

CareOregon Behavioral Health Campaign Healing Happens Together

Campaign Overview

The Healing Happens Together campaign was a multi-channel, statewide behavioral health awareness initiative designed to reduce stigma, increase awareness of available services, and drive access to care during the highest-need winter months (November 2024 – March 2025). The campaign combined lived-experience storytelling, culturally responsive messaging, regional public art, and integrated media to reach Oregon Health Plan members across all CareOregon CCO communities.

Strategy

- Center lived-experience storytelling to build trust and normalize help-seeking.
- Prioritize teens and young adults—historically the most difficult audience to reach.
- Align campaign timing with peak seasonal behavioral health need.
- Localize the message through community-based murals in each CCO region.
- Deliver an integrated, mobile-first, multi-channel experience.

Leadership & Implementation

Shaunmarie Gutbezahl – Campaign Director: Led strategy, creative direction, cross-channel integration, timeline development, and executive reporting.

Kathy Gorman – Content Strategy & Story Development: Conducted interviews, wrote all storytelling content, and managed the editorial calendar.

Elisa Shaw – Media & Public Art Project Management: Managed media placement and coordinated mural execution across regions, including permits, contracts, budgets, and stakeholder communication.

Outcomes & Impact

The campaign met or exceeded all primary KPIs and successfully reached priority and historically under-engaged populations.

- 4,674 behavioral health content views
- 2,329 total users
- 1,793 new users (+4,169%)
- 5,703 article reads (+1,196%)
- 2,777 engaged-user events
- 1,031 resource link clicks

Healing happens together Crisis lines *

Everybody needs the buddy system
It's ok to ask for help

You don't have to go it alone
CareOregon works hard to ensure our members and communities have access to high-quality mental health resources.

Sarah's Story: A safe space can change your life
For Sarah Hobbs, anxiety has been a constant presence in her life, a daily battle that manifests physically as pain in her stomach, racing thoughts in her head and episodes where her legs give out from stress. Read more...

1 in 3 Oregonians has experienced anxiety and/or depression
If you or someone you love is struggling, know that help is available. Read on to learn more and find support.

Depression Anxiety Recovery Youth Resources

Sarah's story: A safe space can change your life

Maddie's story: How depression and anxiety shape the teenage experience

Hudson's story: The importance of culturally specific mental health care

Microsite: Healing Happens Together

Healing happens together Crisis lines *

Maddie's story: How depression and anxiety shape the teenage experience

At first glance, Maddie seems to be a typical teenager. She paints her nails, attends high school and spends time with friends. She has a big personality you could bask in for hours and dreams of becoming a nurse.

But at age 8, she experienced her first panic attack.

Now 17, she is no stranger to the complex world of mental health challenges. She deals with chronic severe depression and anxiety, along with post-traumatic stress disorder. "I knew [when I was a child] I had struggled with anxiety and depression because of what happened in my own life. Losing my mom. Dad's in and out. A lot of things that I shouldn't have had to go through as a young child, just play over and over in my head."

Maddie is not alone in facing mental health challenges. Nearly 50% of youth in the United States, ages 13-18, have a mental health disorder; youth also face higher rates of co-occurring mental health disorders than adults. Anxiety, depression, post-traumatic stress disorder and substance abuse can be common for teenagers, which can lead to significant turmoil in their lives at pivotal growth milestones. Perhaps typical might need to be redefined.

On anxiety and depression

At a young age, Maddie began to lose significant support pillars, including her grandpa and mom. She often felt purposeless. Her home life wasn't always safe. Major negative events began to take a toll on her mental health. Eventually she turned to substance use to numb her negative experiences.

For Maddie, anxiety and depression are constant, built into her daily routine. She wakes up, checks her phone, gets ready and heads to school—but there are thoughts she can't quite shake. "I'm worried about what other people are thinking. I'll bet you that person hates me," she says. "I can never win in my own head."

She can start to feel angry or overwhelmed, especially at night. "It hits the worst when I'm alone. Being alone at night is really hard," she says. Anxiety and depression often feel like a losing game. No matter how many rounds she plays or different paths she chooses—they are always there to trip her up.

The anxiety is unrelenting, gnawing away at her confidence and attempting to spread lies about her only she can hear. The repetition of these thoughts makes for days of confusion, doubt and exhaustion. Over time this breaks her down and allows the depression to seep in. The weight is heavy, full of emptiness. When the depression gets unbearable, the spiral begins to take hold—creating a new game of survival in her mind. Even small interactions or tasks, like speaking with a peer or participating in class, can feel impossible. This cycle reminds her that she's haunted by traumas and losses that sometimes feel too big to face.

Turning to substances to cope

After her grandpa's passing, substance use was prevalent. "He was my home and when it got ripped away from me, it sent me down a huge spiral, which started my addiction," she says. She was aware this was not the right way to deal. "I'll be honest—addiction didn't really help. It was just a way to block out what was going on." She used psychedelics, alcohol and prescription drugs during this time. "When I started using, I thought that I could get away with it. My dad was an addict, and nobody noticed him. But I didn't think about the fact that, you know, [addiction] killed my mom."

Blog article—long form

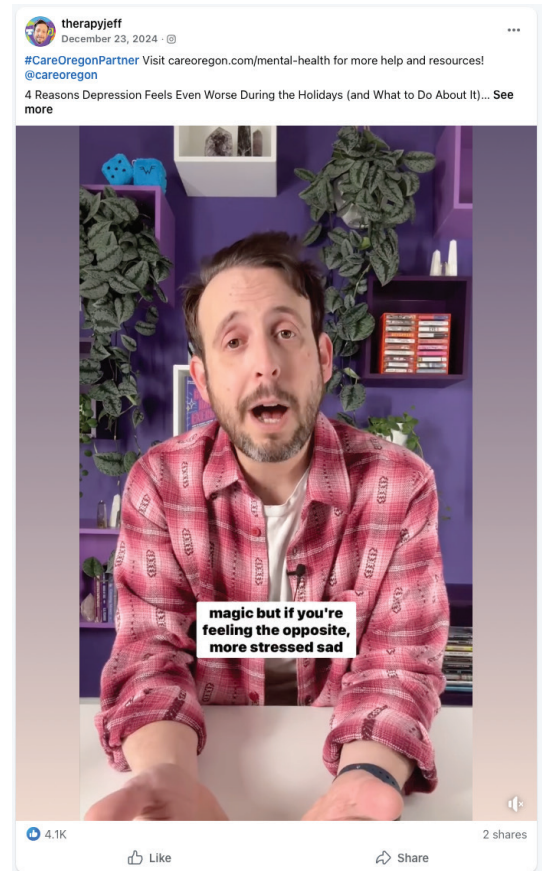
- Crisis line interactions increased by 612%
- Users accessing crisis resources increased by 527%
- 59.5% of users accessed content via mobile

Personal stories delivered the highest engagement, particularly among teens and young adults. Content focused on youth behavioral health and how to talk with teens about mental health significantly outperformed other topics, demonstrating the effectiveness of peer-centered, stigma-reducing storytelling for this priority population.

This represents the highest-performing behavioral health storytelling engagement for the reporting period. Behavioral health content significantly outperformed standard informational content in depth of engagement and movement toward care.

Relevance to OHA

This campaign demonstrates the ability to lead complex, equity-centered behavioral health communications that increase awareness, engagement, and real-world access to services. The trauma-informed storytelling model, mobile-first delivery, and measurable movement toward crisis resources directly align with OHA's goals to improve behavioral health access for diverse and historically under-reached communities across Oregon.



Influencer—Therapy Jeff



Mural: Boys & Girls Club Rockwood



Mural: Astoria, OR



Mural: Portland, OR



Mural: Medford, OR

Mental Health Campaign



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careoregon The holidays can be a time of joy – but for many, they also bring stress, disappointment, and even feelings of anxiety or depression. A 2021 poll by the American Psychiatric Association revealed that Americans are five times more likely to feel increased stress during this season. If you're struggling, you're not alone.

It can be helpful to pause and think about what might be weighing on you. Whether it's honoring a lost loved one, spending time with your chosen family, or giving back through volunteer work, there are ways to make the season more meaningful. And don't hesitate to reach out for support: Talk to a family member, friend or therapist.

🔗 Visit the link in our bio for resources and tips on navigating the holiday season with care.

#BehavioralHealth #AskForHelp
#BehavioralHealthcare #CareOregonBH

Social campaign