

# **Health Promotion Toolkit for Homeless Shelters**

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Promoting Health in Homeless  
Shelters (PHHS) Workgroup

# Rationale

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# PHHS Goal

- Collaboratively develop guidelines that focus on the health of employees and clients of shelters
  - Targeted groups: Emergency shelters and transitional housing (ES/TH)

# **PHHS Toolkit**

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# Targeted Health Message

- Develop targeted health messages for use in formal or informal presentations for staff use throughout the THHI Continuum of Care
- The following pages contain a PowerPoint slide with a targeted health message and notes for handouts/materials and information for presenters.

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# Tuberculosis (TB)

- TB is spread primarily through the air.
- You cannot be infected with TB from a surface (e.g. doorknob, desk, chair)
- About 1 in 20 people in the U.S. are infected with TB, but are not sick.
- You can have TB in your body, but are not sick, and not at risk of infecting others.
- Only those who are sick from TB can infect others.
- Symptoms of TB include cough for greater than 3 weeks, night sweats, appetite and/or weight loss, and coughing up blood.

# TB Prevention

- Cough etiquette
- Treatment as prevention

# TB Resources

- For TB Services (testing, chest x-ray, treatment)
  - Tampa Family Health Centers
    - 813-397-5300; [www.tampachc.com](http://www.tampachc.com)
  - Suncoast Community Health Centers, Inc.
    - 813-653-6100; [www.suncoast-chc.org](http://www.suncoast-chc.org)
  - Your primary care provider
- For TB Education
  - [Florida Department of Health in Hillsborough County, TB Center](#); 813-307-8047
  - [CDC, Division of TB Elimination](#)

# Influenza (Flu)

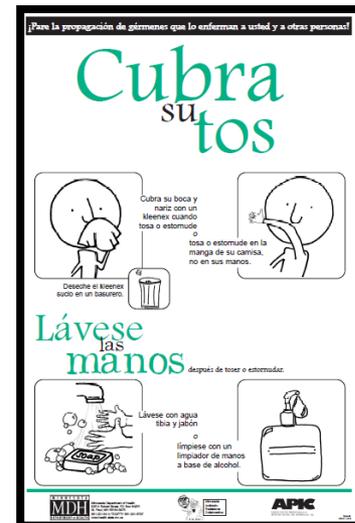
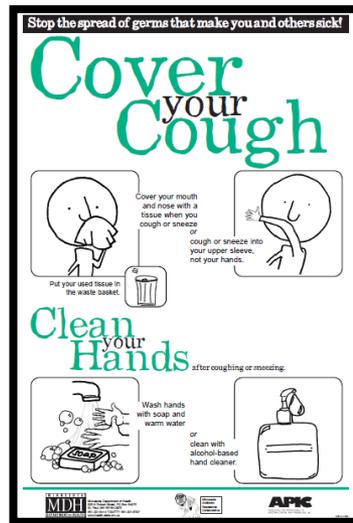
- You can get the flu (1) when a person's eyes, nose, or mouth comes in contact with the flu from another person or (2) by touching an flu-infected surface or object.
- Flu symptoms include: 100°F or higher fever, cough and/or sore throat, runny/stuffy nose, headaches/body aches, chills, fatigue, nausea, vomiting, and/or diarrhea
- Flu symptoms usually last one to two weeks.
- Congregate settings (e.g. homeless shelters) are at increased risk for flu transmission.

# Influenza (Flu) Prevention

- Hand washing
- Cough etiquette
- Get flu shot every year
- Clean and disinfect surfaces and other high-touch areas

# Influenza (Flu) Resources

- CDC – Influenza
- Flu Facts
- Florida Department of Health in Hillsborough County, Epidemiology Program
  - Phone: 813-307-8010



# Norovirus

- Norovirus (stomach flu) illness can give you diarrhea and vomiting many times a day.
- Norovirus is spread from an sick food handler that contaminates food or from coming in contact with the virus from vomit or feces.
- Symptoms generally last 24 hours.
- Someone with norovirus can be contagious for up to 3 days after symptoms clear.

# Norovirus Prevention

- Hand washing
- Clean and disinfect surfaces and other high-touch areas
- Those who are sick should stay at home until symptoms clear

# Norovirus Resources

- CDC – Norovirus
  - Food Safety – Norovirus
  - Florida Department of Health in Hillsborough County – Epidemiology Program
- 813-307-8010

**Help Prevent the Spread of Norovirus ("Stomach Bug")**

IF NOROVIRUS IS AFFECTING YOUR COMMUNITY, HERE ARE SOME ACTIONS YOU CAN TAKE TO HELP PREVENT FURTHER ILLNESS

- Clean up surfaces**
  - Clean frequently touched surfaces with soapy water
  - Rinse thoroughly with plain water
  - Wipe dry with paper towels
  - Dispose of paper towels

**DON'T STOP HERE: GERMS CAN REMAIN ON SURFACES EVEN AFTER CLEANING!**
- Disinfect surfaces**
  - Prepare and apply a chlorine bleach solution
 

1/3 CUP BLEACH + 1 GALLON WATER

*IF USING CONCENTRATED BLEACH, DECREASE THE AMOUNT OF BLEACH TO 1/6 CUP.*
  - Air dry surfaces unlikely to have food or mouth contact on
  - Rinse all surfaces intended for food or mouth contact with plain water before use
- Wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water**

Hand sanitizers may not be effective against norovirus.

**Facts about Norovirus**

Norovirus is the leading cause of outbreaks of diarrhea and vomiting in the U.S. and spreads quickly.

Norovirus spreads by contact with an infected person or by touching a contaminated surface or eating contaminated food or drinking contaminated water. Norovirus spreads via droplets that pass through the air and land on surfaces, or by touching contaminated objects.

Norovirus particles are extremely small and billions of them are in the stool and vomit of infected people.

Any vomit or diarrhea may contain norovirus and should be treated as though it does.

People who become infected can shed the virus for at least three days after being sick.

**Reusable experts from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) helped to develop this poster. For more information on norovirus prevention, please see <http://www.cdc.gov/norovirus/prevention> infographic.**

disinfect-for-health.org

**Clean-up and Disinfection for Norovirus ("Stomach Bug")**

THESE DIRECTIONS SHOULD BE USED TO RESPOND TO ANY VOMITING OR DIARRHEA ACCIDENT

Note: Anything that has been in contact with vomit and diarrhea should be discarded or disinfected.

- Clean up**
  - Remove vomit or diarrhea right away!
    - Wearing protective clothing, such as disposable gloves, apron and/or mask, wipe up vomit or diarrhea with paper towels.
    - Use kitty litter, baking soda or other absorbent material on carpets and upholstery.
    - In floor's liquid, do not vacuum material; pick up using paper towel.
    - Dispose of paper towel/waste in a plastic trash bag or hazardous bag.
  - Use soapy water to wash surfaces that contacted vomit or diarrhea and all nearby high-touch surfaces, such as door handles and toilet handles.
  - Rinse thoroughly with plain water
  - Wipe dry with paper towels

**DON'T STOP HERE: GERMS CAN REMAIN ON SURFACES EVEN AFTER CLEANING!**
- Disinfect surfaces by applying a chlorine bleach solution**

Steam cleaning may be preferable for carpets and upholstery. Chlorine bleach could permanently stain these. Mixing directions are based on EPA-registered bleach product directions to be effective against norovirus. For best results, consult label directions on the bleach product you are using.

  - Prepare a chlorine bleach solution
 

Make bleach solutions fresh daily; keep out of reach of children; never mix bleach solution with other cleaners.

**IF HARD SURFACES ARE AFFECTED...**  
 3/8 CUP OF CONCENTRATED BLEACH + 1 GALLON WATER

*IF USING REGULAR STRENGTH BLEACH, INCREASE THE AMOUNT OF BLEACH TO 1 CUP.*
  - Leave surface wet for at least 5 minutes
  - Rinse all surfaces intended for food or mouth contact with plain water before use
- Wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water**

Hand sanitizers may not be effective against norovirus.

**Facts about Norovirus**

Norovirus is the leading cause of outbreaks of diarrhea and vomiting in the U.S. and spreads quickly.

Norovirus spreads by contact with an infected person or by touching a contaminated surface or eating contaminated food or drinking contaminated water. Norovirus spreads via droplets that pass through the air and then settle on surfaces, including contaminated objects.

Norovirus particles are extremely small and billions of them are in the stool and vomit of infected people.

Any vomit or diarrhea may contain norovirus and should be treated as though it does.

People can become sensitive to stress for at least three days after being sick.

**IF CLOTHING OR OTHER FABRICS ARE AFFECTED**

- Remove and wash all clothing or fabric that may have touched vomit or diarrhea.
- Machine wash three times with detergent, hot water, and bleach (recommended), choosing the longest wash cycle.
- Machine dry.

**Reusable experts from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) helped to develop this poster. For more information on norovirus prevention, please see <http://www.cdc.gov/norovirus/prevention> infographic.**

disinfect-for-health.org

# Hygiene: Cough Etiquette

- Cover your mouth and nose when coughing or sneezing
- Use your elbow
- Use a tissue
- Use a mask in health care settings
- ❖ By following these practices, you reduce the risk of transmitting diseases such as TB, flu, whooping cough, and the common cold.



# Hygiene: Hand Washing

- Hand washing is the single most effective way to prevent illness.



- Wash your hands often with soap and warm water for 20 seconds.
- If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand rub.
  - By following this practice, you can prevent the spread of diseases such as flu, norovirus, and the common cold.

# Vaccine-Preventable Diseases

- Vaccines help prevent you from getting certain diseases (e.g. hepatitis A & B, whooping cough, meningitis, flu)
- Ask your provider what vaccines are required and recommended for you
- Get your flu shot every year
- Whooping cough can be life threatening to infants. If you spend time around infants, make sure to get your Tdap vaccine.
- Living in a congregate facility like a homeless shelter can increase your risk of getting meningitis, so make sure you receive your meningococcal vaccine.

# Immunizations Resources

- Florida Department of Health in Hillsborough County, Immunizations Program
  - Fee-waived vaccinations for children up to 18 years old.
  - Phone: 813-307-8077
- CDC – Immunizations
- Your local primary care provider, Tampa Family Health Centers, and Suncoast Community Health Centers provides vaccinations.

# Sexually Transmitted Diseases

- Anyone can get a sexually transmitted disease or infection (STD or STI) when engaging in oral, vaginal, and anal sex.
- You can't tell who has HIV just by looking.
- Some STDs can be cured (e.g. chlamydia, gonorrhea), while others can only be treated (e.g. HIV, HPV).
- Receptive partners in vaginal and anal sex are at increased risk for contracting a STD.

# STD Prevention

- Get tested for HIV and other STDs regularly.
- Be sure to pick up and understand your results
- Use male latex condoms and female condoms correctly and consistently.
  - Lambskin condoms are not effective in preventing the spread of HIV and STDs
- Abstinence is the only 100% effective method of preventing STDs.
- Talk to a healthcare provider about any concerns

# STD Resources

- Text your zip code to 477493 to find a nearby HIV testing site
- CDC – HIV
- Florida Department of Health in Hillsborough County, HIV/AIDS Program Office
  - 813-307-8065
- CDC – STD
- Florida Department of Health in Hillsborough County, STD Program
  - 813-307-8045

# Mosquito-Borne Illnesses

- West Nile Virus, Chikungunya, Dengue Fever, St. Louis Encephalitis, and Eastern Equine Encephalitis are all mosquito-borne illnesses that can cause complications.
- The more time you spend outdoors, the higher the chance you have of being bitten by a mosquito and potentially becoming ill.
- If you are sick and seek medical attention, let them know if you have been bitten by a mosquito.

# Prevent Illness from Mosquito Bites

- Prevent mosquito breeding around your home
  - Drain standing water
  - Discard old tires and broken planters
  - Empty and clean birdbaths and pets' bowls
- Cover your skin with clothing
- Use mosquito repellent





# Bed Bugs

- Small, flat, reddish-brown, and wingless insects that feed solely on the blood of people and animals while they sleep.
- Can live several months without a blood meal.
- Not known to transmit disease
- Signs of a bed bug infestation
  - Bites on the skin
  - Sweet, musty odor
  - Presence of bed bugs, their outer shells, and rusty-colored blood spots on mattresses, sheets, or nearby furniture.

# Preventing Bedbug Infestations

- Inspect secondhand items such as used mattresses, upholstered furniture, and bedding carefully before bringing into your shelter and potentially cross infesting other facilities.
- Hotel/Motel/Shelter or Group Living precautions
  - Check mattress seams for bedbug excrement and place luggage or bags on tables or dressers instead of on the floor.



<http://nebedbugk9.com/images/bedbugs-dime.jpg>



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# Bed Bug Resources

- [ECOLAB Poster – Bed Bug Inspection](#)
- [ECOLAB Handout – General Bed Bug Info](#)
- [Environmental Protection Agency – Bed Bugs](#)

# Nutrition: Why is It a Problem?

- Limited resources
- Lack of access to healthy, affordable foods
- Fewer opportunities for physical activity
- Cycles of under and overeating
- High levels of stress
- Greater exposure to marketing of obesity-promoting products
- Limited access to health care

# Nutrition (continued)

- There is a high rate of overweight and obesity amongst those facing food insufficiency and food insecurity.
  - 64.7% of adults in Hillsborough County are overweight or obese (FL Charts 2010)
  - 200,590 (17.2%) of people in Hillsborough County are food insecure (Feeding America 2012)
  - 276,330 (21.8%) of people in Hillsborough County receive SNAP benefits (FL Charts 2010)

# Food Safety

- Those facing homelessness and/or food insecurity may take more risks when it comes to preserving food out of fear that they do not know when their next meal may be.
- Pregnant women, small children, older adults, and persons with chronic illnesses are at an increased risk of getting food poisoning.

# Food Resources

- Trinity Café
  - Lunch served Monday-Friday at 11:30am
  - Breakfast served weekends at 9am
  - 2801 N. Nebraska Avenue  
Tampa, FL 33602

# Access to Care

- Crisis Center of Tampa Bay – Community Resource Guide
- ACCESS Florida – Department of Children & Families
  - Medicaid eligibility
  - SNAP (Food stamps) eligibility
- Hillsborough County Social Services
  - Hillsborough County Healthcare Plan (813-272-5040)
  - Community Resource Centers
  - Homeless Prevention
- Florida Medicaid MMA Program

# Access to Care (continued)

- Federally Qualified Healthcare Centers
  - Tampa Family Health Centers
    - 813-397-5300
  - Suncoast Community Health Centers, Inc.
    - 813-653-6100
- Tampa Bay Street Medicine
- THHI - Homeless Outreach Treatment (HOT) Team and Partnerships for Ideal Engagement (PIE) Team
  - 813-223-6115; [info@thhi.org](mailto:info@thhi.org)



# Smoking Facts

- Approximately 3 out of 4 adults experiencing homelessness smoke
- Tobacco use increases the risk for many types of cancer, such as lung cancer.
- Studies show a direct link between cigarette smoking and coronary heart disease.
- Smoking during pregnancy increases the risk for pregnancy complications.
- Smoking, including during the teenage years, increases the risk of dying from COPD

# Smoking Cessation

- Number one way to improve your health
- Quit at your own pace
- Use your supports to conquer your urge to smoke
- There are many different tools to quit
- There is help

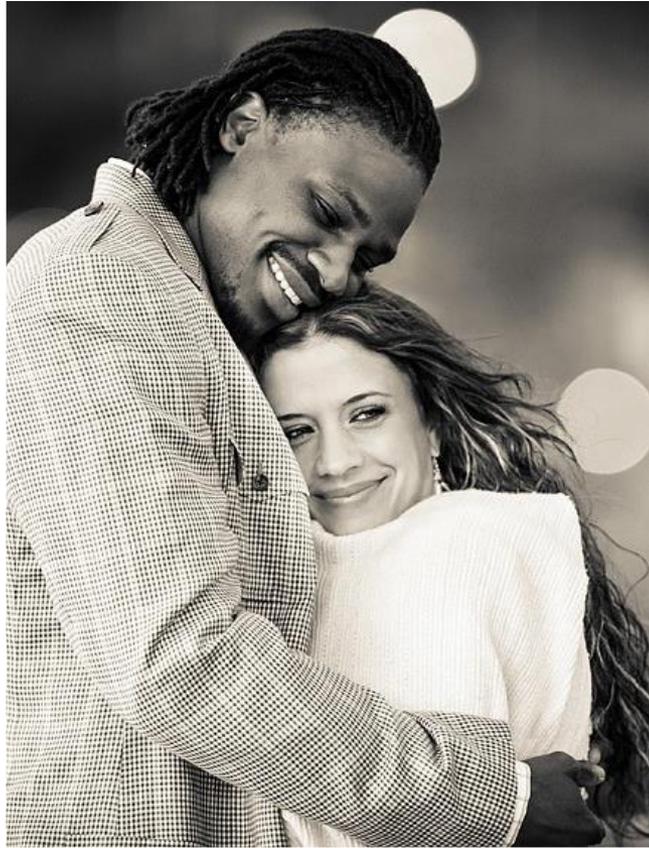
# Smoking Cessation Benefits

- Immediate benefits
  - Food tastes better
  - More energy
  - More money in your pocket
- Extended benefits
  - Reduces risk of coronary heart disease
  - Reduces risk of stroke
  - Reduces risk of cancer of throat, lungs, mouth

# Smoking Cessation Resources

- Quitline
  - 1-877-U-CAN-NOW
- Area Health Education Centers (AHEC):
  - 813-929-1000

# Family Planning



- 50% of pregnancies in the US are unintended
- Cost is cited as a major factor in an individual utilizing adequate family planning methods
- Education and awareness reduces unintended pregnancies.

# Benefits & Methods of Family Planning

- Benefits
  - Reduction of stress
  - Reduction of financial strain
  - Ability to balance individual life goals and reproductive goals
- Methods
  - Birth control (medical, prophylactic or calendar based)
  - Sterilization (of male or female partner)
  - Abstinence



# FP Community Resources

- Tampa Health Center  
8068 North 56th St  
Tampa, FL 33617  
813-980-3555
- Lakeland Health Center  
2250 E Edgewood Dr.  
Lakeland, FL 33803  
863-665-5735
- Pinellas Health Center  
8950 Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. St N, Suite 102  
St. Petersburg, FL 33702  
727-898-8199



# FP Community Resources

## Tampa Family Health Centers

- 8108 N. Nebraska Ave.  
Tampa, FL 33604  
813-307-8054
- 9827 N. Sheldon Road  
Tampa, FL 33635  
813-307-8053
- 3901 S. Westshore Blvd.  
Tampa, FL 33611  
813-307-8055
- 13601 N. 22nd Street  
Tampa, FL 33613  
813-307-8058

## Suncoast Community Health Centers

- 2814 14th Ave SE  
Ruskin, FL 33570  
813-349-7800
- 508 N. Maryland Ave  
Plant City, FL 33563  
813-349-7600
- 14254 Martin Luther King Blvd, SR 574,  
Dover, FL 33527  
813-349-7700
- 7728 Palm River Road  
Tampa, FL 33619  
813-653-6100

## Ybor Youth Clinic

1315 E. 7th Ave. Suite 104  
Ybor City, FL 33605  
813-396-9021

# Oral Health

- Individuals experiencing homelessness are:
  - found to have more severely decayed and missing teeth than even the most impoverished residential areas.
  - twelve times more likely than settled individuals to have dental problems.
- By utilizing programs such as Medicaid and Children's Health Insurance Program, most individuals who are homeless can receive dental services.
- By increasing education and awareness of oral health, individuals who are homeless can be empowered to seek oral health care on a biannual basis.

# Oral Health Promotion

- Brush your teeth twice a day
- Floss your teeth once a day
- Get regular dental check-ups
- Eat a balanced, low-sugar diet

# Low-Cost Oral Health Resources

- Hillsborough Community College – Dale Mabry Campus – Dental Clinic
  - 813-253-7527; 4001 Tampa Bay Blvd., Tampa, FL 33614
  - Provides low-cost preventive services only
  - Dentist is on site to do an exam
  - No treatments provided (e.g. fixing teeth, crowns, extractions)
  - Cleaning is \$20
  - Fluoride is \$5
  - X-Rays are \$25
  - Dental exam is \$5

\* The clinic is a learning facility; therefore appointments are **4 hours long and may require multiple visits.**

# Low-Cost Oral Health Resources

- Tampa Family Health Centers (clinic)
  - <http://www.tampachc.com>
- Suncoast Community Health Centers (Clinic)
  - <http://www.suncoast-chc.org>

# Low-Cost Oral Health Resources

- Suncoast Community Health Centers' Mobile Dental Bus
  - Services that are provided on the mobile dental coach are preventative only. These include:
    - Child Prophylaxis (cleanings)
    - Adult Prophylaxis (cleanings **only** for pregnant women less than 6 months postpartum)
    - Topical application of Fluoride Varnish
    - Sealants
    - Full Mouth Debridement
    - Oral Hygiene Instruction
    - Patient Assessment/Screening

# Substance Abuse

- Almost 50% of all homeless individuals and 70% of homeless Veterans have substance abuse disorders.
- Permanent Supportive Housing, which provides holistic case management and supportive services for substance abuse treatment, is an effective way to end chronic homelessness and substance abuse.
- Trauma history is significantly associated with more mental health problems but was not associated
- with substance abuse problems for homeless men

# Substance Abuse

Type of Drug (Examples)	Effects
Cannabinoids (Marijuana, Weed, Hashish, Reefer, Joint, Mary Jane, blunt)	Depressant, stimulant , narcotic, and psychoactive psychedelic effects. Dependence rates do not exceed 20% for daily users.
Depressants (Barbituates, Benzodiazepines, Gamma-hydroxybutyrate “GHB”)	Drowsiness, relaxation, tolerance if used long-term, physical dependence
Hallucinogens (LSD, psilocybin, mescaline/peyote)	Elation, depression, arousal, erratic behavior, abnormal vital signs, gastrointestinal problems, sleeplessness, dizziness. Low addictive potential.
Stimulants (Amphetamines, Cocaine, MDMA, Nicotine)	Speeds up the body’s vital signs, memory/weight loss, impaired cognition, insomnia, mood changes, violent behavior, organ damage, dental problems.
Opioids (Heroin, Morphine, Fentanyl, and Codeine)	Euphoria, clouded thinking, itching, nausea, depressed respiration, collapsed veins, abscesses, infection of heart lining and valves, arthritis/other rheumatologic problems

# Alcohol Use Disorder

- Alcoholism or alcohol dependence is a diagnosable disease characterized by a strong craving for alcohol, and/or continued use despite harm or personal injury.
- Alcohol affects every organ in the drinker's body and can damage a developing fetus. Intoxication can impair brain function and motor skills; heavy use can increase risk of certain cancers, stroke, and liver disease.
  - Alcoholics Anonymous (Hillsborough): 813-933-9123

# Inpatient/Outpatient Treatment Facilities

- Turning Point of Tampa  
6227 Sheldon Road  
Tampa, FL 33615  
813-882-3003
- Northside Mental Health Center  
12512 Bruce B. Downs Blvd.  
Tampa, FL 33612  
813-977-8700
- Gracepoint Wellness  
5707 N 22nd Street  
Tampa, FL 33610  
813-272-2244
- Tampa Crossroads  
5120 North Nebraska Ave.  
Tampa, FL 33603  
813-238-8557
- ACTS  
4612 N 56<sup>th</sup> St.  
Tampa, FL 33610  
813.246.4899
- DACCO  
4422 E. Columbus Dr.  
Tampa, FL 33605  
813-384-4000  
813-984-1818

# Mental Health

- Approximately 15% of individuals experiencing homelessness in Florida suffer from severe mental illness.
- Mental health is a significant cause of homelessness for single adults.
- Better coordination with mental health service providers helps combat homelessness.
- If an individual experiencing homelessness has a concern regarding his/her mental health, they should be seen by a licensed mental health professional.

# Mental Health and Suicide

- 90% of suicide victims have a diagnosable mental disorder.
- 15-25% of suicides are committed by an individual who has major depression or bipolar disorder.
  - Individuals who are homeless have higher rates of depression than the general population.
    - 22-46% of individuals experiencing homelessness have attempted suicide, while 61% have had suicidal ideations.

# Ways to Prevent/Manage Mental Health Issues

- Counseling/Therapy
- Medication
- Meditation
- Support groups

# Mental Health Resources

- Northside Mental Health Center  
12512 Bruce B. Downs Blvd.  
Tampa, FL 33612  
813-977-8700
- Gracepoint Wellness  
5707 N 22nd Street  
Tampa, FL 33610  
813-272-2244
- ACTS  
4612 N 56th St.  
Tampa, FL 33610  
813.246.4899
- Crisis Center of Tampa Bay  
Call: 211
- Magellan Complete Care (Insurance)  
1-800-327-8613
- Tampa Family Health Centers  
<http://www.tampachc.com>



# Domestic Violence

- 63% of women who are homeless have experienced domestic violence
- Victims of domestic violence may end up homeless because they have no resources once they leave their abuser.
- There are domestic violence shelters that are specifically for victims and their children in need of housing.

# Resources for Domestic Violence Victims

- Housing
  - Mary and Martha House (727-645-7874)
  - The Spring of Tampa Bay (813-247-5433)
  - Alpha House of Tampa, Inc. (pregnant women and their children) - (813-875-2024 and 813-875-3307)
- Victim assistance
  - Hillsborough County Domestic Violence – Victim Assistance (813-272-6423)
  - Crisis Center of Tampa Bay (2-1-1)

# Sharps/Waste Definitions

- Sharps
  - “...Devices with sharp points or edges that can puncture or cut skin.”
    - FDA, 2014
- Biomedical Waste
  - “...Any solid or liquid waste which may present a threat of infection to humans.”
    - FS 381.0098

# Standard Precautions

- ALL human body fluids, except perspiration or tears, are considered potentially infectious
- Blood does not have to be visible
- Common Personal Protective Equipment
  - Gloves
  - Masks
  - Goggles
- Depends on worksite and job responsibility



# Cleaning and Safety

- Any surface or object that comes in contact with biomedical waste needs to be sterilized and disinfected after each use. Using a bleach solution suffices as a proper practice.
- When cleaning a biohazardous spill:
  - Cover the spill with paper towels
  - Pour a 10% bleach solution over the towels
  - Let the solution sit for 10 minutes
  - Wearing gloves, throw away the paper towels in a biomedical waste container; Wash hands afterwards.

# Safety Issues

- Bay Area Sharps Disposal Program
  - Use approved sharps containers
  - Properly seal when full
  - Dispose only at an approved site, within 30 days



- Other Medical Waste Disposal
  - Put on gloves
  - Put soiled bandages or other contaminated non-sharps into a black or brown plastic bag
  - Securely tie or tape the bag
  - Place bag in center of garbage container
  - Remove gloves and wash hands

# Medication Disposal

1. Keep in the original container. This will help identify the contents if they are accidentally ingested.
  2. Mark out your name & prescription number for safety.
  3. For pills: add some water or soda to start dissolving them; For liquids: add something inedible like cat litter or dirt
  4. Close the lid and secure with duct or packing tape
  5. Place the bottle(s) inside an opaque (non see-through) container like a detergent container.
  6. Tape that container closed.
  7. Hide the container in the trash. Do not put it in the recycle bin.
- \*Do not flush medication down the toilet!**

## How to Dispose of Unwanted Medications

Expired or unwanted prescription and over-the-counter medications from households should never be disposed of by flushing them down the toilet or a drain. Although this method of disposal prevents accidental ingestion, it can cause contamination to Florida's aquatic environment because wastewater treatment systems are not designed to remove many of these medications.

### Seven Steps to Safety

Please use these practical guidelines when disposing of prescription and over-the-counter medicines:

#### For Pills and Liquids:

1. Keep the medicines in the original container. This will help identify the contents if they are accidentally ingested.
2. Mark out your name and prescription number for safety.
3. For pills: add some water or soda to start dissolving them  
For liquids: add something inedible like cat litter, dirt or cayenne pepper.
4. Close the lid and secure with duct or packing tape.
5. Place the bottle(s) inside an opaque (non see-through) container like a coffee can or plastic laundry bottle.
6. Tape that container closed.
7. Hide the container in the trash. Do not put in the recycle bin.



• DO NOT give drugs to anyone else.

• DO NOT flush drugs down the toilet.

• DO NOT put drugs in the trash without disguising them – human or animal scavengers may find them and misuse them.



**Don't Flush That Leftover Medicine**

Florida Department of Environmental Protection  
3900 Commonwealth Boulevard  
Tallahassee, Florida 32399  
850.245.8707  
www.dep.state.fl.us



# Medication Disposal

- The Hillsborough County Sheriff's Office has 4 prescription drug drop boxes around the county to properly dispose of unwanted or expired medications.
  - 14102 North 20th St, Tampa, FL
  - 2310 North Falkenburg Rd, Tampa, FL
  - 7202 Gunn Highway, Tampa, FL
  - 503 33rd Street SE, Ruskin, FL
- Acceptable items for disposal are:
  - Pill bottles
  - Boxes and/or packaged drug items
  - Patches, powders, and liquids
  - Inhalers
  - Veterinarian Prescription Drugs

## HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE PRESCRIPTION DRUG DROP BOXES



The Hillsborough County Sheriff's Office has installed permanent drug drop-off boxes at our four patrol district offices. Citizens are now able to properly dispose of unwanted, unnecessary and expired prescriptions, over the counter medicines and veterinarian prescriptions. The drop off boxes will be available 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

DROP BOX LOCATIONS	ACCEPTABLE ITEMS
District 1 14102 North 20th Street, Tampa, FL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Pill bottles</li><li>• Boxes and/or packaged drug items</li><li>• Patches</li><li>• Powders</li><li>• Liquids</li><li>• Inhalers</li><li>• Veterinarian Prescription Drugs</li></ul>
District 2 2310 North Falkenburg Road, Tampa, FL	
District 3 7202 Gunn Highway Tampa, FL	
District 4 503 33rd Street SE, Ruskin, FL	

# Community Resource Guide

- Crisis Center - Tampa Bay Community Resource Guide
  - Provides community resources for local organizations that help out with various services (e.g. financial assistance, counseling, food, legal, medical)

# Special Thanks to our Contributors

- Alpha House
- Catholic Charities
- DACCO
- Florida Department of Health
- Gracepoint Wellness
- Hillsborough County Board of County Commissioners
- Magellan Complete Care
- Metropolitan Ministries
- Salvation Army
- Tampa Hillsborough Homeless Initiative
- The Spring of Tampa Bay
- USF Morsani College of Medicine/AHEC
- VA Domiciliary

