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Laurier expert alert: World Mental Health Day

WATERLOO – World Mental Health Day is held annually on Oct. 10 to raise awareness about mental health and mobilize efforts in support of mental health.

Wilfrid Laurier University has experts available to speak about topics related to mental health.

[Heidi Ahonen](#) is a professor of music therapy, registered psychotherapist and accredited music therapist. She is an expert on music therapy and its potential to support those suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and other psychological trauma. She has worked with traumatized individuals, including refugees, using clinical improvisation, guided imagery and music. [Read more about her work](#). Contact: hahonen@wlu.ca

[Erin Dej](#) is an assistant professor in Laurier's Department of Criminology and an expert in social exclusion. Dej's research focuses primarily on homelessness, as well as mental health and homelessness prevention. She is available to discuss the impacts of social isolation and loneliness on people experiencing homelessness and/or poverty. [Read more about her work](#). Contact: edej@wlu.ca

[Carolyn FitzGerald](#), assistant professor in Laurier's Faculty of Education, is an expert on mental health in education. FitzGerald's research focuses on the mental health of pre-service teachers, teachers and school administrators, as well as ways in which educators can offer effective programs to respond to the mental health needs of Ontario's children and youth. She is the coordinator of [Laurier's Mental Health Issues in the Classroom certificate](#) and is offering training on how to support the mental health of students and faculty in remote learning environments. She is also available to speak about how the COVID-19 outbreak may impact the mental well-being of children and youth and what parents can do to help their children during these uncertain times. Contact: cafitzgerald@wlu.ca

[Jennifer Lavoie](#), associate professor in Laurier's Departments of Criminology and Psychology, is an expert on mental health, policing, de-escalation and crisis intervention. Her current research explores the effectiveness of scenario-based training in improving how police officers respond to mental health crises in the community. [Read about Lavoie's work helping police respond to people with mental health issues](#). Contact: jlavoie@wlu.ca

[Danielle Law](#), associate professor in Laurier's [Youth and Children's Studies](#) and [Psychology](#) programs, is an expert on cyberbullying, associated mental health concerns and responsible Internet use. Law's research examines how children and adolescents develop cognitively and socio-emotionally as they interact and socialize using technologies. [Read more about her research](#). Contact: dlaw@wlu.ca

[Kristine Lund](#) is a professor, the director of the Spiritual Care and Psychotherapy programs, the interim principal dean of Martin Luther University College and the clinical director at the Delton Glebe Counselling Centre. She is an expert on pet-assisted therapy and has been studying university students' interactions with dogs during final exams. She has also studied and written about professional ethics, and teaching and learning in graduate education. She has worked with individuals and couples addressing grief and loss, anxiety and depression and relationship concerns with a particular interest in making meaning of the experience. Contact: klund@luther.wlu.ca

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[Magnus Mfoafo-M'Carthy](#) is an associate professor in the Faculty of Social Work. He is an expert on community mental health, especially mental health and stigma in immigrant communities and treatment options for individuals with mental illness in the community. Prior to joining Laurier, Mfoafo-M'Carthy served as community treatment order coordinator at the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health assisting individuals with serious mental illness. Contact: mmfoafomcarthy@wlu.ca

[Amy Milne-Smith](#), associate professor in Laurier's Department of History, is an expert on the history of mental health, particularly in Victorian Britain and Europe. Milne-Smith is available to comment on the history of stigmas about mental health, the rise and fall of the asylum, mental health and crime, and the evolution of diagnostics and military mental trauma. Contact: amilnesmith@wlu.ca

[Michael Woodford](#), professor and associate dean in Laurier's Faculty of Social Work, is an expert on the mental health and well-being of LGBTQ2S+ youth. Woodford's research explores how discrimination can increase LGBTQ2S+ youth's risk for poor mental health and other negative outcomes, as well as the factors that can foster resilience. Woodford is leading the [Thriving on Campus Study](#), a province-wide survey exploring the experiences, mental health and academic success of LGBTQ2S+ university students in Ontario. [Read more about his work](#). Contact: mwoodford@wlu.ca

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