

INCLUSION AND BELONGING CIRCULAR

July-September 2025



COUNTY OF SAN LUIS OBISPO
BEHAVIORAL HEALTH DEPARTMENT



**Inclusion is a
practice.**

**Belonging is the
outcome.**

**Equity is the path
that gets us there.**



COUNTY OF SAN LUIS OBISPO
BEHAVIORAL HEALTH DEPARTMENT

THE DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION COMMITTEE: OUR SHARED JOURNEY

In our dedicated journey towards creating a more inclusive and understanding community, the County of San Luis Obispo Behavioral Health Department's Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee stands as a beacon of commitment to progress. We are wholeheartedly committed to fostering cultural humility at all organizational and service levels. Our mission transcends beyond awareness; it is about actively engaging in respect, access, empowerment, and understanding the diverse tapestry of individuals, cultures, ethnic groups, genders, gender identities and expressions, sexualities, abilities, veteran statuses, spiritual affiliations, and linguistic backgrounds that enrich our community.

We are enthusiastic about leading, developing, enhancing, and maintaining a culturally-aware workforce, shaping policies, services, and programs that not only embrace but celebrate our community's diversity. Our focused efforts are dedicated to ensuring improved healthcare outcomes for every individual, honoring their unique identities and experiences.

In line with our vision of making diversity, equity, and inclusion the foundational values of our behavioral health services and management operations, we are excited to share our 'Inclusion & Belonging Circular.' This quarterly publication is a cornerstone in our collective journey towards well-being. It will highlight vital information, resources, and services within our community, supporting us all on this path of inclusive excellence.

Through the 'Inclusion & Belonging Circular' and our ongoing efforts, we aspire to build an environment where everyone feels seen, heard, and valued, and where the wellbeing of each individual is our shared responsibility. Enjoy!



TABLE OF CONTENTS

JULY

NATIONAL BIPOC MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS MONTH	5
WORLD FORGIVENESS DAY AND INTERNATIONAL SELF CARE DAY	6

AUGUST

WOMEN'S EQUALITY DAY	7
INTERNATIONAL GRIEF AWARENESS DAY	8

SEPTEMBER

INTERNATIONAL LITERACY DAY	9
SUICIDE PREVENTION DAY/MONTH	10 & 11
INTERNATIONAL DAY OF SIGN LANGUAGE	12
NATIONAL RECOVERY MONTH	13
NATIVE AMERICAN'S DAY	14
LATINX/E HERITAGE MONTH	15

RESOURCES

FREE NALOXONE RESOURCES	16
CRISIS AND COMMUNITY RESOURCES	17

NATIONAL BIPOC MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS MONTH

BIPOC Mental Health Awareness Month serves as a powerful reminder of the urgent need to address mental health disparities in Black, Indigenous, and People of Color communities. Mental health affects everyone, but for BIPOC individuals, these challenges are often magnified by systemic racism, cultural stigma, historical trauma, and inequitable access to quality care.



- 1 in 3 black adults who need mental health care actually receive it
- Latinx adults are 35% less likely than white adults to receive treatment
- Native American and Alaska native communities experience the highest rates of suicide, especially among youth
- Asian Americans are among the least likely groups to seek help

RESOURCES

- Gala Pride & Diversity Center: (805) 541 - 4252
- Cal Poly Counseling Services (students only): (805) 756 - 2511
- Cuesta College Mental Health Services (students): (805) 546 - 3171
- Lumina Alliance: (805) 545 - 8888
- Center for Family Strengthening: (805) 543 - 6216
- Live Another Day: 1 (866) 932 - 5667
- The Summit Wellness Group: (770) 637 - 0579
- Racial Equity Support Line: (503) 575 - 3764

WORLD FORGIVENESS DAY



World Forgiveness Day is a global reminder of the healing power of letting go not just of the pain others cause, but also the pain we inflict on ourselves. While forgiving others can be difficult, forgiving ourselves often proves to be the hardest and most transformative act of all.

INTERNATIONAL SELF-CARE DAY

International Self-Care Day is a powerful reminder that tending to our well-being is not an act of selfishness, but of self-respect. In a world that often glorifies business and productivity, taking time to rest, nourish, and reconnect with ourselves can feel indulgent or even guilt-inducing. Whether it's getting enough sleep, setting boundaries, moving our bodies, or simply taking a quiet moment to breathe, self-care is how we say, "I matter."

SELF-CARE PRACTICES:

- Exercise
- Listen to music
- Join a peer support group
- Talk with friends
- Practice meditation
- Take a few deep breaths
- Ask others for help when you need it
- Have a transition from work to home



WOMEN'S EQUALITY DAY

Women's equality goes beyond careers and salaries - it demands a reimagining of how we approach women's health. Women from marginalized backgrounds—including women of color, LGBTQ+ individuals, disabled women, and those living in underserved areas—have long faced systemic barriers to receiving the care they deserve. Gaps in diagnosis, treatment, and outcomes reflect a broader failure to center women's experiences within the healthcare system. Too often, care that should be inclusive, informed, and empathetic is instead inaccessible. This is especially true in areas like reproductive health, chronic illness, and emotional well-being. Equity means reshaping these systems to meet women where they are, with care that is catered to the realities they face. Health care is not a favor—it's a fundamental right. Reproductive autonomy, safe pregnancies, and trauma-informed mental health support are essential to women's health and well-being. When we invest in women's health, we're not just addressing individual needs—we're strengthening the foundation of healthy communities.

STATISTICS:

- Women (15.3%) are more than twice as likely to take medication for depression than men.
- The prevalence of depression was higher in females at 16% compared to males at 10.1%.



GRIEF AWARENESS DAY

National Grief Awareness Day, observed annually on August 30, serves as a poignant reminder to acknowledge and support individuals navigating the complex journey of grief. This day encourages open conversations, dispels myths, and promotes understanding of the diverse ways people experience and express grief.

Grief is a deep personal experience, influenced by various factors including cultural background, personal beliefs, and the nature of the loss.

Recognizing that there is no universal timeline or method for grieving is essential. Some may find solace in rituals, while others may prefer solitude. By embracing these differences, we foster an environment where individuals feel seen, heard, and supported in their unique grieving processes.

Incorporating grief awareness into workplace and community settings is vital. Providing resources, offering flexible support options, and creating safe spaces for expression can significantly aid those in mourning. It's also crucial to be mindful of language and cultural sensitivities when discussing grief, ensuring that all individuals feel respected and understood.

On this National Grief Awareness Day, let's commit to honoring the diverse experiences of grief, offering compassion, and supporting one another in healing. Together, we can build a more empathetic and inclusive community for all.

**No matter what loss you are grieving, there are
FREE resources to support your well-being:**



Hospice SLO County is a non-medical volunteer service organization and community grief center. They believe that the end of life deserves as much respect as the beginning. Their programs support San Luis Obispo County residents who are grieving a death or coping with a life-limiting illness or facing end of life. Learn more about their supportive services online at www.hospiceslo.org or call (805) 544-2266.

INTERNATIONAL LITERACY DAY

International Literacy Day not only calls attention to the power of reading and writing to transform lives, but also to the reality that not everyone has equal access to this basic tool of empowerment. Across the U.S. and globally, systemic barriers like poverty, language bias, and ableism continue to restrict literacy access, especially for historically marginalized groups. Literacy impacts far more than academics—it shapes a person's ability to find a job, advocate for their health, and engage in their community. When access is unequal, so are the opportunities to thrive. Promoting literacy means more than teaching skills; it requires inclusive, culturally aware support for learners of all ages and backgrounds. On this day, let's celebrate the power of words and recommit to making them accessible to all.

RESOURCES TO IMPROVE HEALTH LITERACY PRACTICES:

- [CDC Health Literacy Homepage](#)
- [World Health Organization Health Literacy](#)
- [National Institute of Health](#)
- Publication: [Health Literacy – A Bridge to Health Equity](#)
- Training: [Health Literacy 101](#)



SUICIDE PREVENTION DAY

Observed each year on September 10, World Suicide Prevention Day is a global call to raise awareness, reduce stigma, and promote actions that can save lives. This year, it's especially important to recognize that supporting marginalized communities is suicide prevention.

Research consistently shows that systemic inequality, discrimination, and exclusion increase suicide risk, particularly among BIPOC communities, LGBTQ+ individuals, people with disabilities, and those facing economic hardship. These groups often encounter barriers to accessing culturally responsive mental health care, face increased stigma, and may experience trauma that goes unrecognized or unsupported.

Diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) efforts are not peripheral to suicide prevention—they are central. Suicide prevention must extend beyond crisis lines—it means building environments where people feel safe to exist fully and speak openly. It means affirming care, housing and job protections, peer support, and spaces where authenticity is celebrated, not punished. To truly prevent suicide, we must dismantle the barriers that harm and replace them with systems rooted in belonging and care.

By creating environments where people feel seen, valued, and safe to share their struggles, we reduce isolation and improve access to help. Culturally competent care, community outreach, peer support, and workplace inclusion policies all play a vital role.



CENTRAL  COAST
HOTLINE
(800) 783-0607
= CRISIS & MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT =
Text or Call 24/7

LGBTQ+ SUICIDE PREVENTION RESOURCES

**National Suicide
Prevention Lifeline**
988

Text TALK to 741741
Text with a trained
counselor from the Crisis
Text Line for free, 24/7

Central Coast Hotline
SLO County's 24/7 crisis
phone and text line
1-800-783-0607

**The LGBT National
Hotline**

Peer-support and local
resources for all ages
1-888-843-4564

Trans Lifeline
Support for transgender
people, by transgender
people
1-877-565-8860

**SAGE LGBT Elder
Hotline**
Peer-support and local
resources for older adults
1-888-235-SAGE

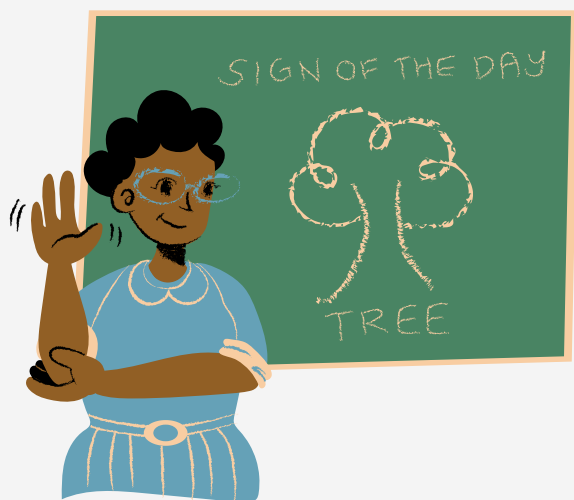
The Trevor Lifeline
Available 24/7 at
1-866-488-7386

Text START to
678-678

TrevorChat: Via
thetrevorproject.org

INTERNATIONAL DAY OF SIGN LANGUAGE

International Day of Sign Language is a time to honor the cultural and linguistic contributions of Deaf and hard of hearing communities. While sign language is often seen as central to Deaf identity, access to it is not universal. Barriers like language deprivation, limited educational support, and systemic exclusion prevent many from learning or using it fluently. It's important to recognize that not all Deaf or hard of hearing individuals communicate the same way—and that assuming so can be harmful. True inclusion means broadening access to all forms of communication: captions, transcripts, visual supports, assistive technologies, and more. Language justice goes beyond offering sign language; it's about ensuring everyone can connect, express, and be understood on their own terms. Supporting that diversity is essential to equity, mental health, and disability rights. On this day, let's celebrate not just a language, but the people, cultures, and rights it represents.



DID YOU KNOW?

The Health Agency provides free aids and services to people with disabilities to communicate effectively with the County, including qualified sign language interpreters

NATIONAL RECOVERY MONTH

Observed during National Recovery Month each September, National Recovery Day is a powerful moment to honor the courage, resilience, and commitment of individuals in recovery from substance use and mental health challenges. It's also an opportunity to widen the lens: to recognize that while recovery is possible, it is not equally accessible to all.

Marginalized communities particularly Black, Indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC), LGBTQ+ individuals, immigrants, people with disabilities, and those living in poverty are far less likely to receive adequate care and support. Historical trauma, medical mistrust, under-resourced neighborhoods, language barriers, and discrimination within the healthcare system all contribute to these disparities. Too often, members of these communities are met with criminalization, stigma, or neglect instead of evidence-based, culturally responsive support.

Recovery should not be determined by race, zip code, gender identity, or income level. Yet for many, the path to healing is obstructed by lack of insurance, absence of nearby treatment centers, culturally incompatible services, or outright systemic exclusion. These inequities are not just gaps in care, they are reflections of broader injustices.


DEI-informed recovery work demands that we center equity at every level: expanding access to harm reduction services, integrating culturally competent mental health care, uplifting peer-led and community-rooted recovery models, and ensuring that people with lived experience have a voice in shaping policy and practice. It means seeing recovery as not only personal, but deeply political.

This National Recovery Day, we affirm that recovery belongs to everyone not just those who can afford it or navigate complex systems. Let us celebrate those in recovery and recommit ourselves to dismantling the barriers that keep far too many from starting their journey in the first place.

Because true recovery—like equity—requires collective care, systemic change, and the unwavering belief that everyone is worthy of healing.



NATIVE AMERICAN DAY



Native American's Day is not only a time to honor the resilience, culture, and history of Native communities it is also a powerful moment to recognize the urgent need for mental and behavioral health equity. For generations, Indigenous peoples have faced the devastating impacts of colonization, forced displacement, historical trauma, and systemic oppression. These injustices have left deep scars passed down through families, communities, and cultures. Mental health struggles in Indigenous communities are not simply individual issues; they are rooted in collective experiences of loss, erasure, and survival.

Addressing behavioral health in Indigenous communities means embracing culturally rooted healing practices, restoring traditional knowledge, and dismantling systems that continue to harm. It means ensuring access to mental health care that is not only available, but affirming care that understands the role of community, ceremony, land, and storytelling in wellness. For many Indigenous people, healing is not separate from identity, it is connected to reclaiming language, reconnecting with ancestors, and returning to a way of life that colonial systems tried to destroy.

This Native American's Day, we must not only celebrate Indigenous strength, we must also fight for the resources, respect, and representation needed to protect Indigenous mental health. Wellness is a form of resistance. Healing is an act of sovereignty. Supporting Indigenous behavioral health is not charity; it's justice. And it's how we help ensure that future generations can thrive with pride in who they are and where they come from.



RESOURCES:

- [National Alliance on Mental Illness Indigenous](#)
- [The Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services \(CMS\). Division of Tribal Affairs](#)
- [Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration \(SAMHSA\) Circles of Care](#)
- [Indian Health Service](#)
- [Mental Health America Native and Indigenous Communities](#)



LATINX/E HERITAGE MONTH

Observed from September 15 to October 15, Latinx/e Heritage Month is a time to celebrate the rich cultural contributions, histories, and resilience of Latinx and Hispanic communities across the U.S. It's also an opportunity to reflect on the unique challenges that Latinx/e individuals face particularly when it comes to mental health and access to care.

In today's climate, marked by anti-immigrant rhetoric, systemic racism, economic stress, and political uncertainty, prioritizing mental health is more urgent than ever. Yet many Latinx/e individuals continue to face barriers to accessing behavioral health services whether due to stigma, language gaps, lack of insurance, fear of legal repercussions, or providers who lack cultural understanding.

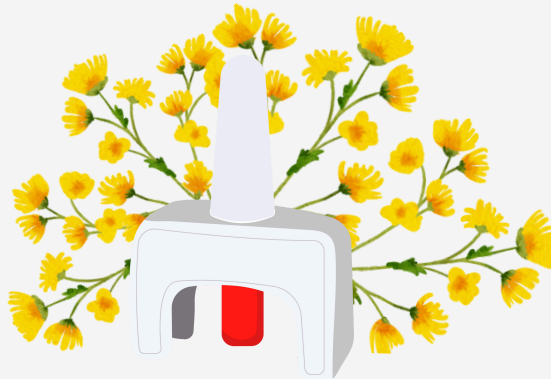
Seeking mental health support is not a sign of weakness, it is a powerful act of self-preservation and resistance. Breaking the silence around mental health in Latinx/e communities, especially for youth, LGBTQ+ individuals, undocumented people, and those living in multigenerational or mixed-status households, is critical. Healing cannot happen in isolation and no one should feel alone in their struggle.

As we celebrate Latinx/e Heritage Month, let us uplift the importance of culturally responsive care: services offered in Spanish and Indigenous languages, trauma-informed approaches that acknowledge the impact of colonialism and migration, and providers who reflect and understand the lived realities of Latinx/e communities.

Investing in Latinx/e mental health is investing in the future.

Let's challenge stigma, open doors to care, and remind our communities that wellness is not only possible but deeply deserved.





NaloxoneNowSLO.org

Did you know you can order Naloxone by mail directly to your home for **free**? Visit NaloxoneNowSLO.org to find more information on Naloxone, overdose education, and order today.

Community NaloxBoxes

NaloxBoxes are emergency access public boxes that contain Naloxone, CPR face shields, and instructions to respond to an opioid emergency. They are located throughout the county at easily accessible locations.

Visit www.slocounty.ca.gov/NaloxBox to view boxes nearest to you.

Free Naloxone Pick-Up Sites

805 4th Street, Paso Robles; (805) 226-3200

277 South St, Ste. T, San Luis Obispo; (805) 781-4754

2180 Johnson Ave., San Luis Obispo; (805) 781-4275

1523 Longbranch Ave., Grover Beach; (805) 473-7080

1152 East Grand Ave., Arroyo Grande; (805) 489-4026

705 Grand Ave., San Luis Obispo; (805) 544-2498

1320 Nipomo St., San Luis Obispo; (805) 781-3660

760 Morro Bay Blvd, Building B, Morro Bay; (805) 458-0123

Central Coast Hotline: call or text 1-800-783-0607

County of San Luis Obispo Behavioral Health Access Line: 1-800-838-1381

Warm Line: call or text 855-600-WARM (9276)

National Suicide Prevention Hotline: call or text 988

Crisis Text Line: text 'HOME' to 741-741

Friendship Line: (People Aged 60+) 1-888-670-1360

Military & Veterans 24/7: call 988 and press 1 or text 838255

Spanish Speakers: dial 988 and press 2 or text "AYUDA"

Trevor Lifeline: (LGBTQ+ Youth) call 1-866-488-7386 or text 'START' to 678-678

COMMUNITY RESOURCES

Aegis Treatment Center: 805- 461-5212

Al-Anon Central Coast: 628-400-3033

Alcoholics Anonymous Central Coast Intergroup: 805-541-3211

Aspire Counseling Services: 805-329-5595

Cal Poly Health Services: (Students Only) 805-756-1211

Central Coast Area Narcotics Anonymous: 800-549-7730

Community Action Partnership (CAPSLO): 805-544-4355

Community Counseling Center: 805-543-7969

Community Health Centers of the Central Coast (CHC): 866-614-4636

County of SLO Behavioral Health: 1-800-838-1381; patient's rights advocate 805-781-4738

County of SLO Public Health: 805-781-5500

Cuesta College Health Services: (Students) 805-546-3171

ECHO Shelters: 805-462-3663

Family Care Network, Inc.: 805-781-3535

Gala Pride and Diversity Center: 805-541-4252

Hospice of SLO County: 805-544-2266

LINK Family Resource Center: 805-466-5404

Nar-Anon Central CA: 800-477-6291

Restorative Partners: 805-242-1272

SLO Food Bank: 805-238-4664

Sobering Center SLO: 820-280-0415 call for bed availability.

Transitions-Mental Health Association (TMHA): 805-540-6500

40 Prado: 805-544-4004