

APRIL 2026

The SMART Center

THE UNIVERSITY OF MEMPHIS NEWSLETTER



THE SMART CENTER

BY Madison Presley

The University of Memphis School of Social Work SMART Center Research, Training, and Treatment Center aims to provide evidence-based interventions for school-based behavioral health programming in underserved areas, provide training on best practice in tele-behavioral health, develop opportunities to research the use of technology in practice direct services to the states most vulnerable populations.

HOURS OF OPERATION

We are a 100% tele-behavioral health clinic. We provide remote services to children, youth, and their families/caregivers, as well as adults in the Mid-South area and across Tennessee. Our current operation hours are Monday- Friday 9:00am-4:00pm.



MEDIA FOR THE SMARTCENTER

Website:

<https://www.memphis.edu/smartcenter>

CONTACT:

901-678-1636

smartcenter@memphis.edu

Instagram:

[@uofm_smartcenter](https://www.instagram.com/uofm_smartcenter)



THE WARM LINE

CONTACT: 901-678-1636

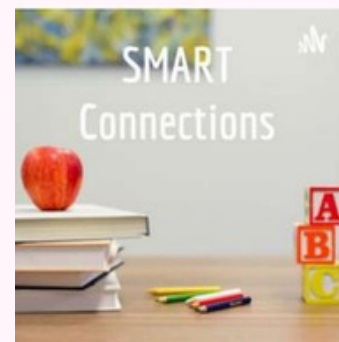
The SMART Center continues to host a “warm line” for the community that provides support, psychoeducation, and linkage to community services FREE of charge. The “warm line” is not intended for crisis support, but to assist families with identifying resources in the community. The “warm line” is in service Monday-Friday from 9:00am-4:00pm CST.



PODCAST AND MEDIA

SMART CONNECTIONS

The SMART Connections podcast has many helpful podcast episodes to listen to for a wide range of topics. If you are struggling with parenting tips, anxiety, depression, or just want some resources for different aspects of your life, then we have an episode for you. The SMART Connections podcast is run by the University of Memphis SMART Center warm line and MSW staff. Listen to our podcasts on our website and receive more information at <https://www.memphis.edu/smartcenter/> and <https://anchor.fm/susan-elswick>



Mental Health Fact

Positive Self-Talk

Positive self-talk is the practice of speaking to yourself with kindness, encouragement, and understanding. The way we talk to ourselves can shape how we feel, respond to challenges, and view our abilities. When negative thoughts appear, try gently replacing them with more supportive ones, such as “I can try again,” or “I’m still learning.” This shift in language helps build confidence, resilience, and a more positive mindset over time. Practicing positive self-talk can also be helpful for children, as they often learn by hearing and repeating the words around them. Modeling encouraging language and reminding ourselves that mistakes are part of learning can create a healthier and more compassionate inner voice. With practice, positive self-talk can become a simple but powerful tool for managing stress and supporting emotional well-being..

IMPORTANT MENTAL HEALTH DATES FOR APRIL

April 2: Autism Awareness Day

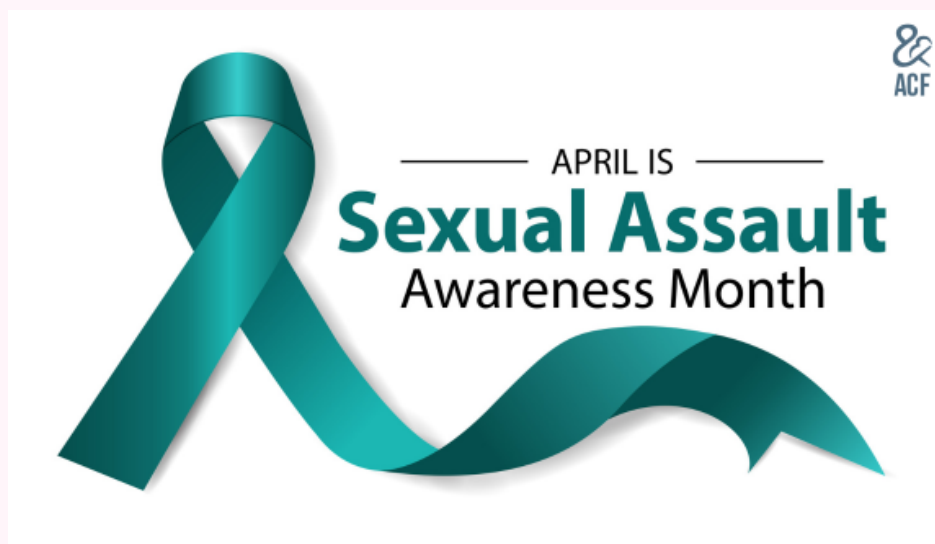
April 7: World Health Day

April 23: World Infant, Child, and Adolescent
Mental Health Day

Autism Acceptance Month

Stress Awareness Month

Sexual Assault Awareness & Prevention Month



**UPCOMING APRIL MENTAL HEALTH
EVENTS IN MEMPHIS**

**Sip N Share: Discussion about the well-being of
Black and Brown Communities**

Wednesday, April 1st

6:30pm-9:30pm 1st Floor Auditorium

1840 Pyramid Place

Free event

Register here: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/sip-n-share-tickets-1981895711424?aff=ebdssbdestsearch>

Phoenix Fellowship for Women of Trans

Experience:

Begins Wednesday, April 8th (6 week program)

6pm

1840 Pyramid Place

Free event

Plug Into the Village-It Takes a Village:

Saturday, April 11th

10am - 2pm at Shelby County Youth and Family

Resource Center

3156 Powers Rd

Free event

Memphis Career Fair:

Friday, April 17th

9:30am – 12:30pm at Sheraton Memphis

Free event

APRIL MENTAL HEALTH FOCUS:

Stress

Understanding Stress & Taking Care of Your Mental Health

Stress is a normal part of life. Everyone experiences stress at different times, whether it's related to school, work, relationships, family responsibilities, or unexpected life changes. While small amounts of stress can sometimes motivate us to meet deadlines or prepare for challenges, ongoing or overwhelming stress can impact both our mental and physical health.



What is Stress?

Stress is your body's natural response to a challenge or demand. When we perceive a threat (real or imagined), our body activates the "fight, flight, or freeze" response. This response releases hormones like adrenaline and cortisol, which prepare us to react quickly.

Short-term stress can be helpful. However, when stress becomes chronic (long-lasting), it can affect mood, concentration, sleep, immune functioning, and overall well-being.

Signs and Symptoms of Stress

Stress can show up in different ways:

Emotional signs:

- Feeling overwhelmed or irritable
- Increased anxiety or worry
- Mood swings
- Feeling sad or withdrawn

Physical signs:

- Headaches or stomachaches
- Muscle tension
- Fatigue
- Changes in sleep patterns
- Increased heart rate

Behavioral signs:

- Changes in appetite
- Avoiding responsibilities
- Difficulty concentrating
- Increased use of unhealthy coping habits

If stress begins interfering with daily functioning, relationships, or overall quality of life, it may be time to seek additional support.

APRIL MENTAL HEALTH FOCUS:

Stress



Healthy ways to Manage Stress

1. Practice Deep Breathing

Slow, controlled breathing helps calm the nervous system. Try inhaling for four seconds, holding for four seconds, and exhaling for four seconds.

2. Stay Physically Active

Even a short walk can reduce stress hormones and improve mood.

3. Maintain a Routine

Consistent sleep, meals, and daily structure can provide stability during stressful times.

4. Connect with Others

Talking with trusted friends, family members, or support staff can reduce feelings of isolation.

5. Limit Screen Time

Taking breaks from social media and news can decrease comparison and information overload.

6. Practice Mindfulness or Relaxation

Mindfulness activities, journaling, prayer, stretching, or listening to calming music can help regulate emotions.

7. Seek Professional Support

If stress feels unmanageable, reaching out to a counselor or mental health professional can provide additional coping tools and support.

Stress is part of being human, but you do not have to manage it alone. Taking small, intentional steps each day can make a meaningful difference in your mental health. This April, let's prioritize self-care, check in with ourselves, and support one another.

If you or someone you know would benefit from additional support, the Smart Center is here to help.