MEDIA RELEASE

OFFICE OF COUNTY MAYOR GLENN JACOBS

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Mayor Jacobs to Recognize Mental Health Awareness Month

Knoxville, Tennessee— Knox County will observe national Mental Health Awareness Month throughout May to continue efforts to increase the awareness and understanding of mental health in our community.

At the beginning of each week, Mayor Glenn Jacobs will present a vignette that highlights a different mental health topic. The videos will focus on stigma and changing the way mental health is perceived; children's mental health and wellness; access to and importance of mental health screening; and available crisis services and resources.

The mayor will also wear green each week to bring attention to this issue. The green ribbon that signifies support for mental health will be displayed on the Knox County Government Facebook Page's cover photo.

"Bringing attention to mental health is something I care deeply about," said Mayor Jacobs. "We must remove the stigma surrounding mental health issues. Mental health has a wide-ranging impact on our wellbeing as individuals and as a community. Just as we encourage each other to take care of our bodies and our physical health, we cannot afford to ignore our mental, emotional and behavioral health."

Fifty percent of Americans will meet the criteria for a diagnosable mental health condition during their lifetime and half of them will develop their condition by the time they are turned 14-years-old. As many as 60 percent of adults and 50 percent of youth in need of mental health support or treatment do not seek help.

"We can change these statistics by promoting awareness and working to reduce the stigma associated with needing or seeking help," said Mayor Jacobs.

Businesses, schools, government agencies, healthcare providers, organizations and citizens must all shoulder the responsibility of promoting mental wellness by prioritizing mental health and resiliency, supporting those who are struggling and helping them work toward a path of recovery.

"It is more important than ever to take care of our own mental health and support others doing the same," said Mayor Jacobs. "Recognizing how and when to offer help may save a life."

Founded by the Mental Health Association in 1949 to raise awareness of the importance of mental health and wellness in Americans' lives, the intent of Mental Health Awareness Month was to find recovery-oriented solutions and provide hope for those affected by mental health conditions.

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