

THE GUIDANCE CENTER LAUNCHES MENTAL HEALTH CAMPAIGN WITH LOCAL TRAININGS FOR MAY

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By The Guidance Center

LONG BEACH, Calif. – Mental health conditions are common and treatable. However, due to the stigma that surrounds mental health, many children and their families who suffer from mental health conditions go without treatment that could help them overcome challenges and lead positive, productive lives.

In 1949, “May is Mental Health Month” was established to combat this issue and raise awareness of mental health conditions and the importance of good mental health for everyone.

In honor of the nationally celebrated awareness month, The Guidance Center, a nonprofit child and family mental health service provider headquartered in Long Beach, invites the community to join its campaign, “Let Courage Rise,” aimed at starting the conversation on mental health and empowering community members with tools to realize their inner courage and end stigma together. Opportunities to participate will be both online and through several events in Long Beach.

“Asking for help is an act of courage and a sign of inner strength,” said Patricia Costales, LCSW, CEO of The Guidance Center. “At The Guidance Center, we see many brave children and their families seeking help for mental health challenges and wanting to create change in their lives. We know there are still children in our community in need of mental health support. As a community, we can make a difference in these children’s lives by finding our inner courage and speaking up about mental health together.”

Throughout the month of May, on its Instagram, Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn pages, The Guidance Center will share resources on how to start a conversation on mental health along with inspiring first-hand accounts of The Guidance Center clients who have faced incredible challenges but found their inner courage and hope through mental health treatment.

On Friday, May 11 from noon to 1 p.m., The Student Nurses Association of Cerritos College (SNACC) will host a KARMA Ride at GritCycle Studio in Long Beach, located at 3850 Worsham Ave. Ste 430, for May Mental Health Month. Proceeds raised will benefit The Guidance Center. Limited bikes available. To reserve a bike, visit <https://gritcycle.com>.

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The second event in honor of the month is The Guidance Center's 3rd Annual Social Hour benefiting the agency's It's About T.I.M.E. (Trauma-Informed Movement in Education) program. The Social Hour will take place on Thursday, May 16 at Liberation Brewing Co. in Long Beach between 5:30 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. It's About T.I.M.E. is a first-of-its-kind for Long Beach Unified School District (LBUSD) training program, based on [ChildTrauma Academy's Neurosequential Model in Education](#), that equips educators with tools to understand and help students who are experiencing negative impacts of trauma. At the event, Costales and Nathan Swaringen, LCSW, clinical therapist at The Guidance Center and developer and lead of It's About T.I.M.E., will share about the program, the vision for its expansion throughout LBUSD, and how the community can join the movement. Tickets to the Social Hour are \$35 per person and include one beer and one taco plate catered by Patricia's Restaurant of Bixby Knolls. For more information on event tickets and It's About T.I.M.E., visit <https://www.tgclb.org/events/>.

"Over the years, we've come a long way to combat the stigma surrounding mental health in our communities, but it still exists," said Costales. "Each of us can be an advocate for change. Spread kindness in your neighborhood. Check on a friend. Share your own experiences with therapy. These simple, caring interactions can make a huge difference. It can encourage someone who needs help to seek it. Stigma around mental health surrounds us, but we can work together to combat it."

To learn more about Mental Health Month and ways to get involved, visit The Guidance Center's blog at <https://www.tgclb.org/community/stopstigma-mmhm/>.
