

# COVID-19 Information Collaboration

*Building Strength, Courage, and Resilience, through the Pandemic*

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



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## Greetings from the CCP!!

*Written by Madalyn Cano, MSSW, LMSW*

We are really pleased to be able to share information about this terrific program. The Texans Recovering Together Crisis Counseling Program is funded through a grant to support the mental health and stress management needs of individuals in our communities resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic. Our services are FREE & 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, and we hope that helps members of our communities move past any perceived stigma in reaching out for brief, solution-focused support during these tough times. The TRT/CCP through Pecan Valley Centers has a multi-disciplinary team of trained Counselors who are ready to provide individual and group counseling and resource referrals for any number of 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's assisting you through 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. I hope you find this information helpful. Don't hesitate to reach out with any questions: Call 817-579-4483 or email [trt@pecanvalley.org](mailto:trt@pecanvalley.org). ~ Blessings, Madalyn Cano, Program Manager

## October: A Month of Awareness. How Can You Support Vulnerable Populations During COVID-19?

*Written by Jamie Pytlik, BSW*

October is a month that spotlights many causes, such as Domestic Violence, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), Bullying Prevention, Down Syndrome, and a few others. Additionally, October is the start of peak mental health season, which is the time of year where mental health concerns for many individuals are exacerbated for a variety of reasons. With COVID-19, each of these causes and concerns are magnified, as the pandemic has created many unique challenges and impacted nearly everyone in some way. Luckily, Texans Recovering Together Crisis Counseling Program is here to provide support regardless of how you or loved ones

are impacted by COVID-19. If you or someone you know is experiencing domestic violence, our trained crisis counselors can help create a safety plan and locate resources to increase safety and empowerment in the aftermath of the abuse. If you have a child living with ADHD, our program employs special education teachers who can help with behavior challenges and developing effective routines at home and in the classroom. No matter what you or your loved ones may be experiencing, Texans Recovering Together Crisis Counseling Program is here to support you. Keep reading for information on the various causes spotlighted in October, and be sure to look for our monthly newsletter for more tips and information on navigating the pandemic.

## It's Domestic Violence Awareness Month... Here's How to Create a Safety Plan

*Written by Erin Stroebel, BS, Criminal Justice*

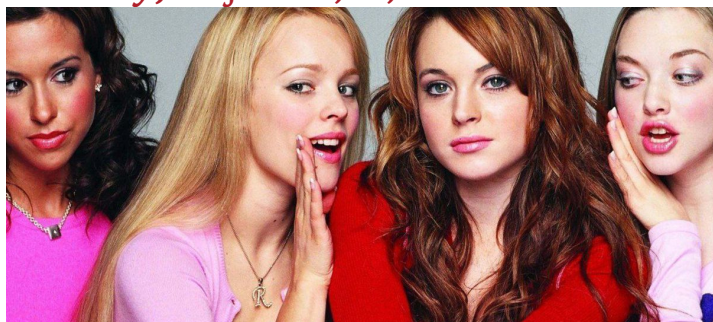
If you or someone you know is experiencing domestic violence, it is important to develop a safety plan. A safety plan is a plan that you develop to protect yourself while you are in an abusive relationship. This plan is designed specifically for you and your situation, and although it might seem obvious what to do to stay safe, it becomes difficult to think clearly when you are in a crisis. On the National Domestic Violence Hotline website, there are different resources for developing this plan. You can also call or chat with an advocate that can help you develop your personalized plan. If you or someone you know is in an unsafe relationship and experiencing domestic violence, we are here to assist you in finding those

resources to leave the situation. We can get you connected to local shelters, and local agencies to assist you and help you navigate through this process. You are not alone!



## Teacher to Teacher: Bullying Prevention Month

*Written by Jennifer Sims, BS, Education*



Preventing bullying begins by understanding what it is and what it feels like. For those of us that are a bit older, we have either been bullied, have been the bully or a combination of both. Think back to the effects it had on you, no matter what side you were on. To this day, if I wear a belt, it has to match my shoes and you will never catch me wearing a skirt that will show my knobby knees. We are talking decades after I was made fun of by a group of mean girls, they are still affecting my behavior. If you were the bully, you may find yourself saddled with guilt and shame. Now this is minor, but for some kids it can be devastating and affect their ability to learn. Teachers

can help by modeling empathy and providing opportunities to discuss and share their own experiences and listen to those of their students. We made it through the hard times and they can too. Be aware that younger folks have more of an opportunity for bullying thanks to technology and can be much more destructive on a larger scale than just on the playground of olde. With all this said, those with disabilities are two to three times more likely to be bullied than their nondisabled peers. (Marshall, Kendall, Banks & Gover (Eds.), 2009.) It can cause school avoidance and higher rates of absenteeism, lower grades, inability to concentrate, loss of interest in academic achievement, and an increase in dropout rates. More information like this can be found at the Pacer's National Bullying Prevention Center. This resource is an excellent place to get some ideas for your class. My personal favorites are the activities that accompany the book Spookley the Square Pumpkin. It even has a digital toolkit and ready made activities! Go check it out!



## Setting the Record Straight: October is ADHD Awareness Month

Written by **Shelley Scheuren, BS, Special Education**

Helping your child with ADD can be a struggle. Using strategies at home can be a huge help. Start with modeling healthy behavior. Make your expectations clear. It may help to make a daily routine or schedule. While working with your child, minimize distractors.

Helping your child at school is as easy as collaborating with your child's teacher about what strategies will help your child. Some strategies are allowing for breaks. Letting the child have a fidget toy. Use clear directions. Compliment the child's efforts and let them sit away from doors, windows or shelves.

Displaying good coping skills such as staying calm, focused, and positive. Use breathing techniques when



Need Support? Texans Recovering Together is here for you!

frustrated and don't be afraid to compromise. Focus on achieving the end goal, not how your child meets the goal. Compliment your child and show your belief in them.

Reduce Stress by taking time for yourself. Whatever you decide to do for self-care, make sure it is for yourself!!

## Making Memories

Written by **Hailey Durham, BSW**



Here are some Family-Friendly events happening in several of the counties we serve:

### **Hood County:**

FRIDAY-SATURDAY, OCTOBER 30-31

Halloween Spooktacular- Speedy Car Wash 6pm-11pm

### **Johnson County:**

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 24

Burleson Boo Bash Drive Thru at 5 locations 6-8pm Visit - Boo Bash with a Twist: Cruising through Candyland - Pre-registration is required

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 28

Trunk of Treat, Burleson Church of Christ, 6-8pm Trunk or Treat at Shepherd's Valley Cowboy Church in Alvarado, 6-8pm

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 29

Drive Thru Trunk or Treat at The Depot, Oct. 29 6-8pm, 1906 Brazzell Road, Cleburne, 76033

Erath County:

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 29

Good the Assisted Living of Stephenville 3-5pm Trick or Treating with the Residents and Staff

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 29

Safe Trick 'R Treat- Downtown Stephenville Square, 4pm-7pm

### **Parker County:**

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 30

Drive Thru Trunk or Treat. Gene Voyles park, Hudson Oaks 6-8pm

***Some fun, low cost, memory making low risk activities for your families-***

- Carving and decorating pumpkins at home
- Carving and decorating pumpkins
- Decorating your home
- Halloween scavenger hunt outdoors
- A virtual Halloween costume contest
- Halloween movie night

## Parenting Children with Special Needs Through Covid-19

Written by **Cindi Lopez, M.Ed., LPC**

COVID-19 has disrupted family routines around the world. For families with children who have special needs (Down Syndrome, Autism, Cognitive Processing Disorders, to name a few), these disruptions are amplified. Public uncertainty makes schedules unpredictable and maintaining routines a challenge. If you're in this situation during the COVID-19 pandemic, know that you can navigate uncertain times successfully. Here are some suggestions:

- Keep a consistent schedule
- Schedule quiet time to reduce sensory input and distress
- Offer praise for a job well done
- Plan gradual transitions to suit your child's pace.



- Help manage your child's stress by taking breaks (deep breathing and stretches)
- Limit access to the news
- Connect with a loved one
- Let go of unreasonable expectations
- HAVE FUN

You and your family can successfully navigate the COVID-19 pandemic by relying on your strengths. You've got this!

## Senior Support: Talking About the Hard Topics

*Written by Latisha Melton, MSW*

During this pandemic it is imperative that we discuss the rise of elder abuse cases that we have seen in the past six months. Social isolation of the senior population and caregivers stress levels have been a disastrous combination. As helping professionals, the Texans Recovering Together Crisis Counseling Program can focus on those preventative techniques that will mitigate stress levels with both seniors and their caregivers. For example, Alzheimer's Association has a caregiver support group that assist caregivers in understanding how to properly care for their loved ones and their conditions. They also have free counseling resources for these families to get the help they need along with many other helpful services. They also provide help for any caregiver

whose senior suffers with a wide array of memory loss conditions other than Alzheimer. Our program can do it is part by getting them in touch with these resources which would hopefully remove the element of extra frustration. To register for a virtual support group or to be connected to their program call this toll free 24/7 helpline at 1-800.272.3900.



## Recovery Relief: Help is Available in Your Community!

*Written by Jamie Pytlik, BSW*



Overcoming addiction is quite the challenge under normal circumstances, and unfortunately, COVID-19 and the additional stressors that have accompanied the pandemic has created additional obstacles. If you or a loved one is struggling to remain sober, or you are becoming concerned about an increased use of substances, support is available in each of the counties our program serves! You can visit [celebraterecovery.com](http://celebraterecovery.com) or [findrecovery.com](http://findrecovery.com) to locate the Celebrate Recovery, NA, AA, and Al-Anon groups in your area.

As always, Texans Recovering Together is here to support you on your journey to recovery as well. Additional resources in each county are listed below.

### **Erath County**

STAR Council: (254)-965-5515

Pecan Valley Centers: (254)-552-2001

### **Hood/Somervell Counties**

Pecan Valley Centers: (817)-573-2662

### **Johnson County**

Star Council: (817)-645-5517

Huguley Psychotherapy Clinic: (817)-558-2988

Texas Health Recovery and Wellness: (682)-626-8522

Pecan Valley Centers: (817)-558-1121

### **Palo Pinto County**

Addiction Recovery Ministries: (940)-325-7499

Pecan Valley Centers: (940)-325-9541

### **Parker County**

Pecan Valley Centers: (817)-599-7634

## Just Breathe

*Written by Andrea Carmack, M.Ed*

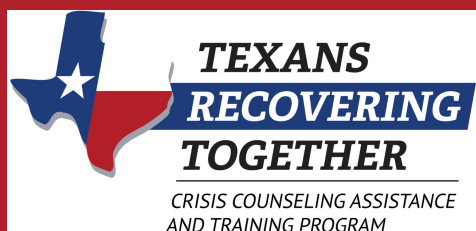
What if there was a quick, easy, no-cost way to decrease stress, improve immunity, natural painkiller, increase energy, lower blood pressure, detox the body, and reduce inflammation for mental clarity and overall well-being? Believe it or not, there is! Just breathe... it is a simple but essential behavior we perform 20,000 times a day. Stress can cause an increasing acidity level in the body-- diseases like cancer thrive in bodies that are acidic in nature; deep breathing helps reduce the acidity in your body, thereby making it alkaline to improve immunity. Additionally, deeply inhaling through the nostrils, oxygenates your blood and influences the amount of energy that is released into your cells; the body releases endorphins, which are the feel-good hormones and natural pain killers. Exhaling slowly through the mouth releases carbon dioxide and signals your nervous system to calm down. One very helpful breathing technique that Dr. Andrew Huberman from



Stanford University, recommended was double- inhale, quick-exhale. (Breathe in through the nostrils, hold for a second, then inhale a second time, then release air rapidly through mouth.)

- Just breath!
- It detoxifies the body
- Stimulates lymphatic system
- Improves digestion
- Reduces acidity
- Increases energy
- Relaxes mind and body

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



## FREE AND CONFIDENTIAL

- Crisis Counseling
- Resource Referrals
- Skill Building
- Grief and Loss
- Disaster Education and Awareness

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Texas COVID-19 24/7 Support Line: (833)-986-1919 | Pecan Valley 24-Hour Crisis Hotline: (800)-772-5987

## References

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### ***Making Memories***

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### ***Parenting Children with Special Needs Through COVID-19***

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### ***Senior Support: Talking About the Hard Topics***

Image: Breath and Lung Association. (2016). *Support groups and services*. [Photograph]. Retrieved by <https://www.ab.lung.ca/what-we-do/support-groups-and-services>

### ***Recovery Relief: Help is Available in Your Community!***

Image: Getty Images. (2019). *Recovery ahead sign stock photo*. [Image]. Retrieved from <https://www.istockphoto.com/photo/recovery-ahead-sign-gm1183592525-332844215>

### ***Just Breathe***

Image: CanStockPhoto. (n.d.). *Young woman and man sit with crossed legs and meditate with brain icon on the background*. [Image]. Retrieved from <https://www.canstockphoto.com/young-woman-and-man-sit-with-crossed-69633362.html>