



The Navajo Nation  
Office of the President and Vice President

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Navajo leaders recognize the month of May as “*ńtsáhakees Silah’igii Baa ‘Áhaya* – Navajo Nation Mental Health Awareness Month”**

**WINDOW ROCK, Ariz.** –Navajo Nation President Jonathan Nez and Vice President Myron Lizer issued a proclamation on Saturday, recognizing the month of May 2021 as “*ńtsáhakees Silah’igii Baa ‘Áhaya* – Navajo Nation Mental Health Awareness Month” to raise awareness of the importance of mental health, particularly during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

“Over the last year, we’ve experienced high levels of grief, trauma, uncertainty, and isolation that impacted our mental health. In many ways, the pandemic has magnified some of the modern-day monsters in our communities. We call upon our citizens to help transform the tragic and life-changing impacts of COVID-19 by protecting our health and well-being, physically and mentally. Also, let us strive to ensure people living with mental health conditions know they are not alone, that hope exists, and healing is possible through support and prayer. Our administration has partnered with the Navajo Nation Division of Behavioral and Mental Health Services to create a Mental Health Coalition to provide more outreach and support. Several weeks ago, the coalition began hosting virtual sessions devoted to breaking the stigma related to mental health illnesses and providing additional resources,” said President Nez.

The proclamation states that “Diné values and traditions, hold in high esteem, our teaching for mental, emotional, physical, and social health” and “mental health is part of overall health and helps to sustain our thought processes, relationships, productivity, and ability to adapt, to preserve, and to overcome adversity.”

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a profound impact on the mental health of Navajo citizens of all ages. It is more critical to reduce the stigma around the mental health struggles of others during the pandemic. Stigmatizing others often prevents individuals from seeking help.

“If you know of someone in your home or community struggling with mental health issues, lend a hand to get them help and support. Asking for help is not a sign of weakness, but a sign of strength. As leaders, we also call on businesses, schools, government programs, health care

providers, and organizations to increase awareness and understanding of mental health and recognize the need for adequate and accessible services,” said Vice President Lizer.

The proclamation recognizes that mental health is often life-threatening, and early detection and treatment can profoundly differentiate recovery and healing.

For more information regarding services and assistance, please visit the Navajo Nation Division of Behavioral and Mental Health Services website at: <https://www.nndbmhs.org> or by calling (928) 871-6240. The Navajo Department of Health also provides resources online at: <https://www.ndoh.navajo-nsn.gov/COVID-19/Mental-Health-Resource>. Support is also available through the National Suicide Lifeline at 1 (800) 273-8255.

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## THE NAVAJO NATION

# Proclamation

### RECOGNIZING THE MONTH OF MAY 2021 AS “ÑTSÁHAKKEES SILAH’IGII BAA ‘ÁHAYA – NAVAJO NATION MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS MONTH”

**WE** recognize our Diné people who endure the challenges associated with mental illnesses, and we pledge solidarity with their families who also require our support for they serve as constant companions to their loved ones suffering from mental health issues. Let us strive to ensure people living with mental health conditions know that they are not alone, that hope exists, and that healing and thriving is possible through support and prayer.

**WHEREAS**, our Diné values and traditions, hold in high esteem, our teaching for Mental, Emotional, Physical and Social health; and

**WHEREAS**, Mental health is part of overall health living and helps to sustain our thought processes, relationships, productivity and ability to adapt to change, to persevere, and overcome adversity; and

**WHEREAS**, we recognize that mental illness adversely affects those abilities and often is life-threatening in nature and acknowledge that early identification and treatment can make a profound difference in successful management of mental illness and recovery; and

**WHEREAS**, approximately one in five Americans experiences a mental illness, yet only about one third of them will access treatment; and

**WHEREAS**, every citizen and community can make a difference in helping end the silence and the stigma surrounding mental illness that has plagued and discouraged people suffering from mental illness from accessing help; and

**WHEREAS**, in conjunction with “National Mental Health Awareness Month”, we renew our commitment to ridding our Nation of the stigma associated with mental illness, and encourage those living with mental health conditions to get the help they need, and reaffirm our pledge to ensure those who need help have access to the support and resources they deserve.

**NOW, THEREFORE, I, JONATHAN NEZ**, President of the Navajo Nation, and **I, MYRON LIZER**, Vice President of the Navajo Nation, do hereby proclaim the month of May 2021 as “Ñtsáhakees Silak’igii Baa ‘ahaya - Navajo Nation Mental Health Awareness Month” throughout the Navajo Nation.

PROCLAIMED THIS 1<sup>st</sup> DAY OF MAY 2021

  
Jonathan Nez, *President*  
THE NAVAJO NATION

  
Myron Lizer, *Vice President*  
THE NAVAJO NATION