

ASSEMBLY JOINT RESOLUTION

No. 43

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

219th LEGISLATURE

PRE-FILED FOR INTRODUCTION IN THE 2020 SESSION

Sponsored by:

Assemblywoman ANGELA V. MCKNIGHT

District 31 (Hudson)

Assemblywoman VALERIE VAINIERI HUTTLE

District 37 (Bergen)

Assemblyman JAMEL C. HOLLEY

District 20 (Union)

Co-Sponsored by:

**Assemblywoman Murphy, Assemblymen Chiaravalloti, Houghtaling and
Assemblywoman Jimenez**

SYNOPSIS

Designates May of each year as “Emotional and Behavioral Disorder Awareness Month.”

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

Introduced Pending Technical Review by Legislative Counsel.



1 **A JOINT RESOLUTION** permanently designating May as “Emotional
2 and Behavioral Disorder Awareness Month” in New Jersey.
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4 **WHEREAS**, Mental health is an essential part of a person’s overall
5 health and ability to thrive in their community; and
6 **WHEREAS**, Emotional and behavioral disorders are medical conditions
7 that disrupt a person’s thinking, feeling, mood, ability to relate to
8 others, and daily functioning; and
9 **WHEREAS**, Just as ailments of other organs of the body, mental
10 illnesses are medical conditions that often result in diminished
11 capacity for coping with the ordinary demands of life; and
12 **WHEREAS**, Emotional disturbances can affect people beyond their
13 immediate emotional states, sometimes creating long-term mental
14 health challenges that can affect physical, social, or cognitive skills;
15 and
16 **WHEREAS**, Some characteristics commonly seen in children who have
17 an emotional disturbance include hyperactivity, aggression, self-
18 injurious behavior, social withdrawal, immaturity, and learning
19 difficulties; and
20 **WHEREAS**, Children are, in many ways, more vulnerable than adults to
21 mental illness, and children with mental illness have a far greater
22 likelihood of being suspended from school, abusing drugs or
23 alcohol, or ending up in the juvenile justice system; and
24 **WHEREAS**, Many people with emotional and behavioral disorders do
25 not receive treatment for their illnesses, due to poor understanding
26 of mental illness and treatment options, stigma, or lack of access to
27 treatment; and
28 **WHEREAS**, Enhanced awareness of emotional and behavioral
29 disorders can help to reduce the stigma associated with mental
30 illness, and help improve access to treatment that can help people
31 lead full and productive lives; and
32 **WHEREAS**, The first week of May is recognized as National
33 Children’s Mental Health Awareness Week to promote positive
34 development of children’s mental health; and
35 **WHEREAS**, The State of New Jersey can support the efforts of
36 national and local groups advocating for emotional and
37 behavioral health by annually honoring “Emotional and
38 Behavioral Disorder Awareness Month”; now, therefore,
39
40 **BE IT RESOLVED** *by the Senate and General Assembly of the*
41 *State of New Jersey:*
42
43 1. The month of May of each year is designated as "Emotional
44 and Behavioral Disorder Awareness Month" in the State of New
45 Jersey in order to foster public awareness and understanding of
46 emotional and behavioral disorders.

AJR43 MCKNIGHT, VAINIERI HUTTLE

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1 2. The Governor is requested to annually issue a proclamation
2 calling upon public officials and the citizens of this State to observe
3 "Emotional and Behavioral Disorder Awareness Month" with
4 appropriate activities and programs.

6 3. This joint resolution shall take effect immediately.

STATEMENT

11 This joint resolution designates the month of May of each year as
12 “Emotional and Behavioral Disorder Awareness Month” in New
13 Jersey to raise public awareness of emotional and behavioral
14 disorders.

Emotional and behavioral disorders are medical conditions that disrupt a person's thinking, feeling, mood, ability to relate to others, and daily functioning. Emotional disturbances can affect people beyond their immediate emotional states, sometimes creating long-term mental health challenges that can affect physical, social, or cognitive skills. Children are, in many ways, more vulnerable than adults to mental illness, and children with mental illness have a far greater likelihood of being suspended from school, abusing drugs or alcohol, or ending up in the juvenile justice system.

24 The joint resolution intends to promote awareness in hopes of
25 improving the lives of people who have emotional and behavioral
26 disorders.