TAR HEEL
Human Services, P.C.

MENTAL HEALTH TIP OF THE MONTH

Pause Before You React

When emotions run high, it can be difficult to think clearly or respond the way we want to.

Try the STOP strategy:

S- Stop: Pause before reacting.
T- Take a breath: Give your body a moment to slow down.
O- Observe: Notice what you're feeling and what you need.
P- Proceed: Choose your next step instead of reacting automatically.

Even a few seconds of intentional pause can help create space between a strong emotion and your response.

You don't have to control every emotion--you can learn to respond to it.

Meet Our Staff

Kristie Cavanaugh, MSW, LCSW
Clinical Director



With over 25 years of experience supporting children, adolescents, and families, Kristie brings a warm, compassionate, and down-to-earth approach to therapy. She believes that a strong therapeutic relationship is the foundation for meaningful change. Her goal is to help guide you toward your own solutions and support you in becoming a more empowered version of yourself by tapping into both new tools and strengths already within you.

Kristie's practice is grounded in a trauma-informed perspective and draws from Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) and Client-Centered approaches. Together, you'll work to better understand long-standing patterns, shift areas where you feel stuck, and help you feel more grounded and in control of your life.

SEPTEMBER IS SUICIDE PREVENTION MONTH

KNOW THE WARNING SIGNS

Suicide doesn't always look the way we expect it to. Sometimes the signs are subtle changes that may indicate someone is struggling.

Pay attention to things like:

- **Talking about feeling hopeless, trapped, or like a burden**
- **Withdrawing from friends, family, or activities**
- **Significant changes in mood or behavior**
- **Giving away important possessions**
- **Saying goodbye in unusual or concerning ways**
- **Talking about death or suicide**



One sign alone doesn't necessarily mean someone is suicidal, but changes that concern you are worth paying attention to.

If you're worried about someone, don't be afraid to check in. Listen, ask directly, and help them connect with support.

Your concern could be the conversation they needed.

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988 IS THERE FOR MORE THAN YOU MAY REALIZE

Did you know you can contact the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline not only when you are experiencing suicidal thoughts or a mental health crisis, but also when you are concerned about someone else?

If a friend, family member, coworker, student, or loved one is experiencing suicidal thoughts, you don’t have to navigate the situation alone. You can call or text 988 for support, guidance, and help figuring out what to do next.

You can reach out to 988 to:

- **Get guidance on how to respond to someone experiencing suicidal thoughts**
- **Talk through your concerns with a trained crisis counselor**
- **Learn how to help keep someone safe**
- **Get support for yourself while supporting someone else**

You don't have to have all the answers. You just have to reach out.

Call or text 988

988lifeline.org

If someone is in immediate danger or has an imminent medical emergency, call 911 or go to the nearest emergency department.