

**THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
OF THE COUNTY OF DOUGLAS, COLORADO**

**RESOLUTION PROCLAIMING MAY 2018 MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS
MONTH.**

WHEREAS, during National Mental Health Awareness Month, we recognize those Americans who live with mental illness and substance use disorders, along with their families who need support as well; and

WHEREAS, the designation of May as Mental Health Awareness Month creates the opportunity to acknowledge the impact that mental illness has on our community as well as highlight efforts to improve access to care and outcome for our citizens with mental illness; and

WHEREAS, approximately 1 in 4 Coloradans experience a mental health or substance use disorder each year, with 1 in 25 adults experiencing serious mental illness that substantially interferes with major life activities such as employment; yet, only 41% of adults with mental health disorders received services in the past year; and

WHEREAS, approximately 13.7% of Colorado youth (ages 12 - 17) experienced a major depressive episode last year, with less than half, just 41% receiving treatment and 17.4% of Colorado high schoolers have seriously considered suicide; and

WHEREAS, approximately 20% of local jail inmates have a history of a mental health condition; and

WHEREAS, serious mental illness costs America \$193.2 billion in lost earnings per year; and

WHEREAS, in 2014, in response to several tragic mental health related events in our community and out of concern that people in need of mental health services were falling through the cracks, the Board of County Commissioners formed the Douglas County Mental Health Initiative (MHI); and

WHEREAS, the mission of the 40+ member Initiative is to create better access to mental health services for underserved people in our county and coordinate more effectively as service providers to prevent gaps that can lead to poor mental health outcomes; and

WHEREAS, the focus of the Mental Health Initiative is to facilitate a seamless continuum of care that addresses prevention to high intensity needs regarding mental health access and treatment for Douglas County residents, through community partnerships; and

WHEREAS, to demonstrate its commitment to this important community issue, the County hired a Mental Health Initiative Coordinator and implemented Mental Health Navigation in coordination with the County Attorney for those with the most serious mental illness or substance abuse issues; and,

WHEREAS, in partnership with law enforcement and fire/EMS professionals, two, full time Community Response Teams were implemented in Douglas County; partnering first responders and mental health clinicians to respond to mental health crises, direct people to effective mental health treatment and ensure follow-up while reducing the use of jail and emergency departments for people who primarily need mental health services; and

WHEREAS, the Community Response Teams have had 873 encounters with 409 individuals from May 2017, when the first team piloted, through March 2018; and

WHEREAS, the MHI is coordinating with other mental health and suicide and substance abuse prevention programs for youth and adults in our community so as not to duplicate efforts but to support an array of resources; and

WHEREAS, the MHI is coordinating with treatment providers, hospitals, payor sources, first responders, and other community and faith based organizations to develop a county-wide, care management network to coordinate care for individuals seeking mental health services, with a goal of designing a 'no fail' system; and

WHEREAS, the MHI is collaborating on an Anti-Stigma Campaign in partnership with Tri-County Health and other counties to educate the community and send the message that there is "no wrong way" to talk about mental illness or help people get connected to resources that can address mental health needs; and

WHEREAS, people living with mental health conditions and their families need to know that they are not alone; that hope exists and that the possibility of healing is real; now therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of County Commissioners of the County of Douglas, Colorado, does proclaim May as Mental Health Awareness Month and urges all citizens to work to reduce the stigma associated with mental illness and support access to mental health care in our county.

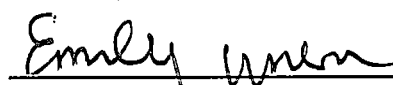
PASSED AND ADOPTED this 24th Day of April, 2018, in Castle Rock,
Douglas County, Colorado

**THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
OF THE COUNTY OF DOUGLAS, COLORADO**

BY:


LORA L. THOMAS, Chair

ATTEST:


EMILY WRENN, Deputy Clerk

