

County of Buncombe

Proclamation

Mental Health Awareness Month

WHEREAS, nearly one in five adults and one in five adolescents in the United States live with a mental illness; and

WHEREAS, mental health impacts a person's emotional, social, environmental, financial and overall well-being, with significant disparities among racially and ethnically diverse communities; and

WHEREAS, one third of the United States population lives in a county designated as a mental health professional shortage area; and

WHEREAS, suicide is the leading cause of death for 15-to-24-year-olds in Buncombe County, with an 11% increase in emergency room visits for suicidal thoughts for all people in 2022 from 2019; and

WHEREAS, an estimated 56% of those detained in our detention center self-reported a mental health diagnosis, often with co-occurring substance use disorders; and

WHEREAS, over 51% of adults in North Carolina with a mental illness and over 61% of youth with major depression did not receive treatment in the past year; and

WHEREAS, Buncombe County and all counties serve as a safety net for residents in need, through first responders, medical & behavioral health clinics, housing supports, and detention centers.; and

WHEREAS, Buncombe County supports programs that raise awareness and address social determinants of health, in order, to reduce criminal recidivism, keep families intact, reduce the negative impacts on health and increase our reach by bringing services out to the community.

NOW, THEREFORE, LET IT BE PROCLAIMED, that Buncombe County Board of Commissioners declares May as Mental Health Awareness Month in Buncombe County to highlight the critical role of the County in providing crucial behavioral health services and resources to its residents; and Be It Further

PROCLAIMED, The Buncombe County Board of Commissioners continues its commitment to partner with our community members to ensure that all mental health services are accessible, valuable, and culturally appropriate for all residents.

Adopted on this 16th day of May, 2023.