



November 2023 Newsletter

“Many survivors insist they’re not courageous: ‘If I were courageous I would have stopped the abuse.’ ‘If I were courageous, I wouldn’t be scared’... Most of us have it mixed up. You don’t start with courage and then face fear. You become courageous because you face your fear.” — Laura Davis

November Holidays and Observances

November hosts [Indigenous Veterans Day](#) on November 8th, [Remembrance Day](#) on November 11th, [Transgender Day of Remembrance](#) on November 20th, and November 25th is both [International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women](#) and begins the [16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence](#). [Movember](#) is also held throughout the month to raise awareness for men's mental health and suicide risk.

To see what other days of importance or celebration there are in November, [click here](#).



Decriminalise Suicide Worldwide - LifeLine International



"LifeLine International believes in a world where access to quality suicide prevention support is available and its use openly encouraged.

However, suicide remains criminalised in 25 countries, home to more than 850 million people. Furthermore, the legal status of suicide as a crime remains unclear in 27 others – a further population of 370 million people. Criminalisation of suicide attempts is an ineffective deterrent that fails to prevent suicide, creating unnecessary legal frameworks that perpetuate stigma, deters help-seeking behaviour, and inhibits the establishment of crucial crisis support services by the fear of punishment.

Combined, a total population of more than 1.2 billion people live in jurisdictions where suicide is a crime – or its legal status unclear – all of which inhibits help seeking that can save lives. Suicide, everywhere in the world, is preventable.

LifeLine International envisions a world where suicide is preventable and those at risk are met with compassion, not criminalisation. Through our collective efforts, we're making strides towards a world where everyone has access to the support they need."

You can learn more about LifeLine International's campaign and their unique online tools by [clicking here](#).

How to help young people cope with graphic images on social media

In the midst of the ongoing international crisis in the Middle East, where images and videos circulating on social media show graphic violence and deadly missile attacks, psychologists caution about the toll these graphic visuals can take on a child's well-being. Building upon the information shared in this article, Distress and Crisis Ontario's podcast, DCO Discourse..., also recorded a special episode on the topic with Waterloo-based therapist Christina Droumtsekas. You can listen to the episode by [clicking here](#).



Here's what we learned from the article

"One of the things that we're constantly searching for is a sense of safety. And when we see this happening in another part of the world, it can interfere with our own sense of safety," explained Dr. Taslim Alani-Verjee, a clinical and counselling psychologist with Silm Centre for Mental Health in Toronto.

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Neighbours, Friends, and Families: Working Together to End Abuse

"This course has been designed [by Western University's Centre for Research and Education on Violence Against Women and Children (CREVAWC)] as a support for anyone who is concerned about people who experience intimate partner violence. Whether it is information you are seeking for yourself or because you are concerned about someone you know, it is [their] hope that you will find the content you need to feel supported and to take action.

Western  Centre for Research & Education on Violence Against Women & Children

This course is structured into 4 lessons and will take about an hour to complete. You can stop and come back at any time. It is a difficult topic that can cause strong or

activated feelings. You can and are encouraged to prioritize self-care, take breaks, walk away, or self-soothe as needed."

You can access the CREVAWC's course [here...](#)

8 Ways to Adjust to the End of Daylight Saving Time

The notorious time change that marks the end of Daylight Saving Time is just around the corner. While gaining an extra hour of sleep sounds like a good thing, this seemingly innocuous shift can have surprisingly substantial psychological effects.



Do these statements sound familiar?

- "I don't feel like going to the gym after work because it's already dark when I leave."
- "It's too cold to go anywhere."
- "My motivation is low during the winter, I just want to hibernate."

Our internal body clocks, known as circadian rhythms, are highly sensitive to changes in light and darkness. Circadian rhythms influence every part of our bodies from our sleep-wake cycle, hormone production, to our appetite. Additionally, mood disorders such as seasonal affective disorder (SAD), major depressive disorder (MDD), and bipolar disorder (BD) are strongly associated with abnormal sleep and changes in circadian rhythms. When we set back the clock during the fall, effectively "gaining" an hour, our circadian rhythms can be thrown off balance, leading to a host of psychological challenges.

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Updates from the Government of Ontario



Governments Supporting Mental Health Initiatives in Ontario's Agricultural Community

"The governments of Canada and Ontario are investing more than \$8 million to support the mental health and wellness of farmers and their families.

With this commitment, the Farmer Wellness Initiative, the In the Know program and the Guardian Network will continue to be available to everyone who needs them. These initiatives are designed to meet the unique mental health needs of farmers and their families and are delivered by the Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA), Ontario Division."

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Free Flu Shot and New COVID-19 Vaccines Available for All Ontarians Six Months of Age and Older

"Starting October 30, Ontarians will be able to receive their free flu shot and the new, most recent COVID-19 vaccine at local pharmacies, public health units and primary health care providers across the province. Staying up to date on vaccinations continues

to be the best way for people to stay safe and healthy this respiratory illness season and avoid unnecessary visits to the hospital.

"Getting your COVID-19 vaccine and flu shot is the best way to keep yourself, your loved ones and your community healthy," said Sylvia Jones, Deputy Premier and Minister of Health. "Our government is ensuring you have access to the tools you need this fall respiratory season by making COVID-19 vaccines and flu shots available in convenient locations close to home, at no cost to Ontarians."

[Learn more...](#)

Ontario Connecting More Women to Breast Cancer Screening Earlier

"The Ontario government is connecting significantly more people to breast cancer screening by lowering the eligibility age of self-referral for publicly funded mammograms through the Ontario Breast Screening Program from 50 to 40 beginning in fall 2024.

This historic expansion will help more than 305,000 people connect to important screening services to detect and treat breast cancer sooner. It is estimated that this will add an additional 130,000 mammograms that can be completed per year."

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Ontario Investing in Mobile Crisis Response Teams

"The Ontario government is investing more than \$4.5 million to help police services provide specialized support to people who are experiencing a mental health or addictions crisis. The Mobile Crisis Response Team (MCRT) Enhancement Grant enables police to work with trained crisis workers when responding to those in need."

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News from and for our Member Centres

We regret to announce that the ONTX text and chat program will cease operations on November 30th, 2023. Text and chat services will remain available until that date, however, they will no longer be accessible starting December 1st, 2023. If you are seeking support alternatives, we encourage you to visit our website at www.dcontario.org/locations to locate your nearest Member centre, some of which provide their own text and/or chat support services.



The Clyde Mental Health and Addictions Awareness Project

In honour of Clyde and his family, this month we have chosen to highlight [Movember](#).

"The mo is calling. Movember is our time to unite. To take on mental health, suicide, prostate cancer and testicular cancer. And you coming along for the ride only makes us stronger."



In other news...

What seniors need to know about vaccines this fall

"Four key vaccines are available for seniors this fall, including an updated COVID-19 shot and Canada's first vaccine for RSV. CBC health reporter Lauren Pelley breaks down what seniors — and those who care for them — need to know."



Learn more from [CBC News Toronto](#)...

DCO Updates

Learning Forum Updates

Important updates and refreshes continue with our Learning Forum content. We now have many new and updated modules uploaded to our website with more on the way very soon.



Spirit of Volunteerism Committee

Monthly SOV webinars for Member staff and volunteers are held on the second or third Wednesday of each month from 12:00PM - 1:00PM EST. Upcoming webinars are as follows:

- November 15th, 2023 - Holiday Preparedness and Food Security
- December 13th, 2023 - Holiday Preparedness; Open Mic Discussion
- January 17th, 2024 - Post-Holiday Letdown and "Winter Blues"



Registration links are shared via email with Member leadership in the weeks leading up to each webinar, and are now being shared on our new Spirit of Volunteerism Community available to all Learning Forum users on Thinkific.

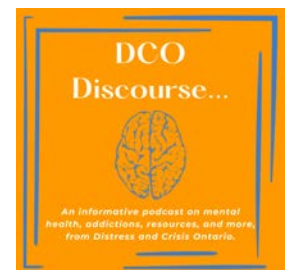
Website

To learn more about Distress and Crisis Ontario, our member organizations, and current news and events, check out our website at dcontario.org. We are currently undergoing an update to our website to ensure we continue to provide the best services possible which is set to launch this month.



Podcast

Our podcast, "DCO Discourse..." continues to feature a variety of mental health topics with new episodes being released every Monday. In October we focused on World Mental Health Day and World Mental Health Month, Cyber Security Awareness Month, and more.



Click our logo to the right to listen. If you have any feedback or requests for future content, please [click here](#).

Becoming a Member

If you are interested in becoming a Member of the Ontario Association of Distress Centre, currently operating as Distress and Crisis Ontario, please [click here](#) to read our Member Benefits Package. Any questions can be sent to us by email at info@dcontario.org.



Thank you for supporting Distress and Crisis Ontario. [Click here](#) if you would like to donate through CanadaHelps.org, or [click here](#) to purchase a Blue Jay Poster, as shown to the left, through ONTogether and support us that way.



DCO Upcoming Events and Schedule of Meetings

Board Meetings

Friday Jan 12, 2024 at 10:00am EST
Friday Apr 19, 2024 at 10:00am EST

SOV Webinars

Upcoming members-only lunch and learn webinars for staff and volunteer responders are as follows:

- November 15th, 2023 - Holiday Preparedness and Food Security
- December 13th, 2023 - Holiday Preparedness; Open Mic Discussion
- January 17th, 2024 - Post-Holiday Letdown and "Winter Blues"



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