



May Newsletter

Changing Lives, One Day, One Goal,
One Person at a Time



Talking to Loved Ones About Mental Health

May is Mental Health Awareness Month, and while many of us know how important it is to check in on the people we love, there can still be a lot of anxiety surrounding knowing what to say, and when to say it. Below are a few tips to help gauge both when someone may be struggling and how you may be able to step in and help:

What Should I Look Out For?

Lack of engagement: They lose interest in activities they used to enjoy or want to hang out less.

Change in communication patterns: You used to chat or hang on the regular, and now they're MIA.

Changes in hygiene and sleeping patterns: They're sleeping less — or all the time. Their appearance and hygiene no longer seem to be a priority.

Displays of sadness or anger: Their temper now has a hairpin trigger, or maybe they seem more down than usual.

Withdrawal from social outlets: They're missing from activities where they were formerly fixtures.

What Do I Say?

Ask. Reach out and ask if they're OK. Make sure you try not to accuse or blame them for your observations. A good way to do this is by using "I" statements. For example, instead of saying "You never hang out with us anymore, why is that?" you can say "I've missed hanging out with you recently, is everything OK?" Be direct; being hesitant to address concerns about mental health makes it seem like a taboo topic. This contributes to a stigma that can prevent people from getting the help that they need.

Listen. This is the most important part. Give them your full attention, be empathetic, and acknowledge how they feel, even if you've never experienced the same feelings. If you have experienced mental health challenges, sharing that information can be a powerful, empowering tool for both you and the person you're trying to help.

Encourage. Whether it's talking to family, other friends, or looking into therapy, encourage your friend to take action.

Check-in. Let them know you're there to help and that they can talk to you. If you get brushed off the first time, don't give up.

Offer to Help. Look for ways to lighten their load. Maybe clean up their kitchen if you notice their dishes have piled up, or bring over a meal so they don't have to think about what to make for dinner. If they have children, offer to babysit for an afternoon. While these gestures may not seem like much in the moment, they can serve as a huge relief for someone needing to focus on recentering themselves.

Mental Health Resources

Local Saginaw Crisis Intervention

<https://www.bwellsaginaw.org/mental-health-substance-use>

Michigan Government Mental Health

<https://www.michigan.gov/mental-health-resources>

BCBSM Behavioral Health

<https://www.bcbsm.com/behavioral-mental-health>

Better Health Therapist Matching

<https://www.betterhealth.com/get-started>

The Family Car is now on Facebook! Let your family and friends know that you'll be joining us as EVOC Productions presents The Family Car at

<https://www.facebook.com/events>

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THE TEMPLE THEATRE
AT THE BRANDS PERFORMING ARTS CENTER

AN ORIGINAL STAGE PLAY BY GLECIA WRIGHT TATUM
WITH CO-WRITERS TWANNIE GRAY AND ARIEL POMPEY

SAT. MAY 27
4:00PM

The Family Car

TEMPLE THEATRE
201 N WASHINGTON AVE.
SAGINAW, MI 48607

PRESENTED BY EVOC PRODUCTIONS WOC SBI

SAT, MAY 27 AT 4 PM

THE FAMILY CAR: Seeing, Hearing, and Unpacking Mental Health in the Black Community

Saginaw

Going

Member Spotlight

Kendall McElway began her employment as the Social Media Coordinator for Women of Colors in April 2023. After working in the mortgage industry for a few years, she decided to pivot into something closer to her heart and returned to school to study Psychology. Being fairly new to the Saginaw area, Kendall is passionate about finding ways to serve others and connect with her new community. She has recently earned her Botvin certification and will soon join the other Women of Colors members in teaching Life Skills training classes for High School students. Outside of work, Kendall is a self-proclaimed foodie, an avid writer, and is determined to visit the many destinations on her travel bucket list.

As thrilled as Kendall is to be part of the WOC team, we are just as thrilled to have her. Welcome to the team, Kendall!



Kendall McElway
WOC Member Since 2023



WOMEN OF COLORS TV NETWORK

Do you have content for Amazon Prime TV, Apple TV, or Roku? WOC can spotlight your business, your book, your school, or your event!

Download Our Free App

1. Go to the App Store
2. Type "Women of Colors"
3. Download free and stream the WOC Network!



Family & Friends: An Addiction Support Group

Is your loved one leading a destructive life? That doesn't mean your life has to be destroyed as well.

Stronger Together is here to help you cope. Join us at WOC for an addiction support group for family and friends of people struggling with addiction.

1st and 3rd Tuesday of every month. 6:30 - 8 PM
1000 Tuscola St Saginaw, MI 48607

President's Corner

According to SAMJSA's 2018 National Survey on Drug Use and Health - Sixteen percent (4.8 million) of African American people live with mental illnesses. Of those people, 22.4 percent (1.1 million people) reported a serious mental illness over the past year. By increasing exposure and spreading knowledge about the symptoms of mental illness, we collectively help to remove the stigma around seeking help. WOC wants to help change the perception of mental illness in the African American community by encouraging people to get the help they need.

Mental Health Resources for Black and African American Communities include **Black Emotional and Mental Health (BEAM)** and **The Boris Lawrence Henson Foundation**.



Evelyn McGovern
Cofounder/President



Happy Memorial Day!