



JB Pritzker, Governor

Grace B. Hou, Secretary

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***IDHS Commemorates Mental Health Awareness Month by Lighting
Skylines Green Across the State***

The cities of Chicago, Decatur, and Quincy light up green to raise awareness for mental health

CHICAGO – The Illinois Department of Human Services (IDHS) is raising awareness for mental health and partnering with providers and cities across the state for awareness month events. In honor of mental health awareness, Governor JB Pritzker proclaimed May to be Mental Health Awareness Month in Illinois.

According to the National Alliance on Mental Illness, 1 in 5 youth aged 13-18 will experience a severe mental disorder at some point during their life, and approximately 1 in 5 adults will experience a mental illness in a given year. Each year Mental Health Awareness Month and Children’s Mental Health Awareness Day seek to raise awareness about the importance of mental health and how it is essential to a child’s healthy development. Research has long shown that the effects of trauma cause disparity in physical health, addiction, mental health conditions, suicide rates, economic vulnerability, educational attainment, violence of all types, and that these disparities are passed from generation to generation.

“Mental Health Awareness Month is an opportunity for individuals and groups across the state to start conversations about mental health and begin to break down the stigma associated with mental illness. It also allows IDHS to highlight the mental health services that are available through our agency,” said IDHS Secretary Grace B. Hou. “We would like to thank our community partners for hosting events this month and cities across the state for lighting up green to raise awareness.”

The State of Illinois, along with more than 1,100 communities, 160 national collaborating organizations, and federal programs have organized local awareness day activities and events around the country. Events in Illinois include a Children’s Mental Health Awareness Day



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Ceremony at Decatur Public Schools (DPS) on May 10, where green and white pinwheels will be displayed for each school to commemorate the day. On Trauma-Informed Awareness Day, May 15, Illinois State Senator Julie Morrison, youth from the Mikva Challenge, and IDHS will be holding a press conference to raise awareness for trauma-informed care in the Blue Room at the State Capitol. Other events include, a public presentation for youth, caregivers and adults working with youth from the Lake County Health Department, and a Walk the Block event by the Egyptian Health Department. For more details and a full list of events and activities please visit IDHS' Division of Mental Health's [events page](#).

Cities and towns across the state will also be lighting their buildings and structures green from May 6-13 to help raise awareness for Mental Health Awareness Month. In Chicago, the Willis Tower, 875 North Michigan Avenue, and Prudential Plaza will be lit green. The Blue Cross Blue Shield of Illinois will be lit green and also display "Mental Health Month" in their windows on May 6. The Tate & Lyle building in Decatur and the Bayview Bridge in Quincy will also be lit green. IDHS would like to thank the Building Owners and Managers Association (BOMA) of Chicago for their support in raising awareness for mental health.