



ROBERT BENTLEY
GOVERNOR

STATE OF ALABAMA
DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH
RSA UNION BUILDING
100 NORTH UNION STREET
POST OFFICE BOX 301410
MONTGOMERY, ALABAMA 36130-1410
WWW.MH.ALABAMA.GOV



ZELIA BAUGH
COMMISSIONER

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 7, 2012

Contact: Office of Public Information
334.242.3417

**ADMH AND PARTNERS TO CELEBRATE CHILDREN'S MENTAL HEALTH
AWARENESS WEEK**

MONTGOMERY – Governor Bentley will soon proclaim May 6-12, 2012, as Children's Mental Health Awareness Week in Alabama, coinciding with both National Children's Mental Health Awareness Week and National Mental Health Month, observed annually in May. The National Federation of Families for Children's Mental Health sponsors Children's Mental Health Awareness Week each year in an effort to increase public awareness of the triumphs and challenges in children's mental health. According to Dr. Tammy Peacock, associate commissioner for ADMH's Division of Mental Health & Substance Abuse Services, adds, "Mental health is essential to children and adolescents overall well being and development. ADMH supports access to care for those who need help, but we also want to increase awareness of the need for mental health promotion within the family and the child's environment."

In recognition of this observance, ADMH, Alabama Family Ties and Alabama Youth M.O.V.E. are partnering to raise public awareness and promote a greater understanding of mental health disorders that affect thousands of Alabama children each year. Community mental health providers have been encouraged to sponsor events or activities to commemorate the week as they have done in previous years. Activities such as health fairs at local schools, poster contests, purchasing and promoting the wearing of green ribbons, and the distribution of promotional items to parents at monthly support meetings are examples of past involvement. Alabama Family Ties secured artwork from a youth consumer during their annual conference, which is featured on a Children's Mental Health Awareness Week poster they have distributed throughout the state.

Alabama Youth M.O.V.E. is a newly formed youth-led organization devoted to improving services and systems that support positive youth growth and development through uniting the voices of individuals who have been served by various systems including mental health, juvenile justice and education. Members of AYM, with assistance from ADMH, created a radio PSA that was distributed statewide informing Alabamians about Children's Mental Health Awareness Week and encouraging them to wear green throughout the week. They also filmed a video "PSA" with the same message that can be found on the ADMH and Alabama Family Ties websites, as well as AYM's newly created Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/AlabamaYouthMOVE>.

The latest national data shows that bipolar disorder, major depression, attention deficit disorder (ADD), attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), and various severe anxiety disorders affect one in five children each year. In Alabama, approximately 25,000 children receive public mental health treatment every year. However, research shows that serious emotional disturbances are more common and often yield more successful treatment outcomes than illnesses such as cancer and juvenile diabetes.

(cont.)



ROBERT BENTLEY
GOVERNOR

STATE OF ALABAMA
DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH
RSA UNION BUILDING
100 NORTH UNION STREET
POST OFFICE BOX 301410
MONTGOMERY, ALABAMA 36130-1410
WWW.MH.ALABAMA.GOV



ZELIA BAUGH
COMMISSIONER

###

RESOURCES

To learn more about Children's Mental Health Awareness Week activities going on throughout the state, as well as children's mental health services in Alabama, contact the Alabama Department of Mental Health at 334-242-3200 or visit www.mh.alabama.gov.

For more information about Alabama Family Ties, visit their Web site at www.alfamilyties.org.

More information about National Children's Mental Health Awareness Week can be found at the National Federation of Families Web site at www.ffcmh.org/events/national-childrens-mental-health-awareness-week/.