



SCOTT WALKER

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

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Governor Scott Walker Kicks Off Mental Health Awareness Month

Appleton – Today, Governor Scott Walker joined local leaders and members of the medical community at the Northeast Wisconsin (NEW) Mental Health Connection to mark the beginning of Mental Health Awareness Month. This year’s Mental Health Awareness Month theme is “No Health without Mental Health” and focuses on increasing access to mental health services and removing the stigma of mental illness that may prevent people from seeking treatment.

“Every day, people suffering from mental illness go untreated because of the stigma surrounding this issue,” Governor Walker said. “Our goal is increase awareness, and offer greater access to treatment so everyone needing assistance can, and will, get it. This investment in mental health services is long overdue in Wisconsin, and our community-centered approach will yield the greatest results, so members of our state living with mental illness can prosper.”

Mental Health Awareness Month is part of a larger effort by Governor Walker to improve treatment and support of people living with mental illness, including a historic investment of more than \$30 million dollars to expand mental health services. Governor Walker also declared 2014 as the year of *A Better Bottom Line*, to promote the benefits of hiring of people with disabilities, including those with mental illness. A copy of the Governor’s proclamation is attached.

2013-15 Mental Health Initiatives

- *Creation of the Office of Children’s Mental Health* to coordinate with federal, state, and local governments to ensure each child receives the proper support to cope and recover from traumatic episodes.
- *Creation of Peer Run Respite Centers* to offer innovative services providing community-based care facilitated by people who succeeded in recovering from mental illness or substance abuse.
- *Expansion of Coordinated Services Team* to increase in home counseling for children earlier in life to treat and prevent traumatic events that can affect children through adulthood.
- *Expansion of Comprehensive Community Services* to take a locally centered approach at treating mental illness through crafting social relationships, out-patient treatment, and improving satisfaction of life for participants.
- *Expansion of Fostering Futures and Trauma-Informed Care* to provide young victims of traumatic events the opportunity to grow-up in a safe and structured home environment with loving caretakers who provide a healthy lifestyle.

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