

Greater Cleveland Community Health Worker Association

Heart, Body & Soul Newsletter

Caring for the Caregiver ~ Who's taking care of you?

*I was not made to give up!*



~ submitted by Audrianna Rodriguez, CHW Student, CICH

#### **AUTISM & AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDER**

~submitted by Kecia Deutch, CHW student, CSU

April is Autism Awareness Month. Autism spectrum disorder (ASD) is a complex developmental condition involving persistent challenges with social communication, restricted interests, and repetitive behavior. Autism is known as a “spectrum” disorder because there is wide variation in the type and severity of symptoms people experience. ASD occurs in all ethnic, racial, and economic groups. Although ASD can be a lifelong disorder with no cure, treatments and services can improve a person’s symptoms and ability to function.

Autism can be diagnosed at any age. It is said to be a “developmental disorder” because symptoms generally appear in the first two years of life. This list is not inclusive of all symptoms, but some early warning signs may include the child:

- Makes little or no eye contact
- Shows no or less response to a parent's smile or other facial expressions
- May not look at objects or events a parent is looking at or pointing to
- May not have appropriate facial expressions
- Less likely to show concern (empathy) for others
- Has difficulty making and keeping friends

Not all people with ASD will show all behaviors, but most will show several. People with ASD are often described as highly intelligent due to having a lasting intense interest in certain topics, such as numbers, details, or facts and having overly focused interests, such as with moving objects or parts of objects.

As caregivers we can assist adults living with ASD to live fulfilling lives independently. Assistance to learn life-skills, reduce challenging behaviors, and learning social, communication, and language skills are some key areas. When working with adults with ASD, address him or her as you would any other adult. Take time to listen. If you ask a question, wait for a response and provide meaningful feedback. It is important for those of us who are family members, friends, and advocates of individuals who have ASD to recognize and respect them as adults and to help them experience as much self-esteem and achieve as much independence as possible.

For resources in Northeast Ohio, click [here](#)

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## **FINANCIAL SELF-CARE**

~ submitted by Chevon Matthews, Editor-in-Chief, with input from The Lending Club

Health is wealth. You may have used that phrase in your professional and personal lives more than once. Putting this edition together I kept focusing on April 18th, tax day. This brought to mind the need to discuss our actual wealth. Self-care is more than focusing on physical, psychological or emotional health. There is financial self-care also.

Practicing financial self-care means developing habits that set you up to reach your financial goals. Just as you would develop an action plan to manage chronic disease, create an action plan for managing your finances. Build a daily routine to strengthen control over your money goals.

First, **reflect on your relationship with money**. 70% of people don't talk about their finances and 1/4 admit they hide debt from their partners. Schedule a "money date" with loved ones (this can

include children of appropriate age) to discuss budgeting. Together bring your money worries, hopes, and dreams into the light of day.

**Check your bank accounts regularly and track your income and expenses.** Have a clear sense of how much is coming in or going out by making a daily habit of checking in with your spending, at least until you get a handle on your habits.

**Create realistic goals to financial freedom.** If you have an irregular income, simply spending less than you earn while saving for your goals isn't realistic. This is especially true if your hours fluctuate from paycheck to paycheck, you're seasonally employed, or you work on a contractual basis. Instead, budget and save over short bursts of time when you know money will be coming in large chunks.

**Up your financial literacy and educate yourself on best practices.** Managing money effectively can be complicated. Just as with physical health, there are professionals to help. [Consumer Financial Protection Bureau](#) has answers to hundreds of financial questions and guides to help you understand how to plan ahead to reach your financial goals.

Most important, **be kind to yourself!** Everyone makes mistakes with money. What matters is how you deal with the set backs. If your money management skills are less than perfect, or you don't reach every milestone, give yourself a break. Take stock of what you have accomplished with your financial self-care activities. Keep putting one foot in front of the other.

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#### **SELF-CARE: Call to Action**

~ submitted by Simpson Price

adapted from U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services

Every April, the HHS Office of Minority Health (OMH) observes National Minority Health Month. The month is designated as a time to raise awareness to reduce health disparities that continue to affect racial and ethnic minority populations, improve the health of racial and ethnic minorities and encourage action through health education and early detection to reduce and take control of disease complications.

In 2022, the theme for National Minority Health Month is "Give Your Community a Boost! This year's theme focuses on the continued importance of COVID-19 vaccination, including boosters. As many have noted, the COVID-19 pandemic exposed the massive gap in health disparities between communities of color, residents living in subpar social and economic conditions and those with limited access to resources that are designed to improve health

conditions.

These challenges, some rooted in historical experiences with racism and discrimination can lead to generational mistrust of the healthcare system among racial and ethnic minority groups and over the past two years has manifested into a mistrust of factual information on the effectiveness of vaccines and boosters.

Throughout April, we ask for all of our readers to take advantage of opportunities to join others throughout the nation in the campaign to empower others by debunking misinformation and supporting evidence based efforts to increase vaccination in their communities.

It will take all of us to join with regional and local health organizations in a collective effort to target the social and economic conditions in which people live, and the opportunities they have, to improve their health. The time is now to continue with actionable steps to addressing the most important factors that impact health in our communities. #BoostYourCommunity

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**April is:**

[World Autism Awareness Month](#)

National Poetry Month

April 4 - 10 National Public Health Week

April 7th - [World Health Day](#)

April 11th - [World Parkinson's Day](#)

April 17th - [World Hemophilia Day](#)

## Crockpot Lemon Chicken

Submitted by Laura Renee Hess, C-CHW



### Ingredients:

8 whole chicken legs, approx. 4 lbs  
1 teaspoon extra-virgin olive oil  
20 garlic cloves  
2 lemons, thinly sliced  
6 thyme springs  
coarse salt  
freshly ground pepper  
crusty bread for serving

### Directions:

1. Preheat 5-6 quart slow cooker and preheat oven to broil.
2. Place chicken skin side up on rimmed baking sheet.
3. Rub oil onto skin and season generously with salt and pepper.
4. Broil until skin brown in places. Transfer chicken to slow cooker.
5. Add garlic, lemons, thyme. Cover and cook until meat is tender and cooked through, on high until approx. 2 1/2 hours or on low for 5 hours.

6. Serve with braised garlic, cooking liquid, and bread.

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