

MAY IS

MENTAL HEALTH Month



You matter. You are not alone.

Awareness • Support • Hope



May marks Mental Health Awareness Month, an annual observance established by Mental Health America in 1949 to elevate the importance of mental wellbeing, increase public understanding, reduce stigma, and promote support for individuals affected by mental health conditions. For more than seven decades, this national movement has served as a powerful reminder that mental health is essential to overall health.

Why Do We Support Mental Health Awareness Month?

At TEECH and FSSRI, we recognize that mental health awareness is not just a campaign—it is a critical step toward building healthier individuals, stronger families, and more resilient communities. Awareness creates space for honest conversations, breaks down long-standing barriers, and encourages people to seek help without fear or judgment. By normalizing discussions around mental health, we foster empathy, deepen understanding, and contribute to a culture where mental wellbeing is prioritized and protected.

Key Objectives of Mental Health Awareness Month

Mental Health Awareness Month continues to drive impact through several important goals:

- Educating the public about mental health conditions and their wide-reaching impact
- Reducing stigma by encouraging open dialogue and fostering acceptance
- Emphasizing the importance of early intervention and timely access to care
- Sharing vital mental health resources, including support groups and crisis services
- Building community, solidarity, and connection to reduce isolation
- Advocating for stronger mental health policies, increased funding, and equitable access to services
- Promoting mental wellbeing, prevention strategies, and self-care as essential components of overall health

Our Commitment



We support Mental Health Awareness Month because it directly aligns with our mission to ensure that mental wellbeing is accessible to everyone, everywhere. Through education, advocacy, and community engagement, we remain committed to advancing conversations that matter and creating pathways to care that transform lives.

Call to Action



This month, we invite you to act with us. Start a conversation about mental health with someone you trust. Share resources within your community. Participate in local or virtual awareness events. Most importantly, check in—on yourself and others. If you or someone you know needs support, don't wait. Reach out to a trusted professional, connect with a support network, or access available mental health services. Together, we can break the stigma, build understanding, and create a future where mental wellbeing is a priority for a Progress is not just measured in milestones, but in lives touched and futures transformed. As you scroll down, we invite you to explore our latest Impact Report—where our commitment comes to life through measurable outcomes, meaningful stories, and the communities we continue to serve.



FAR SOUTHSIDE ROSC INITIATIVE (FSSRI) FY26 COMMUNITY IMPACT REPORT



BUILDING HEALTHIER COMMUNITIES. RESTORING LIVES. STRENGTHENING FUTURES.

FSSRI is a community-driven initiative that strengthens recovery and reentry systems of care, reduces stigma, and promotes wellness, opportunity, and long-term stability for individuals, families, and our communities.

TEECH



COMMUNITIES SERVED

West Englewood, Auburn Gresham, Beverly, Washington Heights, Mount Greenwood, Morgan Park, Roseland, Calumet Heights, Pullman, South Deering, Hegewisch, Oak Lawn, Evergreen Park, Robbins, and Dolton, IL.



COMMUNITY NEED

Our communities continue to face high rates of substance use, overdose risk, and barriers to recovery—especially among justice-involved individuals. Stigma, limited access to employment, housing instability, and gaps in coordinated care systems impact long-term recovery outcomes.

FY26 TOP PRIORITIES



1 EXPAND RECOVERY & REENTRY SUPPORT SERVICES

- Provide coordinated care, housing navigation, and peer support
- Strengthen warm handoffs between providers
- Increase access to basic needs (food, transportation, employment)



2 INCREASE DIVERSION & JUSTICE SYSTEM COLLABORATION

- Expand referrals from parole, probation, and IDOC
- Strengthen alternatives to incarceration through treatment pathways
- Support successful diversion program completion



3 STRENGTHEN COMMUNITY COORDINATION & WORKFORCE PATHWAYS

- Expand job readiness and employment connections
- Increase partnerships across service providers
- Reduce stigma and improve community reintegration outcomes

FY26 IMPACT & OUTCOMES



83

INDIVIDUALS SERVED
through coordinated recovery, reentry, and stabilization support



64

INDIVIDUALS REFERRED
through parole and probation systems



45

INDIVIDUALS COMPLETED DIVERSION PROGRAMS
>70% completion rate



9

INDIVIDUALS ACTIVELY ENGAGED
in ongoing recovery services



8

INDIVIDUALS CONNECTED
to treatment or hospital care



16

INDIVIDUALS CONNECTED
to workforce or structured programming



6

INDIVIDUALS RETURNED
to substance use



1

OVERDOSE REPORTED



COMMUNITY PARTNERS



RECOVERY HOMES

It's About Change, Claudia & Eddie's, In the Spirit



TREATMENT PROVIDERS

Gateway Foundation Treatment Center, Trilogy Behavioral Health, MAS



COMMUNITY-BASED ORGANIZATIONS

Alliance Care 360, Brighter Behavior Choices and other local CBOs



CRIMINAL JUSTICE PARTNERS

Cook County Sheriff, Illinois Department of Corrections (IDOC), Probation & Parole



COMMUNITY STAKEHOLDERS & INDIVIDUALS WITH LIVED EXPERIENCE

Residents, advocates, and peers with lived experience



SPECIAL POPULATIONS SERVED

- Justice-involved individuals (parole, probation, IDOC referrals)
- Individuals with substance use and co-occurring mental health needs
- Returning citizens facing barriers to employment and housing
- Individuals at risk of return to use or overdose



SYSTEM-LEVEL IMPACT



Created direct referral pathways to reduce enforcement to treatment.



Implemented warm handoffs between providers, improving continuity of care.



Increased coordination between recovery homes, healthcare providers, and justice systems.



Expanded access to treatment and alternatives to incarceration.



Strengthened team-informed and data-centered approaches to crisis response.



COMMUNITY IMPACT SUMMARY

FSSRI continues to build a coordinated, recovery-oriented system that reduces barriers and expands access to care for high-risk populations. By strengthening partnerships, improving diversion pathways, and increasing access to employment and recovery support, FSSRI is helping individuals achieve stability while improving overall community health outcomes.



STAY CONNECTED: FSSRI MEETINGS

Monthly meetings are held every fourth Monday from 10:00 AM – 12:00 PM in a hybrid format. For meeting details and updates, contact FSSRI staff or community partners.



GET INVOLVED!

Community members, providers, individuals with lived experience, and stakeholders—

Celebrating This Month's Graduates



As we move through May a season of growth and new beginnings, we are proud to celebrate the individuals completing the TEECH program this month. Your commitment, perseverance, and determination to keep showing up even through challenges deserve to be honored. Each milestone represents more than the completion of a program; it reflects resilience, personal growth, and the courage to invest in your future. Your journey is a powerful reminder of what's possible with dedication and support. Congratulations to this month's graduates. We are proud of all you've accomplished and excited to see the many ways you will continue to grow, lead, and create positive change in your lives and communities.



Community Connections: Events & Collaborations

Our collaborations with community organizations, service providers, and local partners continue to create meaningful opportunities for participants. Whether it's sharing resources, participating in community conversations, or supporting events that promote wellness and opportunity, these partnerships help expand access to support services that include recovery support, mental health resources, workforce development, and pathways that help reduce recidivism.

This work is about more than programs t's about breaking cycles, restoring hope, and creating pathways to stability for individuals and families in our communities.

We're also excited to share that TEECH has officially begun building connections within the school system, creating new opportunities to reach young people and introduce programs that support mental health awareness, life skills, and future workforce pathways. This step marks an important milestone as we continue expanding our work and deepening our impact in the community.

Being present in the community allows us to listen, learn, and grow. Each event and collaboration helps strengthen relationships and reminds us that supporting recovery, mental health, and opportunity is strongest when we work together.

Below are a few highlights from this month's events and collaboration moments that show what's possible when we work together.





FOR THE HELPLESS

105

FAR SOUTHSIDE
ROVIC
BEHAVIORAL HEALTH SERVICES



(312) 521-1265 OR (234) 401-3796
WWW.EEGHFOUNDATION.ORG

MAKES CHOICE CHANGING LIVES
TRANSFORMING COMMUNITIES

FROM PAIN TO PURPOSE

We walk with you.
We listen to you
We help you heal.

I choose I change ME

MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT
& TRANSITIONAL HOUSING &
WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT
YOUTH EMPOWERMENT





Retinc Self-Care Event





BRANDING AND YOUR BUSINESS

Sell Like a Pro

Author: [Name]

Part 1: [Text]

100% [Text]

100% [Text]

Summit of Hope Resource Fair



Narcan Saves Lives: Be Prepared to Help

Accidental opioid overdoses continue to impact families and communities across the country. One of the most effective tools available to prevent overdose deaths is Narcan® (naloxone), a medication that can quickly reverse the effects of an opioid overdose and restore normal breathing.

Narcan is safe, easy to use, and available without a prescription in many pharmacies. It works by blocking the effects of opioids on the brain and can be administered by anyone, including family members, friends, caregivers, and bystanders.

Know the Signs of an Opioid Overdose:

- Slow, shallow, or stopped breathing
- Unresponsiveness or inability to wake up
- Blue or gray lips and fingernails
- Pinpoint pupils
- Limp body

What to Do in an Emergency:

1. Call 911 immediately.
2. Administer Narcan according to package instructions.
3. Try to wake the person and encourage breathing.
4. If there is no response after 2–3 minutes, administer a second dose if available.
5. Stay with the person until emergency responders arrive.

Having Narcan on hand can make the difference between life and death. We encourage everyone to learn how to recognize an overdose, carry Narcan if possible, and share this lifesaving information with family, friends, and neighbors.

Together, we can help prevent overdose deaths and support a healthier, safer community.

Community Impact: Making Difference Together

Behind every event and partnership is the same goal: strengthening individuals, families, and neighborhoods. Through workforce readiness training, peer support, and resource navigation, TEECH continues working to expand opportunity and remove barriers to stability and employment.

Each month, we see that impact in participants gaining new skills, the encouragement shared within our alumni community, and the partners who help connect people to housing, employment, and supportive services. None of this work happens in isolation. It is made possible through the collaboration of community partners, employers, supporters, and alumni who believe in the power of second chances and new opportunities.

Together, we are helping individuals move forward with confidence, build stronger foundations for their futures, and create lasting change within their communities.

Alumni Spotlight: Returning Citizens



Graduating from TEECH is just the beginning. Our alumni remain connected, continuing to support and uplift one another long after the program ends.

The TEECH alumni community regularly steps in to help peers with job leads and readiness, housing navigation, resource referrals, and the everyday encouragement that makes a real difference during times of transition. These connections reflect the strength of a community built on shared experience, trust, and mutual support.

We're also proud to announce the launch of our **Returning Citizens Alumni Group**—a space designed specifically for alumni impacted by incarceration. This group creates opportunities to build community, share resources, and strengthen reentry supports through peer mentorship, encouragement, and connection.

If you're interested in supporting our alumni with **employment opportunities, housing resources, mentorship, or other partnerships**, we'd love to connect.

(224) 406-3798

drkwhite@teechfoundation.net

Together, we can continue expanding pathways to stability, opportunity, and success.

New Season, New Skills: Supporting Workers 50+

TEECH is honored to be selected by **NCBA – Live longer** to support adults 50 and over on Chicago's Far South Side. Through this partnership, we will provide job-skills training and job-readiness support designed to assist seniors strengthen confidence, build stability, and pursue new employment opportunities. Many older adults bring valuable experience, wisdom, and dedication to the workforce, yet often face unique barriers when seeking employment. This initiative reflects our ongoing commitment to expanding opportunity and ensuring that individuals at every stage of life have access to the tools, resources, and support needed to thrive. We are excited to welcome participants into this program and continue building pathways to meaningful employment and long-term stability.

Mitigating Overdose Risk Van continues to serve Chicago's Far South Side. Access to life-saving tools should be close to home. Through ongoing outreach, the Mitigating Overdose Risk Van helps bring harm-reduction supplies, overdose prevention education, and connections to local resources directly to residents across the Far South Side. Efforts like this are possible because of the community partners, volunteers, and supporters who work alongside us. Access to life-saving tools should be close to home. Through ongoing outreach, the Mitigating Overdose Risk Van helps bring harm-reduction supplies, overdose prevention education, and connections to local resources directly to residents across the Far South Side. Efforts like this are possible because of the community partners, volunteers, and supporters who work alongside us making it easier for individuals and families to find support, reduce risk, and take the next step toward stability and recovery.

BECOME A CERTIFIED RECOVERY

CONGREGATION:

Illinois Faith @ Recovery Collaborative



Celebrating Recovery Champions:

Become a Certified Recovery Congregation

Every day, individuals and families in our communities are impacted by substance use disorders, mental health challenges, and the ongoing journey of recovery. Faith communities have a unique opportunity to offer hope, support, and connection to those seeking healing.

A Certified Recovery Congregation is a faith community that commits to creating a welcoming, informed, and supportive environment for people in recovery, their families, and all those affected by substance use and mental health challenges. Through education, training, and community engagement, congregations learn how to reduce stigma, provide compassionate support, and connect individuals with recovery resources.

Becoming a Certified Recovery Congregation does not require a church to become a treatment provider. Instead, it equips congregations to be places of understanding, acceptance, and hope where people can find encouragement and support on their recovery journey.

Why Become a Certified Recovery Congregation?

- Demonstrate your congregation's commitment to welcoming all people.
- Help reduce the stigma surrounding substance use disorders and mental health challenges.
- Increase awareness and understanding through education and training.
- Support individuals and families affected by substance use disorders and recovery.
- Strengthen connections between faith communities and local recovery resources.
- Live out your faith through compassion, service, and community engagement.

Recovery happens in communities where people feel valued, supported, and connected. By becoming a Certified Recovery Congregation, your church can help create a culture of hope and healing while making a meaningful difference in the lives of individuals and families throughout our community.

We invite congregations of all denominations to join this important movement. Together, we can build communities where recovery is celebrated, stigma is reduced, and every person is treated with dignity, respect, and compassion.

For more information about certification requirements and upcoming training opportunities, please contact:

Dr. Karen White

Teech Foundation

Email: drkwhite@teechfoundation.net

Phone: (224) 406-3798

What You Should Know About the Far Southside of Chicago

The Far South Side of Chicago was the largest area ever covered by a Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC) Chicago Quality-of-Life Plan. This community-led planning effort brought together residents, businesses, schools, churches, and nonprofits across multiple neighborhoods to create a shared vision for economic growth, housing, education, and public safety on the Far South Side. Also, The Calumet Harbor area remains an active industrial and shipping hub, connecting Chicago to the Great Lakes and international trade routes.

Empower the Mission: Stand with TEECH and FSSRI

Your Support Changes Lives

The needs in our community are growing every day, and so is our determination to meet them. Families are facing unprecedented challenges, individuals are struggling to access critical resources, and vulnerable members of our community need support now more than ever.

At TEECH Foundation, we believe that no one should have to face these challenges alone. But we cannot do this work without you.

Today, we are asking for your support. Your contribution is more than a donation it is an investment in hope, healing, opportunity, and transformation. Every dollar, every item donated, every hour volunteered, and every service provided helps us create meaningful change in the lives of individuals and families throughout our community.

The Far South Side of Chicago was the largest area ever covered by a Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC) Chicago Quality-of-Life Plan. We gratefully welcome all forms of support, including financial contributions, in-kind donations, professional services, and volunteer time. No gift is too small, and every act of generosity helps strengthen our mission.

Your Support Makes an Immediate Impact

Because of compassionate supporters like you, we are able to:

- Provide essential supplies and support through drives for individuals experiencing homelessness.
- Equip students with school supplies through our Back-to-School Drives, helping them begin the school year prepared and confident.

- Distribute winter coats, warm clothing, and other necessities to families facing hardship.
- Host family reunification events that strengthen relationships and rebuild connections.
- Organize job fairs and health fairs that connect community members with employment opportunities, healthcare services, and vital resources.
- Deliver training, education, and technical assistance that empower individuals, organizations, and community leaders.
- Provide ongoing support services that help individuals and families navigate challenges and access resources.
- Develop innovative programs that address emerging needs and create long-term solutions.

Every contribution creates ripples of positive change. Together, we are building stronger families, healthier neighborhoods, and a more resilient community where everyone can thrive.

Join Us in Making a Difference

When you give to TEECH Foundation, you become part of a movement dedicated to restoring hope, empowering individuals, and transforming communities. Your generosity helps ensure that critical services remain available and that we can continue expanding our reach to those who need us most.

The impact is real. The need is urgent. The opportunity to make a difference is now.

Ways to Give

Online: www.teechfoundation1.org

Zelle: drkwhite@teechfoundation.net

Mail:

TEECH Foundation

1750 W. 103rd Street

Chicago, Illinois 60643



Donate Goods, Services, or Volunteer

If you would like to donate goods, provide professional services, sponsor an event, or volunteer your time, we would love to hear from you.

Dr. Karen White

Phone: (224) 406-3798

Email: drkwhite@teechfoundation.net

Together, we can create lasting change and build a community where every person can succeed, heal, and flourish.

Essential Community Resources and Information:

Strengthening Our Community Together

Access to reliable information and supportive services is vital for the well-being of our community—especially during times of change and uncertainty. Whether you're looking for health care, legal guidance, emergency assistance, recovery support, or help meeting basic needs, there are trusted resources available. We've gathered the contacts below to make it easier to find the right support at the right time. If you're not sure where to start, 211 can help connect you to local services; 988 is available 24/7 for mental health crisis support; and 911 should be used for immediate, life-threatening emergencies. No matter the situation, you deserve help that is respectful, confidential, and judgment-free.

Emergency Help & Crisis Support

When safety or stability is at risk, knowing where to turn can make all the difference. The following national and local hotlines offer immediate assistance, advocacy, and confidential support for individuals and families experiencing crisis, violence, or distress. These organizations are staffed by trained professionals who can provide guidance, resources, and a listening ear — 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Emergency Assistance



911 is for life-threatening emergencies (police, fire, medical).

311 is for non-emergency local government services (potholes, trash pickup, noise complaints).

211 is for community and social services (housing, food, mental health, financial aid).

Support & Advocacy

988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline — 988 — 24/7 support for suicidal thoughts or emotional distress

National Domestic Violence Hotline — 1-800-799-7233 — Help for domestic violence survivors

Childhelp National Child Abuse Hotline — 1-800-422-4453 — Crisis intervention and child abuse prevention

The Trevor Project — 1-866-488-7386 — LGBTQ+ youth crisis and suicide prevention

RAINN Sexual Assault Hotline — 1-800-656-4673 — Support for sexual assault survivors

National Runaway Safe line — 1-800-786-2929 — Help for youth at risk of running away or homelessness

HUD Housing Counseling — 1-800-569-4287 — Guidance on housing stability and foreclosure prevention

Housing & Shelter Support

If you need a safe place to stay or are at risk of losing housing, start with 211 for up-to-date shelter availability and local referrals (including family shelters, youth shelters, and warming/cooling centers). If you are fleeing domestic violence, call the National Domestic Violence Hotline (listed above) for safety planning and confidential shelter connections.

Food & Basic Needs

For help with groceries, meals, diapers, or hygiene supplies, 211 can connect you to nearby food pantries and community meal programs. You can also ask about help applying for benefits such as SNAP or WIC, and other emergency supports (utilities assistance, transportation help, and clothing resources).

Legal, Reentry & ID Support

If you need legal guidance (housing, family, benefits), help replacing an ID, or support navigating reentry after incarceration, start with 211 for trusted local referrals. Many communities also offer free or low-cost legal clinics and record relief support (expungement/sealing) that can remove barriers to employment and housing.

Tip: When possible, call ahead to confirm hours and eligibility. If you have documents (ID, proof of address, benefit letters), bring copies. Don't hesitate to ask if case management is available having one consistent point of contact can make it easier to navigate multiple services.

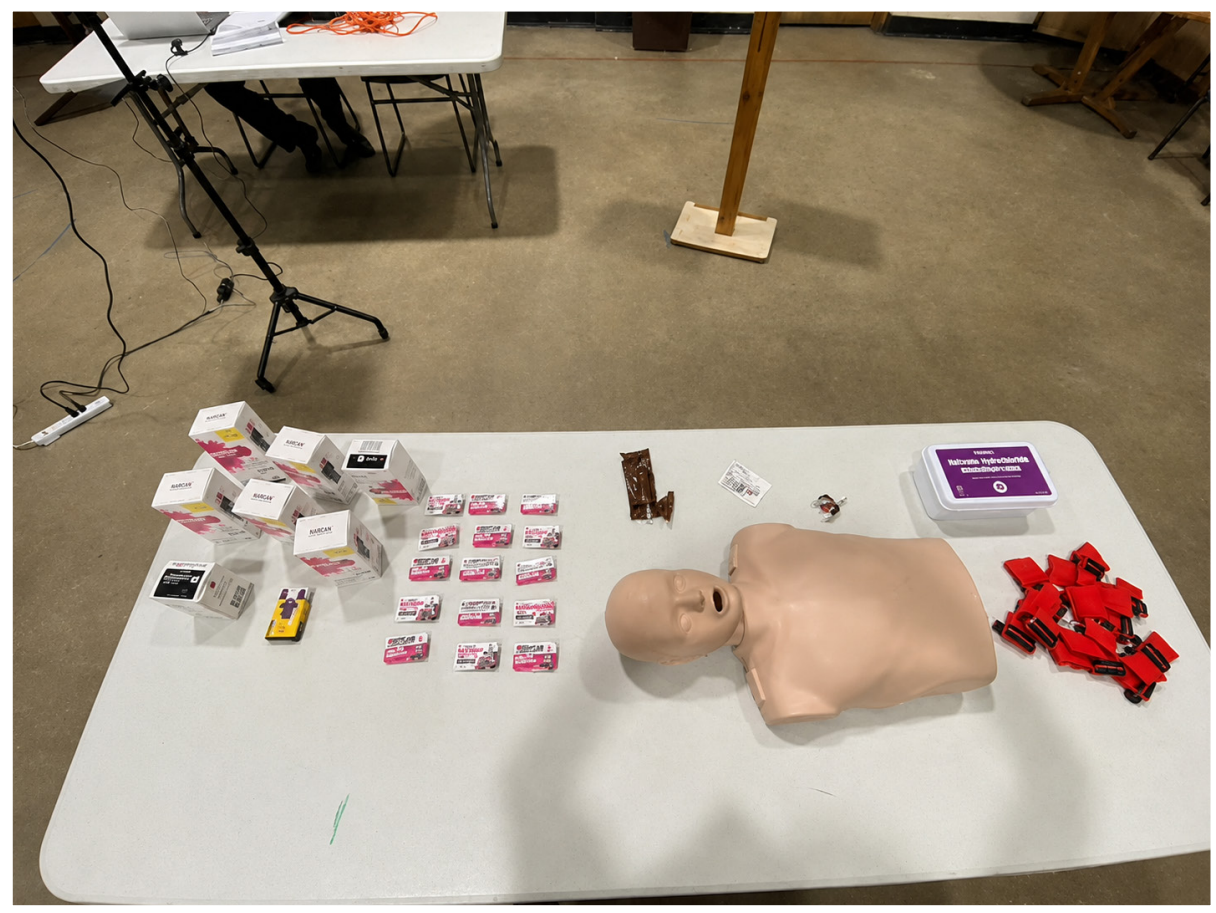
You Are Not Alone—Help and Hope Are Always Within Reach

Struggling with substance use can feel overwhelming, but no one must face it alone. The Illinois Helpline for Opioids and Other Substances is a lifeline for anyone seeking support, guidance, or resources. This service is available every hour of every day—call **833-FINDHELP (833-234-6343)** or text "**HELP**" to **833234** for immediate, confidential assistance. Whether you're reaching out for yourself or someone you care about, compassionate experts are ready to listen, connect you to vital resources, and walk with you on your recovery journey. There is no cost, no judgment, and no wrong time to ask for help.

But support doesn't stop there. TEECH is on the front lines, working tirelessly to make our neighborhoods safer and stronger. By installing Narcan machines throughout our communities, TEECH is putting life-saving tools directly into the hands of everyday people—empowering all of us to act quickly in the face of an opioid overdose and save lives. Our commitment goes beyond distribution: we offer free Narcan and hands-on training sessions so that everyone, regardless of background or experience, can be prepared to make a difference.

If you need Narcan or want to become a trained responder, reach out to **TEECH** at **(224) 406-3798**. All training and supplies are provided at no cost. Together, we are building a network of hope, resilience, and action—one that ensures no one in our community is left behind.

Let's stand together, support one another, and create a future where recovery is always possible and help is always here. Ended the Year with lifesaving Training – Narcan with CPR.



Call to Action: Act Now to Make a Difference Together

Every day, overdoses, addiction, recidivism, and mental health challenges touch the lives of individuals and families across our community. These are not distant issues—they are urgent realities that demand our collective strength, compassion, and action. Now is the time for us to unite, to break the silence, and to stand shoulder to shoulder in support of those who are struggling. When we come together as a community, we create a powerful network of hope and resilience. By collaborating—whether through volunteering, attending training sessions, spreading awareness, or simply offering a listening ear—we ensure that no one must face these challenges alone. Every act of kindness, every moment of support, and every shared resource brings us closer to a future where everyone can thrive. Your involvement is not just valuable—it is essential. Each person who steps forward helps build a stronger, more resilient community. Whether you have lived experience, professional expertise, or simply a caring heart, your contribution matters. Reach out, get involved, and be part of the change. Together, we can save lives, uplift our neighbors, and empower our community to overcome even the toughest

obstacles. Let's work hand in hand to build a legacy of hope, healing, and opportunity. The time to act is now—join us, and let's make a lasting impact, together.

References

- <https://www.thenationalcouncil.org/mental-health-awareness-month>

