

A Bridge and Beyond

Spring 2026



Spring Updates: Moments of Growth, Connection, and Community

As we move through spring, our sites continue to focus on connection, engagement, and meaningful activities for both clients and staff. Recent events have brought opportunities for community involvement, creativity, and time together in supportive environments.



Looking ahead, we are preparing for May is Mental Health Month, a time to continue raising awareness, promoting wellness, and supporting ongoing conversations around mental health across our programs and communities.

News from El Monte

Spring Season Full of Fun, Friendship, and Community Across Our Residential Sites 🌸

The past few months have been filled with meaningful activities, community outings, and seasonal celebrations across both of our residential sites, giving clients and staff many opportunities to connect, learn new things, and enjoy time together.

As winter transitioned into spring, clients kicked off the season with a variety of engaging recreation opportunities. Friendly competition and movement were front and center during a lively pickleball day and an energetic ping pong tournament, where everyone enjoyed cheering one another on and building confidence through play.

Seasonal celebrations brought even more excitement. Valentine's festivities included a festive BBQ filled with good food and companionship, while March welcomed a St. Patrick's Day BBQ that brought clients and staff together for another fun afternoon outdoors. Spring break was also celebrated with a special BBQ gathering that encouraged relaxation, laughter, and community.

Clients also enjoyed several memorable outings into the community. A visit to the Whittier Village Cinemas gave everyone the chance to sit back and enjoy a show in a welcoming setting, while another group explored exhibits and hands-on learning during a trip to the California Science Center. A bowling outing later in the month added even more smiles, teamwork, and celebration as clients practiced new skills and enjoyed a little friendly competition.

Spring-themed activities at the sites kept the season feeling fresh and creative. Clients participated in an Easter egg hunt that was full of laughter and surprises, followed by a cheerful garden party where they planted seeds and spent time outdoors learning about growth and nature. A lovely spring tea party offered a quieter but equally meaningful chance for clients to relax, socialize, enjoy tea, and express creativity through drawing.

These activities continue to highlight the importance of creating joyful shared experiences that support social connection, recreation, independence, and community inclusion. We are proud of the continued efforts by staff at both sites to make each month engaging, enriching, and full of opportunities for our clients to thrive.



News from West Covina



Superheroes at Project Independence 🦸

On April 11, members of the Project Independence team participated in the Superhero 5k Run Walk and Health & Safety Expo in San Dimas, joining community members, local organizations, and event participants for a day centered on wellness, safety, and connection.



The event brought together individuals and families to raise awareness around mental health, support victims of crime, and highlight the importance of accessible community resources. Across the expo and 5K run/walk, the focus remained on encouraging open conversations about mental health and strengthening pathways to healing and support.

Our PI team hosted a resource table that helped share information about available services and supports within our programs. Case Manager Jessica and Peer Support Specialist Susie represented the team at the table, engaging with attendees, answering questions, and helping connect community members to relevant resources.

The table served as a welcoming space for conversation, where participants could learn more about mental health supports, ask questions in a low-pressure environment, and explore ways to access ongoing care and services. The team also helped reinforce the message that recovery and support are community-driven and that help is available at multiple points along a person's journey.

Overall, the event provided a meaningful opportunity to engage with the community in a positive, proactive setting. PI is grateful to have been part of an event that not only promoted physical activity and health awareness, but also emphasized the importance of mental health, safety, and collective healing.



PI resource table at the Superhero 5K Run Walk and Health & Safety Expo featuring Case Manager Jessica and Peer Support Specialist Susie.

News from Woodland Hills

FSP Program in Woodland Hills Expands Team to Enhance Client Support

Our Full-Service Partnership (FSP) program in Woodland Hills is continuing to grow in response to the increasing needs of the individuals and families we serve. This expansion reflects our ongoing commitment to providing accessible, comprehensive, and person-centered behavioral health support within the community.

To strengthen our capacity and enhance continuity of care, we have recently added a Peer Support Specialist to the FSP team. Peer support plays a vital role in building trust and connection by drawing on lived experience to support recovery, encourage engagement in services, and help clients navigate challenges with greater confidence and understanding.

In addition to peer support, the team has expanded with additional case managers and therapists. These new team members will help increase service availability, reduce wait times, and provide more consistent support to clients across varying levels of need. With a broader team in place, we are better equipped to respond promptly, coordinate care effectively, and ensure that each client receives individualized attention and support.

This growth allows our FSP program to deepen its impact by offering more frequent contact, improved care coordination, and a stronger network of support for clients working toward their recovery goals. It also strengthens our ability to collaborate with community partners and connect individuals to essential resources such as housing support, healthcare, and wellness services.

As the program continues to evolve, our focus remains the same: meeting people where they are, supporting long-term stability, and fostering recovery through compassionate, team-based care.

Monthly Shoutouts

Happiest of birthdays to our February, March, and April staff!



A big THANK YOU to all of our staff members celebrating their work anniversaries!



Upcoming Events

May is Mental Health Month is Almost Here!

May is Mental Health Month, and throughout the month our programs will be joining together to focus on wellness, connection, self-care, and community.



Across all sites, staff and clients will be participating in a variety of meaningful and fun activities designed to promote positivity and emotional wellness. Planned events may include mindfulness exercises, gratitude projects, creative art activities, wellness walks, music and movement, stress-relief stations, affirmations, and opportunities to learn more about coping skills and self-care.

Throughout the month, we encourage everyone to take part, share encouragement, and remember that mental health matters every day. Even small actions, like taking a deep breath, reaching out to a friend, spending time doing something enjoyable, or simply taking a moment to rest, can make a big difference.

We look forward to seeing each program's creativity as we celebrate Mental Health Month together and continue building supportive, healthy communities for both staff and clients.

Mindful Moment



AFFIRMATIONS FOR MORE GOOD DAYS AND WHY THEY WORK

Affirmations are statements you say or think to yourself that reinforce what matters to you and who you want to be. They remind you that you are strong and help you focus on your values and on what makes you feel calm and confident.

Affirmations aren't just about positive thinking. They help your brain focus on what matters most, so stress feels less overwhelming, and you become more resilient over time. [Studies on affirmations](#) have found that they can improve people's overall well-being, help them feel better about themselves, and reduce anxiety. On top of that, the effects of affirmations are immediate and long-lasting.

Try some of the affirmations below to support more good days and get through the hard ones.

I am capable of finding a community that protects, affirms, and celebrates me. I will not allow past experiences to block me from the connection that I deserve.

When I slow down and take notice, I am inspired by my resilience, strength, and intelligence.

My feelings are designed to communicate needs that I may not notice otherwise. I can reflect on them with curiosity instead of shame and discover new pathways to brighter days.

I give myself permission to experience the best things about today in a present and grounded body.

I trust my inner wisdom to lead my decisions today.

I have the power to practice daily routines that nourish my physical and mental health. As I do so, I won't forget that rest, connection, and stillness are pivotal pieces of those routines.

I will continue to imagine a world where my needs and wants are a priority. I refuse to shrink myself because living an authentic life is a gift to myself and others.

My creativity is fueled by rest and connectedness. I have the capacity to surprise myself, and my imagination deserves space to play.

I am committed to discovering or creating spaces that honor every aspect of me. I deserve to bask in the joy of being seen, affirmed, and loved fully.

If having good days feels hard, know that help is available and that you are not alone. Check on your mental health with a free, quick, anonymous test at mhascreening.org.

Explore additional resources and tools for more good days at mhanational.org/may.

Support & Resources 🤝

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