

MENTAL HEALTH MINISTRY

RESOURCES & PROPOSALS



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What the Methodist Church Says:

“The United Methodist Church pledges to foster policies that promote compassion, advocate for access to care, and eradicate stigma within the church and communities.”

Social Principles,

¶162.X

Community-Wide Initiatives

Support ministries that are already in place.

Ask mental health providers and non-profits in your community how your church can help.

Offer your facilities (gyms, church playgrounds) for local agencies to use. Church playgrounds can be a neutral place for children in foster care to have arranged custodial visits.

Community-Wide Initiatives

Be an advocate.

Arkansas ranks among the lowest states for mental health funding.

As a congregation, organize and advocate for more mental health resources on a state and local level.

Congregation-Wide Initiatives

Utilize training resources for staff and church volunteers.

Training programs such as "Mental Health First Aid" can help church leaders know the warning signs of a mental health emergency.

Knowledge about mental health first aid is especially important for volunteers working with children and youth. Specialized training can be utilized to understand how to interact with children and youth.

Congregation-Wide Initiatives

Implement dedicated ministries to mental health.

One barrier to long-term mental health care is the cost of care.

Churches can create ministries to help make mental health care more accessible by offering uber rides to therapy appointments, providing stipends to pay for medicine and therapy services, and helping to provide childcare for parents to receive therapy.

Congregation-Wide Initiatives

Be intentional with language and messages.

One of the biggest challenges of mental health is the stigmas associated with receiving treatment and being diagnosed with a mental illness.

Churches can strive to use more inclusive vocabulary, and talk about mental health in sermons. Incorporating mental health in sermons helps to reduce stigmas and makes talking about mental health less taboo.

Congregation-Wide Initiatives

Be visible.

Display mental health ministries and resources in church spaces and on media platforms.

Provide support for mental health care providers by promoting their events and occasionally providing lunch or meals to their workplace. Mental health providers are often overworked and underfunded. It is important for congregations to show appreciation to mental health providers.

Individual Level Practices

Be committed to learning.

One will not become a mental health expert after one training or workshop. Church members should be committed to constantly learning about best practices and guidelines to support mental health ministries.

Individual Level Practices

Know your limits and when to seek professionals.

Although it is important to talk about mental health, it is equally important to know when to involve professionals. Lay servants and church leaders are not equipped to diagnose or treat a mental health emergency.

Individual Level Practices

Host a small group.

There are many useful Bible Studies and books on mental health practices such as setting boundaries and practicing mindfulness.

Smaller group studies allow for more personal discussion and can help foster brave space for others to share.

Helpful Links

Methodist Family Health

<https://www.methodistfamily.org/>

National Alliance on Mental Illness Arkansas

<https://namiarkansas.org/>

Arkansas Community Mental Health Center Directory

https://humanservices.arkansas.gov/wp-content/uploads/CMHC_Directory_and_Map_02122020.pdf

Arkansas Behavioral Health Planning & Advisory Council

<https://cdm16039.contentdm.oclc.org/digital/collection/p266101coll7/id/35311/>

Lucie's Place

<https://www.luciesplace.org/>

Helpful Links

Outpatient Therapy Services Providers for Persons with no
Mental Health Care Insurance Coverage

https://humanservices.arkansas.gov/wp-content/uploads/Therapeutic_Counseling_Service_Provider_Directory.pdf

Arkansas Crisis Stabilization Units

<https://humanservices.arkansas.gov/divisions-shared-services/aging-adult-behavioral-health-services/crisis-stabilization-units/>

Mental Health First Aid

<https://www.mentalhealthfirstaid.org/mental-health-resources/>