

COVID-19 Information Collaboration

Building Strength, Courage, and Resilience, through the Pandemic

Local Support Line: (817)-579-4483 | Email: TRT@pecanvalley.org | Texas COVID-19 24/7 Support Line: (833)-986-1919



Highlights from March:

Greetings: 1
Social Service Heroes: 2
Children and Youth: 2
Senior Support: 3
Teacher to Teacher: 3
Healthy Connections: 3
Resource Referrals: 4
Special Populations: 4
Impact of the CCP: 4
About the CCP: 5
References: 5

● Spring Forward with Texans Recovering Together Crisis ● Counseling and Training Assistance!

● *Written by Madalyn Cano, MSSW, LMSW*

● March rings in with moving our clocks forward an hour, the 12 month anniversary
● date of the COVID-19 disaster declaration, and the expansion of our program to
● anyone affected by the severe winter storm Texas endured during February. The
● ***Texans Recovering Together Crisis Counseling Program*** (TRT CCP) is funded through a
● grant to support the mental health and stress management needs of individuals in
● our communities resulting from disaster declarations. Our services are **FREE and**
● **CONFIDENTIAL**. We will not share any personal identifying information and there
● is no eligibility criteria. This program is different than what most people might be
● used to, as there is no need for a diagnosis, proof of income, or application process.
● We hope that helps members of our communities move past any perceived stigma in
● reaching out for brief, solution-focused emotional support during these tough
● times. The Crisis Counseling and Training Program through Pecan Valley Centers
● has a ***multi-disciplinary team of trained counselors*** who are ready to provide coping
● skills and stress management to individuals and groups of all ages. We are able to
● assist with relevant resource referrals for any disaster-related needs. We understand
● that no matter who you are, what your situation is, we are here to help you – even if
● it's just a regular phone call to check in, or if it is assisting you through an action plan
● for immediate needs. In some cases, we are meeting with students in schools to help
● with anxiety and depression; in other cases we are visiting elderly in their homes, or
● meeting with first responders and business leaders on self-care strategies for their
● workforce. Our counselors are passionate about providing helpful information to
● support the six counties in our service region. Don't hesitate to reach out with any
● questions: call **817-579-4483** or email trt@pecanvalley.org. Also, be sure to check out
● our social media posts for helpful information along the way. We are here for you!
● Blessings~ Madalyn Cano, CCP Program Manager

Social Service Heroes: Fostering Resilience in our Communities

Written by Jamie Pytlik, BSW



March is National Social Work Month, which is a time where we celebrate the invaluable contributions of social workers to our communities throughout the year. This year, the celebration of social work month is even more special, as social workers have been essential in fostering resilience in our communities during the COVID-19 pandemic. Although there are many misconceptions regarding the role of social workers, they are vital to

vulnerable populations. They extend empathy and dedication to the individuals they serve and recognize the inherent dignity and worth of all human beings. However, while social work is a professional career that carries a license and title protection, many individuals in our communities are social workers at heart, even if they do not carry the formal title. These individuals are social service heroes. They have dedicated themselves to bettering the lives of individuals, and have worked tirelessly throughout the pandemic to empower their communities and ensure their needs are met. This month, the TRT CCP would like to recognize our social service heroes, both social workers and those with a social work heart, for the essential role they have played in fostering resilience during the pandemic.

Children and Youth: Highlighting Our Children's Heroes

Written by CallieAnn Petree-Simpson, BSW

HollyAnn Petree is a social service hero, cofounder, and executive director of Addy's Hope Adoption Agency. Her agency serves as an adopt-only agency that places children from foster care. She also has a smaller program that works with women and families experiencing a crisis pregnancy. COVID-19 has created various obstacles for the agency; increase in support and mental health needs for their families, court not being held, funding being halted, and now court being held via zoom. HollyAnn says she has overcome the obstacles with the help of her amazing staff, her team working over time to support their families and putting faith in God. Since the beginning of COVID-19, Addy's Hope has finalized 27 adoptions and placed 19 children into their forever home.



Sharla Caro is another social service hero serving Hood County, as the Executive Director of Ranchos Brazos Community Center. Ranchos Brazos offers free after school programs for kindergarten through 12th grade students, emergency food pantry, utility assistance, Tarrant Area Food Bank (TAFB) distribution site, preventive education, and most important a second home to many. As COVID-19 created a greater need in the community, Sharla and her team stepped up to meet those greater needs. The center made the needed changes to serve the community full force. In 2020 Ranchos Brazos served 679 families.

Senior Support: Strengthening Our Senior Citizens

Written by Latisha Melton, MSW

I asked Jodi Schraeder, a licensed social worker, that works for Behavioral Health Senior Care in Glen Rose, Texas what she does at their agency to foster resilience in the individuals she serves. She stated that fear of contracting the virus was a huge issue, so COVID education was key in building resilience. She also stated that her patients learned to utilize a web streaming service so they could still hold their psychotherapeutic groups. They focused on socializing in groups, talking about the pandemic, processing grief, identifying negative thinking errors, reframing, thought challenging, and emotional triggers. One very important topic in building resilience is discussing past challenging events and focusing on the coping mechanisms that were utilized in the past to overcome crisis-related stressors. Family members can provide creative ways to maintain contact with their loved one to decrease loneliness, which is a significant issue for this population. The TRT CCP would like to recognize the Behavioral Health Senior Care Center in Glen Rose for their work during the pandemic to foster resilience in this beloved population. to learn more about how to support seniors in care, sign up for our newsletter [here](#).



Teacher-to-Teacher: Building Resilience among our Students and School Staff

Written by Shelley Scheuren, BS, Special Education

It is expected that children will automatically adapt to change- they are asked to deal with trauma, emotional pain, and other challenges. During this year alone, they have seen their daily lives overturned by having to adapt to school at home, wearing masks, social distancing, and loss of normal routines. Children can thrive and overcome these challenges by developing skills of resiliency, which is the ability to overcome trauma, tragedy, personal crises, and life problems and bounce back stronger, wiser, and

more personally balanced. Here are some brief tips for building resiliency among students and school staff:

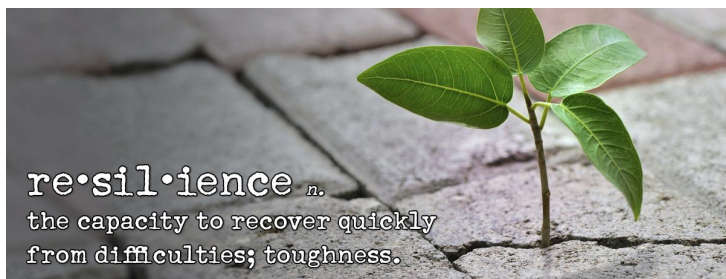
1. Make connections
2. Help your child by having them help others
3. Maintain a daily routine
4. Take a break
5. Teach your child self-care
6. Move toward your goals
7. Nurture a positive self-view
8. Keep things in perspective and maintain a hopeful outlook
9. Look for opportunities for self-discovery
10. Accept change

Source: Henderson (2012) [1]



Healthy Connections: Can I Survive This Chaos?

Written by Andrea Carmack, M.Ed.



re•sil•ience *n.*
the capacity to recover quickly
from difficulties; toughness.

"I'm sitting here trying to find myself, I get behind myself; I need to re-wind myself...I feel like number one, yet I'm last in line...I take too many pills to help ease the pain."

~Kid Rock, Only God Knows Why

Song lyrics, but how relevant. Maybe pills aren't your "go-to"; yet most run to something, (shopping, work, food, alcohol, social media, tobacco...) only to find the escape becomes an entrapment. What's the answer?

It's inside of you---it's called resiliency. It's your innate capacity to recover from difficulties, toughness; also defined as the ability to spring back, elasticity.

So as Resiliency tries to claim its rightful place in your soul, what stops it in its tracks?

The mind. The part that succumbs to fear, worry, self-doubt, and past trauma.

You ARE resilient. Let the fear, worry, and anxiety go; let go of people and situations you cannot change... Have the courage to change the things you can and the wisdom to know the difference.

Resilience is the capacity to recover quickly from difficulties. We all have this within us. We can all do difficult things, and we can all survive this chaos.

Closing with the above-referenced song..."I will keep walking with my head held high, I keep moving on and only God knows why."

Resource Connection: Empowering Our Vulnerable Populations

Written by Erin Stroebe, BS, Criminal Justice

For the month of March, Texans Recovering Together is focusing on building resiliency within our communities. During the pandemic, it has been important to focus on specific populations in need of support, such as the low-income population. We have worked to provide individuals with resources and referrals to different community organizations for financial assistance, food pantries, clinical counseling, and much more. Some tips for fostering resiliency during this time are:

1. Develop a support network and reach out to those in your network when you feel alone or need someone to talk to.

2. Get connected to your community so that you know where to go for help if you were to need it.
3. Know that you are not alone.
4. Stay positive by changing a negative mindset, and reframing those negative thinking errors.



Special Populations: Fostering Resilience for Veterans

Written by Aaron Zamora, BS, Psychology



Managing your mental health during the pandemic has been a struggle for some. For veterans suffering from pre-diagnosed mental health conditions such as anxiety, post-traumatic stress disorder, depression and substance use, managing their mental health can be extremely challenging. The pandemic has brought on fears such as losing loved ones, isolation, job loss and altering family dynamics. These examples may influence trauma triggers that can lead to a relapse in a veteran's mental health management. This can lead to feelings of being unsafe, an increase negative thoughts and trouble with sleeping and concentration. With lockdowns and

closures, it may be very difficult for veterans to find the resources they need to endure. If you are unable to reach your local Veterans Affairs office, here are some avenues online which are assisting veterans during the pandemic:

- [Veterans Crisis Line](#)
- [Wounded Warriors Project](#)
- [Blue Star Families](#)
- [Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America \(IAVA\)](#)
- [Pecan Valley Veterans Services](#)

While waiting for assistance, there are some techniques you can try to alleviate anxiety and stress. One way is to participate in activities that will provide a meaningful impact. This will impact your mood and increase serotonin production. You should also refrain from using negative coping strategies such as tobacco, drugs, and alcohol, and practice positive self-care, such as creating a daily routine, eating healthy, and exercising to manage stress.

Sources: Arnold (2020) [2]; US Department of Veteran Affairs (2020) [3]

Impact of the CCP

Written by Jamie Pytlik, BSW

The month of February was particularly difficult for North Texans. The deep freeze left many Texans without water and heat, and some are still reeling from this severe weather, on top of the stressors already created by the COVID-19 pandemic. However, even through the deep freeze, the TRT CCP was still present to support individuals during these difficult events. During the month of February, the CCP served 83 individuals through individual crisis counseling and facilitated four group counseling events and nine public education events. Of the participants in these encounters, 47% were experiencing emotional reactions, such as anxiety and irritability. Nineteen percent were experiencing cognitive reactions, such as difficulty concentrating and making decisions. Nineteen percent were also experiencing behavioral reactions, such as inactivity, agitation, and withdrawal. Lastly, 11% were experiencing physical reactions, such as fatigue and exhaustion. Four percent of the participants were coping well. In these



encounters, crisis counselors provided assistance with problem solving, doing positive things, managing physical and emotional reactions, and reducing negative thoughts to the majority of participants. If you or someone you know is experiencing disaster reactions or stress due to the COVID-19 pandemic or the recent winter storm, the TRT CCP is a free and confidential resource designed to mitigate long-term mental health concerns. Please email or call us today for information on how we can support you.

Texans Recovering Together Crisis Counseling Program is here to support you through COVID-19!

Need support? Scan our QR Code and fill out the online form to be connected with a trained crisis counselor!

Contact Information:

Local Referral Line: (817)-579-4483
Email: TRT@pecanvalley.org
Texas COVID-19 24/7 Support Line: (833)-986-1919
Pecan Valley 24-Hour Crisis Hotline: (800)-772-5987



Find us on Facebook:
@PecanValleyCCP



Find us on Instagram:
@pecanvalleycenters



Find us on Twitter:
@PVCMMHR

**Provided locally by Pecan Valley Centers for Behavioral and Developmental Healthcare
Serving Erath, Hood, Johnson, Palo Pinto, Parker, and Somervell Counties**



PECAN VALLEY CENTERS
FOR BEHAVIORAL & DEVELOPMENTAL HEALTHCARE



**TEXANS
RECOVERING
TOGETHER**
CRISIS COUNSELING ASSISTANCE
AND TRAINING PROGRAM

References

Social Service Heroes: Fostering Resilience in Our Communities

Image: The Guidance Center. (2020). *It's social worker month!* [Image]. Retrieved from <https://www.tgclb.org/thankfulness/its-social-worker-month/>

Children and Youth:

Images; Photos taken by CallieAnn Petree-Simpson, CCP Crisis Counselor

Senior Support: Strengthening our Senior Citizens

Image: Photo taken by Latisha Melton, CCP Crisis Counselor

Teacher to Teacher: Strengthening our Students and School Staff

[1] Henderson, N. (2012). *What is resiliency and why is it so important?* Retrieved from <https://www.resiliency.com/what-is-resiliency/>

Image: St. Paul's School. (2018). *The most important asset.* [Image]. Retrieved from <https://www.stpauls.qld.edu.au/the-most-important-asset/>

Healthy Connections: Can I Survive This Chaos?

Image: North Virginia Community College. (2015). *5 secrets to resilience.* [Image]. Retrieved from <https://blogs.nvcc.edu/workforce/5-secrets-to-resilience/>

Resource Referrals: Building Resilience among Vulnerable Populations

Image: Pet Food Processing. (2020). *7 tips for building a resilient business to withstand challenging times.* [Image]. Retrieved from <https://www.petfoodprocessing.net/articles/13960-tips-for-building-a-resilient-business-to-withstand-challenging-times>

Special Populations: Fostering Resilience for Veterans

[2] Arnold, J. (2020). *COVID-19 taking a toll on mental health of veterans.* Retrieved from <https://www.wusa9.com/article/news/national/military-news/covid-taking-toll-on-mental-health-veterans/65-4cbo170a-7634-427d-a5e1-c369fd543371>

[3] US Department of Veteran Affairs. (2020). *Effects of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic on PTSD.* Retrieved from https://www.ptsd.va.gov/covid/COVID_effects_ptsd.asp

Image: American Association of Retired Persons. (n.d.). *Veterans, military, and their families.* [Image]. Retrieved from <https://www.aarp.org/home-family/voices/veterans/>

Impact of the CCP

Data collected from the CCP.

Image: Chart developed from CCP data.