

## **BROADCAST-Building Resilience: An Anecdote for Childhood Trauma**

You're hearing a new buzzword these days as the country experiences a rise in anxiety and depression in teenagers and young adults – resiliency. Doctor Samuel Sears, medical director for OSF HealthCare Behavioral Health Services says social support is the biggest factor in resiliency – a person's ability to bounce back from significant negative life events.

**“By getting them those additional supports; people that care, people to interact with and help them through things that is something that you can control.” (:09)**

Peer support can be just as important as a caring adult according to Dr. Sears.

### **It's Time to Talk**

May is Mental Health Awareness Month, offering a good reminder to get professional help or encouraged someone you know who is struggling to do that.

Despite some high-profile celebrities like Brittany Spears and even Britain's Prince Harry talking openly about mental health issues, there's still a stigma that prevents some people from getting the help they need. Sears says more of us should be willing to ask frank questions about how someone is doing and whether they're thinking about harming themselves.

**“Asking these questions can save their life. And, being able to be open and honest with somebody to be there for you to help you solve the problem, that's a huge relief for people who are suffering with mental health difficulties.” (:13)**

### **Social Media Influence**

Social support is the main buffer to the longer-term effects of trauma, but according to Dr. Sears, that does not mean *social media support*.

**“There is a very different level of connectedness and value that goes into the actual human connection versus just putting ideas out into space and having some ideas come back in a digital space.” (:13)**

In fact, while teenagers often turn to social media to find community, Dr. Sears says their mental health can be negatively impacted by a variety of issues including cyberbullying, toxic comparisons, sleep deprivation and fewer face-to-face interactions leading to feelings of isolation.

This month, there will be depression screenings in many of the communities served by OSF HealthCare. Dr. Sears points out depression is a large umbrella that can represent dozens of mental health conditions.

**“We put it under the same category because there are some shared traits of what they're expressing. The way out of it is individual to every human being and we have to recognize that nuance and specificity to really help each individual achieve their best outcome.” (:16)**

A year ago this month, OSF HealthCare also became the first health care system in the U.S. to offer free digital mental health services to individuals in all communities it serves. [SilverCloud](#) is an app and website that offers an anonymous, secure, and interactive platform that helps people manage the feeling and causes of depression, anxiety or stress.

If built-in screening tools exceed certain thresholds, the behavioral health navigator in the region will be notified to provide support which can include connecting users to the right services.