

healing connection

a newsletter from COMPASS



NAVIGATING BACK TO SCHOOL

TIPS FOR WEARING A MASK AS A SURVIVOR

COMPASS UPDATES

A letter from the Program Manager



Wow! It has been a rollercoaster ride the last six months here at COMPASS! Due to COVID-19, we have been busy adapting our services to meet the needs of our clients, state guidelines as well as providing trauma informed care.

A positive COMPASS experience due to COVID-19 is the leap into the virtual world. We had to adapt quickly on our feet and staff was up for the challenge! The amazing staff of COMPASS was able to adapt all of our programming to fit the needs of the new restrictions in the world. Even after the “Stay at home” orders ended, we listened to the needs of our clients and continue to offer virtual options for most of our services.

COMPASS’ staff are taking necessary precautions to help protect clients and fellow co-workers. Activities and events will look differently for COMPASS but we will stay true to our mission and will always keep survivors’ best interests at the core of our decision-making!

Here is to a great rest of 2020 and let us know if there is anything we can do to improve our mission.

MISSION: Promote the healing of individuals impacted by sexual violence and to create social change.

-Kris Drummer,
Program Manager



Navigating back to school



During these trying times, we are all doing our best to navigate our new “normal”. Now, more than ever we as parents, teachers, family and friends need to know the definitions and warning signs of abuse as we return to school, whether in person or virtually. Any intentional harm or mistreatment to a child under 18 years old is considered child abuse. Child abuse takes many forms, which sometime even occur at the same time.

Physical abuse. Physical child abuse occurs when a child is purposely physically injured or put at risk of harm by another person.

Sexual abuse. Sexual child abuse is any sexual activity with a child, such as fondling, oral-genital contact, intercourse, exploitation or exposure to child pornography.

Emotional abuse. Emotional child abuse means injuring a child's self-esteem or emotional well-being. It includes verbal and emotional assault; such as continually belittling or berating a child — as well as isolating, ignoring or rejecting a child.

Medical abuse. Medical child abuse occurs when someone gives false information about illness in a child that requires medical attention, putting the child at risk of injury and unnecessary medical care.

Neglect. Child neglect is failure to provide adequate food, shelter, affection, supervision, education, or dental or medical care.

In many cases, child abuse is done by someone the child knows and trusts, often a parent or other relative. A child who's being abused may feel guilty, embarrassed or confused. He or she may be afraid to tell anyone about the abuse, especially if the abuser is a parent, other relative or family friend. That's why it's vital to watch for red flags, such as:

- Withdrawal from friends or usual activities
- Changes in behavior — such as aggression, anger, hostility or hyperactivity — or changes in school performance
- Depression, anxiety or unusual fears, or a sudden loss of self-confidence
- An apparent lack of supervision
- Frequent absences from school
- Reluctance to leave school activities, as if he or she doesn't want to go home
- Attempts at running away
- Rebellious or defiant behavior
- Self-harm or attempts at suicide

If you notice any of these warning signs or suspect child abuse, report the abuse to the proper authorities.

For more information and resources, please contact the Safe Start Center, a National Resource Center for Children's Exposure to Violence:
<http://www.safestartcenter.org> or 1-800-865-0965 or info@safestartcenter.org
<https://www.childwelfare.gov/pubPDFs/signs.pdf>
<https://www.justice.gov/sites/default/files/defendingchildhood/legacy/2011/09/19/tips-teachers.pdf>

SHOUT OUT: Pandemic support was invaluable

COMPASS would like to send a shout-out to our volunteers and our on-call advocates.

Due to COVID-19, these individuals have not been able to provide the work and support typical to this time of year, pre-COVID.

Our volunteers and on-call advocates are still supportive and understanding while adapting to the ever-changing atmospheres, processes, and duties.

COMPASS events may have been canceled, but the support for our agency and our clients does not waiver.

Thank you for continuing to stay with our family and we hope that things will change soon.



Tips for Back-to-school routines:

PROCESS EMOTIONS

Give yourself time to process your feelings about returning to school.

PREPARE YOUR BODY

Starting a week or two before, train your body to start waking up and going to bed earlier for a more successful body routine.

PREPARE CLOTHES/LUNCHES

Preparing outfits and lunches the night before, often lead to a less stressful morning.



Tips for wearing masks as a survivor



Wearing masks can help flatten the curve of COVID-19, but they can also create circumstances in which survivors are triggered from their sexual assaults.

So how can those who suffer from this mask anxiety still make it to court hearings, important appointments, or just getting out of the house?

Here are some grounding techniques from Ohio Domestic Violence Network:

-Breathing-

Focusing on your breathing can bring yourself inward. Try tracing your hand and breathing in when you go up and breathing out when you go down.

-Yoga-

“Any form of mild exercise will stimulate the vagus nerve

leading to many general and physical benefits” (ODVN, Supportive Ideas with Wearing a Mask for Survivors). The vagus nerve connects the brain with control of the heart, lungs, and digestive tract.

-Expressing your voice-

Singing to yourself, talking, or humming also engages the vagus nerve which brings focus to your breathing.

-Practice-

Try wearing your mask around your yard so you can practice wearing it outside in a safe space. Notice your body’s reactions and practice grounding exercises like breathing.

For the full workbook with techniques and strategies, you can go to: <https://www.odvn.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/ODVN-Supportive-Ideas-with-Wearing-a-Mask-for-Survivors.pdf>



1 in 4 women are sexually assaulted. Speak Out.



DONATIONS NEEDED

COMPASS provides essential services for survivors of sexual violence. Are you wondering how you can help, as well? We are always in need of donations! If you are able and willing, here are the following items used to provide survivors support:



-Bottles of water

-Travel sized personal care items (shampoo, toothbrush, toothpaste, deodorant, etc.)

-Sweat suits

Monetary donations also allow us to provide necessary services for survivors. Please contact us at 330-339-2504 or 330-437-3705 to make a donation.

Updates from COMPASS programs

prevention updates

Going into the new school year, our Prevention Staff has seen many changes! Due to COVID-19, we have gone virtual along with our in-person instruction! Our staff has had the opportunity to work with a local studio, and film our prevention program for all those schools and students learning online. In a series of videos and online activities, we will continue to teach our students about violence prevention and how they can stay safe! It is our mission to give our schools and community collaborators the best learning experience possible. We hope you all stay safe and healthy this school year, see you soon!



medical advocacy updates

COMPASS advocacy in the hospitals has been ever-changing as we adapt to a new normal. We are excited to start video advocacy at Aultman Hospital where a survivor who may not be comfortable with in-person advocacy can still speak with an advocate and see their face for that connection. With all three hospitals—Union Hospital, Aultman Hospital, and Mercy Medical Center—we have worked out policies and procedures to set up advocacy and follow up calls so that survivors are able to be connected with advocacy to provide information, support, and resources. We are here for survivors!



legal advocacy updates

COMPASS advocacy through the legal process has been occurring during the pandemic; advocates are available for court advocacy, assistance with protection order paperwork, and police and prosecutor interviews. These are generally done in person, though advocates can assist with paperwork through teleservices, as well. To discuss options and general overview of legal process, please call COMPASS hotline! Tuscarawas County & Carroll County: 330-339-1427; Stark County: 330-452-1111.

campus advocacy updates

School starting this year looks a lot different than it ever has in the past. Having outreach advocates on campus, COMPASS wanted to make sure services are still readily accessible as they were pre-COVID-19. Thus, COMPASS advocates created virtual office spaces to better connect with students. Each virtual office contains a design of furniture and decorative items to make the space aesthetically pleasing for students. Furthermore, each campus advocate added in a bitmoji of themselves to make the space more inviting and personal. Throughout the virtual office space, which was created through google slides, multiple clickable links are available with related content for students. For example, during the first month of the school year it is important students have information about their specific campus response to Title IX changes and other important materials, such as a campus map. Therefore, those are links that are included in the virtual office space. The virtual office space is equipped with a clickable link that will direct students to the COMPASS website and to the direct email for their campus advocate. A few other links included in the virtual office space is for a self-care article and information on human trafficking. The virtual office space theme will change each month; therefore, students will have different information to learn throughout the school year.