## **BHDDH Division of Developmental Disabilities**



## **COVID-19 Update**

May 22, 2020

## Crush COVID RI

**CRUSH COVID RI** is a COVID-19 pandemic response app which provides Rhode Islanders easy access to all of the resources required during the public health crisis, including a location diary that helps users identify the people and places they are in contact with and a symptom checking survey.

All Rhode Islanders are encouraged to use the CRUSH COVID RI app and take an active role in slowing the spread of COVID-19 in Rhode Island. You can make a difference in the health of your loved ones and your community by helping us track the virus in our state.

Download the CRUSH COVID RI app now to step up and help RI #CrushCovidRI

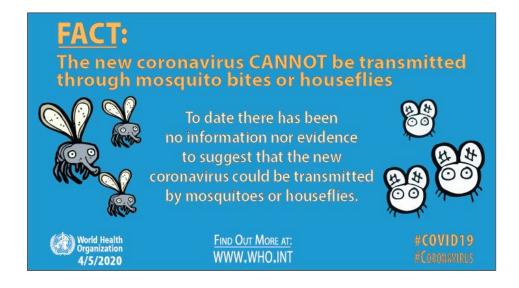


### How does CRUSH COVID RI work?

CRUSH COVID RI is a one-stop place to get all the information you need about COVID-19 in Rhode Island. It also has two features you can use to help everyone in the community.

The My Location Diary feature uses GPS location data that is already available from your phone to help you easily track the places you visited over the past 20 days. All data will be stored locally on your device. It is only shared when you voluntarily decide to share it. If you test positive for COVID-19, and you agree to share this information with the Rhode Island Department of Health, they can quickly identify places you went and people you were in contact with and reduce the spread of COVID-19.

The My Symptom Checker feature lets you tell us if you have any symptoms and only asks you to provide your zip code. If you submit this quick survey daily, it will help give us early indicators of COVID-19 spread in certain zip codes so we can respond by doing things like setting up testing sites in that area.



## **Advocacy Groups Call for Changes to Crisis Standards of Care Guidelines**

The Rhode Island Department of Health (RIDOH) issued <u>Crisis Standards of Care Guidelines</u> [r20.rs6.net] (CSC) on April 27, 2020



Disability Rights Rhode Island (DRRI), with support from leading community partners, has issued an <u>analysis and recommended changes</u> [r20.rs6.net] so that the Crisis Standards of Care do not discriminate against people with disabilities and older adults.

Click <a href="here">here</a> [r20.rs6.net] for the full text of the DRRI letter to RIDOH Director Nicole Alexander-Scott, or visit the DRRI website (<a href="here">www.drri.org</a>) and find it under "Latest Updates".

## The RI Crisis Standards of Care Guidelines must be revised to comply with state and federal protections for people with disabilities.

- 1. Provisions in the CSC Guidelines adversely impact people with disabilities and older adults.
  - As drafted, the CSC Guidelines ("Guidelines) are open to inconsistent interpretation and potentially subjective application of triaging criteria, which adversely impact individuals with disabilities and older individuals.
  - Notably, the list of inappropriate factors that cannot be considered in allocating resources race, gender, socioeconomic status, or sexual identity - does not include disability and age.
- 2. The CSC Guidelines do not comply with civil rights laws governing the rights of people with disabilities, and older adults, including:
  - Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)
  - The Rehabilitation Act of 1973
  - The Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (ACA)
- 3. Revisions are required to the CSC Guidelines to comply with Civil Rights laws.
  - Using criteria that consider survival beyond discharge will have a disparate impact on people with disabilities and older adults.
  - Allowing the use of a triage tool that ties scores to functional limitations is discriminatory.
  - The "Clinical Frailty Scale" is discriminatory to people with disabilities and older adults and should be eliminated from CSC Guidelines.

For concerns about your rights regarding medical treatment or care and any other disability-related legal concerns during this crisis, please contact us at:



Disability Rights Rhode Island 401-831-3150 contact@drri.org https://www.drri.org/

Our answering service is available 24/7 and if you do not reach us during business hours, a member of our staff will return your call within 24 hours.

"We will continue to advocate, along with community partners, to prohibit any discriminatory treatment of individuals with disabilities in accessing emergency and/or lifesaving treatment."

Disability Rights

BRAIN INJURY

BRAIN INJURY

BRAIN INJURY

ASSOCIATION

THE ARC.

The ARC.

## **Work Incentives News from the Sherlock Center**

See the Sherlock Center's COVID-19 Resources [r20.rs6.net] for more information.

### **COVID Fact Sheets**

The Sherlock Center has created several fact sheets to provide up-to-date information for beneficiaries impacted by COVID-19. The fact sheets provide guidance on the following topics:

- Stimulus Payment
- Unemployment Insurance
- Temporary Disability Insurance
- Temporary Caregiver's Insurance
- Role of Representative Payee

All fact sheets are available in English and Spanish and were last updated on May 1, 2020.

#### **NEW FACT SHEET!**

Economic Stimulus Payment: Role of SSA-Representative Payee

This fact sheet, available in English and Spanish, shares information on the role of the SSA- Representative Payee (Rep-Payee) when it comes to managing your stimulus payment.

## RI ABLE: A Financial Tool for People with Disabilities

May 29, 2020 10:30 - 11:30 AM No cost to participate!

Register Online [r20.rs6.net]

## Register Today! Space is limited.

Do you know that money held in an ABLE account is not counted toward resource limits for SSI, SSDI and Medicaid?

Join us for a 1-hour informational webinar to discover the financial advantages of ABLE accounts and how RI ABLE can help you!

RI ABLE Webinar Flyer [r20.rs6.net]

## **RIPIN Webinars: Youth Employment**

RIPIN Event Calendar [r20.rs6.net]

RIPIN is planning to host a series of webinars to address youth employment and the impact on SSI and SSDI. Details will be posted to RIPIN's event calendar.

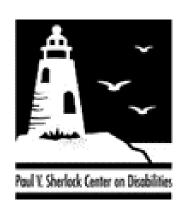
The Sherlock Center provides Work Incentive Information and Benefits Counseling services to SSI and SSDI beneficiaries. Visit the <a href="Sherlock Center">Sherlock</a> Center <a href="Fr20.rs6.net">[r20.rs6.net</a>] website to learn more.

For basic information about SSA work incentives or to request benefit counseling services, call the SSA Ticket to Work HelpLine at 866-968-7842 (Voice) or 1-866-833-2967 (TTY).

Stay Connected!

www.sherlockcenter.org

www.ric.edu/sherlockcenter/workincentives.html



## **Silver Linings**

This is a section we're adding to highlight some of the good things going on in the midst of all the difficulties right now. If you have anything you'd like to share, please send it to BHDDH.AskDD@bhddh.ri.gov with the subject: Silver Linings.

## **See-Through Masks**



Ashley Lawrence

College student Ashley Lawrence designed a reusable face mask with a see-through window for people who are deaf or hard or hearing. She modified a fabric mask pattern to be suitable for those who lip read or who rely on the facial expressions used when communicating in ASL to understand meaning and intention. She is distributing these masks to anyone who needs one, whether they are currently sick or not. If someone who needs these adaptive masks falls ill, they will have a

mask to give to their doctor, so they can communicate more easily with each other. If you are a part of the Deaf or Hard of Hearing community and would like to request a mask, please reach out to <a href="mailto:dhhmaskproject@gmail.com">dhhmaskproject@gmail.com</a>. You can also see the DHH Mask Project on Facebook, which also has a tutorial on how to make your own see-through mask.

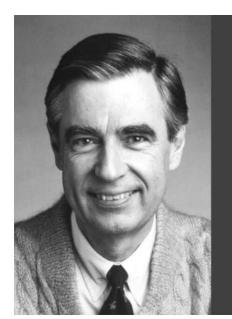
## Community First: A Weekly Series Featuring Community Heroes Serving the Common Good



Join United Way of RI for Community First Conversations every Friday on Facebook Live (<a href="https://www.facebook.com/LIVEUNITEDri/">https://www.facebook.com/LIVEUNITEDri/</a>) to meet the leaders who provide essential services for Rhode Islanders. You'll hear stories of hope, thoughts on recovery, and aspirations for a more equitable future.

Conversations will be recorded and shared on UWRI's Facebook page after the event.

Watch past conversations: May 8: Feeding Our Neighbors and May 15: Housing Our Neighbors



"When I was a boy and I would see scary things in the news, my mother would say to me,

'Look for the helpers. You will always find people who are helping.'

To this day, especially in times of 'disaster,' I remember my mother's words and I am always comforted by realizing that there are still so many helpers—so many caring people in this world."

~Fred Rogers

## If you are experiencing a mental health crisis, BH Link is here for you

BH Link's mission is to ensure all Rhode Islanders experiencing mental health and substance use crises receive the appropriate services they need as quickly as possible in an environment that supports their recovery. Call 911 if there is risk of immediate danger. Visit the BH Link website at <a href="https://www.bhlink.org">www.bhlink.org</a> or for confidential support and to get connected to care:

CALL **(401) 414-LINK (5465)** 

If under 18 CALL: (855) KID(543)-LINK(5465)

Visit the 24-HOUR/7-DAY TRIAGE CENTER at 975 Waterman Avenue, East Providence, RI

## **Stay Informed with Information on COVID-19**

## **Rhode Island Department of Health COVID-19 Resources**

Hotline (401) 222-8022 or 211 after hours;

Email RIDOH.COVID19Questions@health.ri.gov

Website <a href="https://health.ri.gov/covid/">https://health.ri.gov/covid/</a>

### **Center for Disease Control COVID-19 Information**

Website cdc.gov/coronavirus

Videos https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/communication/videos.html

Includes a link to ASL videos

## BHDDH Information on COVID-19's Impact on DD Services and the DD Community

Website <u>bhddh.ri.gov/COVID</u>

## **RI Parent Information Network (RIPIN)**

Website https://ripin.org/covid-19-resources/

Call Center (401) 270-0101 or email callcenter@ripin.org

## Advocates in Action – for videos and easy to read materials

Website https://www.advocatesinaction.org/

Website offers BrowseAloud, which will read the website to you

## Sign Up for Our Email List

If you aren't receiving email updates and newsletters from the Division, you can sign up on our

website. From the main BHDDH page at <a href="mailto:bhddh.ri.gov">bhddh.ri.gov</a>, select What's New, then go to bottom and click on DD Community Newsletter. The link to sign up for the BHDDH

DD Community Newsletter SIGN UP FOR THE BHDDH NEWSLETTER

Newsletter is directly below the title, as shown in the picture at right.

## **Contacting the Division**

The department is working on a reduced workforce and therefore calls should not be placed directly to your social caseworker. DDD has put 24-hour phone coverage in place with a central business hour phone number and an on-call number for nights and weekends.

If you have a vital need, please call the numbers below. If you have any general questions or concerns, please email them if you can, in order to try to leave the phone lines free for those who need to call. We will do our best to address your questions directly or through future newsletters.

5



During business hours (Monday-Friday 8:30-4:00), for questions or support (401) 462-3421



For emerging or imminent care related questions,
Mon - Fri 4pm-10pm and weekends 8:30am-10pm

(401) 265-7461



HELP US KEEP THE PHONE LINES OPEN FOR THOSE WHO ARE CALLING WITH A VITAL NEED!

WHEN POSSIBLE, PLEASE SEND AN E-MAIL FOR:

NON-CRITICAL CONCERNS about Your Services and Supports

GENERAL QUESTIONS about Your Services or the RI DD System

Send general questions to the AskDD email address. Please do not email critical issues.

BHDDH.AskDD@bhddh.ri.gov



For medical or healthcare related emergencies, call your Primary Care



## **CONTACT**YOUR DOCTOR





#### **CALL FOR:**

- ROUTINE Healthcare Questions
- NON-EMERGENCY Medical Care

FOLLOW YOUR DOCTOR'S ADVICE DON'T go to their office unless they tell you to!

# COVID-19 AND YOUR MENTAL HEALTH

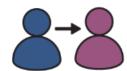
While we are familiar with viruses like the common cold and the flu, the coronavirus (COVID-19) is new and presents a situation that none of us could have imagined a few short months ago. The fact that it is extremely contagious has resulted in business closures, social distancing, and quarantine measures which have disruptived our daily lives. It is more important now than ever to pay attention to mental health during this time of isolation and uncertainty.

## YOUR CONCERNS ARE VALID

There are many reasons that you might be concerned or worried about COVID-19. Some of the most common are:







Passing the virus onto others, especially those that are high-risk



Adjusting to a new reality for an uncertain amount of time



Taking care of and supporting your family



Concern about the health of your friends and family



**Financial stress** 



Not being able connect with friends and family the way you're used to



Shortages of certain common supplies

## REALIZE WHAT YOU CAN CONTROL

One of the most frustrating things about COVID-19 is that so much about the virus and the limitations on where you can go are out of your control. However, there are things that you can control, and focusing on those things can provide you with some comfort. Some of the things you can control include:

YOUR MIND AND BODY



- Keep a healthy diet
- · Exercise at home
- Get enough sleep
- Do not smoke or drink alcohol excessively
- Take care of your mental health
- Maintain self-care and personal hygiene

YOUR IMMEDIATE ENVIRONMENT



- Your house, your bedroom, your closet, your kitchen now is the time to clean and get organized
- Make responsible choices about when to leave the house and only go out if necessary
- · Limit the number of people you come into contact with
- · Work from home if you are able to

## WHAT YOU CONSUME



- Don't overdo your news and information intake
- Get your information from reliable sources like the CDC or WHO
- Watch TV, movies, and videos that make you feel good

## HOW YOU PREPARE



- Keep 2-4 weeks of food on hand
- Avoid overstocking on supplies that are in high demand so other people can have enough of the essentials too
- If you take medication, get refills and keep a month's supply at home if possible

## HOW YOU PROTECT YOURSELF



- Regularly wash your hands for 20 seconds with soap and water or use a hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol
- · Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth
- Avoid greeting people by shaking hands, kissing or hugging
- Keep 6 feet of distance between you and anyone who is coughing or sneezing

## HOW YOU PROTECT OTHERS

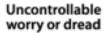


- Stay home if you are sick aside from getting medical care
- Cover your coughs and sneezes
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces

## SIGNS OF ANXIETY

It is normal to be worried and stressed during times of crisis. While worry is a part of anxiety, people with anxiety tend to experience more exaggerated feelings of worry and tension. Some common symptoms include:







Stomach and digestion problems



Trouble with concentration, memory, or thinking clearly



Increased heart rate



Changes in energy and difficulty sleeping



Irritability and/or restlessness

In extreme cases of anxiety, people may experience a panic attack. Panic attacks are often mistaken for heart attacks at first, but usually go away when people are able to talk to someone else to calm their fears and practice deep breathing.

## MANAGING ANXIETY

There are small things that everyone can do while practicing social distancing or self-quarantine to help reduce the amount of anxiety they are experiencing.

Ask someone to be your support buddy. Call, text, or video chat as needed.

Exercise at home

Use resources like online support groups or the Crisis Text Line (Text MHA to 741741)

Set boundaries with your phone

Use a mindfulness or meditation app

Set a timer for every hour to get up and stretch or take a walk

Create a new routine

Take 10 deep breaths when you feel stressed

## WHEN ANXIETY WON'T LET UP

If you're taking steps to manage worry and anxiety during the COVID-19 crisis but they don't seem to be helping, there are additional resources you can take advantage of.

**Mental Health Screening** 

If you feel like you are struggling with your mental health, visit mhascreening.org to check your symptoms.



It's free, private, and anonymous.
Once you have your results, MHA will give
you information and resources to help
you start to feel better.

Find more information and resources about COVID-19 and mental health at mhanational.org/covid19.

**Crisis Hotlines and Textlines** 

If you're experiencing emotional distress related to COVID-19, crisis counselors are available 24/7, 365 days a year.

Call 1-800-985-5990 or text "TalkWithUs" to 66746.





If you are in crisis or thinking about suicide, get connected to a local crisis center and get in touch with someone immediately.

Call 1-800-273-8255 (TALK) or text "MHA" to 741741.



- f /mentalhealthamerica
- 🗾 @mentalhealtham
- @mentalhealthamerica
- /mentalhealtham
- /mentalhealthamerica www.mhanational.org



# TAKING CARE OF YOUR BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

## Tips For Social Distancing, Quarantine, And Isolation During An Infectious Disease Outbreak

## What Is Social Distancing?

Social distancing is a way to keep people from interacting closely or frequently enough to spread an infectious disease. Schools and other gathering places such as movie theaters may close, and sports events and religious services may be cancelled.

## What Is Quarantine?

Quarantine separates and restricts the movement of people who have been exposed to a contagious disease to see if they become sick. It lasts long enough to ensure the person has not contracted an infectious disease.

## What Is Isolation?

Isolation prevents the spread of an infectious disease by separating people who are sick from those who are not. It lasts as long as the disease is contagious.

## Introduction

In the event of an infectious disease outbreak, local officals may require the public to take measures to limit and control the spread of the disease. This tip sheet provides information about **social distancing**, **quarantine**, and **isolation**. The government has the right to enforce federal and state laws related to public health if people within the country get sick with highly contagious diseases that have the potential to develop into outbreaks or pandemics.

This tip sheet describes feelings and thoughts you may have during and after social distancing, quarantine, and isolation. It also suggests ways to care for your behavioral health during these experiences and provides resources for more help.

## What To Expect: Typical Reactions

Everyone reacts differently to stressful situations such as an infectious disease outbreak that requires social distancing, quarantine, or isolation. People may feel:

## Anxiety, worry, or fear related to:

- Your own health status
- The health status of others whom you may have exposed to the disease
- The resentment that your friends and family may feel if they need to go into quarantine as a result of contact with you
- The experience of monitoring yourself, or being monitored by others for signs and symptoms of the disease
- Time taken off from work and the potential loss of income and job security
- The challenges of securing things you need, such as groceries and personal care items
- **Concern** about being able to effectively care for children or others in your care
- Uncertainty or frustration about how long you will need to remain in this situation, and uncertainty about the future
- **Loneliness** associated with feeling cut off from the world and from loved ones
- Anger if you think you were exposed to the disease because of others' negligence
- Boredom and frustration because you may not be able to work or engage in regular day-to-day activities
- Uncertainty or ambivalence about the situation
- A desire to use alcohol or drugs to cope
- Symptoms of depression, such as feelings of hopelessness, changes in appetite, or sleeping too little or too much

 Symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), such as intrusive distressing memories, flashbacks (reliving the event), night-mares, changes in thoughts and mood, and being easily startled

If you or a loved one experience any of these reactions for 2 to 4 weeks or more, contact your health care provider or one of the resources at the end of this tip sheet.

## Ways To Support Yourself During Social Distancing, Quarantine, and Isolation

#### UNDERSTAND THE RISK

Consider the real risk of harm to yourself and others around you. The public perception of risk during a situation such as an infectious disease outbreak is often inaccurate. Media coverage may create the impression that people are in immediate danger when really the risk for infection may be very low. Take steps to get the facts:

- Stay up to date on what is happening, while limiting your media exposure. Avoid watching or listening to news reports 24/7 since this tends to increase anxiety and worry. Remember that children are especially affected by what they hear and see on television.
- Look to credible sources for information on the infectious disease outbreak (see page 3 for sources of reliable outbreak-related information).

#### **BE YOUR OWN ADVOCATE**

Speaking out about your needs is particularly important if you are in quarantine, since you may not be in a hospital or other facility where your basic needs are met. Ensure you have what you need to feel safe, secure, and comfortable.

Work with local, state, or national health of-

- ficials to find out how you can arrange for groceries and toiletries to be delivered to your home as needed.
- Inform health care providers or health authorities of any needed medications and work with them to ensure that you continue to receive those medications.

#### **EDUCATE YOURSELF**

Health care providers and health authorities should provide information on the disease, its diagnosis, and treatment.

- Do not be afraid to ask questions—clear communication with a health care provider may help reduce any distress associated with social distancing, quarantine, or isolation.
- Ask for written information when available.
- Ask a family member or friend to obtain information in the event that you are unable to secure this information on your own.

## WORK WITH YOUR EMPLOYER TO REDUCE FINANCIAL STRESS

If you're unable to work during this time, you may experience stress related to your job status or financial situation.

- Provide your employer with a clear explanation of why you are away from work.
- Contact the U.S. Department of Labor tollfree at 1-866-487-2365 about the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA), which allows U.S. employees up to 12 weeks of unpaid leave for serious medical conditions, or to care for a family member with a serious medical condition.
- Contact your utility providers, cable and Internet provider, and other companies from whom you get monthly bills to explain your situation and request alternative bill payment arrangements as needed.

### **CONNECT WITH OTHERS**

Reaching out to people you trust is one of the best ways to reduce anxiety, depression, loneliness, and boredom during social distancing, quarantine, and isolation. You can:

- Use the telephone, email, text messaging, and social media to connect with friends, family, and others.
- Talk "face to face" with friends and loved ones using Skype or FaceTime.
- If approved by health authorities and your health care providers, arrange for your friends and loved ones to bring you newspapers, movies, and books.
- Sign up for emergency alerts via text or email to ensure you get updates as soon as they are available.
- Call SAMHSA's free 24-hour Disaster
   Distress Helpline at 1-800-985-5990, if you feel lonely or need support.
- Use the Internet, radio, and television to keep up with local, national, and world events.

## Sources for Reliable Outbreak Related Information

## Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

1600 Clifton Road Atlanta, GA 30329-4027 1-800-CDC-INFO (1-800-232-4636) http://www.cdc.gov

## World Health Organization

Regional Office for the Americas of the World Health Organization 525 23rd Street, NW Washington, DC 20037 202-974-3000 http://www.who.int/en  If you need to connect with someone because of an ongoing alcohol or drug problem, consider calling your local Alcoholics Anonymous or Narcotics Anonymous offices.

### **TALK TO YOUR DOCTOR**

If you are in a medical facility, you may have access to health care providers who can answer your questions. However, if you are quarantined at home, and you're worried about physical symptoms you or your loved ones may be experiencing, call your doctor or other health care provider:

- Ask your provider whether it would be possible to schedule remote appointments via Skype or FaceTime for mental health, substance use, or physical health needs.
- In the event that your doctor is unavailable and you are feeling stressed or are in crisis, call the hotline numbers listed at the end of this tip sheet for support.

#### **USE PRACTICAL WAYS TO COPE AND RELAX**

- Relax your body often by doing things that work for you-take deep breaths, stretch, meditate or pray, or engage in activities you enjoy.
- Pace yourself between stressful activities, and do something fun after a hard task.
- Talk about your experiences and feelings to loved ones and friends, if you find it helpful.
- Maintain a sense of hope and positive thinking; consider keeping a journal where you write down things you are grateful for or that are going well.

## AFTER SOCIAL DISTANCING, QUARANTINE, OR ISOLATION

You may experience mixed emotions, including a sense of relief. If you were isolated because

TIPS FOR SOCIAL DISTANCING, QUARANTINE, AND ISOLATION DURING AN INFECTIOUS DISEASE OUTBREAK

you had the illness, you may feel sadness or anger because friends and loved ones may have unfounded fears of contracting the disease from contact with you, even though you have been determined not to be contagious.

The best way to end this common fear is to learn about the disease and the actual risk to others. Sharing this information will often calm fears in others and allow you to reconnect with them.

If you or your loved ones experience symptoms of extreme stress—such as trouble sleeping, problems with eating too much or too little, inability to carry out routine daily activities, or using drugs or alcohol to cope—speak to a health care provider or call one of the hotlines listed to the right for a referral.

If you are feeling overwhelmed with emotions such as sadness, depression, anxiety, or feel like you want to harm yourself or someone else, call 911 or the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-TALK (1-800-273-8255).

## Helpful Resources

### **Hotlines**

## SAMHSA's Disaster Distress Helpline

Toll-Free: 1-800-985-5990 (English and español)

SMS: Text TalkWithUs to 66746 SMS (español): "Hablanos" al 66746

TTY: 1-800-846-8517

Website (English): http://www.disasterdistress.samhsa.gov Website (español): https://www.samhsa.gov/find-help/disaster-distress-helpline/espanol

### SAMHSA's National Helpline

Toll-Free: 1-800-662-HELP (24/7/365 Treatment Referral

Information Service in English and español)

Website: http://www.samhsa.gov/find-help/national-help-

line

#### National Suicide Prevention Lifeline

Toll-Free (English): 1-800-273-TALK (8255) Toll-Free (español): 1-888-628-9454

TTY: 1-800-799-4TTY (4889)

Website (English): http://www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org Website (español): http://www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org/ gethelp/spanish.aspx

## **Treatment Locators**

## **Behavioral Health Treatment Services Locator Website:**

https://findtreatment.samhsa.gov

## FindTreatment.gov

For help finding treatment 1-800-662-HELP (4357) https://findtreatment.gov/

## SAMHSA Disaster Technical Assistance Center

Toll-Free: 1-800-308-3515 Email: DTAC@samhsa.hhs.gov

Website: http://www.samhsa.gov/dtac



\*Note: Inclusion or mention of a resource in this fact sheet does not imply endorsement by the Center for Mental Health Services, the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, or the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

SAMHSA Publication No. PEP20-01-01-007