

For Immediate Release

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What Washtenaw County youth #wishyouknew about their mental health

*Campaign aims to spark honest and supportive conversations about mental health between youth and adults.
Follow along on Instagram [@wishyouknewwashtenaw](https://www.instagram.com/wishyouknewwashtenaw)*

YPSILANTI, Mich., Dec 19, 2019 – Young people across Washtenaw County wish the adults in their lives knew that mental health is real. They’re not “lazy” or “bad.” 10 deep breaths may not fix it. Their community is hurting, but their generation is strong. And just listening can help. Adults wish the young people in their lives knew that they’re not alone, there are people who want to help, and they’re brave for telling trusted adults their scary thoughts.

These themes came up this summer when Washtenaw County Health Department staff talked with and surveyed over 300 community members. The Health Department has teamed up with Washtenaw County Community Mental Health to design a campaign to address community concerns around youth mental health and reducing stigma.

“One common thread that inspired the campaign’s framework is the desire for more open communication between youth and adults, as that’s a major place where stigma shows up,” says Emma Share, outreach worker at the Washtenaw County Health Department. “Both young people and adults want to change communication norms – how we talk about mental health, that we do talk about it.”

The campaign, named #wishyouknew, acknowledges the unspoken truths that youth and adults wish the other knew about mental health. It aims to spark honest and supportive conversations, and to spread hope that if we can share our truth with trusted people in our life, we can begin to heal.



The Health Department is sharing these truths, as well as ways to start these conversations, through quotes, artwork, videos, and activities. Follow along on Instagram [@wishyouknewwashtenaw](https://www.instagram.com/wishyouknewwashtenaw). You can also find the art and messages on buses and billboards and at local movie theaters this holiday season. The campaign also provides information on resources for people who need support, including the recently expanded Washtenaw County Community Mental Health [CARES team](#). Anyone in the County can call the CARES team at 734-544-3050 24/7 with any mental health questions.

“We hope the campaign will not only start a conversation, but also give people tools to be able to respond to youth in our community,” says Lisa Gentz, program administrator of millage initiatives for Washtenaw County Community Mental Health.

Explore campaign materials, as well as ways to get involved and add your voice, at www.washtenaw.org/wishyouknew. The campaign is supported by the Washtenaw County Public

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Environmental Health Division
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washtenaw.org/envhealth

Safety and Mental Health Preservation Millage. If you need mental health support, call 734-544-3050 anytime.

Washtenaw County Health Department

The Washtenaw County Health Department promotes health and works to prevent disease and injury in our community. Our mission is to assure, in partnership with the community, the conditions necessary for people to live healthy lives through prevention and protection programs.

The Washtenaw County Health Department has achieved national accreditation through the Public Health Accreditation Board. Visit us at washtenaw.org/health or call 734-544-6700.

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#wishyouknew
it gets better.

@wishyouknewwashtenaw
need support? 734-544-3050

Funded by the Washtenaw County Public Safety and Mental Health Preservation Millage

#wishyouknew
Mental health is health.

It's not hopeless!
It's not hopeless!
It's not hopeless!
It's not hopeless!
It's not hopeless!
It's not hopeless!
It's not hopeless!
It's not hopeless!
It's not hopeless!
It's not hopeless!

You're not alone.

#wishyouknew

#wishyouknew

washtenaw

what do you wish
someone knew?

 @wishyouknewwashtenaw • need support? 734-544-3050

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Find materials at www.washtenaw.org/wishyouknew