

September

Recovery & Suicide Prevention Month



2023

988 SUICIDE & CRISIS LIFELINE



Thank you to everyone who helped make this possible!



Kern County Board of Supervisors proclaimed the month of September 2023 as National Suicide Prevention Month and Recovery Month in Kern County.

National Suicide Prevention Month

Behavioral Health and Recovery Services (KernBHRS) recognizes suicide as a public health problem and declares suicide prevention a county priority. Working with community partners, we are dedicated to reducing the frequency of suicide attempts and deaths, and the pain for those affected by suicide deaths, through educational programs, intervention services, and bereavement services.



We acknowledge that no single suicide intervention effort will be enough or appropriate for all populations. We are continuing to implement Zero Suicide in our system of care to reach the goal of making suicide a never event.

National Recovery Month

National Recovery Month is a national observance held every September to promote and support new evidence-based treatment and recovery practices, the emergence of a strong and proud recovery community, and the dedication of service providers and community members who make recovery possible. Recovery Month allows us to celebrate people's and families' successes in building healthy and rewarding lives. Substance Use Disorders (SUD) and other behavioral health issues are prevalent in Kern County, and the community must learn about SUD prevention strategies, understand that recovery from mental illness and SUD is possible, and become aware of how to access resources to embark in the journey that is recovery.

National Hispanic Heritage Month

In addition to National Suicide Prevention Month and Recovery Month, Kern BHRS celebrated **National Hispanic Heritage Month** (*September 15th through October 15th*).

- **Community Events:** Our Outreach & Education team participated in several community events that celebrated Hispanic Heritage Month.
- **Workforce Events:** In addition to community events, KernBHRS celebrated the accomplishments of our Hispanic and Latinx workforce. The MHSA Coordination Team sponsored the events with WET (Work, Education, and Training) funding.



Calendar of Events: September 2023

UPLIGHTING CEREMONY

ALL MONTH
County Administrative Building
1115 Truxtun Ave

COMMUNITY FORUM

Tuesday, September 5th
11:30 AM – 1:30 PM
Westchester Training Room – 2001 28th St

SALT WALK

Saturday, September 9th
8:30 AM – 12:00 PM
The Park at River Walk – 11298 Stockdale Hwy

KICKING IT WITH MENTAL HEALTH

Sunday, September 10th
It starts at 7:00 PM
CSUB Soccer Field – 276 Rowdy Way

NAMI & CFLC - SHARING HOPE TOGETHER FORUM

Tuesday, September 12th
1:00 PM – 3:00 PM
Westchester – 2001 28th St

HISPANIC NATIONS CELEBRATION

Sunday, September 17th
12:00 PM – 6:00 PM
Mercado Latino – 2105 Edison Hwy

WALK LIKE MADD

Saturday, September 23rd
Starts at 7:00 AM
The Park at River Walk - 11298 Stockdale Hwy

HISPANIC HERITAGE FESTIVAL & HEALTH FAIR

Saturday, September 23rd
10:00 AM – 3:00 PM
South High School – 1101 Planz Rd

DRUG-FREE YOUTH SUMMIT 2023

Tuesday, September 26th
9:00 AM – 2:00 PM
Bakersfield College – Renegade Event Center
1801 Panorama Dr

APPLE CORE FOOD & BLANKET DISTRIBUTION

Wednesday, September 27th
2:00 PM – 5:00 PM
531 Knotts St

MULTI-COUNTY SUICIDE PREVENTION SUMMIT 2023

Thursday, September 28th
8:30 AM – 4:30 PM
Virtual via Zoom



Uplighting of the Kern County Administrative Building (All Month)

The Kern County Administration Building is the home of our County Administrative Office, which oversees general operations and functions of our local county government. Hundreds of people stop by this building daily to pay their property taxes, get a marriage license, or apply for a county job.

The building, which is located at 1115 Truxtun Avenue in downtown Bakersfield, could be seen basking in teal and purple lights after dusk, the official colors of Suicide Prevention Awareness and Recovery Month for September. These beautiful colors sparked meaningful conversations about suicide prevention and recovery.



Save a Life Today (SALT) Walk (09/09/23)

Save A Life Today (SALT) is a local Kern County nonprofit organization, that exists to raise funds for suicide prevention and to assist those bereaved by suicide. The 10th Annual Walk was a success in raising awareness and funds for suicide prevention.



Kern BHRS Night @ CSUB Soccer Game (09/10/23)

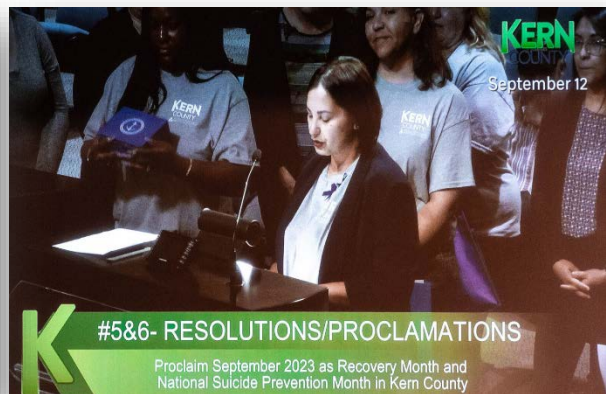
There are growing concerns about the risk of common mental health disorders and suicide in contact sports athletes. Autopsy studies of retired athletes have been linked to exposure to traumatic brain injury which is thought to be associated with depression, impulsivity, aggression, and suicide. Soccer is one of those contact sports that is very popular worldwide but especially popular in Kern County with our Hispanic/Latinx and Asian/Pacific Islander (API) communities. Making the connection with our CSUB Soccer players and fans was important to bring awareness. By sponsoring one Night of Soccer, we were able to reach 1,275 soccer fans in the CSUB Soccer Field! In addition, hundreds of fans watched the Fresno Pacific vs. CSUB Bakersfield NCAA Men's Soccer Game live on ESPN.



Kern County Board of Supervisors Proclamation (09/12/23)

The Board of Supervisors is composed of five members elected from the five separate districts of the County. It is the Board's responsibility to enact ordinances, resolutions, and orders necessary for governing the affairs of the County.

On September 12th, Supervisor David Couch (District 4) proclaimed the month of September 2023 as National Suicide Prevention and Recovery Month in Kern County.




Fiestas Patrias at Mercado Latino *(09/17/23)*

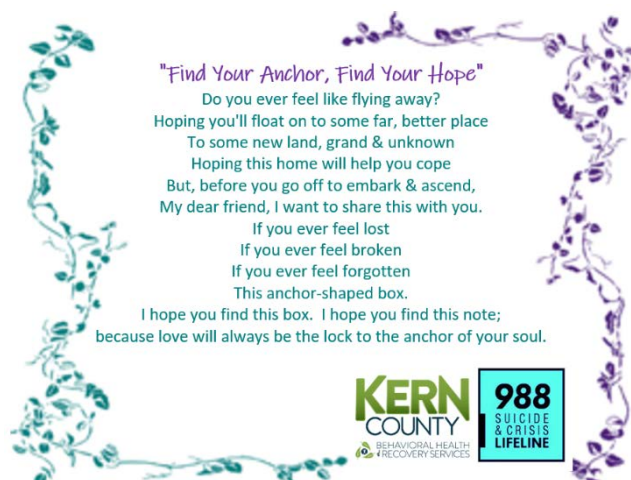
“*Fiestas Patrias*” is a patriotic holiday in Mexico, Chile, and other South American Countries. It commemorates the anniversary of Mexican Independence from Spain and/or the beginning of the independence process of Latin American countries.

The celebration consisted of live music, folkloric dances, a talent competition, and a resource fair. KernBHRS participated in a resource booth providing mental health and substance use disorder resources and giveaways.



Find Your Anchor (FYA) Boxes *(Kick-Off in September)*

For Recovery & Suicide Prevention Month, KernBHRS has distributed close to 1,000 anchor boxes across Kern County, spreading messages of #hope #healing, and #recovery  If you find these boxes throughout September and beyond, feel free to take these messages of encouragement for yourself or a loved one who may be in need.

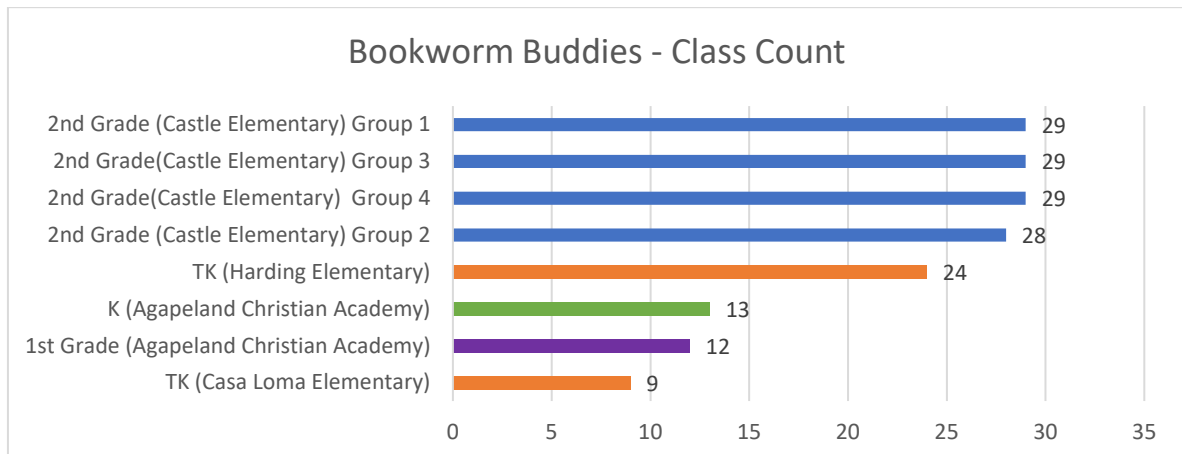
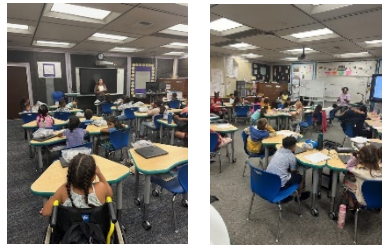
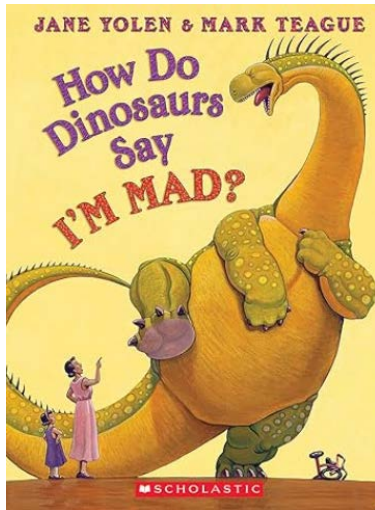


Bookworm Buddies (Stigma Reduction Campaign) (Kick-Off in September)

Kern BHRS Staff read to School-Age children in 4 different schools (Casa Loma Elementary, Harding Elementary, Agapeland Christian Academy, and Castle Elementary).

This event was developed to reach some of our youngest citizens as an effort to early intervention; efforts to give children some of their first tools to help identify and manage big feelings.

The book read was “How Do Dinosaurs Say I’M MAD?” by Jane Yolen & Mark Teague. When little dinosaurs get angry, they sometimes misbehave. Listeners laughed aloud and related to all the dinosaur-sized antics, from stomping and yelling to tantrums and meltdowns. But after a dinosaur storms around the house, it's time to calm down. That's when a dinosaur knows to count to ten, clean up the mess... and give big hugs, of course!



National Hispanic Heritage Month Celebration Kick-Off

Westchester Courtyard

(09/19/23)

All KernBHRS employees were welcome to join the first-of-its-kind Hispanic Heritage Month Celebration at the Westchester Courtyard. We provided a culturally appropriate lunch for approximately 200 employees while educating them through a creative and innovative way of understanding, respecting, and reaching our Hispanic/Latin communities.

All National Hispanic Heritage Month events were planned and sponsored by the MHSA Coordination Team with MHSA – WET Funding.

SHARING OUR CULTURE THROUGH FOOD

Good food is valuable and important. It creates a feeling of unity and belonging. Many of us associate our favorite recipes with warm feelings and memories of home. It's a way to remain connected to one's culture and traditions.

The Hispanic-inspired menu included a Taco Bar, Aguas Frescas (*Pepino-Pina*, *Horchata*, and *Watermelon-Mint*), Churros, and La Rosa Frozen Fruit Bars!



SHARING OUR CULTURE THROUGH MUSIC

Music has the power to bring people together and bridge cultural divides in a way that few other things can. It can transcend language barriers and connect people from different backgrounds and cultures through the universal language of sound.

During our event, our staff enjoyed live Mariachi Music from *Mariachi Mi Ciudad*.



SHARING OUR TRADITIONS

Other traditions we shared during this event were hosting a Salsa Competition, playing a friendly game of Lotería, and making sure to include EVERYONE in the fun celebration!

- **Salsa Competition:** The origin of Salsa is traced back to the times of the Aztecs, Incas, and Mayans. The native people created their versions of salsa using tomatoes, chilies, and squash seeds, however “official discovery” to the rest of the world did not occur until after the Spaniards conquered Mexico in the 1500s.

We received 27 entries from KernBHRS staff members who wanted to share their delicious homemade salsa. Every participant received a “Salsa Competition” medal; the Semifinalist received a Certificate of Appreciation and the Grand Winner received a coveted trophy.





- **A Friendly Game of Bilingual Mental Health Lotería:** The origin of “Lotería” can be traced far back in history. It is believed that the game originated in Italy in the 15th century and was brought to New Spain (modern Mexico) in 1769. However, it only became popular when soldiers fighting for Mexican Independence began playing it. Because the Loteria cards include the name of the pictured character, they are used to teach reading, writing, history, and social values. Many bilingual teachers use the game as a teaching tool in the United States.



- **Make Sure that EVERYONE is included:** The family model is an extended one in the Hispanic / Latinx culture; grandparents, aunts, cousins, and even people who are not biologically related may be considered part of the immediate family. The term used to describe their supreme collective loyalty to extended family is *familismo*.

One of the ways we used to include everyone was to send “*Appreciation Baskets*” to our 24-hour teams who often are not able to participate in department events due to their schedules (i.e. night shifts or weekend shifts) or their remote locations such as our correctional teams. The “*Appreciation Baskets*” contain a beautiful **Thank You** card signed by our Executive Director and Deputy Directors; a 32oz jar filled with a collection of sweet and spicy Mexican hard candy; a box of an assortment of Latin American cookies; a box of delicious Mazapan, boutique cotton candy push pops, and a few personalized sugar cookies.



Another way we used to include everyone was to set up “*Taco Tuesdays – Taco Bar*” EVERY TUESDAY during HISPANIC HERITAGE MONTH (September 15th – October 15th)

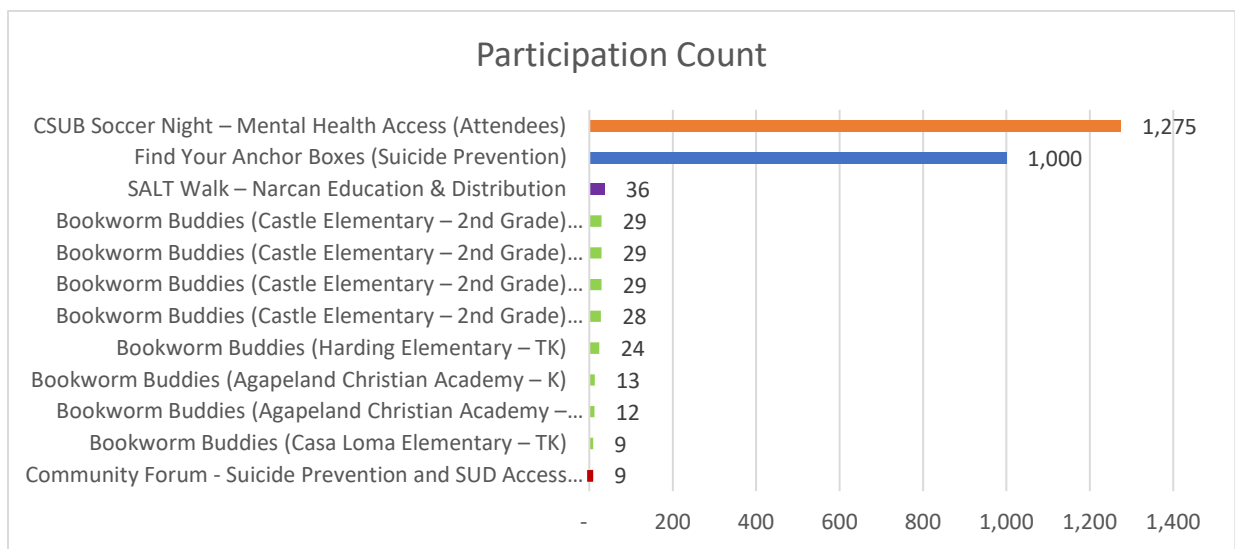
<i>Taco Tuesdays</i>	
DATE	SITE/LOCATION:
9/19/2023	Westchester Building - Courtyard
9/26/2023	Commonwealth - West Training Room
9/26/2023	Correctional Behavioral Health
10/3/2023	Kern Linkage Division - Training Room
10/3/2023	Mary K. Shell Building - Sannappa Room
10/10/2023	STOCKDALE Building - Bonsai Room
10/10/2023	L Street Clinic - Conference Room



2023 September Participation Count

As we reflect on all the activities and events we experienced in September 2023, we cannot help but embrace the power of collaboration and support. Regardless of age, gender, or ethnicity, our community came together to foster unity and celebrate the strength of diversity.

We believe in the power of unity and inclusivity. Collaborating with local organizations, we conducted community outreach events to foster understanding and empathy among people from diverse backgrounds. Through workshops, discussions, and cultural exchanges, we celebrated our differences while building bridges of compassion.



Date	Name of Event	Participation Count
9/5/2023	Community Forum - Suicide Prevention and SUD Access (Attendees)	9
9/7/2023	Bookworm Buddies (Casa Loma Elementary – TK)	9
9/9/2023	SALT Walk – Narcan Education & Distribution	36
9/10/2023	CSUB Soccer Night – Mental Health Access (Attendees)	1,275
9/14/2023	Bookworm Buddies (Harding Elementary – TK)	24
9/15/2023	Bookworm Buddies (Agapeland Christian Academy – K)	13
9/15/2023	Bookworm Buddies (Agapeland Christian Academy – 1 st Grade)	12
9/21/23	Bookworm Buddies (Castle Elementary – 2nd Grade) Group# 1	29
9/21/23	Bookworm Buddies (Castle Elementary – 2nd Grade) Group# 2	28
9/21/23	Bookworm Buddies (Castle Elementary – 2nd Grade) Group# 3	29
9/21/23	Bookworm Buddies (Castle Elementary – 2nd Grade) Group# 4	29
All Month	Find Your Anchor Boxes (Suicide Prevention)	1,000
TOTAL		2,493