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Noble News & Views

A bi-monthly report for those in support of University Health Behavioral Health and our mission.



July/Aug 2022

Noble News & Views

The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline is Now 988

People experiencing a mental health crisis now can dial **988** to reach the Lifeline Network and related resources. This new, three-digit dialing code was established to improve access to crisis services in a way that meets our country's growing suicide and mental health related crisis care needs, and was launched nationwide on July 16, 2022.

988 is more than just an easy-to-remember number—it is a direct connection to compassionate, accessible care and support for anyone experiencing mental health related distress—whether that is thoughts of suicide, mental health or substance use crisis, or any other kind of emotional distress.

The Lifeline is a national network of more than 200 local, independent and state-funded crisis centers equipped to help people in emotional distress or experiencing a suicidal crisis. The move to **988** does not replace the Lifeline, rather it will be an easier way to access a strengthened and expanded network of crisis call centers.

According to the **Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA)**, **988** is a positive first step toward a transformed crisis care system, in much the same way as emergency medical services have expanded in the US.

People can access the Lifeline via **988** or by calling 1-800-273-8255. **988** also is available nationwide via text or chat (English only).

For more information about **988**, go to <https://988lifeline.org/current-events/the-lifeline-and-988/>.

A note from our COO...

Pretty soon, kids will be heading back to school after a flurry of school supply shopping and figuring out bus stops. Learning (or relearning) new routines can be stressful especially for children, and that's why I'm grateful for the partnerships we have fostered to be able to provide support to our community's children in schools.



For example, due to recent funding from the **Jackson County Children Services Fund**, we will be able to impact more families and teachers than ever before this year. This new funding will support programmatic efforts to meet children and their parents where they are rather than expecting them to come to the office for traditional services. Our dedicated staff will host psychoeducational circles with all stakeholders in children's educational experience while also highlighting the benefit of other mental health services as appropriate. This is an especially timely effort now that some of the stigma around mental health services has been lowered due to the mental strain caused by the ongoing pandemic.

Speaking of the seemingly endless nature of COVID-19, there is a new resource for those experiencing a mental health crisis. We also have been able to participate in the important efforts to roll out **988**. This new number for the National Suicide and Crisis Lifeline is now live, and anyone experiencing emotional distress or a suicidal crisis can call these three simple numbers to be connected with a compassionate ear. Callers will then be directed to local providers, and UH Behavioral Health is proud to participate in this program.

These last few years have indeed been stressful. Know that it is normal to feel overwhelmed. We're here for you if you need someone to talk to, and be on the lookout for our next issue, when we'll explore together what it means to move from surviving to thriving in the wake of the pandemic.

Sharon Freese, COO, University Health Behavioral Health

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"Supervising trainees helps keep me on my toes," says Dr. Abbey Gripka, Training Supervisor. "Each trainee brings a variety of experiences, knowledge, energy and curiosity to their practicum or internship placement. I've learned so much from each of my trainees, as they often incorporate new research and ideas in their work with clients. Their impact on UHBH has been very positive."

Social Work Practicum

Students in this program will spend 16 hours per week learning about various departments within UHBH, and will be assigned to a team in which they show interest. This program embeds the students on a team with recovery coaches and Qualified Mental Health Professionals (QMHPs) to learn about and provide mental health services to clients.

"Our program is unique," said Dianne Asher, UHBH Social Work Practicum Coordinator. "Not only do we teach students about mental health services, we also offer a macro social work program where students get exposure to the business and program development side of a **Certified Community Behavioral Health Organization (CCBHO)**. Students are immersed in a number of business areas, including homeless outreach, the Emergency Department, Therapy Department, Community Outreach and lobbying," she added.

Stacy Tucker, current social work trainee, had this to say about her experience in the program: "My experience as a social work intern has exceeded my expectations. I've been given a broad range of opportunities and been introduced to and supervised by people with a wealth of experience and knowledge in social work. UHBH offers many services to help their clients overcome the multitude of barriers created by life in the inner city. This is an excellent organization to be trained in social work practice with plenty of exposure to diversity."

Dianne and Ashlee work closely with universities to ensure the students learn the required skills necessary to fulfill the requirements of their degree. If you or someone you know would like more information about our program, go to <https://www.universityhealthkc.org/professional-education/psychology-training-program/>.

Awareness Dates

September

National Recovery Month

National Suicide Prevention Month

National Suicide Prevention Week
(Sep. 6-12)

World Suicide Prevention Day
(Sep. 10)

October

National Depression and Mental Health Screening Month

Bullying Prevention Month

Domestic Violence Awareness Month

ADHD Awareness Month

International Day of Non-Violence
(Oct. 2)

Mental Illness Awareness Week
(Oct. 4-10)

National Depression Screening Day
(Oct. 8)

World Mental Health Day (Oct. 10)

National Coming Out Day (Oct. 11)

OCD Awareness Week (Oct. 11-17)

National Stop Bullying Day (Oct. 14)

The 2022-2023 Internship Programs Kick-off This Month!

UHBH's Newly Created Training Department Welcomes Student Interns

This month, University Health Behavioral Health's (UHBH) training department welcomes 20 trainees to the 2022-2023 training year. The training department, led by Dr. Ashlee Jones, has expanded and now offers several training opportunities, including: Doctoral Psychology Internship; Psychology/Counseling Doctoral and Master Level Practicums; Social Work Practicum led by UHBH's Dianne Asher; and Recreation Therapy, Music Therapy and Occupational Therapy Internships. All programs are designed to provide interns with a breadth of training, focused on evidence-based assessment and treatment intervention.

Trainees have come not only from universities in the Kansas City Metro, but as far away as West Texas A&M, Pacific University in Forest Grove, Oregon and Northwest University in Kirkland, Washington.

Doctoral Internship Program

UHBH's Doctoral Internship is a member of the **National Psychology Training Consortium**, an American Psychological Association (APA)-accredited program and an Association of Psychology Postdoctoral Internship Centers (APPIC) member. The internship provides an in-depth and unique training experience in a combined year-long rotation. Through three rotations, doctoral interns will gain experience working with children and adults in both our outpatient clinic, and with adults 18 and older in the acute psychiatric care setting.

In this program, students get exposure to core inpatient services, including individual and group therapy and assessment, risk assessment, civil commitment proceedings and guardianship hearings, when available.

Psychology/Counseling Practicum

In this program, trainees are supervised by licensed psychologists, and training is tailored to each individual's professional goals and path toward licensure. There are several rotations available within our integrated clinics, and inpatient and outpatient therapy clinics. Training opportunities include initial psychosocial assessments, short-term individual psychotherapy, interdisciplinary collaboration and consultation, outcome measurement and group therapy.



Shawn and Matthew, Doctoral interns; Luisa, Doctoral psychology intern; and Ashlee Jones, UHBH Training Director

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UH Lakewood Medical Center
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OUR NOBLE CAUSE

Dedicating our professional lives to accepting people as they are today, bearing hope for their future, and using compassion to empower those we serve.

In the Spotlight: Futures Community Program

The Futures Community Program team has been busy this summer expanding services for young adults, collaborating with local schools and focusing on staff to impact quality of life and improve social skills.

What's New?

Expanded Collaboration With Local Schools

Team members from the Futures Community Program have been active with local schools for many years, including **KIPP: Endeavor Academy** and **Hope Leadership Academy (HLA)**. We recently expanded our work in the schools by adding partnerships with **Crossroads Charter Schools** and **DeLaSalle Education Center**. In both locations we have an embedded treatment team consisting of therapists, case managers and certified peer staff providing mental health services to students. We also have a collaboration with the **Ewing Marion Kauffman School, Kansas City Girls Prep Academy** and **Citizens of The World**, providing an expedited intake service utilizing our mobile intake clinic. Our mobile intake staff are able to meet the families within the community, or wherever may be necessary to make the intake process easier for them.

Creation of the Futures Forward Program

The Futures Forward Program is designed to meet the standard and fidelity of a first episode psychosis program. The aim of the program is to provide early intervention to young adults ages 15-30 and their families who are faced with the onset of psychotic symptoms, which can include visual or auditory hallucinations or delusions. Using the Transition to Independence Process (TIP), a developmentally appropriate way of working with Transition Aged Youth (TAY) and evidence-based supported practices, the Futures Forward Program is designed to reduce the long-term, chronic effects of psychotic symptoms.

"The TAY team consists of a recovery coach, therapist, doctor, nurse practitioner and RN, and is unique in that they are working to make an early impact in a young adult's life to help improve their

overall quality of life," said **Tiffany Sturdivant**, UHBH Program Director, Futures Community Program. "The team also works to actively engage and educate family members in the young adult's care, setting expectations, navigating treatment and assisting in empowering the client to take ownership in recovery," she added.



Tiffany Sturdivant, UHBH Program Director, Futures Community Program

"Live at the Loft" Events

Marnie Brodzinski, a Certified Transition Peer Outreach staff member recently started hosting in-person therapeutic events for young adults receiving mental health services. The most recent event involved planting flowers in flower pots as a way to encourage self-care. "One exciting outcome of this event involved a patient who has been diagnosed with selective mutism, an anxiety disorder characterized by a person's inability to speak in certain social settings such as at school, work, or in the community," said Brodzinski. "During the flower planting exercise, this young man started speaking!"

Events like these will continue as a way to encourage clients to express themselves. Other events included wish bracelets that participants created to represent the good things that happen

in their lives, and calming jars, which reminded our young adults to be present in the moment. The next event will enable participants to make water bottle wind spirals. "The purpose of these events is to celebrate a new season of life as we head into the new school year. These remind us that we change just like the seasons do, and that we are still moving through even the harshest of winds just like the wind spirals. We may get blown around a bit but we still sing and dance regardless," Brodzinski added.

Help for the Helpers: Futures Community New Peer Care Response Team

When traumatic things happen to those they serve, it is common for helpers to suffer the impact of trauma exposure themselves. When several traumatic things happen in a row or when the majority of those they serve are navigating trauma day in and day out, the impact on helpers is even greater. Because trauma exposure behaviors can inadvertently magnify suffering, it is important that helpers have support in caring for themselves as they care for others. In fact, research reveals that when people perceive their organizations to be supportive, they experience lower levels of vicarious trauma.

In the face of several difficult community situations that deeply impacted the department staff, Futures Community Program leadership realized the need for a trauma-responsive, structured support system. They reached out to and began working with **Roxanne Pendleton**, with the **UHBH Center for Trauma Informed Innovation (CTII)**. Using the Peer Assault Care Team (PACT) model previously developed by CTII staff, they collaborated to create their own custom program called the Peer Care Response Team (PCRT). Now, when staff experiences trauma exposure, they are offered short-term support and resources. As necessary, staff may be referred to longer-term support like the University Health Employee Assistance Program (EAP).

For more information on the Futures Community Program, call **816-404-5755**.

The Power of Pronouns: How to Lead by Example and Foster a Culture of Inclusivity

By *Vladimir Sainte (he/him)*, LCSW, Senior Project Coordinator, UHBH Employee Wellness

My name is Vladimir Sainte. I am Haitian American, and my pronouns are he/him. In full transparency and vulnerability, I must confess that I am not a scholar on the broadening language of gender identities and expressions—I am still learning. But as a human being and social worker, I value the inherent worth in others, and believe that understanding personal pronouns and why they matter is one crucial component to fostering genuine connections with others, our clients and in the workplace.



Vladimir Sainte

The human brain is a complex machine, constantly absorbing information and categorizing data to help us make sense of our multifaceted world. To effectively process and respond quickly, our brain finds ways to make shortcuts. For example, when we are speaking about a person in the third person, we often use pronouns identifying that individual's gender (i.e., she, he, they). Often, we make assumptions about the person's gender based on their appearance or name.

This connects to a favorite quote of mine by Henry Winkler: "Assumptions are the termites of relationships." Let's pause and sit with this for a second. The development of a trusting relationship lies in the act of connecting, getting to know that person beyond what we immediately see, and not making assumptions that can have detrimental side effects. Appropriately addressing someone by their personal pronouns promotes respect and emotional safety. We are humans and hard-wired for imperfection. If you make a mistake about someone's pronouns and you are corrected, simply say, "thank you." This displays acknowledgment without being overly apologetic. Mistakes are common and frequently happen. However, if someone informs us of their personal pronouns and we continue to ignore it, we become complicit in the oppressive notion that their view of self, uniqueness and individuality does not matter.



well. Say something like: "I'm not sure I mentioned it, but my pronouns are he/him. Would you like to share yours?" This is a safe and respectful way to cultivate an environment of inclusivity, and fortifies the underlying notion that we are all individuals with intrinsic values. Respecting each other's uniqueness is important.

Let's all commit to this practice in order to create a more welcoming culture of inclusivity for our clients and workforce.

So how can we lead by example and foster inclusivity? There is an old social work adage that says we should never have our clients do something that we are not willing to do ourselves. So, the first step in promoting an inclusive culture would be to share your pronouns first. This can help mitigate forms of discomfort and allow a welcoming space for others to share their pronouns as