

# Region 1 Behavioral Health Authority

**October 2021 Newsletter**



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**Check us out at [www.region1bhs.net](http://www.region1bhs.net)  
Facebook @Region1BHA**

## RESOURCES FOR WESTERN NEBRASKA

24/7 Mental Health line: 308-635-5766

24/7 Substance Abuse line: 1-833-789-7177

Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 1-800-273-8255

24/7 Crisis Text line: text REG 1 to: 741-741

24/7 Nebraska Family Helpline: 1-888-866-8660

Disaster Distress Helpline: 1-800-985-5990 or Text '*TalkWithUs*' to 66746

Rural Response Hotline: 1-800-464-0258

# November 3rd National Stress Awareness Day

Everyone experiences stress. Sometimes it can help you focus and get the task at hand done. But when stress is frequent and intense, it can strain your body and make it impossible to function. Finding effective ways to deal is crucial to living well.

## How Stress Affects You

Stress affects your entire body, mentally as well as physically. Some common signs include:

- Headaches
- Trouble sleeping
- Jaw pain
- Changes in appetite
- Frequent mood swings
- Difficulty concentrating
- Feeling overwhelmed

When experiencing long-term stress, your brain is exposed to increased levels of a hormone called cortisol. This exposure weakens your immune system, making it easier for you to get sick.

Stress can contribute to worsening symptoms of your mental illness. For example, in schizophrenia, it can encourage hallucinations and delusions, while in bipolar disorder, it can trigger episodes of both mania and depression. Knowing what situations cause it is the first step in coping with this very common experience.

## When You Are Most Vulnerable To Stress

People are most susceptible to stress when they are:

- Not getting enough sleep
- Not having a network of support
- Experiencing a major life change such as moving, the death of a loved one, starting a new job, having a child or getting married
- Experiencing poor physical health
- Not eating well

Everyone has his own threshold. Certain things that may upset you out might not even make one of your friends raise an eyebrow. Some people are affected when they experience large crowds and noisy environments, while others react to silence and free time.

## Ways to Reduce Stress

Developing a personalized approach to reducing stress can help you manage your mental health condition and improve your quality of life. Once you've learned what your triggers are, experiment with coping strategies. Some common ones include:

- Accept your needs. Recognize what your triggers are. What situations make you feel physically and mentally agitated? Once you know this, you can avoid them when it's reasonable to, and to cope when you can't.
- Manage your time. Prioritizing your activities can help you use your time well. Making a day-to-day schedule helps ensure you don't feel overwhelmed by everyday tasks and deadlines.
- Practice relaxation. Deep breathing, meditation and progressive muscle relaxation are good ways to calm yourself. Taking a break to refocus can have benefits beyond the immediate moment.
- Exercise daily. Schedule time to walk outside, bike or join a dance class. Whatever you do, make sure it's fun. Daily exercise naturally produces stress-relieving hormones in your body and improves your overall physical health.
- Set aside time for yourself. Schedule something that makes you feel good. It might be reading a book, go to the movies, get a massage or take your dog for a walk.
- Eat well. Eating unprocessed foods, like whole grains, vegetables, and fresh fruit is the foundation for a healthy body and mind. Eating well can also help stabilize your mood.
- Get enough sleep. Symptoms of some mental health conditions, like mania in bipolar disorder, can be triggered by getting too little sleep.
- Avoid alcohol and drugs. They don't actually reduce stress: in fact, they often worsen it. If you're struggling with substance abuse, educate yourself and get help.
- Talk to someone. Whether to friends, family, a counselor or a support group, airing out and talking can help. Consider attending a NAMI Connection Recovery Support Group.

## Getting Help

If the steps you've taken aren't working, it may be time to share with your mental health professional. He or she can help you pinpoint specific events that trigger you and help you create an action plan to change them.

## Prevention Spotlight

October is National Substance Abuse Prevention Month, an annual observance to highlight the vital role of substance abuse prevention in both individual and community health and to remember those who have lost their lives to substance abuse.

Millions of Americans suffer from substance abuse, which includes underage drinking, alcohol dependency, non-medical use of prescription drugs, abuse of over-the-counter medications, and illicit drug use.

Prevention strategies targeting the root of the problem are essential to curb drug use and help people lead healthier lives. Early intervention helps prevent substance abuse and reduce the negative consequences of addiction before they occur. Through community-based efforts involving youth, parents, educators, and government officers, we can strengthen the support systems that deter our Nation's young people from drug consumption and improve both academic performance and workforce readiness.

Region 1 Substance Abuse Prevention team provides the coordination of critical system areas including Regional Prevention System Coordination. In this role, Region 1 provides prevention system leadership, support and technical assistance to providers, community coalitions and multiple stakeholders in planning new services and ensuring the appropriate use of funding for prevention strategies.

For more information on Substance Abuse Prevention efforts in the Panhandle, visit the Region 1 Prevention page on our website by [clicking here](#). Additional resources and information, curated by the Region 1 Prevention team, are available on Pinterest at [http://www.pinterest.com/r1\\_prevention](http://www.pinterest.com/r1_prevention).

Please take a couple minutes to complete the Region 1 Stakeholder Survey. It is available on the Region 1 website at this [link](#). This survey is used to gauge the perception and impact of Region 1, and then utilized to drive change. Thank you for your participation!



**Halloween Safety Tips**

Keep your little ghouls safe this Halloween with some easy tips and tricks!

 Trick or treat in groups- never alone 

 Take a flash light with you and place reflective tape on costumes.

 Only visit well lit houses

 Only enter a house if with a trusted adult

 Never ride with strangers

 Examine candy before its eaten

 Make sure any weapons for a costume aren't too sharp

 Contact authorities if you see anything suspicious or dangerous.

 Halloween is a fun holiday, so establish rules for a scarily safe time!

 

**National Suicide Prevention Lifeline**

**1-800-273-8255**