

# *Proclamation*

## **Mental Health Awareness Month**

**May 2026**

- WHEREAS,** mental health is fundamental to overall health and wellbeing, shaping how we think, love, work, and find meaning, and remains inseparable from our sense of purpose, belonging, and spiritual wholeness; and
- WHEREAS,** one in five adults and one in six youth in the United States experience a mental health condition each year, yet far too many never receive the care, understanding, or support they need; and
- WHEREAS,** from the earliest moments of life our community grows stronger when families, schools, and partners invest in safe, stable, and nurturing environments that build resilience and give every child the chance to thrive, yet nearly half of children who need mental health care never receive it due to cost, access, or simply not knowing where to turn; and
- WHEREAS,** substance use and mental health are deeply connected, as nearly one in three people with a substance use disorder also lives with a co-occurring mental health condition, and addressing both together through integrated and compassionate care is essential to the health of our community; and
- WHEREAS,** Colorado ranks among the highest in the nation for mental illness prevalence, and more than 266,000 adults in our state report serious thoughts of suicide, while nationally one life is lost to suicide every eleven minutes, a heartbreaking reminder of the urgency of this work; and
- WHEREAS,** men represent nearly 80 percent of all suicide deaths in the United States despite making up half the population, and white males account for more than 68 percent of all suicide deaths, yet men remain among the least likely to seek help, revealing a clear crisis and the need for more spaces where men can gather, speak honestly, and look out for one another; and
- WHEREAS,** our hospitality and restaurant workers, the people who feed and welcome our community, carry significant and often invisible mental health burdens, with some of the highest rates of substance use disorder and elevated suicide risk compared to other industries, yet only one in three has access to employer sponsored health care; and
- WHEREAS,** one in three older adults' reports feeling lonely, and loneliness increases the risk of early death by more than 25 percent, creating a quiet crisis hiding in plain sight in our own neighborhoods; and
- WHEREAS,** Colorado has reason to celebrate. Our youth suicide rate has fallen to its lowest level since 2007, cut nearly in half from its peak in 2020, showing that community commitment saves lives. Yet every loss remains one too many, and the work of awareness, prevention, and connection must continue; and
- WHEREAS,** Colorado Springs is uniquely positioned to support mental wellbeing through access to Pikes Peak, Garden of the Gods, extensive trail systems, and abundant open spaces, and research confirms that even ten minutes in nature can measurably reduce anxiety and stress, while children who spend one hour daily outdoors show a 50 percent lower risk of mental health challenges; and
- WHEREAS,** the City of Colorado Springs has demonstrated commitment to workforce mental health through HOPE Certification, training more than 200 managers and supervisors in mental health awareness as it works toward Gold level certification; and

**WHEREAS,** community connection is itself a form of prevention, and programs that meet people where they are, build belonging, and foster a culture of care protect mental health long before crisis ever occurs.

**NOW, THEREFORE,** I, Lynette Crow-Iverson, President of the Colorado Springs City Council, do hereby proclaim May as

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in Colorado Springs and encourage all residents, organizations, and businesses to:

- Take a mental health training — QPR, Mental Health First Aid, and ASIST are available in our community and equip anyone to recognize the signs of struggle and connect others to care
- Talk openly about mental health and substance use to reduce stigma and build understanding
- Go outside — Pikes Peak, Garden of the Gods, and our trails are not just beautiful, they are healing
- Check on someone — a coworker in the service industry, a senior neighbor, a child in your life — and mean it
- Show up for the men in your life — ask the hard questions, and don't accept "I'm fine" as an answer
- Share the 988 Colorado Mental Health Line — call or text 988, or visit [988Colorado.com](https://www.988colorado.com) — because no one should face their darkest moment alone
- Champion mental health every day — not just in May

**IN WITNESS WHEREOF,** I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Great Seal of the City of Colorado Springs to be affixed this 12<sup>th</sup> day of May 2026.

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Lynette Crow-Iverson, President  
Colorado Springs City Council