

DEI newsletter

MAY

Mental Health Month

It has been a long two years since the initial outbreak of COVID-19, and it has weighed heavily on all of us—especially in the healthcare field. 41% of adults report struggling with mental health or substance use, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, up from 20% pre-pandemic. Health plan data also reflects this trend. Nearly 1/3 of adults now report having symptoms of anxiety or depression.

Mental health is an important part of overall health and wellbeing. Mental health includes our emotional, psychological, and social wellbeing. It affects how we think, feel, and act. It also helps determine how we handle stress, relate to others, and make healthy choices. Poor mental health can negatively impact physical health, and poor physical health, especially chronic conditions like diabetes and heart disease, can negatively impact mental health.

- Depression interferes with a person's ability to complete physical job tasks about 20% of the time and reduces cognitive performance about 35% of the time
- Only 57% of people with moderate depression and 40% with severe depression receive treatment
- People with a behavioral health condition can be up to three times more likely to have a chronic physical health condition

It is imperative that we all take care of our mental health. Attached to this email is the current coverage by Excellus for mental health counseling.

Other suggestions for improving mental health:

- Decrease screen time, especially on social media
- Increase quality time with loved ones – Zoom, walks outdoors, social events, etc
- Find and utilize activities that bring you peace and happiness (this includes little things!)
- Talk about it (Our first suggestion is to talk to a professional, but it is also good to share and be open and honest with your loved ones)
- Apps: Moodfit, Talkspace, Calm, Shine
- Don't be hard on yourself if you are not feeling your best. You are NOT alone.



Asian-American Heritage Month

May is Asian-American Heritage Month. There are currently 18.9 million Asian Americans in the US. Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders (AAPI) are the two fastest-growing racial populations in the United States, projected to become the largest immigrant group in the country by 2055. Unlike other racial groups, most AAPIs are foreign born. Immigration is therefore a significant and relevant issue for AAPIs across the country.

There is a “model minority myth” about Asians that assumes they are universally successful. However, aggregated data for AAPIs overshadows the great diversity in experiences among different ethnic groups, including migration history, socioeconomic status, and political status. As the Washington Center for Equitable Growth shows, ethnicities in the AAPI population represent both ends of the achievement spectrum with respect to educational attainment, household income, and employment rate. For example, as a group, AAPIs have the highest share of college graduates, surpassing every other racial group by wide margins. Yet this high level of educational attainment is attributed to only a select group of Asian Americans, such as Taiwanese, Asian Indians, and Malaysians. About 13 of these U.S. ethnic and racial sub-groups have lower educational attainment rates than the U.S. average, including peoples of unspecified Micronesian, Bhutanese, Hawaiian, Vietnamese, and Burmese origin. Therefore, it is important to dismantle the model minority myth to acknowledge the diversity of AAPI experiences and cultures. *(this excerpt is taken from: <https://edsitement.org/teachers-guides/asian-american-and-pacific-islander-heritage-and-history-us>)*

Since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, there has been a significant increase in racism and hateful acts against AAPI people in the US. The website “Stop AAPI hate” is an amazing resource that encompasses not just education about this problem, but also a way to report hateful acts you witness as well as donate to organizations that are working to stop AAPI hate. Please visit the link here: <https://stopaapihate.org/actnow/>

May 21 – World Day for Cultural Diversity for Dialogue & Development

As the DEI committee, we challenge you to ask yourself some tough questions and start conversation in honor of world day for cultural diversity for dialogue and development.

Ask yourself this...

- Are there people close to me in my personal life that belong to other diverse groups that I am not a part of? (Culture, race, religion, etc)
- If no, why not?
- If yes, when is the last time you have thought about their experiences and how they are different from yours?
 - Are there hardships that their group faces that does not affect you? Do you recognize and address the diversity between you?
 - If you feel you experience hardships that this person may not know or understand (due to race, culture, etc), when is the last time you have tried to truly educate them and help them understand?

We ask that you start a conversation with someone in your life about diversity and the challenges that come with being a part of diverse group. Talking is our first step to learning and growing as a company and as a community.

Child Apraxia of Speech Awareness Month

The Mayo Clinic definition of Childhood Apraxia of Speech (CAS) is “an uncommon speech disorder in which a child has difficulty making accurate movements when speaking. In CAS, the brain struggles to develop plans for speech movement. With this disorder, the speech muscles aren't weak, but they don't perform as they should because the brain has difficulty directing or coordinating the movements.” It is called Childhood Apraxia, but a person never outgrows it. The brain knows everything you want to say, but your throat, tongue, lips, and voice control don't know how to work together to get the words out.

Our employee Stephanie Jennings (Authorization Scheduling) has learned a lot about CAS in the past 7 years. Her son, Kipton Jennings will celebrate his 7th birthday May 7, 2022. The Jennings had Kipton evaluated through Early Intervention (EI) after feeling as though things were not right - but EI wasn't concerned and advised them to call back for reevaluation if things changed. They had him re-evaluated at 2 years old due to changes in his speech, and that is where his first intervention started. Kipton is now a 1st grader at Liverpool School District, which is the appropriate grade level for his age. He is about 2 years behind developmentally, but he is catching up very quickly. His classroom is an integrated classroom; it has a 1st grade teacher, a 1st grade Special Ed teacher, and 2 TA's in the classroom at all times. He gets Adapted Phys Ed, and continues with PT, OT, ST. Because it is an integrated class all the kids are supportive and encouraging to the kids that need extra help. **To read their full story, please see the attached PDF.**

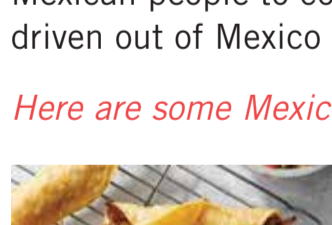
The Jennings feel that it is so important to take any opportunity to get the word out about Childhood apraxia of speech. They want to help, and for others to learn about it and teach their kids about it. Stephanie is shocked at how many kids have this diagnosis – she is willing to bet that there is at least one child in every school. They rely heavily on direction from the therapists since there are very limited resources in the CNY Community for them.

Many times, parents hear “don't worry about it if he cannot speak,” “every child develops at a different rate,” or some variation of that. Stephanie encourages parents that if you think something is not right, just get an evaluation, and follow your gut!

Happy Cinco De Mayo!

Cinco De Mayo is a Mexican holiday celebrated on May 5. People in the U.S. often mistake Cinco de Mayo for Mexico's Independence Day, which is September 16th. Cinco de Mayo celebrates Mexico's victory over France at the Battle of Puebla on May 5, 1862. The triumph inspired the Mexican people to continue fighting for their freedom and, six years later, the French were finally driven out of Mexico for good. Today, the holiday celebrates Mexican culture as a whole.

Here are some Mexican recipes to try at home:



BEEF FLAUTAS

<https://www.tasteofhome.com/recipes/beef-flautas/>



MICHELADA

<https://www.tasteofhome.com/recipes/michelada/>



STUFFED POBLANO PEPPERS

<https://www.tasteofhome.com/recipes/easy-stuffed-poblanos/>

LOCAL MEXICAN RESTAURANTS TO TRY:

Margaritas Cantina | Carmelita's | Papa Gallo | XO Taco | Otro Cinco | Alto Cinco

Purpose Statement

SOS as a medical practice and a contributor to the local community is committed in its support of diversity, equity, and inclusion. SOS seeks to build patient and team-member relationships among individuals of all ages, races, ethnicities, genders, and sexual identities that fully represents many cultures, backgrounds and viewpoints and thereby cultivate a culture of tolerance where all feel welcome.

DEI Committee Members

Brandi Brown | Yolanda Brown | Melissa Butler | Helena Capone | Nicole Chidsey
Shelly Devries | Dr. Naven Duggal | Melissa Griffin | Cheryl Holdrege | Mike Humphrey
Diana Jones | Melissa Patnella | Victoria Rolls | Robert Taylor | Dr. Daniel Wnorowski

Please reach out to anyone in the DEI committee to share your thoughts and ideas.

If you have any questions about the content of this newsletter, please contact our editor in chief, Melissa Patnella, at melissa.patnella@sosbones.com.