



The mission of B.C. SAFE is to reduce the number of suicides and suicide attempts by increasing public awareness and providing educational and training resources in Broome County.

## May is Mental Health Awareness Month: 5 things you need to know

May is Mental Health Awareness Month, and organizations across the nation will be drawing attention to the various—and often-surprising—way mental illness affects people's lives. This May, a number of new research findings highlight the need for increased understanding of, empathy for, and respect of people facing mental health issues. Consider the following.

### Mental Illness is 'Normal'

People with mental health issues have long felt that they are different from others. Indeed, discussions of mental illness tend to speak about "people with mental illness" as if they are a foreign group few of us ever encounter. The reality is that mental illness is so common—so common, in fact, that a recent study claims that it's a life unmarred by mental illness that's the real anomaly.

According to the study, which followed people ages 11-38 and tracked their mental health, a mere 17% avoided mental illness. Forty-one percent had a mental health condition that lasted for many years. Forty-two percent had a short-lived mental illness. This suggests that, sooner or later, mental illness becomes an issue for most people. Depression, anxiety,

and substance use were the most common diagnoses in the study.

### Gender Can Affect Mental Health Diagnoses

Many of us have heard that 1 in 68 children are diagnosed with autism, but the overwhelming majority of those children are boys. A new study suggests this may be because providers fail to recognize the signs of autism in girls. The reason?

Gender-based empathy conditioning. People with autism often appear to lack empathy or recognize social cues. According to the study, however, girls on the spectrum show outward signs of empathy. Researchers believe this is because gender conditioning to master social skills is much stronger in girls. So girls with autism may appear to understand social cues even when they don't.

### Worldwide, Depression is the Leading Cause of Disability

The leading cause of disability isn't cancer or chronic pain, though public health campaigns might make you think otherwise. According to data from the World Health Organization (WHO), depression is the leading cause of disability worldwide. What's more, it's held that place for many years.

Even more troubling, despite burgeoning awareness, the rate of depression is not getting better. Particularly in developing nations, people often do not receive treatment for symptoms of depression. And between 2005-2015,



the rate of depression actually increased by 18%.

### Mental and Physical Health are Inseparable

Media portrayals often talk about mental and physical health, or discuss how one supports the other. This isn't anything new. Philosophers, scientists, and laypeople of all varieties have been separating the mind from the body for generations. Research increasingly points to the link between the two. For example, some studies suggest that chronic inflammation may cause depression. Others have found that mental illness can affect physical health, or lead to symptoms of chronic pain. The role of exercise in fighting mental illness is well documented. People taking some chemotherapy drugs may be more vulnerable to depression, even when researchers control for the already depressing effects of having cancer. And a new study just linked consuming low-fat, rather than whole-fat, dairy to a lowered risk of depression.

<https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/when-your-adult-child-breaks-your-heart/201705/mental-health-awareness-month>

Learn to practice  
**POSITIVE THINKING.**

It rewires your brain!

*I love myself unconditionally!*

*My challenges bring me better opportunities!*

*I am strong!*

*I deserve to be happy!*

#BeThe1To

**ASK. KEEP THEM SAFE. BE THERE.  
HELP THEM CONNECT. FOLLOW UP**

Find out how at [www.BeThe1To.com](http://www.BeThe1To.com)

If you're struggling, call 1-800-273-TALK (8255)

Is your friend thinking about suicide? Ask if they've thought about how they would do it and separate them from anything they could use to hurt themselves.

It's important to find out some things to establish immediate safety. Have they already done something? Do they have a plan? When do they plan on acting on it? Do they have access to things involved in their plan? Knowing the answers to these questions can tell you a lot about the imminence and severity of danger the person is in. The more steps and pieces of the plan that are in place, the higher the severity of risk and their capability to act upon their plan. At that point, contacting authorities or driving them to an emergency department might be necessary.

### Upcoming Events

#### **APRIL:**

National Child Abuse Prevention Month

**4:** *The Buzz* for Parents 6-8 pm @ Vestal Middle School – African Road Auditorium—No registration required

**4:** Lourdes ADEPT *Naloxone Training* 5-6 pm 219 Front Street, Binghamton Register @ 584-3114

**27:** *Walk-A-Mile for Suicide Awareness* @ Newark Valley Village Green- more info: [northerntiogachamber.org](http://northerntiogachamber.org)

#### **MAY:**

National Mental Health Awareness Month

**1:** *Prevention Night with the Rumble Ponies*, 6:35 @ NYSEG Stadium; more info call 778-1005

**2:** Lourdes ADEPT *Naloxone Training* 5-6 pm 219 Front Street, Binghamton Register @ 584-3114

**15:** *Mental Health First Aid Training* @ MHASt—771-8888 [mhast.org](http://mhast.org)

**22:** *Youth Mental Health First Aid* @ MHASt— 771-8888: [mhast.org](http://mhast.org)

**22:** *Clearing the Confusion* 10 week series—Wednesdays 5pm-6:30pm May 22 - July 24 at Lourdes Hospital, 169 Riverside Dr, Binghamton in the East-West Dining Room - come to one or all—NO registration required. [www.truthpharm.org](http://www.truthpharm.org)

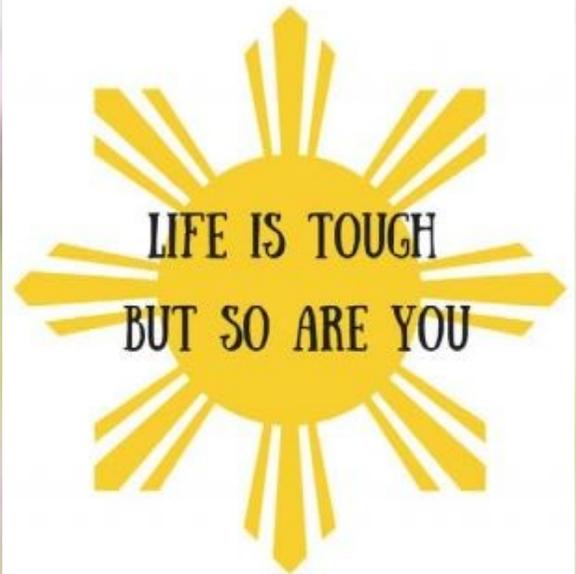
#### **JUNE:**

National PRIDE Awareness Month

**5:** Lourdes ADEPT *Naloxone Training* 5-6 pm 219 Front Street, Binghamton Register @ 584-3114

**6:** *The Stand for Children* @ Rec Park, Binghamton [cyscbroome.org/stand-for-children](http://cyscbroome.org/stand-for-children)

**10-16:** National Men's Health Week



If you or a loved one is in crisis, call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at **1-800-273-TALK (8255)**.

If there is imminent danger, seek emergency help immediately by calling **911**  
Suicide Prevention Lifeline:  
**[www.preventsuicideny.org](http://www.preventsuicideny.org)**

Suicide Prevention Center of NY: **<https://suicidepreventionlifeline.org/>**

Download the **HOPE - Broome County Mental Health App** for more information and resources.



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