MAY is Mental Health Awareness Month

"It's OK to not be OK."

May is Mental Health Awareness Month. Observed in the United States since 1949, it is a time when we can collectively help bring awareness to and understanding of those impacted by mental illness. It is also a time when we can help to reduce the stigma of mental illness and encourage others (and ourselves) that it is absolutely OK to seek the advice of a medical professional when it comes to our mental health.

We see the dentist for a toothache; we see our primary care doctor for regular physical check-ups; and we wouldn't think twice about scheduling an appointment with a medical specialist for hearing loss or blurry vision. We need to promote the understanding that talking to a medical professional about how we're feeling is just as important as fixing a broken bone.

Within the month of May, the first week is designated as Children's Mental Health Awareness Week. The Youth Mental Health Project provides a number of ideas and resources for families.

Taking care of myself!
- Limit screen time… especially on social media
- Distance yourself from toxic people and situations
- Exercise / Get 8 hours of sleep / Eat a balanced diet
- Go on a walk / get outside / get some fresh air
- Speak up about something that is troubling you. There are people around you who want to help!

Taking care of those around me!
- Check in with friends and family
- Be "present" when you are with others
- Reinforce with others that you are available to them
- Invite someone to go on a walk with you
- Speak up for other

COMMUNITY RESOURCES:

Boys Town National Hotline   800-448-3000   Text VOICE to 20121

United Way of the Midlands

The Kim Foundation

If you or someone you know is in crisis and need immediate help, please call: 1-800-273-TALK (8255) or 911