

iIMPACT Newsletter

March, 2022

IN THIS ISSUE, WE'RE COVERING:

THE IMPORTANCE OF SLEEP

SELF HARM AWARENESS MONTH

EARNED INCOME TAX PROJECT

IHELP POLICY LAB

Mental Health Awareness THIS MONTH

Self Harm Awareness Month
National Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month

- Sleep Awareness Week (Mar. 1-7)
- National Drug and Alcohol Facts Week (Mar. 30-Apr. 5)
- World Autism Awareness Week (Mar. 30-Apr. 5)

THE IMPORTANCE OF SLEEP

Sleep Awareness Week (March 1st - 7th) is a time to reflect upon healthy sleep patterns and the importance of sleep in our daily functioning. Getting the appropriate amount of sleep each night is vital to our cognitive and behavioral functioning. Sleep deprivation, or getting less than the recommended amount of sleep, has been linked to higher risk for certain medical conditions and diseases.

Here are some tips to ensure you are getting the best sleep possible!

1. Establish a realistic bedtime routine and stick to it every day of the week, including weekends!
2. Maintain a comfortable temperature in your bedroom. The optimal sleep temperature is between 60 and 67 degrees
3. Consider lessening your screen-time an hour before bedtime
4. Refrain from consuming large meals, alcohol, and caffeinated products an hour before your bedtime
5. Get the recommended amount of exercise for your age range during the day to help you wind down at night.



Age Group	Age Range	Recommended Amount of Sleep per Day
Newborn	0-3 months	14-17 hours
Infant	4-11 months	12-15 hours
Toddler	1-2 years	11-14 hours
Preschool	3-5 years	10-13 hours
School-age	6-13 years	9-11 hours
Teen	14-17 years	8-10 hours
Young Adult	18-25 years	7-9 hours
Adult	26-64 years	7-9 hours
Older Adult	65 years or older	7-8 hours

SELF HARM AWARENESS MONTH



According to the National Alliance on Mental Illness, self harm (or self-injury) is defined as hurting oneself on purpose.

Common forms of self-harm include cutting ones skin with a sharp object, burning oneself, or picking at wounds to prevent healing.

In the United States, 2 million cases of self harm instances are reported annually and is most commonly reported to begin occurring during teenage years.

Self-harm is not identified as a mental illness itself, but is often a warning sign or symptom of emotional distress. Self-harming behaviors suggest a need for the development of healthier coping skills. When someone does not know ways of coping with overwhelming emotions such as anxiety, sadness, and anger, self-harm can feel like a "release". However, this "release" may lead to intense feelings of guilt and shame, causing individuals to want to continue utilizing self-harming behaviors.

If you or someone you know is engaging in self-harming behaviors, the first step in treatment is talking to a trusted adult. From there, one should seek out mental health services such as a psychiatrist or alternative mental health professional.

To learn more about Self-Harm and Self-Injury or how to participate in Self-Harm Awareness Month, please visit <https://www.nami.org/About-Mental-Illness/Common-with-Mental-Illness/Self-harm>

Earned Income Tax Credit Project

Dr. Elena Delavega discovered in 2013 that the most economically vulnerable Memphians often fail to claim the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC), and she decided to involve her students with the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program to help more families claim the EITC. In 2015, she partnered with Impact America's SaveFirst Program. Since then, more than 200 MSW students from the University of Memphis have collaborated with Impact America's SaveFirst Program, and each year these and other students from local universities help around 2,000 Memphis families in poverty and with low and moderate incomes save almost three quarters of a million dollars in tax preparation fees and claim more than two million dollars in the EITC.

American citizens between the ages of 25 and 64 who have had any work earnings during the year are eligible to claim this important credit, which can be more than \$6,000 for a family with three children. The EITC can mean the difference between well-being and destitution for a low-income family, and it can start a family on the road to financial sufficiency and asset-building.



THIS YEAR, FREE TAX HELP FOR LOW- AND MODERATE-INCOME FAMILIES CAN BE FOUND HERE:
[HTTPS://IMPACTAMERICA.COM/FREETAXPREP/](https://impactamerica.com/freetaxprep/)

INSTITUTE FOR HEALTH LAW & POLICY LAB (IHELP)

The iHeLP Policy Lab fosters policy-based service work through interdisciplinary, community-focused engagement. The program supports system level health and policy changes in the Mid-South community with the purpose of preventing childhood trauma through research, advocacy, and the drafting of new social policies. As a part of the iIMPACT Initiative, the program helps to build a "culture of health" for Memphis families through the collection of data and connecting real life experiences and stories to policies. Community focused engagement and learning opportunities provided by the Policy Lab aim to positively benefit Memphis families.

The iHeLP Policy Lab continues to seek out opportunities to work with Memphis families and the Memphis Community "...to address policy-related obstacles to community health and well-being,".

Please visit https://www.memphis.edu/law/ihelp/education/policy_lab.php to learn more about the program and how to get involved.

PAST IHELP POLICY LAB PROJECTS INCLUDE:

- RESEARCH MEMORANDUM ON LEGISLATIVE EFFORTS TO INCORPORATE ADVERSE CHILDHOOD EXPERIENCE (ACES) INTO LAWS/POLICIES AT LOCAL, STATE, AND FEDERAL LEVELS
- STRATEGIC PLAN AND POLICY BRIEF FOR ENHANCING CHILD CARE PROVIDER QUALIFICATIONS IN TENNESSEE
- POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS TO DECREASE ENERGY INSECURITY OF THE MEDICALLY VULNERABLE IN MEMPHIS, TENNESSEE
- RESEARCH MEMORANDUM ON MEDICAID PAYMENT FOR POSTPARTUM DEPRESSION SCREENINGS UNDER THE CHILD'S MEDICAID ID
- ANALYSIS OF TENNESSEE'S ANNUAL STATE BUDGET FROM THE FAMILY SUCCESS FRAMEWORK PERSPECTIVE
- GRANT WRITING ASSISTANCE FOR STATEWIDE COLLABORATIVE FOCUSED ON INCREASING PRENATAL-TO-AGE-3 SUPPORTIVE SERVICES
- DEVELOPMENT OF SCREENING TOOLS, INTAKE FORMS, AND SPANISH TRANSLATIONS FOR MEMPHIS CHILD MEDICAL-LEGAL PARTNERSHIP CLINIC



iIMPACT Projects

**Institute for Interdisciplinary Memphis Partnerships to Advance Community Transformation
(iIMPACT)**

UofM Autism Treatment, Training and Research Clinic

College of Education and School of Communication
Sciences and Disorders Initiative

Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) Program

Dr. Thouraya Al-Nasser

Visiting Clinical Assistant Professor, Applied Behavior
Analysis, ICL; Director of UofM Autism Treatment,
Training and Research Clinic (Autism clinic on
campus)

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The Literacy Landscape Project

College of Education

Dr. Carolyn Kaldon

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The BRAiN Center

Counseling Educational Psychology and Research (CEPR)

Dr Kiersten Hawes -BRAIN Center Program Coordinator

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Men Healing Men

College of Social Work

Dr. Gregory Washington

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LIFE Project: Lifelong Initiative for Family Empowerment (Life)

College of Social Work

Dr. Gregory Washington

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Trauma Healing Club

College of Social Work

Dr. Susan Elswick

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Dr. Gregory Washington

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Pregnant Moms' Empowerment Program (PMEP)

Department of Psychology

pmepmemphis@gmail.com

(901) 257-9848

School Mental Health Access to Resources through Teletherapy (SMART) Research, Training and Treatment Center

Christy Peterson - Program Coordinator

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Coordinated Effort to Enhance Development (CEED)

College of Professional and Liberal Studies

Sonja Randall - CEED Program Coordinator

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Dr. Loretta Rudd

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Language Environment Analysis (LENA)

College of Professional and Liberal Studies

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Medical Legal Partnership (MLP)

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