



STATE OF TENNESSEE  
**PROCLAMATION**  
BY THE GOVERNOR

**WHEREAS**, mental health includes our emotional, psychological, and social well-being affecting how we think, feel, and act, as well as how we handle stress, maintain relationships, respond and adapt to daily life changes and participate fully in our communities; and

**WHEREAS**, a lack of mental health awareness and stigma of reaching out for help leads to detrimental impacts on the wellbeing of individuals and society; and

**WHEREAS**, Tennessee's 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline delivers mental health services to nearly 5,000 Tennesseans per month via call, chat, or text through seven crisis centers located across the state; and

**WHEREAS**, since 2019, the State of Tennessee, in partnership with the Tennessee General Assembly, has dedicated more than \$142 million in new state funding for mental health services, including more than \$7 million for the Behavioral Health Safety Net for Children to meet the essential mental health needs of uninsured and underinsured children; and

**WHEREAS**, the State of Tennessee has dedicated \$250 million for the K-12 Mental Health Trust Fund to create strong mental health services for school-aged youth in 2024 and beyond; and

**WHEREAS**, in 2020, the State of Tennessee, in partnership with the Tennessee General Assembly, invested \$3 million to expand School-Based Behavioral Health Liaisons across all 95 counties of Tennessee and in 2023 invested another \$8 million to add more than 100 new liaisons; and

**WHEREAS**, evidence-based mental and behavioral health training teaches adults how to recognize signs and symptoms of mental health and substance use challenges in youth and adults and provides skills to use a 5-step action plan to help someone who may be facing a mental health challenge or crisis, such as suicide; and

**WHEREAS**, teen Mental Health First Aid trainings are proven to reduce stigma and teach teens how to identify, understand and respond to signs of mental health and substance use challenges among their friends and peers; and

**WHEREAS**, the Tennessee Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services, Tennessee Association of Mental Health Organizations, community mental health providers, and mental health advocates across the state support and provide these and many other impactful and life-changing opportunities;

**NOW, THEREFORE**, I, Bill Lee, Governor of the State of Tennessee, do hereby proclaim the month of May, 2023, as

*Mental Health Awareness Month*

in Tennessee and encourage all citizens to join me in this worthy observance.



**IN WITNESS WHEREOF**, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the official seal of the State of Tennessee to be affixed at Nashville on this eighteenth day of May, 2023.

*Bill Lee*

Governor

*Lee Hargett*

Secretary of State