



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, activities such as exercise, mindfulness activities, social connections, 'unplugging' from news and social media, pursuing a hobby, spending time in nature, and self-care may support mental health; and

WHEREAS, in instances for which wellness activities are not helpful, it is important to note that professional help may be necessary to stabilize and or to monitor a person's mental health; and

WHEREAS, one in five United States adults will experience a mental illness, and one in five children, either currently or at some point during their life, will have or have had a seriously debilitating mental illness, according to the CDC; and

WHEREAS, rates of anxiety, depression, and other mental illness conditions have risen since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, which has significantly increased the need for holistic and specific mental health services, according to the National Institute of Mental Health; and

WHEREAS, a greater understanding from emerging science and research on toxic stress and adverse childhood experiences has informed an understanding of the worsening mental health and suicide rates of youth, affirming that a multi-faceted and swift response is needed to address this growing public health crisis; and

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

WHEREAS, New Jersey has successfully built and continues to expand its robust array of effective, responsive, integrated services and supports for children, youth and adults, and recognizes the need for opportunities that allow them to heal from trauma; and

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

WHEREAS, New Jersey has implemented and incorporated 988, the national three-digit dialing code for anyone having thoughts of suicide and experiencing a mental health or substance abuse crisis; and

WHEREAS, New Jersey is making great strides in reducing discrimination associated with a mental health diagnosis by instilling hope and by providing access to healthcare and to a wide array of community-based, human and social services that assist individuals with mental illness to live a dignified life with the supports and services they need to thrive;

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

MAY 2024

AS

MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS MONTH

in New Jersey.



Lt. GOVERNOR

GOVERNOR

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