



Suwannee's **HEART**

Helping Everyone Achieve
Resilience and Thrive

May is **Mental Health Awareness Month**. Mental health is an incredibly important part of overall health. It includes our psychological, emotional, and social well being. How we deal with stress, the way we relate to others, and the choices we make are all part of our mental health. When people experience mental health challenges, their thinking, mood, and behavior are affected.

There are many factors that play a part in a person's mental health. Experiencing abuse or other traumatic events, a family history of mental health problems, and biological factors all contribute to mental health and well being

Millions of Americans face the reality of living with a mental health condition. The truth is 1 in 5 American adults have experienced a mental health issue. 1 in 6 young people experience a mental health condition every year, and only half of them receive treatment. 1 in 20 American adults experience a serious mental illness every year and less than two-thirds of them receive treatment. Suicide is the 2nd leading cause of death for people ages 10-34. In 2020, the number of lives lost to suicide was nearly double the number of lives lost to homicide in the United States. Mental health affects everyone either directly or indirectly through family, friends or coworkers.

The good news is that mental health challenges are treatable and recovery is very possible. The vast majority of people who live with mental health issues live productive, satisfying, happy lives. Early intervention of mental health challenges cannot be underestimated. Getting help as soon as possible makes a big difference and a better outcome. There are some great resources below that provide direction and information about talking to and supporting someone struggling with mental health problems. If you or someone you know are experiencing a mental health challenge, get help immediately.

SUPPORTING A LOVED ONE DEALING WITH MENTAL AND/OR SUBSTANCE USE DISORDERS

STARTING THE CONVERSATION

When a family member is drinking too much, using drugs, or struggling with a mental disorder, your support can be key to getting them the treatment they need. Starting the conversation is the first step to getting help.

How You Can Help

- 1 IDENTIFY AN APPROPRIATE TIME AND PLACE.** Consider a private setting with limited distractions, such as at home or on a walk.
- 2 EXPRESS CONCERNS AND BE DIRECT.** Ask how they are feeling and describe the reasons for your concern.
- 3 ACKNOWLEDGE THEIR FEELINGS AND LISTEN.** Listen openly, actively, and without judgement.
- 4 OFFER TO HELP.** Provide reassurance that mental and/or substance use disorders are treatable. Help them locate and connect to treatment services.
- 5 BE PATIENT.** Recognize that helping your loved one doesn't happen overnight. Continue reaching out with offers to listen and help.

What to Say

"I've been worried about you. Can we talk?
If not, who are you comfortable talking to?"

"I see you're going through something.
How can I best support you?"

"I care about you and am here to listen. Do
you want to talk about what's been going on?"

"I've noticed you haven't seemed like
yourself lately. How can I help?"

For more resources, visit
www.SAMHSA.gov/families.

If you or someone you know needs help,
call **1-800-662-HELP (4357)** for free and
confidential information and treatment referral.

SAMHSA's mission is to reduce the impact of substance abuse and mental illness on America's communities. 1-877-SAMHSA-7 (1-877-726-4727) • 1-800-487-4889 (TDD) • www.samhsa.gov

SAMHSA
Substance Abuse and Mental Health
Services Administration

HELPING A LOVED ONE DEALING WITH MENTAL AND/OR SUBSTANCE USE DISORDERS

You may suspect or discover your loved one is dealing with a mental illness, drinking too much, or using drugs. As a family member, you can play a central role in getting them the help they need.

