

MEDIA ADVISORY

For immediate release:

May 11, 2018

For more information, contact:

Dellia Hawthorne-Williams, Public Information Officer
Prince George's County Health Department
301-883-7835/ 240-417-8443

Prince George's County Health Department Launches Campaign to Reduce the Stigma of Mental Illness in Our Communities

The Step Forward campaign includes a series of advertisements and a partnership with a national organization to empower young people, adults and families to lead healthier lives

LARGO, MD – In recognition of Mental Health Awareness Month in May, Prince George's County is launching a public awareness campaign that begins to change the conversation about mental illness and reduce the stigma that often comes with getting help. County Executive Rushern L. Baker, III will join the Health Department and representatives from a variety of partnering County agencies and organizations to launch Step Forward. The campaign aims to increase the understanding of mental illness, promote access to and the utilization of treatment services in the continuum of care, and improve stability and recovery.

A series of advertisements and a newly designed website will educate the public about prevention and intervention strategies, as well as provide a map showing the location of mental health and substance use treatment providers with a summary of the services they provide. The Step Forward campaign is also the official launch of the county's partnership with [Crisis Text Line](#), a national crisis assistance service intended to reach residents ages 13 to 25.

"Ensuring that children and families are more aware of mental health issues and the resources available to address them is important," said County Executive Rushern L. Baker, III. "We have to erase the stigma that is associated with seeking help in our communities, so our residents view getting professional help for their mental health as important as getting help for their physical health. This campaign is about ensuring that our residents, including our young people, understand that they are not alone and that there are resources out there to assist them."

In addition to remarks by County public health experts, and child-serving organizations, the event will also feature personal stories from Prince George's County residents about the impact mental illness has had on them.

WHAT:

Step Forward Program Launch

WHO:

The Honorable Rushern L. Baker, III, County Executive, Prince George's County
Betty Hager Francis, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer for Health, Human Services and
Education, Office of County Executive Rushern L. Baker, III
Pamela Creekmur, Health Officer, Prince George's County
Gwendolyn J. Mason, Ed.D., Associate Superintendent, Office of Special Education and
Student Services, Prince George's County Public Schools
Dr. Jacquelyn Duval-Harvey, Deputy Health Officer, Prince George's County
Stephen Liggett-Creel, Chief of Staff, Prince George's County Department of Social
Services
Collette Harris, Executive Director, National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI), Prince
George's County

WHEN:

Monday, May 14, 2018
12:30 p.m.

WHERE:

Kentland Community Center
Theatre Room
2411 Pinebrook Avenue
Landover, MD 20785

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