

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**San Joaquin County Behavioral Health Services Offers Guidance and Resources for  
Mental Health Awareness Month**

**Stockton, CA** — As May marks Mental Health Awareness Month, San Joaquin County residents are encouraged to recognize the importance of emotional well-being and the value of seeking support when needed. While mental health challenges affect people year-round, this month serves as a reminder that no one has to face stress, anxiety, depression, or substance use struggles alone. National estimates show that millions of individuals experience mental health conditions each year, yet many delay seeking help because of stigma or lack of awareness about available resources.

San Joaquin County Behavioral Health Services (BHS) encourages residents to take proactive steps toward caring for their mental health by checking in with themselves and others, practicing healthy coping strategies, and reaching out for support and treatment when needed.

“Mental Health Awareness Month is an opportunity to remind our community that mental health is just as important as physical health,” said Fay Vieira, Director of BHS. “Seeking support is a sign of strength, and early intervention can make a meaningful difference in someone’s recovery and overall well-being.”

Everyday stress, financial pressures, social isolation, and life transitions can all affect emotional wellness. For individuals managing ongoing mental health conditions or substance use recovery, these challenges may become more difficult without support and connection. BHS encourages residents to maintain healthy routines, stay connected with trusted friends and family members, and make time for rest and self-care.

Vieira emphasized the importance of open conversations and community support during Mental Health Awareness Month. “Sometimes simply checking in on someone or asking for help yourself can be the first step toward healing,” she said. “We want residents to know that support, treatment, and hope are available, and no one should feel alone in their journey.”

**Tips for Supporting Mental Health**

- Understand your triggers. If you are in recovery, avoid situations where alcohol or drugs are present or where past use took place. For those living with mental health conditions, notice when crowds, conflict, or overstimulation increase symptoms and set limits accordingly.

- Practice intentional self-care. It's okay to decline invitations, step outside for a break, or schedule downtime. Choose environments and people who support your well-being.
- Move your body and calm your mind. Light exercise, stretching, or meditation can ease stress and lift moods.
- Stay connected. Reach out through a call, video chat, or message. Checking in with others also builds a sense of community.
- Eat balanced meals, drink plenty of water, and avoid overindulgence can help stabilize mood and energy levels.
- Focus on what matters most. Reflecting on gratitude, acts of kindness, and manageable expectations can help ease emotional strain.

BHS provides around-the-clock support for individuals and families needing someone to talk to or seeking professional help. Support services include:

- 24/7 Crisis Line: 209-468-8686 Counseling, crisis support, and warmline services for individuals and families
- Non-Urgent Behavioral Health Services: 209-468-9370 1212 N. California St., Stockton, CA
- Walk-In Support: 1212 N. California Street, Stockton, CA

“If you or someone you know is struggling, please reach out,” Vieira added. “There is hope, there is help, and our community is here for you.”

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