



STATE OF NEW JERSEY
EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT

Proclamation

WHEREAS, mental health is an essential part of overall health and well-being; and affects one's physical health, relationships and ability to thrive; and

WHEREAS, mental health, as defined by the National Institutes of Health, includes our emotional, psychological and social well-being; affects how we think, feel and act as we cope with life; helps determine how we handle stress, relate to others and make choices and is important at every stage of life from childhood to adolescence, to adulthood and in aging; and

WHEREAS, the COVID-19 pandemic has had an imposing impact on the mental health of the citizens of New Jersey as many individuals have experienced isolation, disruption of daily routines, sickness, grief, trauma, job loss, increased substance use, food and housing instability, which has significantly increased the need for mental health services; and

WHEREAS, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, one in four adults has reported experiencing symptoms of anxiety or depression directly related to the pandemic; and

WHEREAS, the emerging science and research on toxic stress and adverse childhood experiences evidence a growing public health crisis with implications for social service, educational, juvenile justice, criminal justice, and health care systems; and

WHEREAS, the mental health of youth is worsening and the suicide rate of adolescents has significantly increased, causing a public health crisis that requires a strong, multi-faceted and swift response; and

WHEREAS, people with mental illness are often: over-represented in the criminal justice system; reside in substandard housing or institutions; under-employed; lacking access to basic needs; experiencing severe socio-economic inequalities and disadvantage; and impacted by co-occurring substance use and comorbid physical health conditions; and

WHEREAS, New Jersey is successfully building a robust array of effective, responsive and integrated services and supports for children, youth and adults; and

WHEREAS, New Jersey recognizes that an understanding of a person or community's mental health includes understanding and growing opportunities to understand and heal traumatic effects; and

WHEREAS, with effective implementation of evidence-based and promising practices, all individuals living with mental health conditions have the opportunity and potential to recover and thrive in the community; and

WHEREAS, New Jersey is committed to providing children and adults with access to a behavioral health system that offers comprehensive, integrated, coordinated, person-centered treatment services and supports that are trauma-responsive, competently and compassionately delivered; and

WHEREAS, New Jersey is making great strides in reducing stigma and discrimination associated with a mental health diagnosis; in instilling hope, providing access to healthcare, and a wide array of community-based human and social services that help to create opportunities for those with mental illness to live a healthy, dignified and fulfilling life;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Philip D. Murphy, Governor of the State of New Jersey, do hereby proclaim:

MAY 2022
AS
MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS MONTH

in New Jersey.



GIVEN, under my hand and the Great Seal of the State of New Jersey, this twenty-sixth day of April in the year two thousand twenty-two, the two hundred forty-sixth year of the Independence of the United States.

Richard J. DeLeon
Lt. GOVERNOR

Philip D. Murphy
GOVERNOR