



MEDIA RELEASE

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Mayor Jacobs Discusses The Language To Battle Mental Health Stigma

KNOXVILLE, Tenn.— Knox County Mayor Glenn Jacobs continues to recognize National Mental Health Awareness Month, focusing this week on the importance of how we talk about mental health.

“The words we use, the language, it matters,” said Mayor Jacobs. “Negative labels can make people to embarrassed or afraid to ask for help. Nobody wants to be labeled ‘crazy’ or ‘insane.’ People are worried about discrimination or rejection. There is a stigma when there shouldn't be.”

Research shows nearly [one-in-five American adults](#) will have a diagnosable mental health condition in any given year. Around [46 percent of Americans](#) will meet the criteria for a diagnosable mental health condition sometime in their life.

Despite the common nature of mental health issues, the cultural stigma often discourages people from seeking assistance. Most people with mental health issues struggle 10 years before seeking help. The U.S. Surgeon General said stigma is its own threat to public health. Less than half of people with mental illness seek or receive treatment, even though most can be successfully treated.

Mayor Jacobs encourages people to educate themselves and reject negative stereotypes regarding mental health issues. A prominent national campaigns that focuses on the issue is [Stigma Free](#), featuring several online resources and a [Stigma Free quiz](#). Other national efforts include [Bring Change to Mind](#), [Stamp Out Stigma](#), [MakeItOk.org](#), [This Is My Brave](#), and [How Are You Really](#).

“Whatever someone is struggling with, see them as a person rather than the condition, be aware of how you talk about mental illness and encourage others to do the same,” said Mayor Jacobs. “The words we use can help stop a discouraging stigma, and start encouraging people to get help that can make their lives better.”

You can see this week's video for Mental Health Awareness Month on [YouTube](#) and [Facebook](#).

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