

# PROCLAMATION

WHEREAS, Mental Health Awareness Month has been observed in the U.S. since 1949 to fight stigma, provide support, educate the public and advocate for policies that support people with mental illness and their families; and

WHEREAS, according to the National Alliance of Mental Illness (NAMI), one in five Seattleites experience mental health conditions or substance use disorder, or both each year; and

WHEREAS, 50 percent of all people with mental health conditions experience them by age 14, and 74 percent by age 24; and

WHEREAS, in Washington, 1,252 lives were lost to suicide in 2020. In this same year, Governor Inslee declared a state of emergency due to the mental and behavioral health of Washington's kids.

WHEREAS, approximately 82,000 Washingtonians age 12–17 have depression; and

WHEREAS, in 2020, 52% of Washingtonians aged 12–17 who had depression did not receive any care; and

WHEREAS, the stigma against mental health conditions and substance use disorder remains one of the greatest barriers to improving the lives of all Seattleites through better mental health; and

WHEREAS, early intervention is prevention, the most effective way to reduce the prevalence of mental health conditions which helps improve and save lives; and

WHEREAS, with early and effective treatment, people with lived experience of mental illness and/or substance use disorder get better, live in recovery, lead fulfilling and empowered lives, and provide invaluable knowledge of how to improve and transform systems of care; and

WHEREAS, each business, school, government agency, healthcare provider, organization, and Seattle resident, has a responsibility to promote mental wellness and support prevention efforts; and

WHEREAS, a national poll conducted by NAMI of U.S. adolescents found that seven in 10 teenagers believe schools should offer mental health education, and 68% of adolescents say schools should communicate treatment options that may be available; and

WHEREAS, 1 in 4 people with a serious mental illness has been arrested by the police at some point in their lifetime, leading to over 2 million jail bookings of people with serious mental illness each year; and

WHEREAS, in 2022 Seattle allocated half a million dollars to expand mental health services in schools, and in the 2023-2024 biennium allocated an additional \$4 million in funding to address the mental health needs of our youth; and

WHEREAS, in 2022, 988 was implemented as the national suicide and mental health crisis hotline number; and

WHEREAS, Seattle has demonstrated strong support of the 988 system as it is a vital piece of a reimagined behavioral health system to ensure that individuals in crisis are receiving trauma-informed and culturally competent care; and

WHEREAS, Seattle's budget has allocated \$717,000 for 2024 to support the Community Safety and Communications Center's implementation of dual dispatch of officers and civilian staff to respond to 911 calls with a mental or behavioral health nexus. This is in addition to \$1.9 million already previously reserved for the same purpose; and

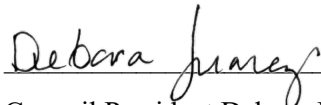
WHEREAS, Seattle remains dedicated to reimagining and implementing a crisis response system which promotes help not handcuffs; and

WHEREAS, in recognition that all residents hold inherent value, Seattle continues striving to become the healthiest City in the nation by ending stigma, providing support, and focusing on the integrated role of mental wellness in our all lives; and

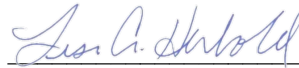
WHEREAS, Seattle upholds the belief that all people are worthy of life, love, and healing; and thereby every person should receive timely care when and where they need it;

*NOW, THEREFORE, THE SEATTLE CITY COUNCIL PROCLAIMS  
MAY 2023 TO BE*

## **Mental Health Awareness Month**



Council President Debora Juarez



Councilmember Lisa Herbold



Councilmember Andrew J. Lewis



Councilmember Tammy J. Morales



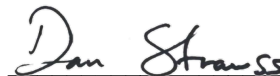
Councilmember Teresa Mosqueda



Councilmember Sara Nelson



Councilmember Alex Pedersen



Councilmember Dan Strauss

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