



# Canadian Mental Health Association Windsor-Essex County

*Community well-being is our sole focus.*

## MESSAGE FROM THE CEO

I hope that you are doing well and staying safe in this new world. Over the last five months we have all had to adapt to new protocols, wearing masks and physical distancing. Even for the most mentally healthy individuals, this new reality has taken a toll on all of us. We continue to be most grateful for all of the frontline workers who continue to support our clients despite these challenges.



Some of our front-line staff continue to work from home. However, we are increasing the number of in-person visits and also re-introducing programs and groups. We are also fortunate that we have been able to introduce new services since March. This includes the Mental Health & Addictions Urgent Care Centre located at CMHA-WECB, the hiring of a Pandemic Response Therapist who is able to work with individuals dealing with heightened anxiety, depression and grief related to the pandemic and most recently, the hire of a Workplace Outreach Worker. As part of our On the Front Lines campaign, this individual will visit designated workplaces on a regular basis to provide mental health information and supports, meeting people literally "where they are at."

September is Suicide Prevention Awareness Month. CMHA-WECB will once again be working with community partners on a variety of initiatives including; webinars, training and the community walk. Unfortunately, due to COVID-19 limitations, the walk will be virtual this year. We are hopeful that hundreds will once again walk in memory of lives lost to suicide and to bring awareness on **Sunday, September 27.** Although we cannot physically be together, we hope that we walk together in spirit. Participants will be encouraged to take photos and share to social media and also write messages of support with chalk along their routes. Details about registration are included below in the newsletter.

The CMHA-WECB Annual General Meeting is scheduled for **Tuesday, September 22 at 5 p.m.** It will be a virtual event this year. However, we hope that you will still be able to join us. More details to follow. Finally, we are very excited that the Go Green Golf Tournament WILL be happening on **Monday, September 28.** I'm thrilled to share that the Tournament is **SOLD OUT.** This is truly amazing given that so many are struggling financially right now. We are looking forward to a fantastic day (while physically distancing) in support of our Bereavement program.

Thank you for your ongoing support of CMHA-WECB. Until we meet again, please be safe.

All the best,

*Claudia den Boer*  
Chief Executive Officer

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As the COVID-19 pandemic took hold of our region and the world, we here at CMHA-WECB were launching phase two of our Sole Focus Project, "***On the Front Lines***". Our goal is simple, but not easy: provide proactive outreach to workplaces through education, training and awareness.

Investing in employees' mental health is more than just good for the bottom line. We know that early intervention is key to reducing anxiety, depression, addictions and even rates of suicide. New generations of employees are calling for mental health to be part of a psychologically safe work environment. Building a supportive culture with confidentiality and benefits on par with physical health care is increasingly important.

We know that our local business community want to support their employees, but may not know where to start. *On the Front Lines* is the answer and can provide solutions.

Our new Workplace Outreach Worker is available to come into your workplace to provide mental health resources, training via lunch and learns and workshops, onsite counselling, and guidance on developing a mentally healthy and psychologically safe workplace. Read about it in the [Windsor Star](#).

For more information, please contact Kim Willis at 519-255-9940 ext. 161 or email at [kwillis@cmha-wecb.on.ca](mailto:kwillis@cmha-wecb.on.ca).

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## September is Suicide Prevention Awareness Month

Like many other things this year, our annual Suicide Prevention Awareness Month activities will look a little different. We are very proud to be commemorating five years of suicide prevention initiatives within our community, with a host of community partners, including the Windsor-Essex County Health Unit.

Our annual walk will continue in a virtual format. [Free registration](#) is now open and we have developed a walking group on [Facebook](#) to share words of support and encouragement, your distance walked, share photos and maps, and connect with others supporting the cause in our community. Walk for

yourself, walk to support a friend or loved one, or walk in memory.

For those that wish to fundraise in support of suicide prevention education and training, we will be offering some great incentives:

- Raise \$100 and receive a \$10 virtual Tim Hortons gift card and a Suicide Prevention Awareness face mask,
- Raise \$250 and receive a Suicide Prevention Awareness face mask and 5 year anniversary t-shirt,
- Raise \$500 and receive a Sole Focus Project prize pack valued at \$50.

### Trainings

We are pleased to be able to offer a variety of free webinars throughout the month as well.

- Sep. 3 – [Parenting Through Grief](#)
- Sep. 9 – [Helping Others: Understanding & Responding](#)
- Sep. 17 & 18 – [ASIST](#)
- Sep. 22 – [ASIST Tune-up](#)
- Sep. 22 – [safeTALK](#)
- Sep. 24 & 25 – [ASIST](#)

### Other Events

- Sep. 4 & 11 – [Yoga for Healthy Living](#)
- Sep. 10 – Virtual Candlelight Vigil via Facebook Live

We will also have a limited edition 5 year anniversary t-shirt available for [purchase for \\$15 each](#).

Visit our website for complete [Suicide Prevention Awareness Month](#) details.

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## Coping with COVID-19 - Tina Szymczak

When I first heard of Coronavirus I brushed it off like many others. It sounded serious and there was the need to be cautious for certain people but I didn't feel it applied to me or my family. People began to panic and clear out the stores and I still thought they were over reacting. I mean, who needs that much toilet paper for a respiratory infection? What I wasn't thinking about was a long period of self quarantine. I wasn't thinking ahead to what supplies we did and didn't have in our home. I had no idea that when we were told mid-March to expect to work from home for a few weeks that August would come and we would still be working from home with no end in sight.



I am very open with people that I struggle with depression and anxiety on top of my Bi-Polar diagnosis. A lot of my anxiety is socially based so you would think that being isolated would make things easier for me. But it has also meant having to talk on the phone a lot for work and to keep connected and using the phone is another phobia of mine. I also find that I miss people. I am not a hugger and yet I think about seeing co-workers and friends again and wishing I could hug them.

In the early days of COVID-19 I had a conversation with my psychiatrist where we agreed I would focus on four things for the duration of isolation. Some of the things I decided to do:

- Create a "to do" list for the day – each morning my husband and I list at least two or three things we intend to accomplish that day. It could be something big like finish a report for work or it could be something small like to call a friend. Whatever it is we try hard to stick to our list and review our accomplishments at the end of the day.
- Engage in activities that activate your mind – from past periods of depression I know all too well the cycle of bingeing TV while eating junk food. It does no one any good in the long run. My psychiatrist advised me to engage in activities that activate the problem solving and thinking parts of our brains. Early days of COVID, before the stores closed, I went out and purchased puzzles, colouring books for adults and some knitting supplies. I didn't know how to knit but I googled videos and now can make a scarf. I also ordered paint by number kits online and have almost finished a large painting I am quite proud of.
- Stay connected to positive relationships – during times of isolation we have to be creative to stay in touch with people that matter. I am not a phone person but I don't mind texting and Facebook chats. I even went out of my way to send cards in the mail to some of my friends near and far. Figure out what works for you and stay in touch with people.
- Keep on track with Medications and/or Therapy - if you are on medications, it is extra important during this time to keep taking them the way your doctor has ordered. As well if you are in counselling/therapy be sure to keep your appointments. It's not the same doing the appointments by phone or virtually or but it is better than not at all. I know for me having someone that knows my moods and symptoms that I can check in with has been very helpful.

Things I was really looking forward to have been cancelled. Decisions around school for my son need to be made. We really are in uncharted waters and I think the best we can do is stay safe and stay flexible. Be kind to others and be kind to yourself.

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## Did You Know That You Can Be a Member of CMHA-WECB?

CMHA-WECB offers an annual membership program that supports our fundraising initiatives. Membership has benefits! By becoming a member you are supporting our Bereavement Program, Client Assistance Fund and Mental Health Awareness, Education and Training.

Additionally, members receive:

- An invitation to our Annual General Meeting, with voting privileges for non-staff
- Our quarterly newsletter and annual report
- The right to be elected to our Board of Governors

New this year, members will also receive a quarterly Mental Health Moment - an opportunity for connection between CMHA-WECB and our supporters, as well as members and their networks.

Joining is quick and easy, and your support means so much! [Click here](#) to join today!

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## UPCOMING EVENTS



**Poppin' for a Purpose**

**Until August 18**



**2020 Annual General Meeting**

**Tuesday, September 22**

Order a pail of popcorn and support CMHA! Now until August 18th. Many flavours to choose from. [Click here](#) to order yours today!

Our AGM will be held virtually this year. [Click here](#) to RSVP. A Zoom link will be provided upon registration.



### Suicide Prevention Awareness Month Walk

**Sunday, September 27**

The walk will be held virtually this year. [Click here](#) for complete details.



### Go Green Golf Tournament

**Monday, September 28**

Essex Golf & Country Club

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[Donate Now](#)

[Become a Member](#)

## Canadian Mental Health Association Windsor-Essex County Branch

Main Office:  
Monday - Friday: 8:30am - 4:30pm



Be sure to add our email address to your address book or safe senders list so our emails get to your inbox.

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