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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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OCHN Encourages Community to Prioritize Mental Health During the Holidays

OAKLAND COUNTY, MI (December 18, 2024) – Oakland Community Health Network (OCHN) encourages the community to prioritize mental health during the holidays and into the new year.

While the holidays are a time of joy and celebration for some, others may experience extreme stress and sadness during the holiday season. Individuals diagnosed with mental illness, intellectual disabilities, substance use disorders, and/or Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD) have a greater risk of facing mental challenges during the holidays. An [American Psychological Association poll](#) found that 89% of U.S. adults have concerns such as not having enough money, missing loved ones, and anticipate family conflict that causes them stress during the holiday season.

OCHN wants to encourage not only persons with mental health challenges to prioritize their mental health, but the entire community to pay special attention to mental health during the holidays and beyond.

Here are some tips for managing your mental health during the holidays, and throughout the year:

- **Notice your feelings:** Remember that it is okay to feel unhappy during the holidays.
- **Practice self-care:** Treat yourself with kindness and avoid self-criticism.
- **Take care of your body:** A big part of mental health is related to your physical health. Make sure you're drinking plenty of water, maintaining a sleep schedule, and eating balanced meals.
- **Utilize your coping skills:** Take a walk, play with your pet, or even write in a journal.

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- **Maintain your boundaries:** It's okay to say no to extra activities and tasks so you aren't overloaded.
- **Develop a plan for when you are feeling sad, stressed, or lonely:** This plan may include calling a friend or family member, engaging in an activity that brings joy, or watching a favorite movie. Having a plan can help ensure the difficult moments are more manageable. Seek additional supports when needed.

If you or someone you know needs immediate assistance, call or text the Suicide & Crisis Lifeline at 988 (24/7). Non-emergency Access services can be reached at (248) 464-6363. For more tips on managing your mental health during the holiday season, click [here](#). To learn more about OCHN, visit www.oaklandchn.org.

About OCHN

OCHN is contracted by the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) to lead a provider service network and manage care for approximately 30,000 Oakland County residents at more than 400 service sites across the county. People who receive public behavioral health services through OCHN's provider network include those who have an intellectual or developmental disability, mental health concerns, or substance use disorder. Most of these individuals have Medicaid insurance coverage.

OCHN's goal is to ensure these individuals are aware of and have access to services and supports that will improve their health and quality of life, as well as ensure their engagement in full community participation. Its mission to "inspire hope, empower people, and strengthen communities" reflects an unyielding belief in a "Valuable System for Valued People." Programs and supports provided by OCHN's service network are available at www.oaklandchn.org.

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