

TRANSITIONS

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER OF
SOUTHWEST BEHAVIORAL & HEALTH SERVICES

SB&H Mental Health Awareness Month Events

May 3, 2019, Phoenix, AZ



12 News Video highlights Southwest Behavioral & Health Services Community Resilience program as staff and clients gather for a picnic at Water Ranch Park and the Riparian Preserve in honor of May is Mental Health Month.

Complete with food and activities, Steven Sheets introduces a Proclamation issued from the City of Phoenix Mayor Kate Gallego, in partnership with SB&H announcing May is Mental Health month.



CONTENTS ALSO INCLUDE:

- P2 **SB&H Mental Health Awareness Month Events**
- P3 **Go Beyond Autism Awareness**
- P4 **SB&H Earns HAWP Gold Award**
- P5 **SB&H Announces New Board Member**

SB&H Mental Health Awareness Month Events



May 16, 2019, Payson, AZ

May is Mental Health Month, an observation that aims to bring to light the daily struggles of more than 43 million people in the U.S. KMOG 1420am, Rim Country Radio's Randy Roberson spoke with Diane Roberson, Payson Operations Manager; Becky Conway, Payson CSR Supervisor; and Lynda Riford, SB&H Marketing Director, about the importance of this awareness month, reducing stigma, Mental Health First Aid, and tips for people to boost their overall mental health.

Payson Mayor Tom Morrissey joined the Mental Health Month event at the SB&H Payson Empowerment Center and read a Proclamation of May is Mental Health Month, in partnership with SB&H.

In addition, the Mayors of Buckeye and Flagstaff each partnered with SB&H to provide Proclamations declaring May as Mental Health Month in their communities while Governor Doug Ducey provided a Proclamation of May is Mental Health Month in the State of Arizona.

May 24, 2019, Prescott Valley, AZ

May is Mental Health Awareness Month. SB&H Prescott Valley Outpatient invited employees and clients to participate in a Mental Health Awareness Month event aimed to bring to light the daily struggles of people with mental health issues. Director Christine Hayes presented a laugh therapy session during the event, proving that humor and laughing are good for people's mental health.

Prescott Valley Mayor Kell Palguta participated in the event and read his Proclamation declaring May as Mental Health Month in Prescott Valley, in partnership with Southwest Behavioral & Health Services.



The month of April is very special to me. April is Autism Awareness Month. As with most “awareness” months, it’s an opportunity to create awareness for something that affects so many.

Rather than just making people aware of the fact that autism exists, I’d like to see everyone take the extra step and promote acceptance and inclusion in schools and communities.

Fourteen years ago, my husband and I were blessed with twins, a boy and a girl. Sarah and Josiah were like most kids. They liked cartoons and animals and steered clear of activities deemed “no fun,” like brushing their teeth.

But something about Sarah was different and it would be years of doctor appointments before we came up with any answers. When Sarah turned nine, she was diagnosed with pervasive developmental and attention deficit disorder. The doctors added Asperger’s and anxiety to the diagnosis later that year.

After a bit of research, we discovered the Southwest Autism Center of Excellence. They threw us a lifeline and we gladly grabbed it. SACE’s philosophy of serving Autism Spectrum Disorder members throughout their life span promotes high quality community-based services that are tailored to each member and family, delivering services in the most appropriate setting, in a timely fashion and while respecting the member’s and family’s cultural heritage. Individualized treatment plans are developed for each individual and their family, adapted to fit their particular strengths, needs and goals. SACE also offers comprehensive services that include medical, developmental and mental health providers in one setting – something we really needed.

A comprehensive evaluation provided the much-needed insight that allowed a team to put an action plan together for our daughter. Traditional cognitive behavioral therapy wasn’t working and SACE suggested and offered an alternative applied behavior analysis therapy in our home.

Go Beyond Autism Awareness

By Rebekah McConnell



We learned the motivation, questions and “why” behind Sarah’s behaviors. Our ABA therapist showed and taught us how to gain Sarah’s cooperation and design behavior modification strategies.

Victoria also taught us how to parent without having emotional reactions to Sarah’s behaviors, which has created a much calmer home environment. It allows us to expect the behaviors and then work to modify them – parenting the child you have, not the one you were expecting.

We still have hurdles with creating schedules, hygiene, time management and working independently, but we’re making great strides. Sarah has also shown incredible progress in managing aggression, defiance and the need to harm herself. SACE’s psychiatric and nursing care has been amazing. Parenting classes and support groups provide a much-needed community for sharing challenges and wins with a group of people that really understand what you’re going through. I wish that people could understand that autism doesn’t take away a child’s humanity, dignity or desire for relationships. Individuals with autism have unique talents and gifts. They may need accommodations and parents may need extra patience, but every goal accomplished is precious.

- Rebecca McConnell lives in Mesa. The Southwest Autism Center of Excellence is a collaborative effort of Southwest Behavioral & Health Services and Southwest Human Development. Information: sbhservices.org or saceaz.org





Southwest Behavioral & Health Services earns HAWP Gold Award

AZ Business Leaders
Article; Phoenix, AZ

Southwest Behavioral & Health Services (SB&H), an innovative leader in behavioral health, has been awarded the Healthy Arizona Worksites Program (HAWP) Gold Award, which recognizes Arizona businesses that are making efforts to positively affect the health and well-being of employees, their families, and their community. The criteria for this award evaluate evidence-based worksite health initiatives and promising programs.

“As a community-based behavioral health provider, we have prioritized serving our community for the past 40 years,” said Southwest Behavioral & Health Services marketing director Lynda Riford. “Winning this award only reinforces the idea that we care about employee health and wellness as much as we care about fostering it in our community.”

HAWP is a public health initiative that has been developed through a partnership between the Arizona Department of Health Services and the Maricopa County Department of Public Health. This statewide program provides Arizona employers with training, technical assistance, tools, and resources to design, implement, and evaluate worksite wellness initiatives. The Gold Award is HAWP’s second highest acknowledgement.



Transitions is published quarterly to keep the community informed about new developments at Southwest Behavioral & Health Services.

If you have suggestions for future newsletter topics or would like to be added to our email list, please contact:

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Kevin Lawson

April 12th, Southwest Behavioral & Health Services announced today that it has appointed Kevin Lawson to its board of directors. Lawson has more than 24 years of firefighter paramedic experience currently working for the City of Scottsdale's Station 609 at the Scottsdale airport.

Interested in Being on the Board of Directors?

Are you, or is someone you know, interested in serving on the Board of Directors of Southwest Behavioral & Health Services and making a difference in the community?

Contact **Lynda Riford** at lyndar@sbhservices.org.

