

INCLUSION AND BELONGING CIRCULAR

October-December 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!



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ADHD AWARENESS MONTH

Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder, or ADHD, often begins in childhood and can persist into adulthood. Symptoms include limited attention, limited ability to sit still, impatience, excessive talking, and hyperactivity.

It may contribute to low self-esteem, troubled relationships, and difficulty at school or work. With a proper diagnosis, individuals can receive a tailored treatment plan that may include therapy or medication, improving their ability to handle daily responsibilities. Additionally, understanding the nature of their difficulties helps individuals develop effective coping strategies and enhances overall functioning.



OCTOBER 10:
WORLD MENTAL
HEALTH DAY

OCD AWARENESS WEEK

October 12-18

Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder (OCD) is a mental disorder characterized by a cycle of unwanted, intrusive thoughts and fears (obsessions) that trigger repetitive behaviors (compulsions). These rituals are meant to relieve the distress caused by the obsessions, but they only provide temporary relief and reinforce the cycle.

OCD can significantly disrupt daily life, work, school, and relationships. OCD is a debilitating mental disorder that is estimated to affect 1 in 40 adults in their lifetime and 1 in 100 children but is often overlooked and belittled as a personality quirk or choice. **In reality, OCD is a very real disorder that affects people of all ages and walks of life.**

BULLYING PREVENTION MONTH

Bullying Prevention Awareness Month is observed annually in October to raise awareness around bullying and to promote kindness, acceptance, and inclusion. A key event during the month is Unity Day, held this year on Wednesday, October 22, where people wear the color orange to show their support and unite against bullying.

The campaign provides resources and activities, often spearheaded by organizations like **PACER's National Bullying Prevention Center**, to encourage everyone to take action against bullying in schools and communities.



DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AWARENESS MONTH

This month serves as an opportunity to spread awareness and uplift those who have experienced domestic violence. Domestic violence comes in many forms, often extending beyond physical abuse to include emotional manipulation and bullying, sexual abuse, financial control, or economic exploitation. Abusers may also misuse the legal system or leverage children as tools of coercion and control.

During Domestic Violence Awareness Month, we reaffirm our commitment to acknowledging and addressing the complex and multifaceted nature of domestic violence. We stand with survivors, offering them the support, resources, and empowerment they need to reclaim their lives. Let us work together to create a community where everyone feels safe, respected, and valued.

- **National Domestic Violence Hotline:** Call 1-800-799-7233 or text BEGIN to 88788
- **Lumina Alliance:** 805-545-8888
- **SAFER Resources for Students at Cal Poly:** 805-756-2282



YOUR GUIDE TO A FUN AND INCLUSIVE HALLOWEEN

Drink your Witches Brew and BOOze Safely!

Safety Tips for Drivers: Be alert for other cars and pedestrians. Slow down and scan the area for pedestrians. Do not drink and drive and contact law enforcement if you see a drunk driver.

Tips for Pedestrians: Walk on the sidewalk and scan the area before crossing. Do not walk alone, use a buddy. Accompany young children.

Tips for Hosts: Serve plenty of food and non-alcoholic beverages. Make sure everyone has a safe drive home with a sober driver (DD, Uber, Lyft, etc.)

Fentanyl Can be a Trick and Not a Treat!

If your Halloween celebration plans include substances, remember to:

1. Always **have Naloxone on hand** at all times!
2. If using, utilize **fentanyl test strips**.
3. Call the **Never Use Alone Hotline** at **877-696-1996**. Peer operators are available 24-hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year.



View our Naloxone Resources page at the end of this circular for more information on where you can get the free life saving medication.

Remember—Someone's CULTURE is not a COSTUME. Be ORIGINAL!

Cultural appropriation is taking or using things from a culture that is not your own, especially without showing you understand or respect that culture.

Ask yourself these questions:

1. Is your costume racially, ethnically or culturally based?
2. Do you belong to that group of people?
3. Would you wear that costume around that group of people?

NATIVE AMERICAN HERITAGE MONTH



Native American Heritage Month honors the rich cultures, histories, and contributions of Native people across the United States. This month is filled with blessings, honor, and respect for the diverse communities that have shaped and continue to shape the fabric of our nation. It's a time to celebrate the enduring strength and resilience of Indigenous Peoples, whose cultures and traditions have not only survived but thrived despite centuries of adversity. As we celebrate, it is essential to recognize the profound challenges that Native American communities face today, particularly in the realm of mental health. Non-Hispanic Indigenous People in the United States die by suicide at higher rates than any other racial or ethnic group ([CDC](#)). This tragic loss of life within Native communities speaks to a larger issue that is rooted in historical trauma, systemic inequities, and the ongoing effects of colonization. The impact of these factors also contribute to elevated levels of substance use disorders, involving both illicit drugs and alcohol. These struggles are exacerbated by limited access to culturally competent health services, creating barriers to the care for Native people.

At County of San Luis Obispo Behavioral Health, we acknowledge these disparities and are committed to making a difference by supporting, uplifting, and empowering our Native clients, ensuring that they receive the compassionate care and respect they are entitled to. Behavioral health care must be culturally informed and responsive to the unique needs of Native communities which includes understanding the connection between land, culture, healing and wellbeing. We encourage you to use this month as an opportunity to learn more about San Luis Obispo County's Native cultures, listen to Native voices, and to advocate for the changes needed to address the health disparities affecting Native communities.

RESOURCES:

- Learn about the [ak tiṭyu tiṭyu yak tiłhini \(ytt\) Northern Chumash Tribe](#)
- Learn about the [Salinan Tribe](#)
- [Cal Poly Native American & Indigenous Cultural Center](#)
- Read about [California Native American Day](#)

NATIONAL VETERANS AND MILITARY FAMILY MONTH

November is a time, by tradition, for family celebrations. It is also a month that we honor Military Families acknowledging that military service involves strength and sacrifice of the entire family. Military life imposes unique demands on families, often requiring them to endure their own sacrifices and show resiliency and courage to get through difficult times. This month we recognize and honor this quiet endurance and support provided by military spouses, children, parents, and their loved ones.

TIP SHEET WORKING EFFECTIVELY WITH MILITARY FAMILIES: 10 KEY CONCEPTS ALL PROVIDERS SHOULD KNOW

On Veterans Day, we gather as a nation to honor the incredible bravery, dedication, and sacrifice of all who have served in our armed forces protecting our freedoms and shaping the course of our history. We honor the diverse veterans who make up this community, including veterans of color, women, and LGBTQAI+ veterans who have served with pride, often in the face of adversity. Their courage and resilience, both in defending our nation and in challenging societal norms, should not go unrecognized. Their commitment is a vital part of our military's legacy, and we are grateful for their lasting impact. Veterans not just as heroes, but survivors. Their strength during times of uncertainty and trauma inspires us.



**CONTINUED:
NATIONAL VETERANS AND MILITARY FAMILY MONTH**

Whether dealing with physical or emotional scars, these veterans demonstrate extraordinary resilience, and we must continue to support them in their mental health and substance use recovery, especially unhoused and displaced veterans. These individuals deserve our unwavering support as we strive to ensure they receive the respect, care, and housing resources they need to recover and live with the dignity we owe them.

Every veteran, regardless of their background or role, has contributed to the strength and security of our nation. Today, and every day, we celebrate the contributions of our veterans and pledge to advocate for the care and support they so rightfully deserve. Your service has left an indelible mark on our country, and for that, we are profoundly grateful. Thank you for your commitment to protecting our nation and its values!

**MILITARY & VETERANS
MENTAL HEALTH RESOURCES**

SLO County Veterans Treatment 805-748-2403

Screening, assessment, individual and group therapy,
Psychiatry and medication services

Central Coast 24/7 Hotline Call or text 1-800-783-0607

Military & Veterans 24/7 Crisis Line Dial 988 or 1-800-273-8255 and
press 1. Text 838255 and chat online at veteranscrisisline.net

Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors 1-800-959-8277

24/7 assistance line for survivors in need of immediate suicide
postvention support and grief support for those who have lost loved ones
to suicide.

Vets 4 Warriors 1-855-838-8255

Peer-support warm line providing resources for military and veterans.

Military OneSource 1-800-342-9647

24/7 warm line that provides personalized care support.

InTransition Psychological Health Resource Center 1-866-966-1020

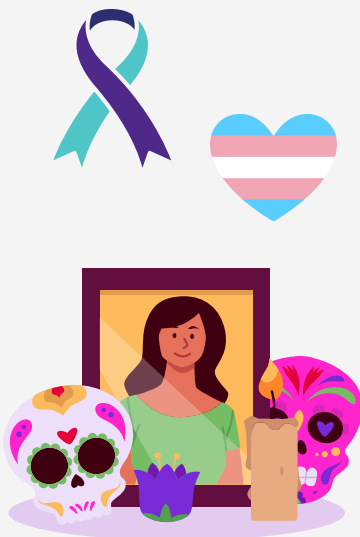
24/7 assistance and resources related to combat stress, depression,
reintegration, mental health conditions, treatment, and more.

COPING WITH GRIEF

November marks several awareness days that touch on themes of loss and grief: **Día De Los Muertos** (November 1), **Transgender Day of Remembrance** (November 20), and **International Survivors of Suicide Day** (November 23).

These observances remind us how important it is for us to understand the diverse ways people experience loss and express grief. Grief is a deeply 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, like Día De Los Muertos, in community vigils, while others may prefer solitude.

Providing resources, offering support, and creating safe spaces for expression can 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. By embracing these differences, we foster an environment where individuals feel seen, heard, and supported in their unique grieving processes.



**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.



DÍA DE LOS MUERTOS 2025

MISSION PLAZA, SAN LUIS OBISPO
SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 1 • 12:00 – 4:00 PM

- Folklórico dancers • Mariachis • Food & drink
- Community booths • Costumes & face painting
- Traditional altares

FREE COMMUNITY EVENT

HOSTED BY THE LATINO OUTREACH COUNCIL
(PROCEEDS FUND SCHOLARSHIPS & COMMUNITY PROGRAMS)



ACCESSIBLE HEALTHCARE

In December we recognize several awareness days that touch on themes of rights and accessibility:

International Day of Persons with Disabilities

(December 3), **Human Rights Day** (December 10),

and **International Universal Healthcare Day**

(December 12).



Consistent with our Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion mission, we aim to cultivate a Behavioral Health Department where every individual feels valued, understood, and empowered to receive our services.

We provide full and equal access to healthcare services for people with disabilities, following both federal ADA standards and stricter California state requirements. This includes:

- Wheelchair accessible clinics.
- Services in English and Spanish and other spoken languages through the Language Line.
- Sign language interpreters for patients who are deaf or hard of hearing.
- Written materials in alternative formats, such as large print, Braille, or electronic formats compatible with screen readers, for those who are blind or have low vision.
- Video interpreting service for immediate needs or allowing clients to use speech-to-text software.
- Accommodating service animals in patient-accessible areas (per policy).
- Assisting with administrative tasks, like having staff complete intake paperwork for a patient with a cognitive disability.

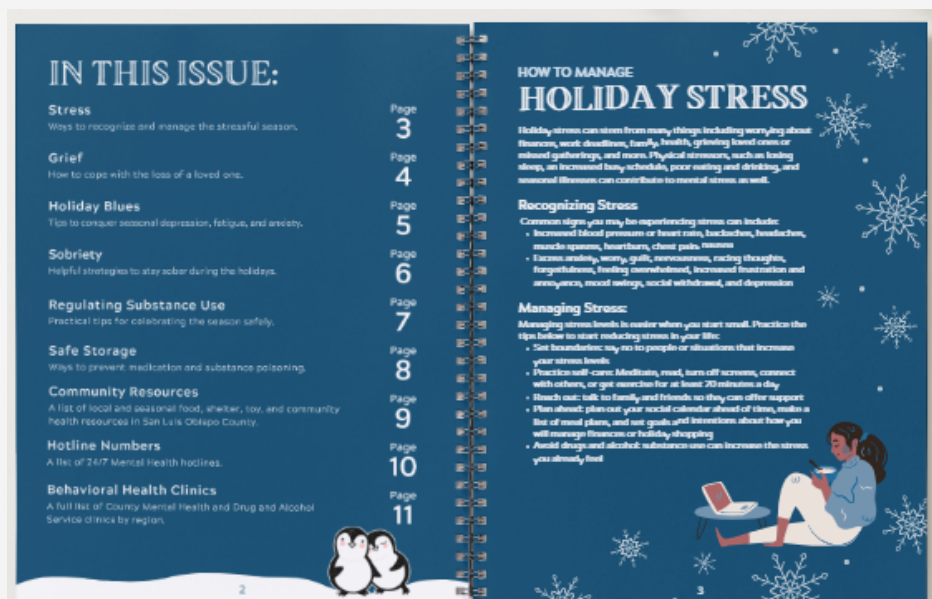
It is through these real examples that we demonstrate ADA and DEI healthcare practices, improving health outcomes and equitable access to health to our SLO County community.

More information on Behavioral Health accessibility practices can be found on the Client Resource Center online.

2025 CULTURAL HOLIDAYS (A-Z)

- Advent: Begins the fourth Sunday before Christmas
- Bodhi Day: December 8
- Christmas: December 25
- Christmas Eve: December 24
- Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe: December 12
- Feast of the Holy Family: December 30
- Feast of the Immaculate Conception of Mary: December 8
- Hanukkah: December 14-December 22
- Kwanzaa: December 26-January 1
- Las Posadas: December 16-December 24
- Saint Nicholas Day: December 6th
- St. Stephen's Day (Boxing Day): December 26
- Yule: December 21-January 1
- Zartosht No-Diso: December 26

No matter what holidays you may be celebrating this year, check out the [Behavioral Health Holiday Guide](#) for more tips on how to take care of your mental and physical health this season.



SAFE STORAGE DURING THE HOLIDAYS

Keep your household safe

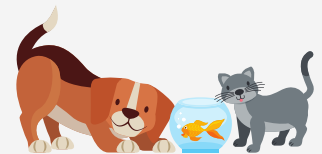
- Keep substances in child-resistant packaging and fully reseal them after each use
- Store and dispose of cannabis products and wrappers in areas not easily seen or accessible to children or pets
- Store substances & prescription medications in a lock box to prevent family members and/or visitors from taking them
- Do not share your medications
- Dispose of all expired, unwanted, and unused medications at your local pharmacy or “take back” event



In children: Watch for loss of coordination, sleepiness and/or difficulty with breathing

How to dispose of medications

- Pharmacies offer free medication disposal services both in person and through the mail
- Before disposing of your medication, remove the label or scratch off or scribble over personal information
- Do not flush unwanted medications down the toilet! Drugs poured down the sink or flushed down the toilet can seep into groundwater, pass through treatment systems, or enter rivers and lakes

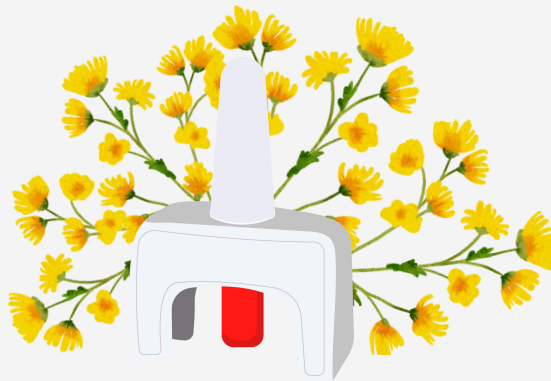


In pets: Watch for stumbling, urinary problems, lack of energy, drooling, vomiting, and/or agitation

In case of emergency...

- Call California Poison Control at 800-222-1222
- If the individual collapses, has a seizure, has trouble breathing, or can't be awakened call 911 right away
- Call your local veterinarian or the Animal Poison Control Center at 888-426-4435 if a pet consumes substances

**CHECK OUT THE
BEHAVIORAL
HEALTH
HOLIDAY GUIDE
FOR MORE TIPS!**



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

5575 Hospital Drive, Atascadero; (805) 461-6080

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 to call for bed availability

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

40 Prado: 805-544-4004