



United Way of Hall County

ONE HALL MENTAL AND BEHAVIORAL HEALTH COMMITTEE

Cumulative Report | 2019-2021

ESTABLISHING RATIONALE FOR A COMMITTEE FOCUSED ON MENTAL & BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

Through United Way of Hall County's Community Game Plan, which was the culmination of years of research of Hall County's greatest needs, one of the largest needs identified was raising awareness and resources for mental health. Northeast Georgia Health System had also recently identified through its Community Health Needs Assessment that mental and behavioral health would need to be one of the region's top health priorities. From this knowledge and based on information gained from listening sessions throughout our community, a collaborative subcommittee of the United Way of Hall County's Health Committee was formed: The Mental and Behavioral Health (MBH) Committee.



COMBINING A SHARED VISION

Findings published in United Way's Community Game Plan and feedback from the community listening sessions revealed the need for community collaboration in order to come together to address mental health.



MENTAL AND BEHAVIORAL HEALTH COMMITTEE BACKGROUND

OBJECTIVE: A more unified approach to meeting our community's mental health needs. The strategic vision of this effort is to create a comprehensive system of integrated services that recognizes and treats the behavioral health needs of people where and when they need care.

Members of the Mental and Behavioral Health Committee sought to collaborate with other county agencies and entities with the following information in mind:

Population to mental health provider ratio in Hall County is **1350:1** compared to 330:1 for top U.S. performers

Hall County suicide rate is **16.9 per 100,000** compared to Georgia's benchmark of 14 per 100,000. (NGHS Community Health Needs Assessment 2020 Progress Report)

The World Health Organization states that **mental health and poverty are intertwined**

"OUR GOAL IS TO BRING AWARENESS TO THE PREVALENCE OF MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES AND HELP US ALL UNDERSTAND EVERYONE HAS A ROLE TO PLAY IN HELPING OUR COMMUNITY BE HEALTHIER."

Drug overdoses and mental health issues are often co-related. **Low educational attainment, poverty, unemployment, high-risk behaviors and isolation** are all factors that contribute to substance abuse (The Rural Health Information Hub)

1 in 5 people face mental health issues

Unmet mental health needs lead to **absenteeism at work** and **missed school** for students

Roughly **5%** of 6th-12th grade students in Gainesville and Hall County schools reported they had **attempted suicide** at least once in the previous 12 months.

Hall County had **95 drug overdose-related deaths** per 100,000 compared to Georgia's average of 14 deaths per 100,000. (County Health Rankings: 2017-2019)

Early intervention and education about available resources can help **raise awareness** and alleviate this painful cycle for the most vulnerable

Jessica Dudley,

United Way of Hall County CPO

STAKEHOLDERS AND COMMUNITY MEMBERS

MBH COMMITTEE CO-CHAIRS



Dr. Monica Newton,
Co-Chair



Reese Daniel,
Co-Chair

MBH EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBERS:

Tracy Vardeman
Jessica Dudley
Christy Moore
Jay Parrish
Sarah Bell
Katie Dubnik
Kristen Green
Tonya Sanders
Callie Flack
Brooke Burt
Teigha Snowden

COLLABORATIVE ORGANIZATIONS

United Way of Hall County	Avita
Northeast Georgia Health System	Local non-profits
Gainesville City/Hall County School System	Counselors
Gainesville City Police Department	Mental Health Providers
Hall County Family Connection	Church leaders
Partnership for a Drug Free Hall	NAMI representatives
	<i>And more...</i>

60 stakeholder participants gathered to discuss this issue and identify top priorities for community-based solutions.

THREE AREAS OF EMPHASIS

Once meetings began, there were at least 30 participants from businesses, educational institutions, faith-based organizations and nonprofits consistently attending MBH meetings to provide input. Three areas of need were determined following listening groups, committee meetings and stakeholder interviews:

ACCESS

COLLABORATION

EDUCATION



ACCESS

Acquisition of a shared data platform that will provide information and tracking of clients in support of a robust navigation program.



COLLABORATION

Development of a partnership structure that will support ongoing collaborative efforts

MENTAL HEALTH JUSTICE

Helping link the mentally ill to community-based programs instead of jail or hospital as appropriate



EDUCATION

Implementation of a comprehensive community plan with a strong focus on Mental Health First Aid & destigmatizing mental health.

ACCESS | How to get people what they need in as efficient a manner as possible

DATA SHARING PLATFORM

Through United Way's One Hall Initiative, NGHS is working as a catalyst with community partners to implement a Digital Shared Data Platform, which will help the community become more efficient with resources when serving those who have social needs that impact their overall wellbeing. This platform will be used to make referrals to community non-profits and will provide a universal method to track outcomes, making better use of resources and resulting in better, more coordinated care.

This project is key for investing in future pandemic preparedness given the importance of meeting human need as quickly as possible especially in times of public health emergency. Information and availability of community services changes rapidly in times of crisis, therefore, updated resource information is needed in real time to react to community need. The models in consideration are proven successful in the state and nation and have been vetted with the help of AVIA, a well-respected digital innovator.

DATA SHARING PLATFORM SUBCOMMITTEE: VALUE OPPORTUNITY

Process Metrics

- ↑ Staff efficiency
- ↑ Number of clients who attend a referred service
- ↑ Number of clients referred to appropriate services quality outcomes tracking
- ↑ Quality outcomes tracking

Outcome Metrics

- ↓ Service gaps
- ↓ Total cost of care
- ↓ Unnecessary ED utilization
- ↓ Unnecessary readmissions

*Information provided
by AVIA, 2020*

Steps completed toward determining a data sharing platform:

Created community
workgroup with
stakeholders
from over 14
organizations

Identified Key
Functional
Requirements based
on community
stakeholder needs

Developed list
of questions to
ask vendors

Surfaced short list
of vendors to demo
based on key functional
requirements

Based on scorecard
results and group
discussion, vendors are
undergoing due diligence

Discussed key
infrastructure to
enable Coordinated
Community Networks

Validated key
functional
requirements in
light of COVID

AVIA created a
scorecard based on
stakeholder input

Vendor presentations in
February 2021, including
additional conversations
regarding EPIC integration

**RESEARCH SUPPORTS THE IDEA THAT AS MUCH
AS 80% OF A PERSON'S WELLBEING IS TIED TO
PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT, ECONOMIC FACTORS
AND HEALTH BEHAVIORS**

COLLABORATION | How to partner for a healthier community

MENTAL HEALTH JUSTICE INITIATIVE

The Mental Health Justice Initiative was born out of the MBH Committee, with Gainesville Police Chief Jay Parrish recognizing the need for a mental health clinician on staff at the Gainesville Police Department to reach those individuals who were struggling with mental health prior to finding themselves engaged in the criminal justice system. Out of this came the **Gainesville Police Department's Mental Health Co-Responder Program**.



- North Georgia Community Foundation provided a \$55,000 seed grant to hire clinician Anjana Freeman to respond to mental health calls in the field
- Northeast Georgia Health System Foundation's Medical Center Open chose this program as its beneficiary to allow continued years of the program plus paid interns to help carry caseload

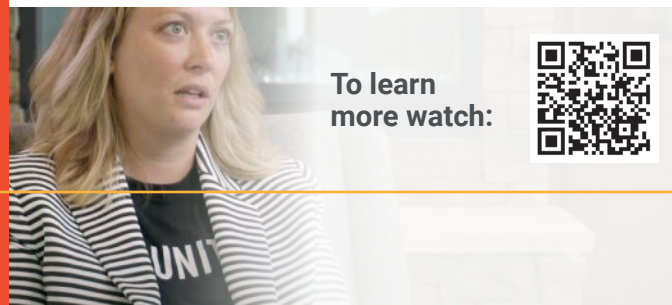
IMPACT

After one year of the program:

87 people connected to resources

32 of those 87 followed up with resources and received support

"I ENVISION A DAY WHERE WE HAVE FOUR OR FIVE CLINICAL WORKERS THAT ARE IN THE POLICE CARS, SO THAT WHEN WE GO TO A CALL AND WE KNOW IT'S A PATIENT IN NEED OF SERVICES, WE CAN ROUTE THAT PATIENT TO SERVICES BEFORE THE CRIMINAL ACTIVITY AND BEFORE THEY GET ARRESTED."



Jay Parrish,
Gainesville Police Chief

EDUCATION | Campaign to Destigmatize Mental Health

REACH OUT CAMPAIGN



GOAL:

Create a unified voice in Hall County around mental health

CAMPAIGN THEME: REACH OUT

You're not alone: Begin campaign to destigmatize mental health issues and educate the population about the importance of mental healthcare.

Community Testimonials: Campaign to encourage people to start openly talking about mental health as a community.

COVID-19 Shift: Meeting people where they were in isolation and providing resources to address specific pandemic needs.

Check in: Addressing post-pandemic mental health needs and remind our community to check in with themselves and with others.

COLLABORATIVE EVENTS

HEALTHSMART

In conjunction with the Reach Out campaign, the Greater Hall Chamber of Commerce focused their annual HealthSmart Expo on mental health. The HealthSmart breakfast featured nationally recognized speaker and **New York Times Bestselling author Eric Langshur**, and the Expo offered businesses the opportunity to take advantage of wellness seminars focusing on how to increase corporate emotional wellbeing. There were 430 in attendance for this event, with 130 attendees at the keynote breakfast.



MENTAL WELLBEING IN THE WORKPLACE

This January 2020 half-day workshop was provided to 2019 Medical Center Golf Tournament Sponsors and focused on information about mental wellbeing and behavioral health in the workplace. The half day seminar included information about the most common mental and substance use issues, signs and symptoms and contributing factors, and strategies for the workplace to improve overall individual performance. Over 330 people attended this workshop.



NGHS MEDICAL CENTER GOLF TOURNAMENT

In October 2019 the NGHS Foundation Golf Tournament focused its efforts on providing funding for **The Hub at Gainesville High School**. The Hub serves as a pilot to potentially replicate in other areas throughout the region. Components of the project include addressing academic and workforce development while also increasing access, collaboration, and education regarding the mental and behavioral health services that are increasingly in demand. By collaborating with community agencies and local non-profits to bring mental and behavioral health services to a centralized location, support services will be offered that can help students reach their full potential and have positive ripple effects within families. The vision for these services is based on creating an environment of trust with students and working to destigmatize the need for mental and behavioral health services. The 2021 beneficiary for this event is the **Mental Health Justice Initiative** (more information on page 9).



REACH OUT COLLATERAL



7,500 book marks distributed
to elementary, middle and high
school students in Hall County
and Gainesville City Schools



10,000 stickers
distributed to school
systems, NGHS, and
community non-profits

- 10 bus stop ads
- Parks and Recreation banners with views totaling close to 270,000
- NGHS prominent corner signs



750 English language &
250 Spanish language cards
distributed to community about the
mental health awareness survey

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!

United Way of Hall County is currently conducting a survey to assess the awareness of mental health in Hall County.

The survey should take less than 5 minutes to complete and will be live from **September 18 - October 16**.

Anyone who participates by midnight on October 16 will be entered into a drawing for a \$250 Visa gift card.

unitedwayhallcounty.org/reach-out

United Way of Hall County

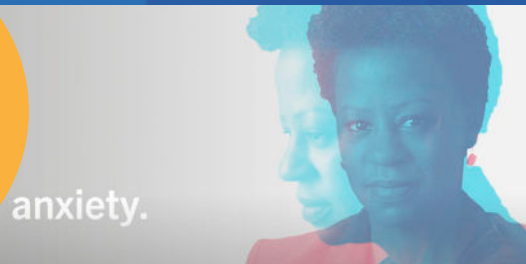
take the survey:

REACH OUT TESTIMONIAL AND EXPERT VIDEOS

Almost two dozen videos were created featuring community leaders and experts, detailing their journeys with emotional and behavioral health. Videos were shared across social media and the United Way of Hall County Website as well as in public venues like City Park during football games.



16 community testimonials were created, sharing the stories of local leaders and their own journeys with emotional wellness.



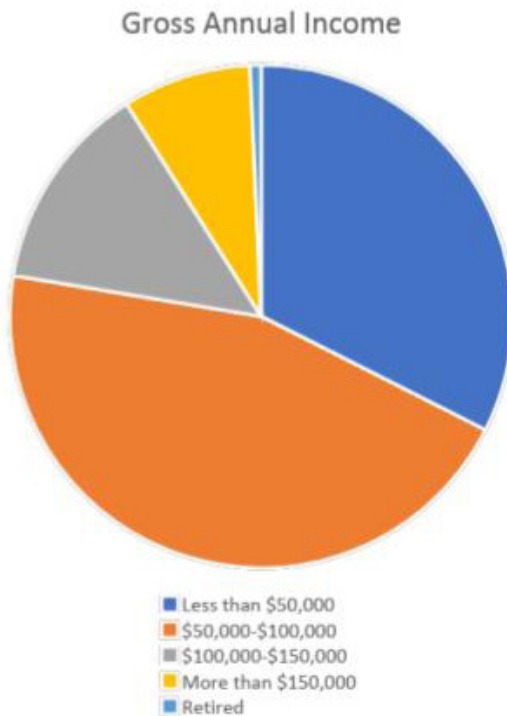
WATCH A COMMUNITY TESTIMONIAL FROM PHILLIPPA LEWIS MOSS

Six expert testimonials were created for community information.



WATCH AN EXPERT TESTIMONIAL FROM KATE MATTISON

SURVEY RESULTS | RESPONDENT PROFILE



A community-wide survey was completed, assessing the depth of mental health needs and resource awareness.

- **1,944 Surveys were completed**
(1,740 were 100% completed)
- **96.6 % lived or worked in Hall County** (1,875)
- **86.10% were female** (13.90% were male)
- **Gross Annual Income**
 - 45.10% make \$50,000- \$100,000
 - 32.5% make less than \$50,000

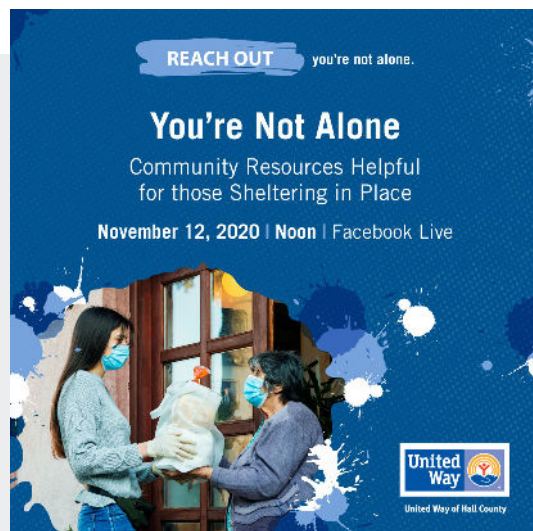
Survey responses were used to help direct future efforts and identify gaps in awareness and need.

SOCIAL MEDIA IMPACT

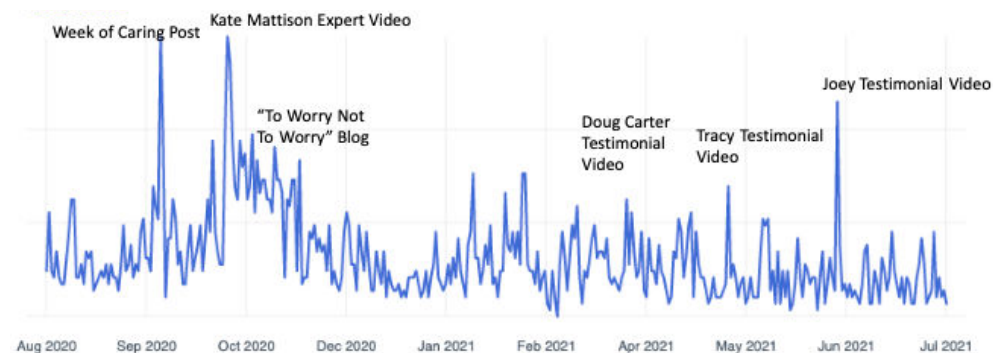
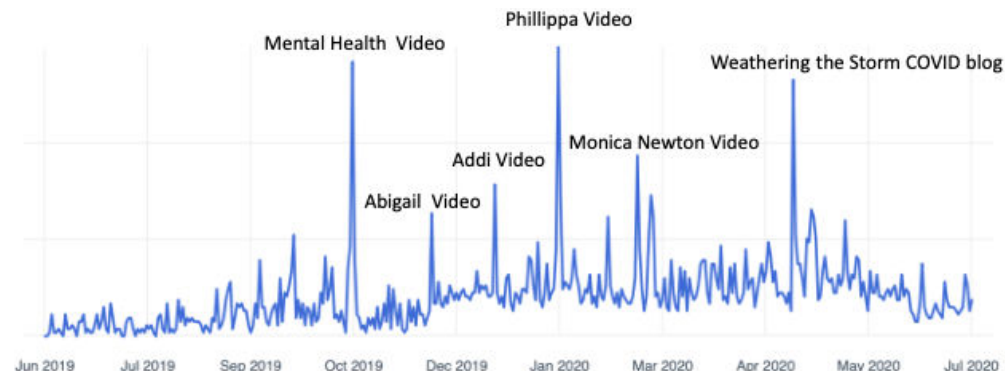
Facebook Page likes in October 2019 were **1,270**. By August 1, 2021, page likes have now almost reached **1,750**. An increase of more than 38% of the likes.

SINCE OCTOBER 2019:

- **95** mental health related posts
- Reaching **109,777** people across Facebook and Instagram
- Video Testimonials attributed for:
 - **30%** of the reach (33,027) of the engagements (3,937)
- Blog Articles attributed for:
 - **4%** of the reach (4,041)

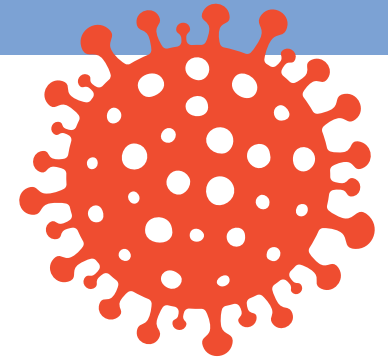


PAGE VIEWS

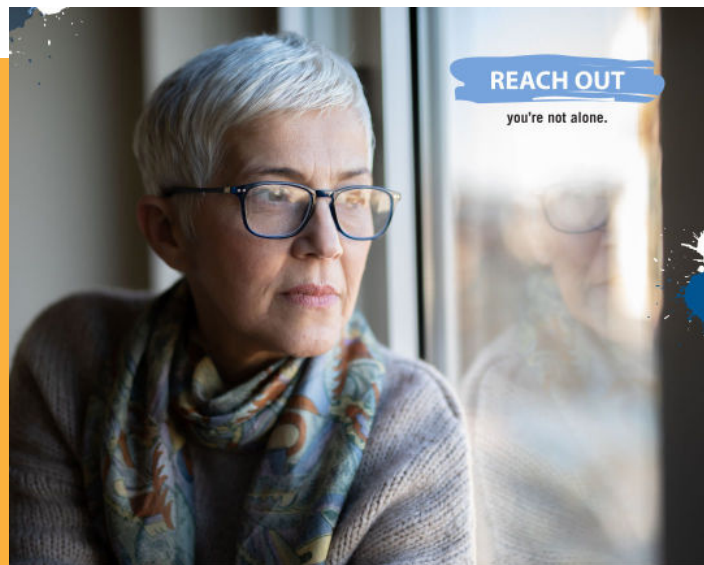


COVID-19 EFFORTS

The successful launch in October 2019 of the Reach Out efforts and the collaborative work of the MBH committee was diverted, but not stopped, by the ensuing COVID-19 global pandemic. A shift in focus was made to address the growing emotional health ramifications of the pandemic and to meet people where they were, with virtual and online workshops and resources.



17 COMMUNITY-EXPERT BLOGS about mental health COVID related topics ([click here to visit our blog page](#))



Weathering the Storm
by Jeff Thompson, Retired Director of Pastoral Care, NGHS

COVID-19 RESOURCES PAGE

- Shared resources for those struggling with mental health during global pandemic, including, resharing information from NAMI, Jeffrey's Place, CDC, NGHS, and community blogs

REACH OUT BUSINESS CARDS

25,000 cards distributed March- April while most people were sheltering in place linking individuals to COVID resources page (English/Spanish)



25,000 business card-sized informational pieces distributed on meal buses to students and families during COVID-19 shutdown.

COVID-19 EFFORTS CONTINUED


SENIOR ADULT FACEBOOK LIVE PANELS

3-part series providing free information from community experts to senior adults sheltering in place:

You're Not Alone


Watch and Learn from the Experts

Free senior adult expert panels are now available online.




Panel 1

Tips for Safely Navigating COVID-19
Balancing mental and physical wellbeing while social distancing




Panel 2

You're Not Alone
Helpful community resources for those sheltering in place



Panel 3

2020 Reboot
How to reset expectations, reframe the holidays, and cope with feelings of grief/loss




REACH OUT

you're not alone.

You can watch these videos or read/print our **highlights sheets** (provided in both English and Spanish) from each session on our **website**:

Point your smartphone camera here



click on the link that appears on your screen.

[unitedwayhallcounty.org/reachout/senioradultpanels](https://www.unitedwayhallcounty.org/reachout/senioradultpanels)

REACH OUT AND WRITE pen pal project with Wisdom Project

- 2,053 supportive letters delivered to senior adults and healthcare workers



REACH OUT & Write!



Take part in our **letter writing** initiative

Learn more at
www.unitedwayhallcounty.org/reachoutandwrite



COVID-19 EFFORTS CONTINUED

HEALTHCARE HEROES PROJECT

Supportive letters, donations, food, and other kind gestures were shown to local healthcare workers who were under immense emotional stress due to the pandemic.

BEN NEMTIN BUILDING RESILIENCE ONLINE WORKSHOPS

- 353 requests for the curriculum



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HALL COUNTY
family connection



COVID PUSH RESULTS

FROM MARCH 15, 2020 – JUNE 1, 2020

SOCIAL:

Reached **27,651 people** | **807 engagements**

Top 3 posts:

- **Weathering the Storm, by Jeff Thompson**
 - 10,429 reached | 253 engagements
- **Staying Focused, by Dr. Mac Hafele**
 - 5,695 reached | 150 engagements
- **Strange Days Indeed, by Reese Daniel**
 - 2063 reached | 95 engagements

WEBSITE TRAFFIC:

- **458 views, 350 unique visitors** went to COVID resources page (21 directly clicked the QR code from cards)
- **365 views, 275 unique visitors** to the Reach Out Page
- **85 views, 52 unique views** to the Blogs page

FROM JULY 1, 2020 – DECEMBER 30, 2020

SOCIAL:

Reached **31,945 people** | **1457 engagements**

Top 3 posts:

- **Reach Out Expert Video, by Kate Mattison**
 - 5,394 reached | 140 engagements
- **UNITED Around Mental Health**
 - 5,333 reached | 43 engagements
- **Medical Panelists Discussing COVID-19 Facebook Live**
 - 3,989 reached | 74 engagements

ONE HALL ADVOCATES

- Focused on building stronger communities, the commUNITY conversations were built out of the One Hall Advocates group
- 29 individuals were a part of the One Hall Advocates group
 - Focused on creating equity and compassion across demographics
- 24 people registered to become trained facilitators to lead discussions
 - Facilitators will use books, videos, podcasts and study groups to highlight racial disparities.
 - Each group will be equipped to share their enhanced knowledge and experiences with contacts so as to reach a “tipping point” for community change surrounding the issues addressed in the conversations.

COMMUNITY CONVERSATIONS

WE CAN DO MORE WHEN WE LIVE UNITED.

WANT TO BE A CommUNITY BUILDER?

Connect to create new beginnings with CommUNITY Conversations.

These conversation groups will meet virtually from April to June to share stories and topic-related media meant to expand perspectives on race, equity, and inclusion.

Join us: 770.536.1121

United Way
United Way of Hall County

As National Youth Poet Laureate Amanda Gorman reminds us:

"There is always light,
if only we're brave enough to see it
If only we're brave enough to be it"

LEARN, GROW, UNITE.

POST COVID WORK

As the pandemic continues to shift awareness of the depth of the need of mental health resources, the goal of reaching a broader audience in a variety of new ways remains at the forefront.

- Greater Hall Chamber of Commerce mailer inserts sent to 1800 community businesses
- Bookmarks distributed in local school systems to faculty and students to kick off the school year with mental health messaging
 - Hall County School System distributed 19,200
 - Gainesville City School System distributed 7,775
- 7 Bus Stop ads updated at key locations throughout Gainesville City
- Park and Recreation Field Banners updated

UPCOMING INITIATIVES:

- Speakers Bureau community series
- Collateral with messaging for untapped audiences
- Providing local faith leaders resources to integrate conversations about emotional health needs that will benefit congregations

MOMENTUM IN THE COMMUNITY:

In addition to the work under the MBH Committee, there are efforts throughout the community to make mental health resources and access more available.

- NGHS's GME program is adding 24 psychiatry residents by 2023, to increase the number of mental health providers in the area
- Avita opened the Behavioral Health Crisis Center to serve the emotional and behavioral health needs of those in Hall County and has added programming to address increased need

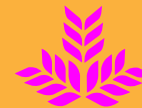


**“EVERYONE HAS A ROLE TO PLAY IN
MAKING OUR COMMUNITY HEALTHIER. WE
WANT PEOPLE TO KNOW THAT WHATEVER
THEY MAY FACE, THEY ARE NOT ALONE.”**

Reese Daniel,
Co-Chair Mental and Behavioral Health Subcommittee



United Way of Hall County



Northeast Georgia Health System

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