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Coping with PTSD During Firework Season

OAKLAND COUNTY, MI (July 3, 2024) – For victims of gun violence and Veterans who have post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), the Fourth of July holiday can be a stressful time of year. Oakland Community Health Network (OCHN) is releasing tips to cope with PTSD during this firework season.

PTSD is a mental health condition that is triggered by experiencing or witnessing a traumatic event. Symptoms may include flashbacks, nightmares and severe anxiety, as well as uncontrollable thoughts about the event. Most people who go through traumatic events may have temporary difficulty adjusting and coping, but with time and good self-care, they usually get better. If the symptoms get worse, last for months or even years, and interfere with day-to-day functioning, one may have PTSD. To learn more about PTSD, click [here](#).

For individuals who have witnessed gun violence or who have served in the military, the sounds, smells, and unpredictability of fireworks may trigger their PTSD. However, one can take steps to manage the impact of fireworks.

- Remind yourself that the sights, smells, sounds, and settings of fireworks may match a past event but are not a threat in your current environment.
- Use the trauma reminders as a cue to practice self-care such as breathing techniques, journaling, mindfulness, etc.
- Research local firework shows to prepare yourself for potential triggers.
- Consider earplugs or headphone to mute any noise.
- Remind yourself that this is temporary, and you are safe.
- If you find that fireworks are distressing and hard to manage, lean on your support system and call 988 if you find yourself in a mental health crisis.

To learn more about coping with fireworks and PTSD, click [here](#). For non-emergency Access services, call (248) 464-6363. If you or someone you know needs immediate assistance, call or text the Suicide & Crisis Lifeline at 988. For more information on 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 29,000 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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