

C.H.E.E.R

Community*Health*Education*Empowerment*Resources

**March Is Self-Injury
Awareness Month**

**Self-injury or self-harm is
a response to severe
emotional distress.
Intentional, non-suicidal
injuries are a way for a
person to mirror
psychological pain with
physical pain.**

In some cases, the physical injury has a temporary calming effect and, in others, a self-inflicted wound is a means of “feeling something” to combat emotional numbness.

For more than a decade, March has been designated Self-injury Awareness Month and is promoted by organizations like LifeSIGNS and the Self-Injury Foundation.



**Scars tell
the story
of where
you've been.**

**They don't dictate
where you're going.**

Doctor's Diagnosis

Social anxiety disorder is a common type of anxiety disorder often associated with symptoms of anxiety or fear in social situations where an individual may be rejected, humiliated, scrutinized, or judged by other people. Examples may include meeting new people, answering a question in class, conversing with a stranger in public, using public restrooms, or eating or drinking in public. The fear that people experience in public is so intense that they may feel out of control, and the symptoms typically last for six months or more.

People who experience social anxiety may worry about engaging in social situations before they happen, and they may avoid places or events that may cause them emotional distress. The emotional distress an individual may experience is disproportionate to the actual threat posed by the social situation. For example, the intensity of the fear may impact going to work, attending school, going out into public spaces, or completing daily tasks out of fear of being ridiculed or embarrassed.

Social anxiety usually presents in late childhood/early adolescence and may resemble extreme shyness or avoidance of social interaction.

Women and minority cultures tend to experience symptoms of social anxiety more frequently. This may be due to the disparity of minority distress experienced by minority individuals. Researchers found that the rate of people experiencing social anxiety increased by 25.6% post-COVID. The government-enforced quarantine, work and school closures, physical distancing, and avoidance of social interactions negatively impacted the general population, leading to an increase in occurrences of social anxiety.

The lack of exposure to social situations and the threat of illness have continued to influence people's ability to interact with the general public in a healthy way. We can see these after-effects in how people interact with others in the community. Researchers explain that community-based interventions (ex., Promoting social connectedness) and specific mental health promotion strategies (ex., Reducing news consumption, increasing social connections, learning healthy communication styles, and learning strategies to reduce emotional reactions to stressors) may help to prevent dysfunction and assist the general public with increasing healthy interactions.

If you are concerned you may have symptoms of social anxiety, talk to your mental health provider to learn more information. Social anxiety is generally treated with psychotherapy, medication, or both. Cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT) is a well-researched and widely used psychotherapy approach used to treat social anxiety. CBT is used to explore unhealthy thought patterns, behaviors, and grounding beliefs that may negatively influence the effects of social anxiety. CBT can help an individual learn how to adopt healthier methods of thinking and coping with the triggers of social anxiety. Exposure therapy may also be used after the individual adopts the tools needed to manage anxiety as a method of practicing the skills and learning not to avoid triggers. If you or someone you know shares thoughts of suicide or homicide, call for emergency help immediately.

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During Counseling Awareness Month in April, we focus on the central role that professional counselors across workplace settings play in keeping people and communities healthy.

Powered by the American Counseling Association—more than 58,000 members strong—Counseling Awareness Month provides an opportunity to celebrate the counseling profession and individuals who do this important work.

Get Involved and Spread the Word

This year's theme, Get Fit for Your Future, calls counselors to take the time to look after their mental, spiritual, social, emotional and physical fitness. By caring for their own wellness, counselors can be more present in their professional and personal lives. Help share this call to action by participating in special Counseling Awareness Month activities, using or sharing resources and showing your support in your community or on social media.

#CounselorsHelp

Get Assistance:
BCMHC Mobile Crisis Line:
843-761-8282 ext.5
BCMHC Mobile Crisis Line
after hours: 1-833-364-2274
Suicide & Crisis Hotline:
(Call, Text, or Chat) 988
NAMI Helpline: (800) 788-5131

- Services we provide:
- Crisis intervention
 - Therapy for individuals, families, & Youth
 - School-based services
 - Peer Support
 - Employment Support
 - Psychiatric & Nurse Services
 - Care Coordination
 - Patient Assistance
 - Traumatic Grief
 - Dialectical Behavior Therapy or DBT
 - Revitalization/ Stress Relief
 - Living Well
 - Recovery for Life
 - Mindfulness Group

Cheryl's Reading Corner

**Cleaning up your mental mess by
Caroline Leaf**

**Untangle your Emotions by Jennie
Allen**

**Eat to beat depression and anxiety by
Drew Ramsey**

**Mental Health for dummies by for
dummies series**

**I'm not okay & that's okay by Steff
Dubois, PHD**



visit us at berkeleymentalhealth.org for more information and resources