



**City of Traverse City Proclamation Declaring  
May 2022 as Youth Mental Health Awareness Month**

WHEREAS, mental health conditions are real, common, and treatable, and people experiencing mental health challenges deserve support, compassion and care; mental health is no less important than physical health; and

WHEREAS, children in the United States and our community were experiencing mental and behavioral health challenges before the additional challenges of the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic; and

WHEREAS, families have been deeply affected by the COVID-19 pandemic with long-lasting consequences, and children are likely facing increased stress due to the changes, fear and uncertainty caused by illness, isolation, impending homelessness, and job and healthcare loss at rates never before seen; and

WHEREAS, children have been found to be at a higher risk of abuse or of witnessing domestic abuse during the pandemic, due to various factors including long-term school closures; and

WHEREAS, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reports that more than 20 percent of youth have a diagnosed mental health disorder in the United States and that up to 1 out of 5 children experience a mental disorder in a given year; and

WHEREAS, the average age of early signs of mental illness is 14, when most students are entering high school; and

WHEREAS, an estimated 60 percent of students with emotional, behavioral and mental health disorders do not graduate from high school, according to the U.S. Department of Education; and

WHEREAS, National Survey of Drug Use and Health data shows mental health diagnoses, suicide rates, nonsuicidal self-injury such as cutting, and emergency room visits for students experiencing mental health issues are all on the rise; and

WHEREAS, the number of children ages 6-12 who visited children's hospitals for suicidal thoughts or self-harm has more than doubled since 2016, according to the Children's Hospital Association; and

WHEREAS, the CDC has declared suicide as a leading cause of death among youth ages 15 to 19 years old; and

WHEREAS, the World Health Organization has found that neighborhood safety, access to green space, healthy food, housing, health care, and pollution can shape the mental health of young people; and

WHEREAS, the Surgeon General's Advisory identified youth with parents or caregivers who were frontline workers, youth who experienced disruptions in routine, such as not seeing friends or going to school in person, youth who experienced more adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) such as abuse, neglect, community violence, and discrimination and experienced more financial instability, food shortages, or housing instability as risk factors to contributing to youth mental health issues during the pandemic; and

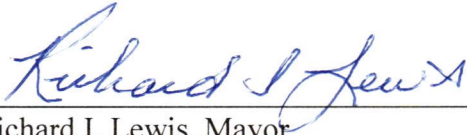
WHEREAS, the Surgeon General's Advisory on Youth Mental Health identified youth with intellectual and developmental disabilities, racial and ethnic minority youth, LGBTQ+ youth, low-income youth, youth in rural areas, youth in immigrant households, who faced language and technology barriers to accessing health care services and education, special youth populations, including youth involved with the juvenile justice, or child welfare systems, as well as runaway youth and youth experiencing homelessness as groups of young people who are at higher risk for mental health challenges; and

WHEREAS, the City of Traverse City is committed to supporting the youth of our community and enhancing discussions around the importance of youth mental health; and

THEREFORE, I, Richard I. Lewis, Mayor of the City of Traverse City, proclaim:

**May 2022 as Youth Mental Health Awareness Month**



  
Richard I. Lewis, Mayor  
City of Traverse City