

BACKGROUND ON COMMITMENTS APPLAUDED BY THE PRESIDENT TODAY AT THE NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON MENTAL HEALTH

Today, at the National Conference on Mental Health, the President applauded the dozens of commitments made by organizations representing media, educators, health care providers, faith communities, and foundations to increase understanding and awareness of mental health. These organizations are:

- 1. Launching new efforts to raise public awareness through television, radio, social media campaigns, and other platforms.**
 - The **National Association of Broadcasters (NAB)**, representing local television and radio stations and broadcast networks throughout the country, is creating a national public service campaign to reduce the stigma around mental illness. The multiplatform campaign, launching this summer, will include TV and radio ads, online ads and resources and a robust social media platform to raise awareness – specifically among 13-24 year olds, their friends and caregivers – that it’s okay to talk about mental health and help is available. The campaign will encourage those who need help to seek treatment and refer them to online resources. NAB is also working in partnership with **SchoolTube** to provide secondary schools with public service announcements and educator resources to share in classrooms.
 - **Blue Star Families**, a non-profit organization created by military families to strengthen military families and connect America to her military, is producing a second series of public service announcements entitled “This Country Cares,” featuring country music stars telling our military heroes with mental health problems that they are not alone and encouraging them to seek help if they are struggling with these issues.
 - **Facebook, Google, and Twitter** will be hosting an online training session to teach mental health advocacy groups and other organizations making commitments to raise awareness about mental health problems how they can best use social media to encourage their members and fans/followers to talk about mental health, seek help if needed, and connect others to help.
 - As part of their *Love is Louder* campaign, **MTV and The Jed Foundation** will harness the power of social media to promote help-seeking and challenge the stigma surrounding mental health. Beginning today, MTV is encouraging members of its audience to take any action that supports their or a friend’s emotional health, and then share that action with @LoveisLouder. MTV will amplify the best responses through several of its social media channels, which in total reach nearly 160 million fans and followers.
 - **The Entertainment Industries Council (EIC)** has developed an easy-to-use reference guide to support all media creating television, print and film stories about behavioral health issues, in English and Spanish. The guide is part of EIC’s Tools for Entertainment and Media program (TEAM Up), which encourages authentic and accurate storytelling about mental health to increase public understanding, reduce discrimination and increase help-seeking behavior.
 - **The Entertainment Software Association** and leading video game companies **Activision Blizzard, Inc., Activision Publishing, Inc., Bethesda Softworks, Blizzard Entertainment Inc., and Microsoft Corporation** will promote consumer resources for mental health and

wellness information through their consumer web sites and online communities, which reach tens of millions of people every month.

- **Microsoft Corporation** highlighted mental health throughout the month of May on MSN Causes and achieved over 5 million page views.
2. **Teaching students about mental health and helping adults who work with youth recognize early signs of mental health problems and refer kids to treatment.**
- **The National Association of Secondary School Principals** has called on its 25,000 members, middle and high school principals and assistant principals from across the country, to hold an assembly on mental health awareness by the end of 2013. To help principals plan effective assemblies, the **School Social Work Association of America**, **American School Counselor Association**, and the **National Association of School Psychologists** have teamed up to develop online resources, including discussion topics and activities related to mental health awareness.
 - **The National Association of Elementary School Principals** is working directly with its membership – 20,000 prekindergarten, elementary, and middle school principals – to organize a variety of school-based, age-appropriate activities that raise awareness of common mental health issues.
 - **The National Parent Teacher Association** is partnering with the **National Association of School Psychologists** to host a webinar for their members regarding mental health awareness. Topics will include how parents can talk to their children about mental health in an age-appropriate manner and start a dialogue on mental health in their children’s schools or in PTA meetings.
 - **The National Association of School Nurses**, which represents almost 16,000 nurses serving in schools nationwide, is developing a new online continuing education program on behavioral health for school nurses and sending its members an evidence-based checklist of steps to identify early signs of mental health problems and refer students and their families to treatment if needed.
 - **Skype in the classroom**, a free global community for educators, will help raise awareness around mental health issues by inviting expert guest speakers to deliver Skype lessons about mental health to classrooms in all 50 states. These lessons will reassure students that it's okay to talk about mental health and inform them of the help they can access. Skype in the classroom will also facilitate classroom-to-classroom discussions about mental health.
 - **The National Education Association** and the **American Federation of Teachers** will disseminate new information to their members on mental health and how it impacts educators and the students they work with.
 - **YMCA of the USA** and the **American Psychological Association** will work together to develop educational tools and resources to help 18,000 full-time Y staff, as well as 49,000 summer employees who work with youth, to identify the signs of depression and other mental health problems in youth and refer them to appropriate resources. Each year, YMCAs serve about 9 million kids through programs like childcare, afterschool, summer camps, and more. This initiative will be launched in time for the summer camp season and, after the summer launch, materials will be promoted and made available to YMCA afterschool programs.

- **Boys and Girls Clubs of America (BGCA)**, which serves nearly four million youth every year, has created and distributed more educational materials on mental health to its Clubs' staff and called on its 4,000 Clubs to organize an activity focused on mental health awareness during the month of May. BGCA also offered sessions on mental health at its national conference in May, which had approximately 2,500 attendees including Club staff and board members.
- **Big Brothers Big Sisters of America**, which annually serves 200,000 children and families, will be having a session at their National Conference in Denver this June about the role high quality mentoring by their Big Brothers and Big Sisters can play in children's emotional well-being.
- **The American Council on Education, the American Psychological Association, and NASPA - Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education** have formed a partnership to produce a new report that will review current trends in student mental health and highlight promising practices that contribute to student well-being. The publication will be widely disseminated to leaders of the nation's postsecondary institutions and practitioners addressing campus mental health and will serve as a foundation for presentations at higher education-focused conferences.
- This fall, the **National Panhellenic Conference (NPC)** and **North-American Interfraternity Conference (NIC)**, which represent over 600,000 current college and university students, are organizing presentations on mental health on all 800 campuses where they have a presence. NPC and NIC are also calling for their members to hold a session on mental health during upcoming national conventions and regional meetings.

3. Giving health care providers the tools they need to screen for mental health problems and encouraging them to lead efforts to raise awareness in their communities.

- In a new effort, the **American Medical Association (AMA)** and the **American Psychiatric Association (APA)** are partnering to disseminate educational materials developed by the APA to help physicians in all specialties better integrate mental health screenings into their practices, reduce misperceptions of mental illness, and direct patients to additional mental health services when needed. The AMA and APA will use their electronic newsletters and social media outlets and work with state medical associations and national specialty societies to ensure that physicians across the country receive these materials.
- The **National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners**, which represents over 7,500 advanced practice professionals, is developing and disseminating online resources to help its members organize community-based conversations and activities focused on child mental health awareness and treatment.
- The **American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP)**, which represents 60,000 pediatricians across the country, is adding new resources to its mental health website and aggregating comprehensive information on children's mental health for parents and pediatricians.
- Today, the **American Hospital Association (AHA)** is sending an advisory to its members – almost 5,000 hospitals, health care systems, and other health care organizations, and 43,000 individuals across the country – calling on them to raise awareness of mental health in their communities. The AHA is also disseminating information to its members on creative steps

some hospitals are taking to increase awareness and improve access to mental health services.

- The **Children’s Hospital Association**, in collaboration with its 225 member hospitals, is committed to taking steps to promote children’s access to age-appropriate mental health services through efforts such as training non-mental health professionals on recognizing and responding to early warning signs of mental illness and increasing the utilization of mental health screening tools for primary care visits and in the emergency department.
 - The **National Association of Public Hospitals and Health Systems (NAPH)** is developing and disseminating to its members materials that encourage them to promote access to mental health services and to work in their hospital systems to decrease misconceptions about mental illness. Additionally, NAPH is working with its members to host a series of roundtables to engage communities across the country in conversations about mental health.
 - The **Federation of American Hospitals**, which represents investor-owned community hospitals and health systems throughout the United States, will be convening a meeting with its member companies to discuss the role of hospitals in early detection and treatment of mental illness and encouraging its member companies to host local conversations in their communities.
 - The **National Association of Psychiatric Health Systems** has called on all of its members to organize and lead meetings in their communities to increase understanding about mental illnesses and to identify and better meet community needs for mental health and substance use services.
 - The **Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC)**, together with the **American Psychological Association**, calls for their members and other health educators to submit educational materials aimed at preparing future health professionals to provide comprehensive, integrated mental health care. Materials will be freely accessible to the general public through AAMC’s new MedEdPORTAL iCollaborative Mental Health webpage.
4. **Convening experts, as well as philanthropic and civic leaders, to identify innovative ways to reduce negative attitudes and perceptions about mental illness and improve access to treatment at the local level.**
- Civic leaders across the country are joining with philanthropic partners to host community conversations moderated by trained, neutral facilitators to discuss how to raise awareness of mental health and make sure others in their communities get the help they need. The first community conversations will take place in **Sacramento, Birmingham, Albuquerque, Kansas City, and Washington, D.C.** To help raise the profile of these conversations, the **National Football League** will send former players trained in responding to mental health issues to participate.
 - **Give an Hour** will lead a collaborative initiative with **America’s Promise Alliance**, the **Aspen Institute**, the **Case Foundation** and the **Clinton Global Initiative** to identify successful community-based models of prevention and intervention that have been shown to improve mental health and psychological well-being, and develop a comprehensive strategy for broader adoption of these effective models. They will start by convening veterans and their families, as well as traditional veterans service organizations and other groups that

provide mental health services to this population, to discuss the best practices for reaching out to veterans and their families about mental health.

5. Launching new conversations in our houses of worship and other faith-based institutions to help people recognize mental health problems and access the treatment they need.

Faith groups from across the country have committed to launch new conversations on mental health by taking steps such as:

- Including a message about mental health in a worship service or other event, and providing congregants with bulletin inserts on mental health issues.
- Developing and disseminating toolkits with resources such as discussion starters to help members continue the conversation about mental health outside of worship services.
- Organizing a session on mental health awareness at an upcoming national conference.

Denominations and faith groups that are pledging to raise awareness of mental health as part of a national dialogue include: **African Methodist Episcopal Church Connectional Health Commission; American Association of Pastoral Counselors; American Muslim Health Professionals; Catholic Charities USA; Church of God in Christ; Evangelical Lutheran Church in America; Interfaith Network on Mental Illness; Islamic Relief USA; Lutheran Services in America; National Baptist Convention, USA, Incorporated; National Episcopal Health Ministries; Pathways to Promise; The Potter's House; Progressive National Baptist Convention; The Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism; The Samaritan Institute; Seventh-Day Adventist Church – North American Division; Sikh Council on Religion and Education; United Church of Christ; United Methodist Church; United States Conference of Catholic Bishops.**

*****Visit mentalhealth.gov for a full list of participating organizations.*****

BACKGROUND ON MENTALHEALTH.GOV

Mentalhealth.gov is a new website providing consumer-friendly content such as:

- Basics on mental health and how it is important for overall health and wellness.
- Myths and facts regarding who struggles with mental health problems and whether treatment can help.
- Descriptions of the major categories of mental health problems and signs you or someone you know may be struggling with these issues.
- Information about how people with mental health problems can build a support system, participate in the decision making regarding their treatment, and develop a recovery plan.
- Tips to help parents and caregivers, friends, and educators talk to an individual showing signs of a mental health problem and connect him or her to help.
- Resources for individuals or groups that want to organize a conversation about mental health in their community. This page includes a list of non-government mental health

organizations which, as part of this Dialogue, have volunteered to help others planning an awareness event find speakers with expertise in mental health.

- Hotline numbers for individuals who need immediate help for a mental health crisis or a referral to a service provider.
- Questions and answers regarding insurance and mental health coverage.
- Mentalhealth.gov social media channels that connect people to the latest information on the national conversation

The website also includes videos featuring first-person narratives of individuals who have recovered from or managed mental health problems, or supported a friend or loved one struggling with these issues. Individuals contributing their stories to this initiative include: Glenn Close, Demi Lovato, John Saunders, and Cher.