

July is BIPOC Mental Health Awareness Month

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ALTON - July is National BIPOC Mental Health Awareness Month. At Centerstone, we recognize National BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and People of Color) Month as an important opportunity to acknowledge the mental health needs of traditionally underserved and underrepresented populations, to discuss the significant impact of racial trauma, and to dispel some of the myths about mental illness among BIPOC.

“All too often, BIPOC are lacking the space to be authentically ourselves, in all our strengths and vulnerabilities, alike. I believe it has been an instinctive trait through generations of BIPOC to shrink ourselves, suppress our emotions and hold our tongues in order to make others feel more comfortable, resulting in generational trauma running through our veins,” said Kayla Ervin, Centerstone Medication Assisted Recovery Services counselor. “There is a major shift taking place in our world right now that I am grateful to witness and be a part of. BIPOC mental health is so important because as people – especially people of color – we spend so much of our time in our heads. We are constantly thinking, processing and experiencing hypervigilance, while also creating, exploring interests and making room for our friends and family. If we are going to spend

much of our time in our heads, we need to be intentional about making it a comfortable and healthy space to be.”

Centerstone invites our local media in Illinois to speak with our mental health providers about a variety increasingly important topics related to BIPOC Mental Health Awareness Month, including:

- What are some of the myths of mental health perpetuated against BIPOC communities?
- What is racial trauma and what impact does it have on mental health?
- Are BIPOC more prone to mental health conditions?
- How might BIPOC benefit physically from receiving regular mental health treatment?