Julianne: Clean my house! There is nothing more relaxing to me, than sitting in a clean and quiet home.

ECare: What do you wish you knew more about?

Julianne: I would love to expand my knowledge of baking. I like cooking dinner and special meals, but baked goods are hit and miss!

ECare: What are some things that help you have a great day?

Julianne: Being organized and prepared always helps me have a great day. Also support from my team, family and friends can make a great impact, as well.

ECare: What do you like most about ExpertCare?

Julianne: As a Caregiver I always said that I loved ExpertCare for being supportive, not only of the people we serve, but the staff as well. Working in the office is just reaffirming my previous notions of the company. Everyone is so understanding, helpful, and supportive of anybody we come into contact with, and I think that's something we could always use a little more of in the world.



One small
POSITIVE THOUGHT
in the morning
can change your
whole day.