

May is Mental Health Awareness Month!

Back to Basics

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Welcome to another opportunity to make mental health a priority in our lives. This is so important. Based on research, we know that almost half of persons in the US will have a diagnosable mental health condition at some time in their life. Also, we know that the situations we currently face may increase threats to our mental health. These include the on-going COVID pandemic, as well as significant mental health burdens on groups targeted for systemic oppression and violence (e.g., racism, sexism, transphobia, etc.).

These conditions make it critical that we all have a solid foundation of knowledge about mental health. So, this year's national theme from Mental Health America is "*Back to Basics*".

There are many factors that play a role in mental health, from social determinants to genetics. Unfortunately, the average delay between the start of symptoms to beginning treatment is 11 years! This means that a lot of people spend months or years with mental health challenges before even getting a diagnosis. Fortunately, there are also protective measures that can prevent mental health conditions from developing or keep symptoms from becoming severe. Addressing mental health symptoms early is extremely important for overall health: it is never too early to seek treatment for your mental health. Intervening effectively during early stages can save lives and is important for those living with mental health conditions.

Let's make mental health a priority in our personal lives, our homes, schools, social groups, and the workplace. Get *Back to Basics* by checking out <https://mhanational.org> to learn more about practical resources around:

- Recognizing warning signs
- Knowing the factors that can lead to mental health conditions
- Maintaining mental well being

- Seeking help for mental health

Additional Resources:

Persons facing a mental health crisis or risk of harm to themselves or others may call 911, or go to their nearest hospital emergency department.

Also, The Lifeline provides free and confidential emotional support to persons in suicidal crisis or emotional distress 24/7. The Lifeline may be contacted:

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline - suicidepreventionlifeline.org

Services are available for:

- English speakers: 1-800-273-8255
- Spanish speakers: 1-888-628-9454
- For deaf & hard of hearing individuals: for TTY users, use your preferred relay service or dial 711 then 1-800-273-8255

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For Mental Health Month this year, Mental Health America is bringing it back to basics.

With mental health entering mainstream conversations, it's critical that solid foundations of knowledge are formed.

MHA
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