



MENTAL HEALTH

AWARENESS MONTH

Turning Awareness Into Action



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BHS A.S.S.I.S.T. Spotlight

May 2025

Your EAP is a free and confidential service, which provides assessment and short-term counseling for a variety of mental health, substance abuse and work/life related issues. To learn more about your available benefits, contact your BHS Care Coordinator at 800.245.1150.



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Awareness Month

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Embracing Gratitude-Fueled
Self-Care

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Children's Mental Health:
Facts, Warning Signs and
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Recipe: Traditional Guacamole

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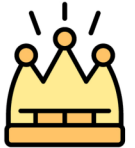


Turning Awareness into Action During Mental Health Awareness Month

In a world where millions are impacted by mental health challenges, raising awareness is only the first step. It's time to turn understanding into real support, compassion into meaningful action, and good intentions into lasting change.

Embrace Gratitude-Fueled Self-Care:

Self-care is essential for both physical and mental health, and a gratitude mindset enhances it. By focusing on what we're grateful for, we prioritize well-being, manage stress, and replenish our energy. Small acts of self-care, rooted in gratitude, help us feel balanced and more connected, nurturing both ourselves and others.



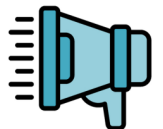
Engage Your Community:

Checking in with those around you is an essential part of supporting mental health in your community. Make time to connect with friends, family, and colleagues, and be present in those conversations. Listening and offering support can help others feel valued and understood. Pay attention to those who might be struggling and offer a caring ear or helping hand.



Advocate For Change:

Advocating for mental health and educating others is key to breaking down stigma. Misconceptions make it difficult for people to speak up about their struggles, leading to negative impacts on well-being and productivity. Leaders must start the conversation to inspire openness and support, creating a culture where individuals feel safe to seek help.



During Mental Health Awareness Month, take a step towards lasting change. Reach out, learn, and take action. Call BHS at 800-245-1150 to speak to your designated Care Coordinator or visit www.BehavioralHealthSystems.com to learn more about your benefits and options for support.

Embracing Gratitude-Fueled Self-Care

Gratitude is not just a positive emotion—it's a powerful form of self-care. It's the practice of recognizing and appreciating the gifts in your life, both big and small, and acknowledging that they are not owed to you, but are blessings. In a world where it's easy to take things for granted, gratitude shifts your perspective. It helps you cultivate a deeper appreciation for what you have, leading to increased joy, energy, and overall wellbeing. Regularly practicing gratitude can significantly boost your resilience, improve your health, and enhance your happiness.

Research has shown that the more frequently and intensely you experience gratitude, the greater its positive effects on your life. The benefits are amplified when you focus on a wide range of life circumstances you're grateful for, and when you recognize the people who enrich your life.

To weave gratitude into your daily routine and practice self-care, consider these simple exercises:

- **Start each day with a gratitude session:** Take two minutes each morning to pause in a quiet space and reflect on the people, experiences, and blessings you're thankful for. Remind yourself that these are gifts, not obligations.
- **Keep a gratitude journal:** Make it a habit to write down one new thing you're grateful for every day. Don't repeat entries—this encourages you to notice and appreciate the smaller, often overlooked gifts in your life.

- **Create a gratitude affirmation or prayer:** Develop a short, daily affirmation or prayer that reminds you of the gifts you have received, recognizing that even though you've worked hard for them, life's blessings could have unfolded differently.
- **Reframe challenges as gifts:** When facing difficulties, practice viewing them through the lens of gratitude. This mindset shift helps you see challenges as opportunities for growth, turning them into valuable learning experiences.

By consistently practicing gratitude, you're not just boosting your mood and health, but also nurturing your resilience in a meaningful way. This practice helps you develop a more positive mindset, allowing you to face challenges with greater strength and emotional balance. Over time, gratitude becomes a powerful tool for building inner peace and enhancing your overall sense of wellbeing, helping you navigate life's ups and downs with a deeper sense of calm and clarity. As you continue to focus on the positive aspects of life, you create a foundation for growth and emotional stability. Gratitude shifts your perspective, encouraging you to embrace each moment and find value in the smallest joys.

Call BHS at 800-245-1150 or visit www.BehavioralHealthSystems.com to learn more about your benefits and options for support. During Mental Health Awareness Month, take a step towards lasting change.



Children's Mental Health: Facts, Warning Signs and Support

The National Alliance on Mental Illness reports that 1 in 5 children, ages 13-18, will face a serious mental health issue, with an 8-10 year delay in intervention. Suicide is the third leading cause of death for youth 10 and older, with 90% having an underlying mental illness. Post-Covid studies show rising rates of depression, anxiety, and social isolation in children. Below are key facts, warning signs, impacts, and resources to support children's mental health.

Warning Signs:

- Decline in school performance
- Mood Swings that affects relationships
- Harmful out-of-control behavior
- Feeling Sad or Withdrawn excessively
- Extreme Difficulty in Concentration
- Eating Habits; significant weight loss or gain

Mental Health Conditions in Children:

- **ADHD** - Attentional problems
- **Bipolar Disorder** - Depression and high energy
- **Conduct Disorder** - Behavioral problems
- **Depression** - Sadness
- **Grief** - Coping with loss
- **Substance Use** - Drinking and using drugs

For information and referrals, contact a mental health professional or your school's guidance counselor for local resources available. If you suspect a problem, consult a pediatrician or mental health professional.

How To Support Kid's Mental Health?

- Promote good physical health through nutritious food, adequate sleep, exercise, and a supportive environment.
- Offer unconditional love, nurture confidence and self-esteem, and encourage play, which fosters creativity, problem-solving, and self-control.

Role of Schools:

Schools are crucial in early intervention by fostering a safe environment, addressing bullying and harassment promptly, promoting social and emotional learning, and connecting students to the appropriate mental health services.

Role of Family:

Caretakers should focus on teaching self-control, not controlling the child. Be firm, kind, and realistic with expectations, and criticize the behavior, not the child.

RECIPE: Traditional Guacamole • 10 Minute Prep Time

Ingredients • 2 avocados, peeled and pitted • 1 cup chopped tomatoes • ¼ cup chopped onion • ¼ cup chopped cilantro • 2 tablespoons lemon juice • 1 jalapeno pepper, seeded and minced (Optional) • salt and ground black pepper to taste

Instructions • Mash avocados in a bowl until creamy • Mix tomatoes, onion, cilantro, lemon juice, and jalapeño pepper into mashed avocado until well combined. Season with salt and pepper.

