

Community Guide to
Hope

May is Mental Health Awareness Month



**BEHAVIORAL
HEALTH & RECOVERY
SERVICES**

Your Guide to Mental Health Issues and Care

BREAKING the STIGMA

The COVID-19 pandemic has had profound impacts on the mental health of people of all ages, and pushed the need to talk more openly about mental health and substance use to the forefront of public conversation. Now more than ever, it is critical to reduce the stigma around mental health struggles that commonly prevents individuals from seeking help.

Whether it's ourselves or someone that we know, most of us will be touched by mental illness or substance use in some way during our lifetimes.

Although treatment options, like developing coping skills, therapy and medication, can help a person manage their symptoms, the National Alliance of Mental Illness (NAMI) reports that less than half of adults in the United States experiencing mental health concerns actually get the help they need.

Despite the positive direction that public perception of mental health is heading, the stigma surrounding it is still causing some people to suffer in silence. NAMI reports that most people who live with



1 in 5
America adults
live with a
**mental health
condition**

Source: NAMI

mental illness have, at some point, been blamed for their condition or called names. They also say their symptoms have been referred to as “a phase” or something they can control “if they only tried.”

NAMI says stigma can cause someone to feel ashamed for something that is out of their control. Worst of all, it may prevent people from seeking the help they need.

There may be various reasons why people react negatively when their loved ones share their mental health experience with them. Mental Health America says it could be a lack of information and awareness, concern for how the person will be treated by others, or being unable to relate to this person's experience.

Mental health is essential to everyone's overall health and well-being, and mental illnesses are common and treatable. Ending stigma begins with you. Mental Health America says learning and listening to someone's experience with mental illness goes a long way towards acceptance and healing.

What YOU can do to help end stigma

- ▶ Talk openly about mental health
- ▶ Educate yourself and others
- ▶ Be conscious of language
- ▶ Encourage equality between physical and mental illness
- ▶ Show compassion for those with mental illness
- ▶ Choose empowerment over shame
- ▶ Be honest about treatment
- ▶ Let the media know when they're being stigmatizing
- ▶ Don't harbor self-stigma



When STRESS becomes more

It's a feeling most people have experienced – that nervous twitch that typically signals you are stressed out about something. But how do you know if you're dealing with a small bout of stress or if it is anxiety?

The words are often used interchangeably. Both share many of the same physical symptoms, such as increased heart rate, muscle tension or rapid breathing. In both cases, your body is releasing hormones to trigger these symptoms.

Stress is a normal reaction to a demanding situation. It could be that last minute deadline at work, handling an issue with family or sitting in rush hour traffic.

However, chronic stress can often lead to negative health outcomes. Physically, it can cause headaches, high blood pressure, heart disease, obesity, diabetes and stroke. Chronic stress has also been linked to mental health issues, including depression, anxiety and post traumatic stress disorder. It can also lead to unhealthy behaviors, such as under- or overeating, substance use and social withdrawal.

Anxiety is a condition characterized by feelings of apprehension or unexplained thoughts of impending doom. Another way to tell the difference between stress and an anxiety disorder is noticing how long your feelings of stress last. When stress lingers for days or weeks and prevents you from carrying out daily activities, then you may be experiencing anxiety. Other signs include avoiding certain places or situations for fear of what might happen, or even feeling anxious about the fact that you're anxious.

If you are having these concerns, you are not alone. Anxiety disorders are common and manageable. If you are feeling overwhelmed by stress or anxiety, it's OK to reach out to a mental health professional to help you manage your feelings.

Treatment options, like therapy or medication, can help you work out coping techniques to manage stress, address concerns of an anxiety disorder or manage the physical symptoms of stress and anxiety.

Source: Mental Health America

TOP 10

STRESS RELIEVERS

- ▶ Identify what triggers your stress or anxiety
- ▶ Count to 10 before you speak or react
- ▶ Exercise or do something active
- ▶ Take a few slow, deep breaths
- ▶ Meditate
- ▶ Sleep on it and respond tomorrow
- ▶ Walk away from the situation for a while
- ▶ Break down big problems into smaller parts
- ▶ Turn on some relaxing music or an inspirational podcast.
- ▶ Do something to help someone else

Source: American Heart Association

More Access to treatment

Reaching out for help for a mental illness or substance use disorder can be scary and full of uncertainty. However, taking that step is extremely brave and can help someone begin their recovery journey.

To provide another access point for someone with an addiction to get connected to treatment, Kern Behavioral Health and Recovery Services (KernBHRS) opened the county's first two Recovery Stations, located in Bakersfield and Delano, in June 2020. The Recovery Stations are peer-led recovery facilities that provides a safe space for a person to recover from drug or alcohol intoxication and receive connection to needed mental health and/or substance use services.

"The facility will help to fill a gap within our current continuum of care. Now individuals who find themselves intoxicated have a place to recover safely and also receive the vital access to mental health and substance use services as well as other community resources," said Ana Olvera, Substance Use Disorder Administrator for KernBHRS.

The Recovery Station model blends the elements of a sobering station with the use of peer staffing with the goal to help begin a person on their recovery journey. Similar to a sobering station, a person brought to the facility by designated agencies and providers will be given a chance to recover safely and recuperate. Once sober, staff will meet with each person to connect them with information on available behavioral health services and needed resources in the community. Staff will also follow-up with that person after their stay at the facility.

Both facilities only serve individuals over 18 years old. Those individuals must be transported by local law enforcement or other appropriate agencies. Telecare is contracted to provide the facility's services.

The Recovery Stations are financed through the Mental Health Services Act's Innovation Project funding.

For more information on the Recovery Stations, please contact info@kernbhers.org.



Need Help?

Call the 24-hour Substance Use
Access Line
866-266-4898

Creating **HEALTHY ROUTINES**

With everything that we take care of daily, it's easy to get overwhelmed. By creating routines, you can organize each day in such a way that taking care of tasks and ourselves becomes a pattern that makes it easier to get things done without having to think hard about them.

- 1 Create the routine that is right for you
- 2 Start small by changing one thing at a time
- 3 Add to your existing habits
- 4 Modify some of your habits for healthier ones
- 5 Plan ahead in case life gets hectic
- 6 Make time for things that you enjoy
- 7 Reward yourself for small victories
- 8 Don't beat yourself up if you miss a day

Suicide Prevention is EVERYONE'S BUSINESS
#BETHE1TO: **SAVE A LIFE**

Ask
Be there
Keep them safe
Follow-up
Help them connect

Available 24/7

1-800-991-5272

H O P E



is only one call away

May is #MentalHealthAwarenessMonth

Whether it's ourselves or someone we love, most of us will be touched by **mental illness** or **substance use** in some way during our lifetimes. During May, let's **Come together | Raise awareness | End the stigma**

Visit www.kernbhers.org/community for more details
Masks and social distance guidelines will be required



- 3** **Kick-Off Lighting Ceremony**
7:45 p.m. • @KernBHRS on Facebook
- 7-9** **Art in the Park**
Featuring artwork by Creative Crossing
Enjoy a unique art experience at the Bluffs
- 7** **Mindfulness & Self-Care Workshop**
3-5 p.m. • Free to attend
RSVP to namikern@yahoo.com
- 13** **Mindfulness & Self-Care Workshop**
3-5 p.m. • Free to attend
RSVP to namikern@yahoo.com
- 13** **Mental Health Resource Fair**
3 p.m. – Suicide Prevention Forum via Zoom
4 p.m. – Drive-thru giveaway,
1331 Cecil Ave., Delano
Hosted by Child Guidance & Delano High
- 14** **Youth Mental Health Symposium**
1-2 p.m. • Register at Eventbrite
Hosted by KernBHRS, Kern County
Superintendent of Schools, Assemblyman
Vince Fong & Kaiser Permanente

- 14** **Advocacy for American Indian Health Equity in Kern County**
8 a.m. • Hodels's Country Dining, 5917 Knudsen Dr.
RSVP to baihpcommunity@bakersfieldaihp.org
Hosted by Bakersfield American Indian Health Project
- 14** **Goodie Bag Giveaway**
2-4 p.m. • 661 Roberts Lane
Hosted by Child Guidance
- 17** **NAMI In Our Own Voice**
5:30-7 p.m. • Free to attend
RSVP to namikern@yahoo.com
- 19** **Appreciation Awards Ceremony**
Honoring the outstanding individuals
in our mental health community
Watch at 1 p.m. @KernBHRS on Facebook
- 20** **Here for Health Pit Stop event**
9 a.m. – Noon • 3201 F St.
A partnership with CityServe & Dignity Health
- TUES** **Remember to wear lime green every Tuesday in May to raise awareness!**
Hosted by KernBHRS & Kern High School District



ART *in the* PARK

May 7-9, 2021
Sunrise to Sunset
Panorama Park

Since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic last year, more and more people are discovering how healing art can be to alleviate stress during traumatic circumstances. Studies have proven being creative, regardless of the medium used, can boost confidence and resilience as well as relieve symptoms of depression, anxiety and stress. KernBHRS partnered with local art group Creative Crossing Co-Creato to bring Art in the Park, a unique art experience to the iconic Bluffs at Panorama Park for Mental Health Awareness Month.

“The past year of COVID and constant changes in our lives has increased the need to raise awareness for mental health and those facing a diagnosis,” said Dr. Christina Rajlal, Mental Health Services ACT Coordinator for KernBHRS. “One of our main goals is to end the stigma associated with mental health and substance use recovery. It’s important to know it’s OK to feel anxiety, stress or whatever else they’re feeling, and

that there are resources available.” Fifteen separate art pieces will be placed at the Bluffs, each centered around key mental health issues in both English and Spanish. The artwork will be installed at Panorama Park early on May 7 and the public will be able to stroll through the park from sunrise to sunset each day. Individuals and families are encouraged to also bring their own art supplies to create their own masterpieces. Masks are required and everyone is expected to follow social distancing guidelines.

“It is always exciting to collaborate with KernBHRS, bringing awareness through the arts. KernBHRS came to us with the theme ‘Tools to Thrive’ and I reflected on the mental health maintenance necessary for a thriving mind. I thought about the contrast between a mental health ‘breakdown’ and a ‘breakthrough’ and believe that the difference lies in one’s perspective,” said Creative Crossing Co-Creato’s Director of Design, Kei Deragon.

Virtual YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH SYMPOSIUM

The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the importance of discussing mental health issues, especially for our youth. They have faced isolation, loneliness and stress as they have had to navigate distance learning, stay at home orders and more.

KernBHRS is partnering with the Kern County Superintendent of Schools, Kern High School District, Assemblyman Vince Fong and Kaiser Permanente to host the first Virtual Youth Mental Health Symposium. The event will highlight local mental health resources available for students, raise awareness and explain the importance of working to end the stigma against mental health in celebration of Mental Health Awareness Month.

The event is free to attend. Register at <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/virtual-youth-mental-health-symposium-tickets-150968106671>.

May 14, 2021
1-2 p.m.
Via Zoom



With the on-the-go lifestyle that many people have, not everyone makes their health and well-being a priority. A new event will now make it easy for our community to take care both of their mental and physical health at the same time.

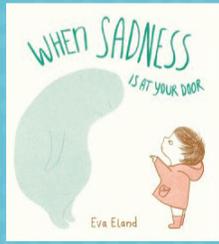
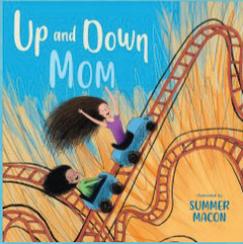
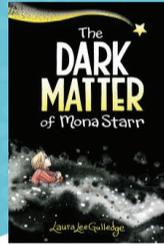
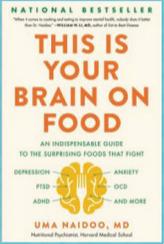
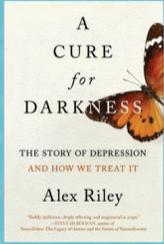
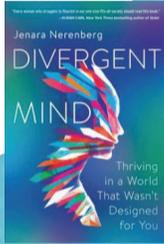
Hosted by CityServe and in collaboration with Dignity Health and KernBHRS, the Here for Health Pit Stop event will be held Thursday, May 20. The event combines the ease of a drive-thru event with a traditional health fair. Attendees will be able to park their vehicles

and walk to booths to receive information on local mental health, substance use and community resources, sign up for services, including Medi-Cal, Covered California, Medicare and CalFresh, and receive free health screenings. Food boxes will be distributed as attendees leave while supplies last. The Here for Health Pit Stop event will be held from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m., at 3201 F St. Attendees are encouraged to enter from 30th Street. Masks will be required and social distance guidelines will be followed at the event.



Mental Health Awareness Month

Discover titles in the Kern County Library's collection. Visit KernLibrary.org



A partnership between the Kern County Library and Kern County Behavioral Health & Recovery Services to highlight the importance of Mental Health Awareness.



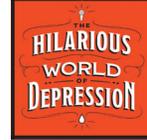
Top Podcast for Mental Health



Mental
Ending the Stigma of mental health and replacing it with honest compassionate dialogue



LatinX Therapy
Cultural and commonly stigmatized themes will be discussed with LatinX mental health professionals. In Spanish & English.



The Hilarious World of Depression
Conversations with comedians about how they've dealt with depression & other mental health conditions.



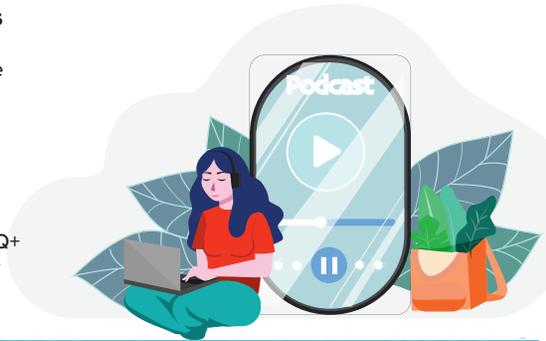
Therapy for Black Girls
BIPOC women explore their mental health & acknowledge it's okay to seek support.



Living in This Queer Body
Powerful outlet for the LGBTQ+ community speaking on their communities mental and physical health.



Podcast available on Apple Podcast & Spotify



Virtual Bilingual Storytime

Mental Health Awareness Month

May 28 @ 10:30am

English and Spanish speakers alike are invited to enjoy a bilingual family storytime with stories, songs, and fun. This special storytime will feature stories about managing our emotions, include a breathwork exercise, and we'll learn more about the services offered at Kern County Behavioral Health & Recovery Services.

@KernCountyLibrary



A partnership between the Kern County Library and Kern County Behavioral Health & Recovery Services to highlight the importance of Mental Health Awareness.



Book Talk Bakersfield

May 5

Special Episode: Mental Health Awareness Month

Join Fahra, Jasmin, and a special guest from Kern County Behavioral Health and Recovery Services as we discuss the importance of mental health, resources available to Kern County residents, and about everything we've been reading, watching, and listening to.

Episodes are available on Spotify and Apple Podcasts, as well as on the Beale Memorial Library Facebook page and KernLibrary.org.



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Mental Health MOVIE CHOICES



A BEAUTIFUL MIND

PG-13 – Based on a true story, this movie follows the challenges that John Forbes Nash Jr., a mathematical savant, experiences in his life due to schizophrenia.

THE SOLOIST

PG-13 – Based on a true story, a journalist begins writing about Nathaniel Ayers, a musician who developed schizophrenia and became homeless.



GOOD WILL HUNTING

R – Will Hunting, a janitor at MIT, spends his spare time solving incredible puzzles that the other college students can't seem to figure out. However, he can't shake the impact his abusive childhood has had on his life. Through therapy, the movie follows how Will successfully deals with his depression.

INFINITELY POLAR BEAR

R – Cam, a father with bipolar disorder, becomes the sole caregiver for his two daughters while his wife goes away to graduate school. He faces many challenges, but the film provides a meaningful portrayal of how families can be impacted by mental illness.



THE PERKS OF BEING A WALLFLOWER

PG-13 – This coming-of-age movie shows the highs and lows of growing up with mental illness through the eyes of Charlie. He starts high school isolated and anxious, but quickly meets friends who bring joy into his life.

IT'S KIND OF A FUNNY STORY

PG-13 – This movie follows a 16-year-old who checks himself into a psychiatric ward due to his depression and suicidal ideation, and the surprising realization he finds inside.



SILVER LININGS PLAYBOOK

R – Pat Solatano moves back into his parent's home after a stay in the hospital to treat his bipolar disorder. To win his wife back, Pat meets Tiffany who offers to help him if he becomes her ballroom dance partner.

MADNESS OF KING GEORGE

PG-13 – This movie depicts a very realistic portrayal of how King George III of Great Britain suffered with porphyria and later acute psychosis.



SOUL

PG – Joe Gardner, a middle-school band teacher, gets the chance of a lifetime to play at the best jazz club in town. But one misstep lands him in another realm where he really learns about passion, grief and life.

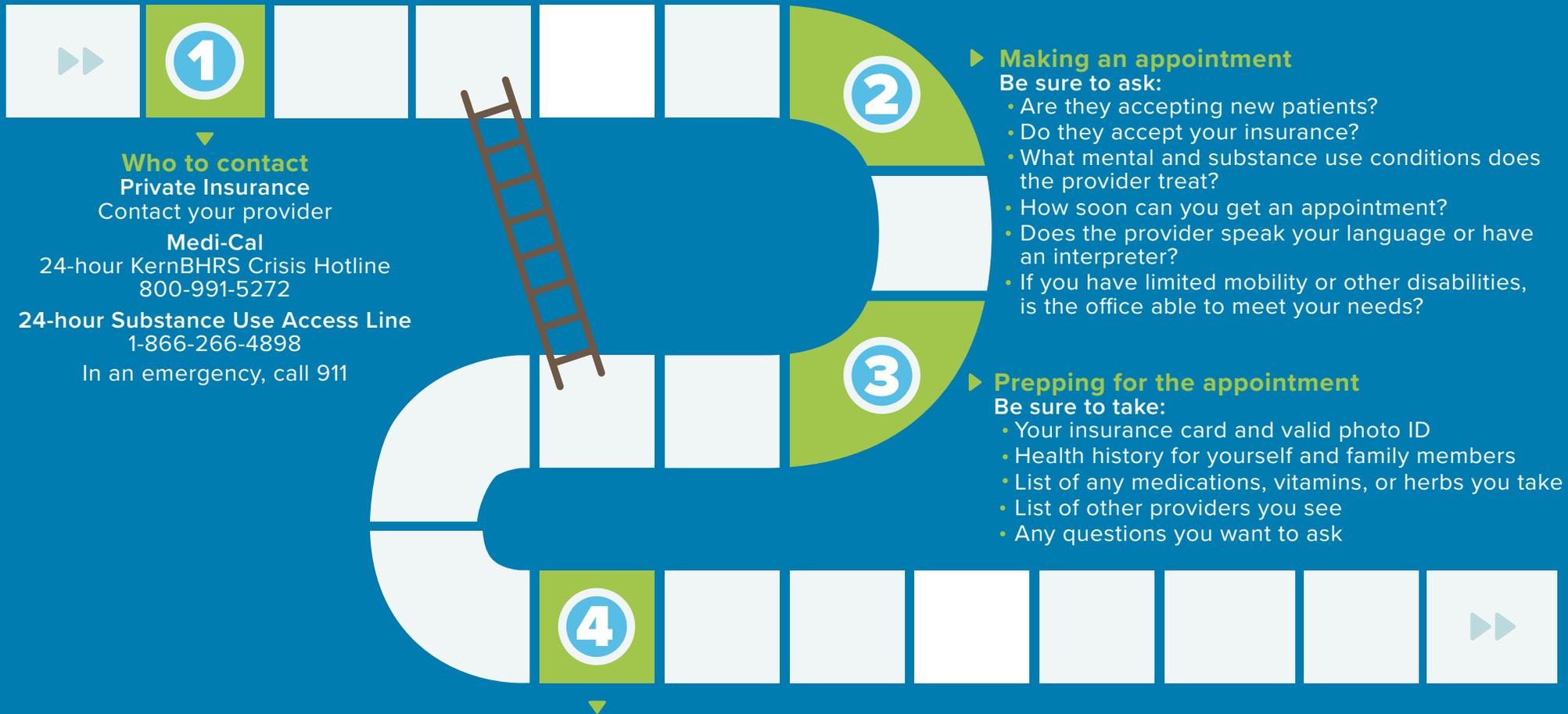
INSIDE OUT

PG – Emotions Joy, Sadness, Anger, Fear and Disgust learn to work together to help Riley adjust to her family's move to San Francisco.



HOW TO *Connect* SERVICES AND TREATMENT

Taking care of your mental health is just as important as your physical health to your overall well-being. If you have changes in your mood or behavior or your alcohol or drug use causes problems, contact your health care provider. Remember, **help** is available and **recovery** is possible.



If you are not sure what insurance you have, you can call our Crisis Hotline to be connected to services and resources.

Things may be *different*
but we're still *here*

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the
Consumer Family Learning Center
(CFLC) is open **VIRTUALLY**.

To see which classes and groups
are available, visit
www.kernbhhs/cflc
or call **661-868-7550**

