

Indiana Center for Recovery Urges Hoosiers to ‘Check In and Reach Out’ as Holiday Stress Surges

Indiana Center for Recovery launches statewide push to “Check In and Reach Out” as holiday stress and seasonal depression rise, fostering mental health support.

INDIANAPOLIS, IN, UNITED STATES, December 9, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Indiana Center for Recovery is launching a statewide push to [Check In and Reach Out this season](#). The campaign encourages Hoosiers to check in with others who may be suffering in silence and reach out for help if they find themselves struggling.

The holidays can bring a range of added pressure and loneliness. The increased stress can trigger symptoms even in people who do not have a history of mental health conditions.

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Zoë Leichty-Wireman, clinical director, ICFR in Indianapolis

of Mental Health.

Lead therapist at [Indiana Center for Recovery in South Bend](#), Robert Nagle, says this time of year is rough in our community. “There is a heightened expectation of joy and family celebrations.



Indiana Center for Recovery staff

More than 40% of adults report increased stress during the holiday season, and 12% admit to using alcohol or other substances as a coping mechanism, according to the American Psychiatric Association.

This time of year also brings on seasonal affective disorder for 10 million Americans. The days are shorter, and most of those days are overcast in the Midwest. Seasonal affective disorder causes feelings of sadness, oversleeping, overeating and isolating, according to the National Institute

When reality falls short, the disappointment can trigger mental health symptoms and, for some people, cravings.”

“People often feel pressured to pretend everything is fine,” Nagle said. “You don’t have to struggle alone. Checking in on someone with a brief text could be the lifeline they need.”

Check-ins with others are crucial during the winter season. To help people start these conversations, Indiana Center for Recovery released a free downloadable conversation guide

on what to say and what not to say when reaching out to someone who may be struggling. The toolkit includes conversation starters, supportive language and ways to seek help.

For some people, like Andy Stretch, reaching out was the turning point.

He became lost in anxiety, depression and substance use disorder. He asked for help and checked himself into treatment at Indiana Center for Recovery, completed treatment in 2023, and is thriving. “I’m blessed. It’s everything I thought it could be. I’m chasing my dreams, opened my own business and keep pushing forward,” Stretch said.

Once he got sober, Stretch said his mental health was no longer an issue. Today, he has a strong support system, a core group of friends who check in on each other and hold each other accountable. Stretch hopes his experience shows others that recovery is possible.

Stories like Stretch’s show why checking in and reaching out are so important this time of year.

Clinicians across the state say they see the holidays magnify emotions in their patients. At [Indiana Center for Recovery in Indianapolis](#), chief clinical director Zoë Leichthy-Wireman says this time of year can heighten vulnerability, especially when people begin comparing their circumstances with others. “The holidays are framed as joyful, but they can prompt deep reflection,” she said. “When someone is already feeling low and sees others who appear happy, it can intensify their own sense of sadness or disconnection.”

Indiana Center for Recovery encourages people to pay attention to warning signs such as withdrawal, changes in sleep, low mood and increased alcohol and substance use. Early intervention can prevent crises and help people access care before symptoms escalate.



Indiana Center for Recovery in Indianapolis

Leichty-Wireman emphasizes that accessible, compassionate strategies can help people nurture their mental health during the season. "Small, realistic practices like taking a walk, getting a change of scenery, spending time in natural light, reaching out to someone you trust, volunteering or engaging in meaningful acts of kindness can have a real impact," she said. "These activities help people feel connected, grounded and supported during what can be a complex and emotionally demanding time of year."

About Indiana Center for Recovery

Indiana Center for Recovery is the most advanced addiction and mental health care provider in the Midwest, offering psychiatric hospitalization, residential rehab, drug and alcohol detox and outpatient services. Indiana Center for Recovery is committed to expanding access to substance use and mental health care with 10 locations across the Hoosier State.

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