

MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS MONTH

WHEREAS, Buncombe County recognizes the bravery and resilience of those living with mental health conditions, and we show our gratitude for the dedicated mental health professionals and devoted loved ones who stand by them every step of the way; and

WHEREAS, Mental Health Awareness Month was established in 1949 to raise awareness about mental illness, research, and treatments, reduce the stigma associated with mental illness, and celebrate recovery from mental illness; and

WHEREAS, Mental Health Awareness Month helps people recognize the ways mental illness impacts their lives, connects people to available services, and highlights ways to advocate; and

WHEREAS, in 2021 approximately thirty percent of Buncombe County residents were receiving treatment for mental health; and

WHEREAS, The Buncombe County Child Fatality Prevention Team raised awareness that suicide is currently the leading cause of death for 15-to-24-year-olds in Buncombe County and supports initiatives to raise awareness for the 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline; and

WHEREAS, Buncombe County continues to support access to Mental Health Resources for individuals who are uninsured or under-insured; and

WHEREAS, Buncombe County is currently collaborating with other organizations to support initiatives around building youth resiliency and supporting local crisis centers; and

WHEREAS, Buncombe County services connect those in need to mental health services; and

WHEREAS, through our values of respect, integrity, collaboration, honesty, and equity, each one of us has a role to play in changing the narrative and ending the stigmatization of mental health issues.

NOW, THEREFORE, the Buncombe County Board of Commissioners proclaims May 2024 to be **MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS MONTH** and urges our community to join together in observing Mental Health Awareness Month. We can start by showing compassion, so everyone feels free to ask for help and learn the warning signs of emotional distress and suicide.

Brownie Newman, Chairman
Buncombe County Board of Commissioners