**May - National Mental Health Month Media Release Template**

UPDATE ALL HIGHLIGHTED AREAS. USE THE [DFPS DATA BOOK](https://www.dfps.state.tx.us/About_DFPS/Data_Book/) TO PULL STATEWIDE AND LOCAL STATISTICS AS NEEDED. COPY AND PASTE THE TEXT INTO THE BODY OF AN EMAIL TO YOUR LOCAL MEDIA. IF YOU NEED ASSISTANCE WITH DATA OR IDENTIFYING YOUR LOCAL MEDIA, PLEASE CONTACT THE COMMUNICATIONS TEAM. PLEASE SEND A LINK OR PDF OF ANY COVERAGE YOU GET. GOOD LUCK!

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**Caring for Yourself and Others: National Mental Health Month with YOUR CASA PROGRAM**

CITY, Texas – May is National Mental Health Month, and YOUR CASA PROGRAM wants you to know that caring for your mental health is just as important as caring for your physical health.

“Physical and mental health are linked—meaning when one is in poor condition, often so is the other,” said ED’s FULL NAME, executive director of YOUR CASA PROGRAM. “In addition to watching out for our physical health, we also need to be doing everything we can to take care of our mental health.”

YOUR CASA PROGRAM is a local nonprofit that recruits and trains CASA volunteers, or Court Appointed Special Advocates, to advocate for children and families involved in the foster care system in SERVICE AREA. Sadly, the children and families served by these volunteers are at a high risk for experiencing mental health issues.

“As advocates for those involved in foster care, we see children, parents and families struggling with mental health issues, and helping them access the treatment and services they need is a core part of what we do,” ED’s LAST NAME said.

Like the kids and families PROGRAM NAME serves, we can all benefit from taking good care of our mental health. This looks different for everyone, ED’s LAST NAME said. For some, it can mean keeping up with regular exercise and a healthy diet. For others, it can mean practicing meditation and mindfulness. For still others, it can mean opening up to someone, whether a friend or a professional. Whatever it means to you, there’s no better time than now to make your mental health a priority, HE/SHE/THEY said.

“Our CASA volunteers are continuing to keep an eye out for the mental health of the children and families they’re serving, because it’s an equal partner to physical health,” ED’s LAST NAME said. “Make sure you’re doing the same, both for yourself and for others.”

Though there’s no one-size-fits-all approach, ED’s LAST NAME has a few tips on how you can look after your mental health.

If you’re looking for easy ways to get or stay active, there are many free workout channels on video platforms like YouTube, as well as smartphone apps for running, yoga and more. You can also help keep your brain “trained” through mindfulness exercises and meditation.

If you’re working and/or in school, do what you can to maintain a healthy balance and give yourself breaks when you know you need them. Try not to hold yourself to unrealistic expectations. If you’re concerned you’re not doing enough, think of what you would say to encourage a friend who was feeling the same way, and give yourself the same grace.

If you’re struggling, consider opening up to a trusted friend, partner or family member. It might be scary at first, but chances are, the person will be glad you told them how you are feeling and will be happy to support you and lend a listening ear.

If you think you could benefit from professional help, check out [Psychology Today’s Find a Therapist tool](https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/therapists) to get started. You can also consider online or text therapy.

Lastly, if you are in severe emotional distress or experiencing thoughts of suicide, you can contact the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline, toll-free, at 1-800-273-TALK (8255). Your call is confidential and free of charge.

“This National Mental Health Month is a better time than ever to come together and take care of ourselves and each other,” ED’s LAST NAME said. “We can all benefit from investing in our mental health, both right now and in the future.”

For more information on CASA PROGRAM NAME, the issues children and families in the foster care system face, and the work of CASA volunteers, visit YOUR WEBSITE AND/OR PHONE NUMBER AND/OR [www.BecomeACASA.org](http://www.BecomeACASA.org). The next information session is DATE.

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