



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT AVAILABLE FOR ST. LOUIS RESIDENTS**

The Saint Louis Mental Health Board (MHB) is partnering with the City of St. Louis Department of Health to increase access to mental health services for youth and adults. Using the existing COVID-19 response system, St. Louisans can call 2-1-1 and press 1 to be connected to mental health services.

Daily life is changing for everyone, so it is important to practice self-care and to seek help when needed. "As this COVID-19 crisis continues to unfold, many in our community are feeling anxiety, stress and uncertainty," said Michelle Tucker, president and CEO of United Way of Greater St. Louis. "Mental health is a critical component of taking care of ourselves. United Way 2-1-1's partnership with Behavioral Health Response gives neighbors throughout the St. Louis region a place to turn, and we encourage those feeling overwhelmed to dial 2-1-1 and press 1 to get connected to help."

"Our highly skilled clinicians are prepared to answer the phone lines 24 hours a day, seven days a week. They understand how the pandemic has affected mental health and will listen and compassionately respond, providing expert care and resources to support every caller's well-being," said BHR President and CEO Pat Coleman.

To help spread the word about this free resource, MHB worked remotely with community members to record 20 second videos encouraging people to call 2-1-1 and press 1. "Sometimes people think they have to be in crisis to call for help and that's not true." explained Jama Dodson, St. Louis MHB Executive Director. "We want to let people know that whether they are struggling with a loss of income or anxious about health risks, there are people who care and want to help."

**Seven neighbor-to-neighbor videos are available to share with the media** to help spread the word about this important resource. This effort is also coordinated with the COVID-19 Prepare STL campaign.

**About Saint Louis MHB:** Saint Louis MHB is an independent taxing district in the City of St. Louis authorized in Missouri state statutes and local ballot initiatives to administer public funds for behavioral health and children's services for the benefit of City residents. MHB does not provide direct services itself but makes funding available for direct services operated by non-profit agencies.

**About United Way 2-1-1:** Serving United Way of Greater St. Louis' service area and the entire state of Missouri, United Way 2-1-1 connects people to services that help them live their best possible lives – from basic needs to childcare to disaster relief to counseling.

**About Behavioral Health Response:** BHR ensures compassionate and immediate barrier-free access to behavioral health care.

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