

May 15, 2023



Good morning Members,

I hope to find you well. I hope your Mother's Day weekend went well. I know mine did. I want to let you know that May is National Mental Health Month. The county executive member and Governor signed in two legislatives and has given money into mental health efforts. If you think you are having issues with mental health reach out for help. I have heard that finding mental health counselors to go to has been hard because there are more people looking for help, but that means there are less people to provide that help.

Don't hesitate to reach out to me though and I can help you navigate this. The best tool I have found is Google. You can search in your area for counselors and see what is available around you. I advise you to call the 288 number, people first, or me and we will do our best to help you. There is also a 211 number that you can call and that will get you in contact with different resources. I am not sure if this is just for Milwaukee County or if it is statewide, but I will find out for sure.

Since, COVID there are a lot of people that are still going through things, and you are not alone in that. To me it feels like resources are still getting cut, but People First and me are here to help you with whatever we can do. This year for Badgercare/Medicaid you will have to reapply since the COVID emergency was recently lifted, this also means that the free services and resources people were receiving during COVID will no longer

be available. If you need help with this process, make sure to ask someone for help or you can have someone there help you too. I know Foodshare is difficult right now because they are cutting what people were getting, so when you apply again make sure to ask for assistance.

I have some suggestions on how to save money if you are on a fixed income is by all the things you will need when you get paid. The things that you must have at home like laundry soap, toilet paper, food essentials, and pay your bills (phone, rent, electric). This way you have what you need. If you need help with your electric there is a resource for a budget plan. You can always freeze food so that you have it for later as well. I like to go through and clean my freezer out and see what I have in there and then I like to have some comfort food in there for when I want to have a treat.

If you make food, try to make food that will last you a few days because you want to get the best for the money you spend. I like to go to Aldi for good deals, I also like to go to different farmer's market in the summer. I know everyone has a different way of doing things, but if you can save money and time that is important. Also, if you have pets, make sure you plan to get them what they need too. Everything is more expensive these days and rent and bills will not be going down, so whenever you can save money on other things that is important. I am here and I care.

Don't forget to check out our website for People First Wisconsin for events coming up! We have the meet-up tonight from 4:30pm-6:30pm and Thursday is from 6pm-7:30pm. There is also the speaker series tomorrow from 11am-12pm. If there is anything I missed, please look at our website for updates: <http://www.peoplefirstwisconsin.org/>

I know it can be hard out there and I know we all struggle at times. Be there for each other and reach out to someone that is a friend or family member. You can call my cell phone @ 414-852-6462 8:30am - 5:00pm, Monday - Thursday. If I am unable to take your call, I will call you back. You can reach the Suicide and Crisis Lifeline at 800-273-TALK (8255) or 988 has been designated as the new three-digit dialing code that will route callers to the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline (now known as the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline) and is now active across the United States. This is the website: <https://988lifeline.org/>

In spirit of Mental Health Month, here is a quote today from Maya Angelou:

“It's good to remember that in crises, natural crises, human beings forget for awhile their ignorances, their biases, their prejudices. For a little while, neighbors help neighbors and strangers help strangers.” -- Maya Angelou

Sincerely,

Cindy Bentley

Executive Director

People First Wisconsin