

OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
PROCLAMATION

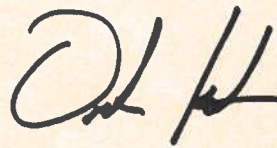
CHILDREN'S MENTAL HEALTH ACCEPTANCE WEEK

WHEREAS, the COVID-19 pandemic challenged the mental health of our youth and families and brought it to the forefront of many conversations. We recognize that a youth's mental health is just as important as their physical health. Acceptance of those who struggle reduces fear, worry, blame, and shame for families and their loved one's experience; and

WHEREAS, talking about mental health with our children and adolescents destigmatizes their view of it and increases the likelihood those who are struggling. They are likely to seek help and access resources. Children and adolescents living with mental health challenges, including their families, can benefit from access to timely resources, services, and support that are family-driven, youth-guided, and culturally appropriate; and

WHEREAS, it's time to move beyond the term awareness and redefine how we address children's mental health in an effort to foster acceptance and end prejudice and discrimination — to accept that one in five youth experiences a mental health challenge; to accept that mental health challenges must be met with understanding and support; to accept that bias and discrimination toward individuals who experience mental health challenges creates a barrier to seeking treatment - and it must be eliminated; to accept that our youth are facing serious challenges ahead that need to be addressed; and to accept that the future wellbeing of our country depends on how we support and invest in the next generation.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, DEREK S. K. KAWAKAMI, MAYOR, County of Kaua'i, do hereby proclaim May 1 to 7, 2022, as Children's Mental Health Acceptance Week in support of this significant health care need and extend my deep appreciation to the Children's Mental Health Acceptance Planning Group, co-led by the Hawai'i Department of Health's Child & Adolescent Mental Health Division and Epic 'Ohana Youth Partners and made up of community organizations dedicated to serving children and families, for providing statewide leadership for these mental health acceptance events.



Derek S. K. Kawakami
Mayor, County of Kaua'i
State of Hawai'i

