



Paul A. Pettit, MSL, CPH
Public Health Director

**GENESEE COUNTY
HEALTH DEPARTMENT**
3837 West Main Street Rd.
Batavia, NY 14020
(585) 344-2580 x5555

**ORLEANS COUNTY
HEALTH DEPARTMENT**
14016 State Route 31, Suite 101
Albion, NY 14411
(585) 589-3278

CONTACT INFORMATION:

Kaitlin Pettine, MPH, MCHES®
Director of Health Promotion/Public Information Officer
Kaitlin.Pettine@co.genesee.ny.us
Paul Pettit, MSL
Public Health Director

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

You Are Not Alone. Help is Available.

While the holidays can be a time for joy and celebration for many, it can be a time that is lonely, sad and stressful for others. This can be particularly true for people living with mental health and substance use conditions.

“It is important for folks to focus on self-care and seek support,” stated Paul Pettit, Public Health Director for the Genesee and Orleans County Health Departments (GO Health). “We encourage individuals to prioritize their mental well-being and connect with the resources available in our communities.”

Here are some strategies to support your mental health:

- **Connect with others for support.** Meaningful connections are critical to our mental health. Make time for the important relationships in your life. Connect with yourself through self-care. When you are ready for help, reach out and ask for help. Help is available.
- **Take care of your body.** Eat healthy. Be physically active. Get enough sleep. Avoid alcohol and drugs. Spend time outside. These things may help to keep your mental health on track.
- **Take care of your mind.** Write down your feelings. Take deep breaths to calm your mind and slow your heart rate. Celebrate your small accomplishments, which can lead to larger goals.

“It is okay to not be okay,” stated Lynda Battaglia, Director of Mental Health and Community Services for Genesee County. “Help is always available if you or someone you know is having a hard time around the holiday, or those struggling with mental health, substance use or feeling overwhelmed.”

“There are people in the community that are available to help,” stated Danielle Figura, Director of the Orleans County Mental Health Department. “If you or someone you know is feeling

lonely or missing someone, reach out to your local mental health department or someone you trust.”

The following are some mental health and substance use resources available:

Genesee County Mental Health- 585-344-1421

Orleans County Mental Health- 585-589-7066

Genesee and Orleans County Care & Crisis Line- 585-283-5200

988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline- Dial 988 or visit [988Lifeline.org](https://988lifeline.org).

Veterans Crisis Line- Dial 988 (press 1)

SAMHSA’s National Helpline- 1-800-662-HELP (4357) – A confidential, free 24-hour that can provide referrals to local treatment facilities and support groups.

To find a local treatment facility, visit FindTreatment.gov

To find support for issues with mental health, drugs, or alcohol, visit Samhsa.gov/find-support

For more information on Health Department programs and services, visit GOHealthNY.org or call your respective health department at:

- Genesee County: 585-344-2580 ext. 5555
- Orleans County: 585-589-3278

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