

MIND YOUR MIND

COBB COLLABORATIVE

VOLUME 2 - 2023 Q2

MAGAZINE

IN THIS ISSUE:

ANXIETY &
DEPRESSION

COMMUNITY VOICE
VITAL STATISTICS
Q&A W/A PROFESSIONAL
PAINT LOVE
RESOURCES

MIND YOUR MIND | MAGAZINE

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COLLABORATIVE
Educating. Engaging. Empowering.

A WORD FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Welcome to the *second quarter* edition of our digital Mind Your Mind magazine. In this issue, we explore **anxiety** and **depression**, the two most common conditions of mental health. Anxiety disorders are the *most common* category of mental health disorders in America, impacting approximately 40 million adults 18 and older.

While certain factors increase the risk of developing depression, it can affect anyone, at any age, and of any race or ethnic group. It's important to explore and understand the risk factors, including family history, situational stresses, and more. A staggering **19%** of all lost working time in 2021 was due to **poor mental health across all sectors**.

This issue seeks to create more understanding of these two prevalent mental health issues as we work to **raise awareness, promote resilience, and reduce stigma**. It continues our tradition of being an authentic and informative source of information. We wish to normalize the conversation around mental health and equip our community members with the language to begin these conversations.

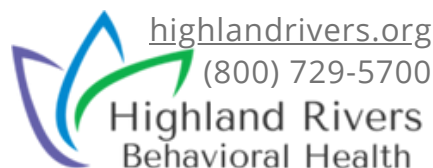
The better we understand and connect with one another, the greater our strength to make a lasting change in our own backyard.

This format is designed for easy consumption and accessibility for the entire community. If you have any feedback on how we can improve your experience with MYM Magazine, email us at ibarton@cobbcollaborative.org. For more information outside of MYM Magazine, check out our MYM Toolkit [HERE](#), and follow us on social media.

IRENE BARTON
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

CRISIS LINES

If **you**, or **someone you know**, is experiencing a *mental health crisis*, **CALL** or **TEXT 9-8-8** immediately to speak to a mental health professional.



MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS MONTH



MENTAL HEALTH MAY

Since 1949, May has been recognized in the United States as ***Mental Health Awareness Month***. The purpose of this dedicated month aligns with our Mind Your Mind initiative to ***raise awareness, promote resiliency, and reduce stigma*** around mental health.

As community members and leaders, we can utilize evidence-based toolkits created for this purpose. Many of these toolkits include media and social media resources, printable informational handouts, posters, and DIY tools to support yourself and your community. They also include various outreach ideas, mental health screening tools, and upcoming events to take part in.

This work cannot be done alone, so with the help of MHA, NAMI, and SAMHSA, we can use our collective impact to improve the mental health of all in our community. *(Toolkits are available in English and Spanish).*

MENTAL HEALTH TOOLKITS



**Mental Health
America
(MHA)**



**National
Alliance on
Mental Illness
(NAMI)**



**Substance Abuse
and Mental Health
Services
Administration
(SAMHSA)**

COMMUNITY VOICE



Successes



- FCCM is dedicated to **establishing** and **strengthening community partnerships** to provide support for those who are in need.
- Faith provides social interaction, belongingness, purpose, identity, and service alongside others



Challenges



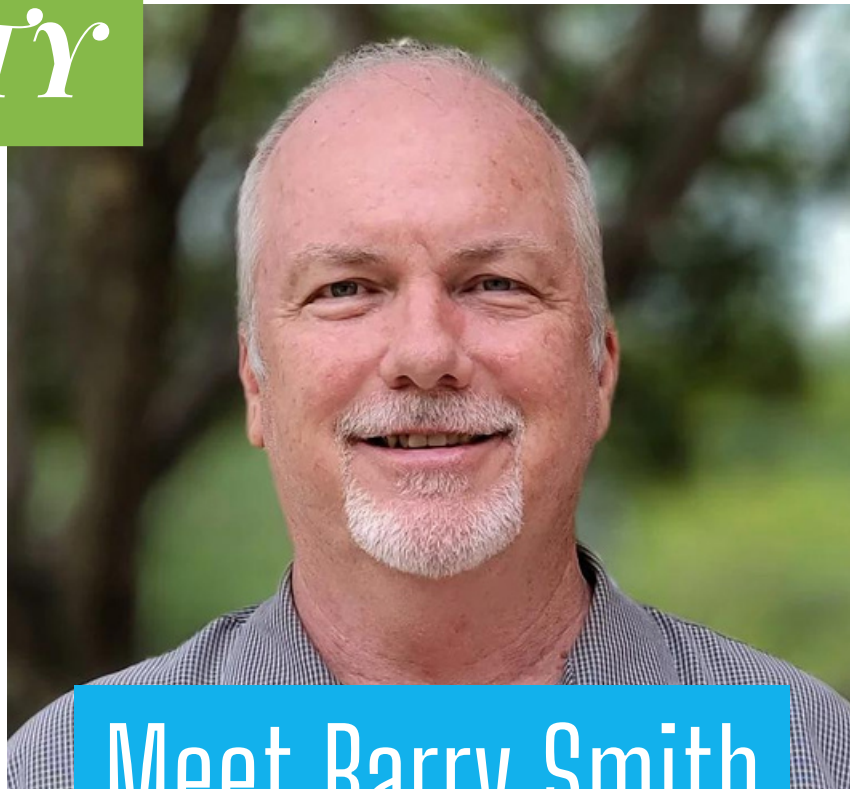
- Limited knowledge of community resources to access when they are needed



TIPS FOR COMMUNITY LEADERS



- Create a "judgement free" space
- Ask simple questions, like "Are you okay?" or "Have you thought about harming yourself?"
- Gather a list of resources you can refer to when someone is seeking help



Meet Barry Smith

Executive Minister

First Christian Church of Mableton

When we think of pillars in our community, it is hard not to recognize the importance of faith and faith leaders who guide our communities, especially during hardships like we've seen over the past few years. As the Executive Minister of First Christian Church of Mableton, Barry Smith knows firsthand how faith plays a part in our mental health.

In addition to organizing the strategic management of the church as a religious organization and the management of community partners, Barry builds and maintains critical engagement with local schools, religious nonprofits, community nonprofits, Mableton City pastors, and local food banks, which allows the church to stand as a foundational pillar in serving South Cobb.

With this hyper-focus on community, Barry has seen the impacts of depression and anxiety deeply intertwined in the community he serves. *Continued on next page.....*



CONTINUED. *"Because we have weekly interaction with everyone from teens in school to the elderly in rehab facilities, we see the impact of anxiety and depression up close,"* mentions Barry. He recognizes that when individuals are experiencing anxiety or depression, they are more likely to pull away and withdraw from regular activities like going to a weekly service. It also shows in the individual's motivation levels; many experience low or lack of motivation and an increasing desire to give up. To combat this, Barry and FCCM work closely with the individual to access the vital resources and partners in our community to help them solve short-term problems and see a brighter long-term future.

Creating a "Judgement free" approach is critical for Barry, FCCM staff, and volunteers to reduce the stigma around mental health, which often creates more barriers and prevents individuals from seeking the help they need. By seeing the depth and breadth of mental health struggles in the community, FCCM ensures that attendees and visitors know that their struggles are heard and appreciated and that free and accessible help is available if needed.

Asking a question as simple as *"Are you okay?"* or *"Have you thought about harming yourself?"* opens the door for individuals and lets them know that someone is on their side for support.

In addition to connecting individuals with a large number of various community resources, such as government agencies and nonprofit organizations, First Christian Church of Mableton provides *biblical consultations* as a way to listen to each individual's needs and concerns and to combat mental health issues.

Faith can provide a number of dimensions that support mental health. The **social interactions**, the **sense of belonging**, **purpose** and **identity**, and the **ability to serve alongside others in the community** all have tremendous positive benefits on mental health. Though many individuals require the intensive help of mental health professionals, Barry and his colleagues see that the basic foundations provided by a church are requisite to good or improving mental health in all cases.

In order to strengthen the mental health support for individuals in the South Cobb community, where FCCM is located, Barry has made the commitment to ensuring that the individuals he is serving have the knowledge of how to access and navigate the numerous supportive agents. *"From my vantage point, I also see that our community has become more understanding of this issue as it has become more aware of it. That alone should help to reduce the feelings of isolation for those struggling and encourage them to seek help."*

Regardless of your beliefs, there is help available. It is with the help of our community partners, like Barry and FCCM, that we can continue to break down barriers and support our community from all angles.



WANT TO LEARN MORE?

Email - barry@fcc-m.com

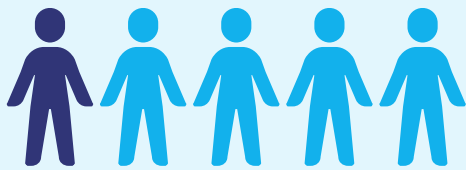
Phone - (770) 948 - 9215

FCCM - 878 Old Alabama Rd SW
Mableton, GA 30126

Mental health can impact anyone, regardless of age, gender, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, race, religion, or ability. Check out the statistics and information below to find out more about how mental health impacts adults, children, and adolescents, and what you can do to support mental health for all individuals.

VITAL STATISTICS

MENTAL HEALTH- ADULTS



1 in 5 adults have a mental illness

Individuals with depression have a **40%** higher risk of developing cardiovascular and metabolic disease



About **1 in 25** U.S. adults lives with a serious mental illness, such as schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, or major depression

50% of **ALL** mental illnesses occur before a person turns **14 years old**



WHAT CAUSES MENTAL ILLNESS?

While we cannot pinpoint one single cause for mental illness, we know that specific factors can increase someone's risk for developing a mental illness. Those are:

- Early adverse life experiences (ACEs), such as trauma or a history of abuse **Check out our Q1 issue of MYM Magazine for an in-depth look at ACEs*
- Experiences related to chronic medical conditions, such as cancer or diabetes
- Biological factors or chemical imbalances in the brain
- Use of alcohol or drugs
- Having feelings of loneliness or isolation

Are you wondering where you are at with your own Mental Health? Check out the various screenings below to know where you stand and how to access help if you need it.

[Stress Screener](#)

[Anxiety Test](#)

[Depression Test](#)

[PTSD Test](#)



Early Warning Signs of Mental Health Concerns

- Eating or sleeping too much or too little
- Pulling away from people and usual activities
- Having low or no energy
- Feeling numb or like nothing matters
- Having unexplained aches and pains
- Feeling helpless or hopeless
- Smoking, drinking, or using drugs more than usual
- Feeling unusually confused, forgetful, on edge, angry, upset, worried, or scared
- Yelling or fighting with family and friends
- Experiencing severe mood swings that cause problems in relationships
- Having persistent thoughts and memories you can't get out of your head
- Hearing voices or believing things that are not true
- Thinking of harming yourself or others
- Inability to perform daily tasks like taking care of your family or getting to work or school

Tips to manage Stress & Anxiety.

- Take breaks from news stories, including those on social media.
- Take care of your body by eating healthy, getting enough sleep, and being physically active
- Limit alcohol intake.
- Avoid using illegal drugs or prescription drugs in ways other than prescribed.
- Avoid smoking, vaping, and the use of other tobacco products.
- Continue with regular health appointments, tests, screenings, and vaccinations.
- Make time to unwind.
- Connect with others.

Tips to Improve Employee Mental Health



- Train your managers to promote health and well-being
- Increase employees' options for where, when, and how they work
- Reexamine health insurance policies with a focus on employee mental health
- Listen to what your employees need and use their feedback to evolve
- Take a critical look at equity, diversity, and inclusion policies

Improving your mental health doesn't happen overnight and it's not a one size fits all solution. It can take some time to break down stigma, understand where you are at in your own mental health journey, and find what resources and tools work for you.

Take the [Mental Health Quiz](#) to gain deeper insight into your own understanding of mental health.

MENTAL HEALTH QUIZ



MENTAL HEALTH- CHILDREN & ADOLESCENCE



The Percentage of High School Students Who:*	2011 Total	2013 Total	2015 Total	2017 Total	2019 Total	2021 Total
Experienced persistent feelings of sadness or hopelessness	28	30	30	31	37	42
Experienced poor mental health†	–	–	–	–	–	29
Seriously considered attempting suicide	16	17	18	17	19	22
Made a suicide plan	13	14	15	14	16	18
Attempted suicide	8	8	9	7	9	10
Were injured in a suicide attempt that had to be treated by a doctor or nurse	2	3	3	2	3	3

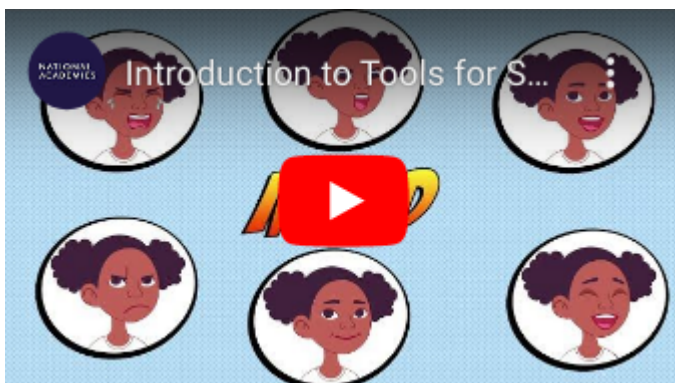
In 2021, almost 60% of female students and 70% of LGBTQ+ students experienced persistent feelings of sadness or hopelessness during the past year

40% of high school students felt so sad or hopeless that they could not engage in their regular activities for at least two weeks during the previous year

Children today face more mental health challenges than ever before. While we have always had periods of economic uncertainty and political unrest, we've never been so connected to it. With constant streams of news sources and social media, it becomes harder and harder for youth to disconnect from the stressors of the world while still dealing with the challenges of young adulthood.

As we recognize the continual increase of mental health problems for children and adolescents, it's important that we find tools to support healthy developmental and emotional milestones while building social and coping skills. Check out the videos below to discover ways you can support your child's mental health.

Introduction to Tools



Emotional Wellbeing - Belly Breathing





Q&A *with a Professional*

Dr. Karen Schwartz
Clinical Social Worker
Cobb County School District

Dr. Karen Schwartz is a licensed clinical social worker with Cobb County School District. She has been providing school social work services for over 20 years in Cobb County schools. Dr. Schwartz started her career as a child and adolescent therapist, primarily working with children struggling with anxiety and depression while also supporting families by providing parent education and support.

Q - WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN ANXIETY AND STRESS?

A - Stress and anxiety are both emotional responses and can have similar mental and physical symptoms, but the biggest difference between the two is how much they impact day-to-day life. Stress is typically caused by an external trigger. For example, it could be a response to an upcoming event, deadline, or conflict with a friend or family. With stress, day-to-day functioning is usually not affected, and symptoms can be managed with coping skills such as physical activity, healthy eating, and good sleeping hygiene. Mild stress can even be motivating as it can make people work harder, train more, or improve performance in preparation for the external event.

Anxiety, however, is an ongoing response that doesn't go away even when those stressful triggers have resolved. It involves persistent, excessive, and reoccurring worries that interfere with daily functioning and lasts for one week or more. This excessive worrying that something bad is going to happen impacts not only behaviors but thoughts and feelings as well. For example, someone might avoid certain situations or activities because they fear something bad will happen. Their thoughts become focused on that worry and leads to mood changes such as irritability, sadness, and anger.

Q - WHAT ARE PHYSICAL SYMPTOMS OF ANXIETY THAT INDIVIDUALS CAN LOOK OUT FOR TO KNOW WHEN THEY ARE EXPERIENCING ANXIETY?

A - Our bodies are hard-wired to react to anxious situations with a fight/flight/freeze response to protect us from a perceived danger. However, in today's society, we aren't being chased by a saber-toothed tiger, but our bodies respond the same way to any perceived threat, just as it has for generations. Physically, this may involve our muscles tensing up, heart pounding, sweating, digestive troubles, headaches, and sleep disturbance. Anxiety also impacts us cognitively as the ability to think clearly and manage emotions is impaired. This creates difficulty concentrating, focusing, organizing, and planning. If these mental and physical symptoms don't resolve with coping skills, and last for over a week or two, it is important to reach out to your doctor and/or a mental health professional to get assistance. If left untreated, anxiety can lead to long-term physical and social-emotional issues, so it is important to access treatment early on. *CONTINUED*.....

Q - HOW DO THE DIFFERENT ASPECTS OF OUR DAILY LIVES CONTRIBUTE TO ANXIETY AND DEPRESSION?

A - Our daily lives contribute to both anxiety and depression in a few ways. Just as our bodies are hard-wired to react to perceived danger, our bodies need time to decompress after stressful situations occur. When these triggers arise, hormones pump through our bodies to give us strength and the ability to protect us from danger. If we do not incorporate strategies into our daily lives to help metabolize these hormones, our bodies will remain in this heightened state. Unfortunately, many of us do not integrate downtime into our daily routines to help return us to a healthy state. For example, when we are constantly connected to our cell phones, are over scheduled, and feel like we are unable to keep up with life's demands, our bodies keep releasing those hormones until we are at rest. In generations past, there was time in the day to sit around a campfire and just "be." Today, we don't have campfire time in our day unless we build it in ourselves.

Q - HOW DOES SOMEONE KNOW WHEN THEY ARE EXPERIENCING CHRONIC ANXIETY?

A - One way to identify chronic anxiety is noticing when our day-to-day decisions are based on our anxious thoughts. For example, we may avoid school, work, or a social gathering because we are anxious about the situation. If this happens occasionally, it is not a huge cause for concern. However, if this avoidance has led to loss of friendships, a decline in grades, or work productivity, these are signs that anxiety is negatively impacting us. In addition, another sign that we are experiencing chronic anxiety is when the fight/flight/freeze symptoms persist for a week or longer and are unable to be resolved with coping skills. When our sleep is disrupted, heart rate is continually elevated, and we have headaches and stomach aches for days on end, we know it's become chronic.

These are signs that anxiety has moved beyond a stressful trigger that may motivate performance and instead, one which negatively impacts an area of life/functioning.

Q - WHEN SHOULD SOMEONE SEEK HELP?

A - Seeking help is such an important tool when social-emotional and physical symptoms are present for an extended period of a week or more. If the coping skills you've tried are not successful and daily life is impacted, it is imperative to reach out for support. Therapists can help identify the anxiety triggers, help you recognize specific symptoms, and develop strategies to help manage it. Anxiety disorders respond very well to many evidence-based treatments, so it is important to access these avenues before any long-term mental or physical health issues arise.

Q - HOW HAVE YOU SEEN ANXIETY IMPACTING CHILDREN IN SCHOOL?

A - From a school perspective, our students who struggle with anxiety frequently miss more classes and school days overall. The absences are frequently reported to the school as issues with stomach and headaches. Since anxiety also impacts attention and concentration, when combined with these physical symptoms, students may fail classes, end up retained, and/or even drop out of school. As one would expect, this impacts self-esteem and self-worth and puts students at increased risk of additional social-emotional struggles such as depression, substance use, and school discipline.

Impacts of Stress & Anxiety

- Stomachaches and headaches
- Increased risk of low grades and dropouts
- Struggle to maintain focus and concentration
- Lower self-esteem
- Weakened social and peer relationships
- Greater feelings of isolation, anger, sadness, irritability, and depression



Q - DOES THIS HAVE ANY LONG-TERM IMPACTS ON CHILDREN?

A - Untreated anxiety can have a long-term impact physically, social-emotionally, and academically. Chronic anxiety has been linked to increased risk of heart disease, gastrointestinal disorders, migraines, and weakened immune system. Social-emotionally, children who experience anxiety struggle with social interactions and are higher risk for depression and substance use disorders. Academically, the struggles we discussed for school performance often result in failure to graduate and impacts the long-term employment and financial independence. However, these lifelong impacts do not have to be the outcome if we are able to put in place interventions and supports early on.



Q - CAN JOINING HOBBIES, CLUBS, OR SPORTS REDUCE STRESS AND ANXIETY, OR DOES THIS CONTRIBUTE TO GREATER STRESS AND ANXIETY?

A - We often think of hobbies, clubs, and sports as “extras” (in fact, the name “extracurricular” speaks to that term). While we know there are benefits, it’s important to assess if the benefits outweigh the costs of participating. Students who are overscheduled often experience anxiety when they do not feel they can accomplish all they need to from day-to-day. With so many options, I would recommend that parents help their children choose carefully and strive for balance. Also, it is important to pay attention to signs that the demands are too great such as sleep disturbance, school/club avoidance, and weakened immune responses. However, hobbies, clubs, and sports can have an incredibly positive impact and can provide opportunities for self-care through physical activity and social interactions. Paying attention to the impact on day-to-day functioning is the best barometer to assess the costs/benefits of these extracurriculars.

Q - WHAT ARE SOME POSITIVE THINGS THAT OUR SCHOOLS ARE DOING TO SUPPORT STUDENTS WHO ARE EXPERIENCING INCREASED STRESS AND ANXIETY?

A - Schools are doing a variety of things to address the mental health of students, and the interventions vary depending on the severity of the anxiety. Many schools are working on initiatives to improve mental health literacy for teachers, students, and families through presentations, classroom lessons, and/or school-wide initiatives. These activities include education surrounding what anxiety looks like, how to manage symptoms, and when to provide or seek additional support. In addition, schools provide opportunities for students to access counseling services either during the school day or after school hours with local providers. As social workers, we are often collaborating with area mental health providers to establish a coalition of therapists to work with our students as we connect our students to these local resources. Schools are also increasing opportunities for students to manage anxious feelings through designated spaces such as calming corners. These spaces are designed with various activities students can use to practice skills such as breathing strategies and mindfulness.

Supporting Stress and Anxiety.

- Find a balance in your day-to-day
- Recognize your own triggers and know when you are at your capacity
- Tune into your body and watch for signs of retreat
 - Sleep disturbances
 - School/club avoidance
 - Weakened immune responses
- Look for small opportunities for self-care, physical activity, and social interaction
- Tap into community and school-wide resources such as counselors, therapists, and educational opportunities
- Focus on breathing and mindfulness



Q - ARE THERE THINGS THAT PARENTS CAN DO WITH OR FOR THEIR CHILDREN AT HOME TO REDUCE ANXIETY?

A - Parents are instrumental in helping their children manage their anxiety, starting with understanding what it looks like, recognizing signs and symptoms, and developing a "toolbox" of coping strategies. A toolbox gives a young person a list of useful strategies which can be drawn upon when needed. It is also important for parents to keep an open line of communication and create a safe space for children to feel comfortable reaching out for support.

To create this atmosphere for your children, there are a few tips I would recommend:

- Ask open-ended questions without assumptions or judgment
- Ask, "What do you need from me?"
- Let them know that you are open to talking and are willing to give them space and wait until they are ready to talk
- Come up with a plan for the anxious times
- Practice/model what to do before a situation occurs

One of the biggest questions parents often ask is, when do I know if my child needs more help? I use the rule of three in these circumstances. If we think of a child's life as having three areas, school, family, and friends, we can use this rule to help answer that question. For example, if there is just one area affected, you can read a book, talk to another person, and use those toolbox strategies at home. However, if you are starting to see that there are two or more areas affected, leaving only one area untouched, additional support such as counseling may be indicated. Your child's school counselor or school social worker can guide you with resources in these situations so do not hesitate to reach out. **It takes a village!**



For more information about CCSD Social Workers, or questions for Karen, contact **Dr. Karen Schwartz** at karen.schwartz@cobbk12.org or (770) 973-7145.

To contact the Cobb County School Social Work central office or to "find your social worker", check out the link [here](#).

3 HOBBIES TO IMPROVE YOUR MENTAL HEALTH

Taking care of your mental health isn't limited to speaking with a regularly scheduled therapist or using mindful breathing techniques.

We often underestimate the powerful benefits of a **hobby**, but it may actually be the key to mending the relationship with your own mental health in a *fun* and *accessible* way.

Hobbies are proven to **reduce stress, enhance well-being, improve social connection, decrease anxiety and depression, and improve overall mental health** (*Utah State University*).

You don't have to be an expert or have any prior experience to start a hobby. Even if it's your first time picking up a paintbrush or a spatula, just incorporating something you enjoy and find pleasure in will have a positive impact on your well-being.

Hobbies can be done by yourself or with a group. They can be creative, athletic, or anything that brings you joy.

To make it easier to incorporate hobbies into your busy routine, try to focus on brief moments of joy or "micro-breaks". Take a 10-minute walk during your lunch break. Instead of picking up your phone and scrolling on social media, pick up a pencil and doodle in a notebook. Small moments build to create long term happiness.



COOKING & BAKING

In a study published by the National Library of Medicine, researchers found that spending time in the kitchen, either cooking or baking, leads to increased long-lived positive psychological growth and short-lived happiness. Cooking at home is also beneficial to your physical health since you are using fresh and healthy produce, which also leads to better mental health.



ART

Engaging in something creative, whether it's painting, photography, journaling, knitting, ceramics, or drawing, has been shown to improve mental health. Any type of creative outlet exercises your mind, reduces stress, and builds confidence, regardless of the level of skill you possess. Many accessible art programs can be found through local community centers and libraries.



THE GREAT OUTDOORS

Spending time outdoors in nature, even as short as 10 minutes, 3 times a week, is shown to reduce cortisol levels, which is the hormone related to stress. Whether you are taking a leisurely stroll, going for a bike ride, or even sitting on a bench surrounded by the sounds and sights of nature, you can reap the benefits of the wonders in our backyard.

PAINT LOVE



Written By: Mandy Noa – Paint Love Program Director



Imagine how often you or your community engages the arts. Do you play music together? Sing to honor a loved one? Dance in celebration? Do you photograph places you love or write poems in journals about your day? Do you quilt or paint together? Do you doodle on pages or drum on your desk to center your body through long meetings?



The arts as a practice for healing and connection is one that reaches as far back as human life. Like our ancestors, we use the arts in rituals of life and death, grief and joy. The arts are what some mental health clinicians call a “bottoms up” approach because of its somatic effect. Creating releases endorphins lowers heart rate, and refocuses our mind toward breath and motion. The sensory engagement of the arts restores our connection with self. These psychological changes have the ability to navigate our bodies back into safety. This is incredibly significant for individuals and communities who have experienced prolonged stress (trauma) or adverse experiences.

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CONTINUED In his book, *The Body Keeps the Score*, Bessel Van Der Kolk says, “trauma robs people of the imagination they need to create something better.” The arts also give space for imaginations to stretch, to see new realities and possibilities.

The arts are a resource for individuals and communities to heal and thrive. This is a fundamental belief of Paint Love.

Founded in 2014, Paint Love is a nonprofit that provides extraordinary arts programming to empower youth and strengthen communities. They have served over 19,000 youth through partnerships with over 100 agencies across metro Atlanta. Through residencies, murals, or one-time workshops, Paint Love utilizes local artists and their mediums to guide intentional conversations on topics like mental health, community, and advocacy.

Paint Love has served thousands of Cobb County youth and families. This past school year, Marietta High School Student Life partnered with Paint Love to provide two 10-session residencies, focused on teen wellbeing, to their students. Sessions were taught through mediums like graffiti arts, printmaking, collage, clay, and illustration. In post-session surveys, over 80% of students noted positive changes in their mental health and over 75% felt more connected to peers.

This school year, Paint Love also partnered with Cobb County School District to provide three-session Visual Journaling residencies to second and third grade classrooms. Visual Journaling enhances existing lessons by teaching students ways to *explore*, *document*, and *reflect* using play and movement alongside writing and art. Students noted new knowledge about their environment and community, but also about themselves. One second grader said, “I learned to be more playful. I feel love for myself.”

“
I learned to be more
playful. I feel love for
myself.”

Paint Love murals can be seen throughout the county. In 2022, Artist Muhammed Yungai and over one-thousand Brumby Elementary students created a large mural of Micah Dalton’s character, Aku. In 2023, Artist Madison Bealieu created a mural with Mableton Elementary student’s for their STEAM courtyard. In 2021, Artist Candance Caston created a mural at Austell Youth Innovation Center with their youth, and in 2017, Artist Meta Gary created a mural for Austell Elementary’s garden. Murals and installations can also be seen at Dowell Elementary and Clarkdale Elementary. Paint Love murals are special because youth are a part of every step of the process– from design to final details. This deep place-making steers the power over the space to the community, the ones who experience the art each day, with the facilitation of Paint Love.

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CONTINUED Paint Love acknowledges the stories and experiences of our youth artists by taking a trauma-informed approach to all of our programming—including murals. They realize there's vulnerability in making art so it's imperative for youth to feel safe and empowered. One step to their five-part approach is "regulation." Regulation is an opportunity for youth to be present with their bodies and engage their parasympathetic nervous systems ("rest and digest"). Staff lead movement or breathing exercises that students can use outside the classroom. Another part of the approach is "Reflect." Reflection is a time to pause and step outside your creation, to look into it with awe and respect, like it's hanging in a museum. Paint Love teaches kids that no matter their creation, no matter how they showed up today, they can look into themselves with that same awe and respect.

Paint Love is grateful to join the changemakers in Cobb County to create a better future for its residents. ***Because to create is to hope.***



WANT TO LEARN MORE?

For more information on programs, volunteer opportunities, training, events, and resources, visit gopaintlove.org

To bring trauma-informed art to your community, contact Mandy Noa, Program Director, at mandy@paintlove.org.



MENTAL HEALTH RESOURCES

Depression, stress, and anxiety **do not** have to rule your life. Below are a set of resources compiled to help you on your journey to improve your own mental well-being.



Department of Human Services

The Cobb County Department of Human Services investigates reports of child abuse; finds foster and adoptive homes for abused and neglected children; issues SNAP, Medicaid and TANF; helps out-of-work parents get back on their feet; and provides numerous support services and innovative programs to help families in need.



GEORGIA
HOPE

GA HOPE

Georgia HOPE is categorized as a Tier Two+ Provider of Community-Based Mental Health Services. The organization provides a number of services that help clients maintain stability in an outpatient environment. They provide community-based, school-based, in-home, and online services.



Good Samaritan

Good Samaritan Health Center is a Federally Qualified Health Center that provides primary medical and dental healthcare to the uninsured and underinsured, working poor, and indigent in the community. They also provide counseling, pharmaceutical, referral, and health education programs in an atmosphere of dignity and respect, regardless of race, ethnicity, religion or ability to pay.



Highland Rivers
Behavioral Health

Highland Rivers

Highland Rivers Behavioral Health is a public safety net for those who face behavioral health challenges and/or who have intellectual and developmental disabilities and are uninsured and underinsured. The Board provides effective, innovative care and appropriate resources—offering children, adolescents, and adults hope, empowerment, and purpose.

Intelligent College Guide for Mental Health

Intelligent is a platform used to inform students with nonbiased, accurate, and fact-based information on a variety of topics related to college life. They put together a guide for students to navigate mental health in college, such as how to access help on your campus and a list of apps for various mental health disorders.



Mental Health America

MHA promotes mental health and prevents mental illness through advocacy, education, research, and services. Their education services aid Americans of all ages to better understand prevention, early identification, and intervention through a variety of information, online tools and events.



Mental Health First Aid

Mental Health First Aid is a course that teaches you how to help someone who may be experiencing a mental health or substance use challenge. The training helps you identify, understand and respond to signs of addictions and mental illnesses.



Mind in Mind focuses on children's mental health with clinical practices and ideas that support children and families through research in psychoanalysis, attachment theory, neuroscience and developmental ideas. They provide a variety of podcasts, videos, and research from leading practitioners in child mental health.



NAMI

NAMI is the National Alliance on Mental Illness, the nation's largest grassroots mental health organization dedicated to building better lives for the millions of Americans affected by mental illness. NAMI provides tools to educate, support, advocate, listen, and lead individuals and organizations to improve the lives of people with mental illness and their loved ones.



Resilient GA created a state-wide coalition to develop a closely-aligned and trauma-informed public and private network working toward a united vision to create a birth through 26-year-old integrated behavioral health system. Key components include prevention, early intervention, research, advocacy and policy, and System of Care implementation and coordination.



YouthCentric is a brick-and-mortar center for high school students developed in consultation with students to create programming that promotes good mental health through building life skills, developing a sense of belonging/community, and bringing more life balance. They have compiled a list of self-help apps for students focused on organization and time management, mood tracking, stress/anxiety management, and mindfulness and relaxation.



Self-Discovery: Pain, Positioning and Purpose, Inc. - 501(c) (3) non-profit organization focused on suicide prevention, intervention, postvention, and recovery programs that provide multiple peer-to-peer approaches to increase wellness, resiliency, and protective factors among those at risk for or impacted by suicide.

If you need immediate assistance for a mental health crisis,
CALL or **TEXT 9-8-8** *anytime* to be connected to a licensed
mental health professional.

THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS



THANK YOU to everyone involved in the making of MYM Magazine. At Cobb Collaborative, we aim to reduce the stigma of mental health and increase access and awareness to support and services.

CC RESOURCES

COLLABORATIVE CONNECTION - NEWSLETTER

Sign up for our bi-weekly newsletters to get the latest updates from Cobb Collaborative and our members.

MYM TOOLKIT

Our MYM Toolkit is a robust toolkit for a well rounded approach to mental health with extensive resources, statistics, and information.






MYM SPEAKS - PODCAST

Mind Your Mind Speaks is our Podcast which features a wide range of guests with knowledge around mental health and more.

We wouldn't be able to do this amazing work and further our mission without the support of Resilient Georgia. Be sure to check out our **events**, many of which are sponsored by Resilient Georgia.

We would also like to thank our wonderful guests, Barry Smith, Dr. Karen Schwartz, and Mandy Noa, for providing insight into how depression and anxiety take shape in our community and the tools we can use to support our own mental health. Their words provide real-life understanding of topics that impact us daily.

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