I am convinced, however, that the faith community, the Church, has a unique role to play in responding to this crisis. We have professional, pastoral and spiritual gifts we can bring to help support and heal the wounded and frightened members of our community. And, as always, we trust that our human efforts will be complemented by the powerful grace and unfailing compassion of our Heavenly Father.

May our Blessed Mother Mary, who never fails to assist her children, and St. Dymphna,

the patron saint of mental health, accompany us as together we begin this journey of healing and peace.

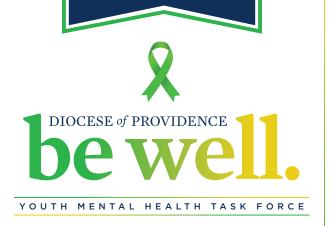
+ Te J. Toling

Loving God, you are always near to us, especially when we are troubled and experiencing distress.

Reach out to those who experience mental health challenges.

Lift their burdens, calm their anxiety, and quiet their fears. Surround them with your healing presence that they may know that they are not alone.

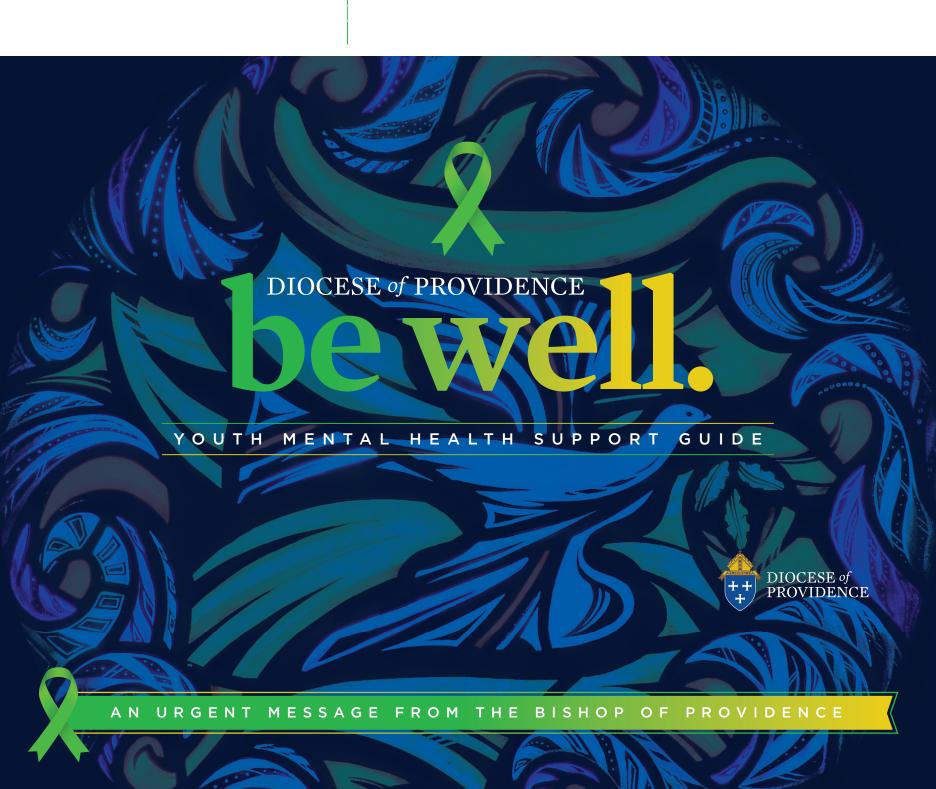
Introducing a new diocesan task force focused on Youth Mental Health



For more information visit dioceseofprovidence.org/bewell

One Cathedral Square
Providence, Rhode Island 02903
Phone: 401-278-4500

dioceseofprovidence.org



We are well aware that recently there has been a rapid and intense increase in mental health problems in our society, especially among young people – young adults, teenagers and children.

MOST REV. THOMAS J. TOBIN

Bishop of Providence

This development has been well-documented by physicians and mental-health experts. It is a deep concern for all of us.

The righteous cry out, the Lord hears and he rescues them from all their afflictions The Lord is close to the brokenhearted saves those whose spirit is crushed

Psalm 34: 18-20

#### SUPPORTING YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH

The Youth Mental Wellness Task Force of the Diocese of Providence was established by Bishop Thomas J. Tobin in 2022 to address the growing mental health crisis among young persons. Its mission is to identify and recommend resources and supports to assist our diocesan schools, parishes, and institutions in promoting the well-being of the young persons whom we serve.

Mental health is an essential part of overall health. Young persons who experience mental health challenges need support, compassion, and care. Although increasing prior to the pandemic, rates of psychological distress among young persons have escalated during the past two years since the onset of the pandemic in 2020.

According to the U.S. Surgeon General's Advisory Report (2021), recent national surveys of young persons have shown an alarming increase in the prevalence of youth mental health difficulties, especially symptoms of anxiety, depression, self-harm and suicidal ideation. Moreover, rates of suicide among young persons have increased dramatically in recent years.

Mental health conditions can cause much distress for young persons and their families. Fortunately, there are resources and supports available to help.

## WHEN TO SEEK HELP

TIME TO SEEK **CARE** 

Young persons may benefit from professional assessment and treatment if they are presenting some or all of the following difficulties:

Appear sad, depressed, and/or anxious much of the time

**Emotional distress**; tearfulness, anger, irritability

**Expresses sense** of hopelessness, pessimism

Negative, critical statements about self and/or others

Sudden, unpredictable changes in mood or behavior

Difficulties with concentration; confusion, disorientation

**Persistent worries** or fears

Regularly reports not feeling well; complains of physical pain, headache, stomach ache

Difficulties with fitting in or getting along with others

Persistent sense of loneliness, increased social withdrawal, isolation

Decreased interest in and/or motivation to be involved in class activities, homework, or other activities

Difficulty coping with normal activities

Talk about possible self-harm



According to the National Institute of Mental Health guidelines it is advisable to consider seeking help if the young person's challenging behaviors and emotions persist for a few weeks

or longer, cause distress for the individual and/or the family, or interferes with the individual's functioning at home, school, or socially.

SEEK **IMMEDIATE HELP** 

### Seek immediate help for possible warning signs for suicidal thoughts or plans, including:

Makes statements and/or writes about death or suicide

**Comments about** feeling hopeless, helpless, worthless; no reason for living

Social withdrawal from family, friends, community; isolation

**Reckless behavior** or engaging in risky activities; increase in alcohol and drug use

**Dramatic mood** changes

**Experience of** recent significant loss, trauma, abuse, bullying

Recent exposure to the suicide of others

A history of suicide in the family, or previous suicide attempts; easy access to firearms

# YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH RESOURCES

## **LOCAL Immediate Support**

### **NATIONAL Immediate Support**

Call (877) 235-4525 or Text HOME to 741741

Parental Stress Line: (800) 632-8188

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline

Call or text 988 or chat 988lifeline.org

## **Informational Support**

- Butler Hospital Behavioral Health Services Call Center - 24/7 access to support (844) 401-0111
- BHLink For confidential support call (401) 414-5465 or visit BHLink 24/7 triage center at 975 Waterman Ave. East Providence.
- Kids' Link RI
- (855) 543-5465
- 24/7 crisis care for children and adolescents
- - Samaritans 24-hour response (877) 870-4673

Parents Helping Parents

Hopeline

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC): Children's Mental Health - Website: cdc.gov/childrensmentalhealth/index.html
- National Alliance on Mental Illness (nami.org) Kids, Teens, and Young Adults
- National Federation for Catholic Youth Ministry (NFCYM) Youth Mental Health Resources
- **Protecting Youth Mental Health** The U.S. Surgeon General's Advisory (2021)

The Samaritans of Rhode Island (401) 272-4044 or (800) 365-4044 Website: samaritansri.org

Website: bhlink.org