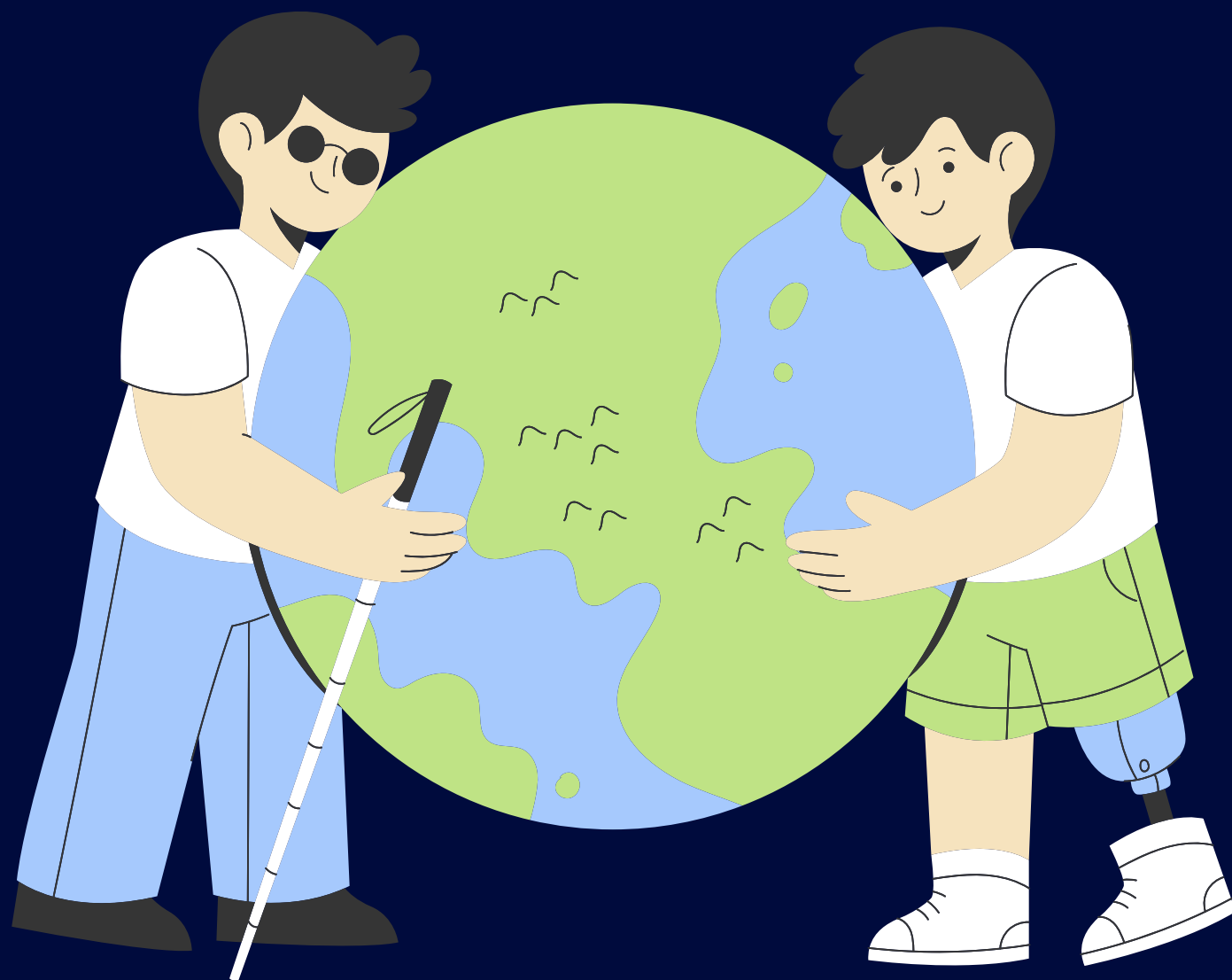


#30 July 2026



DISABILITY PRIDE MONTH

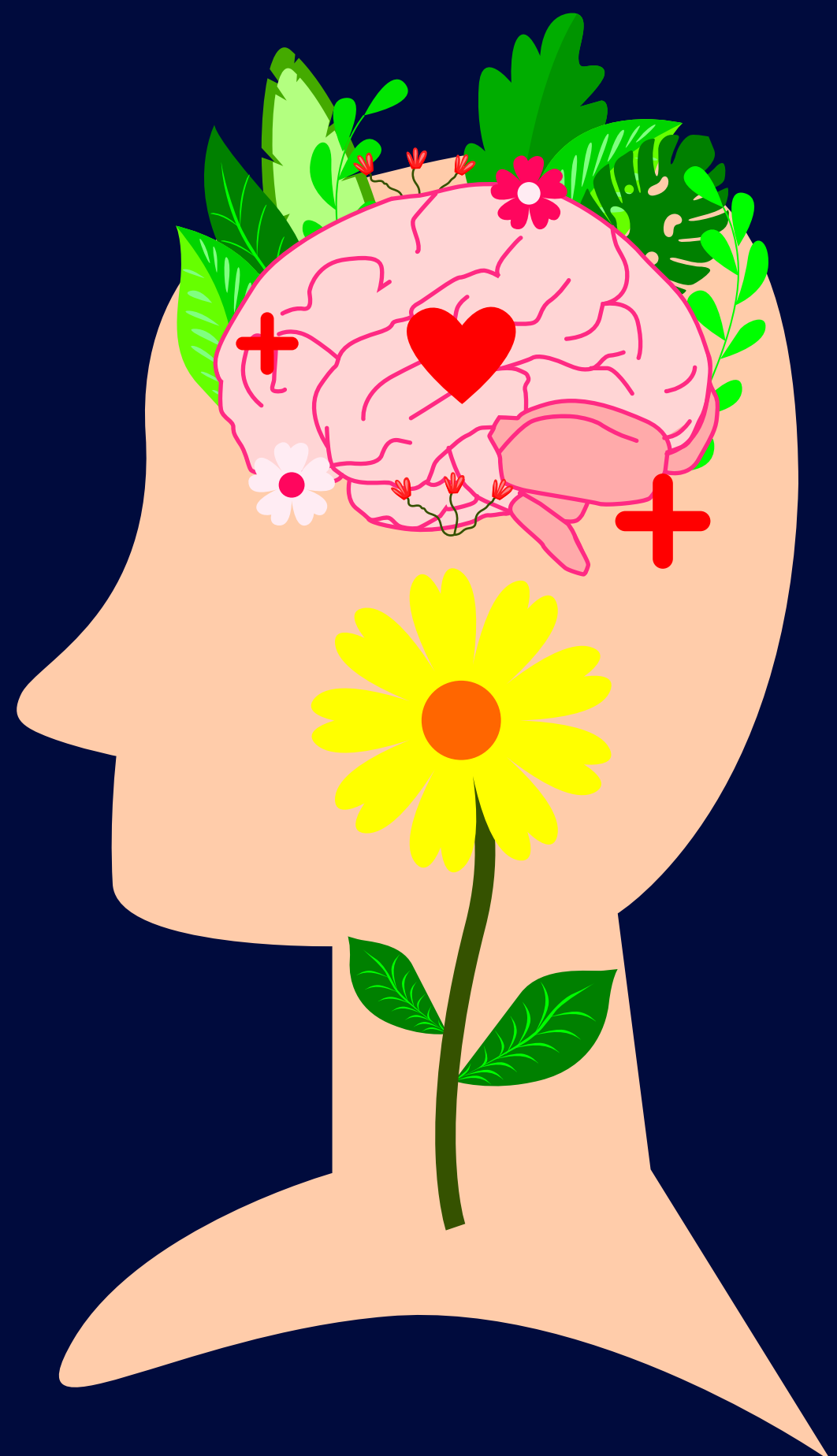
Disability Pride Month is celebrated every July since July 26, 1990. It commemorates the signing of the Americans with Disabilities Act, which prohibited discrimination against people with disabilities in many areas of public life. This month promotes inclusion and acceptance by encouraging society to recognize disability as a natural part of human diversity.



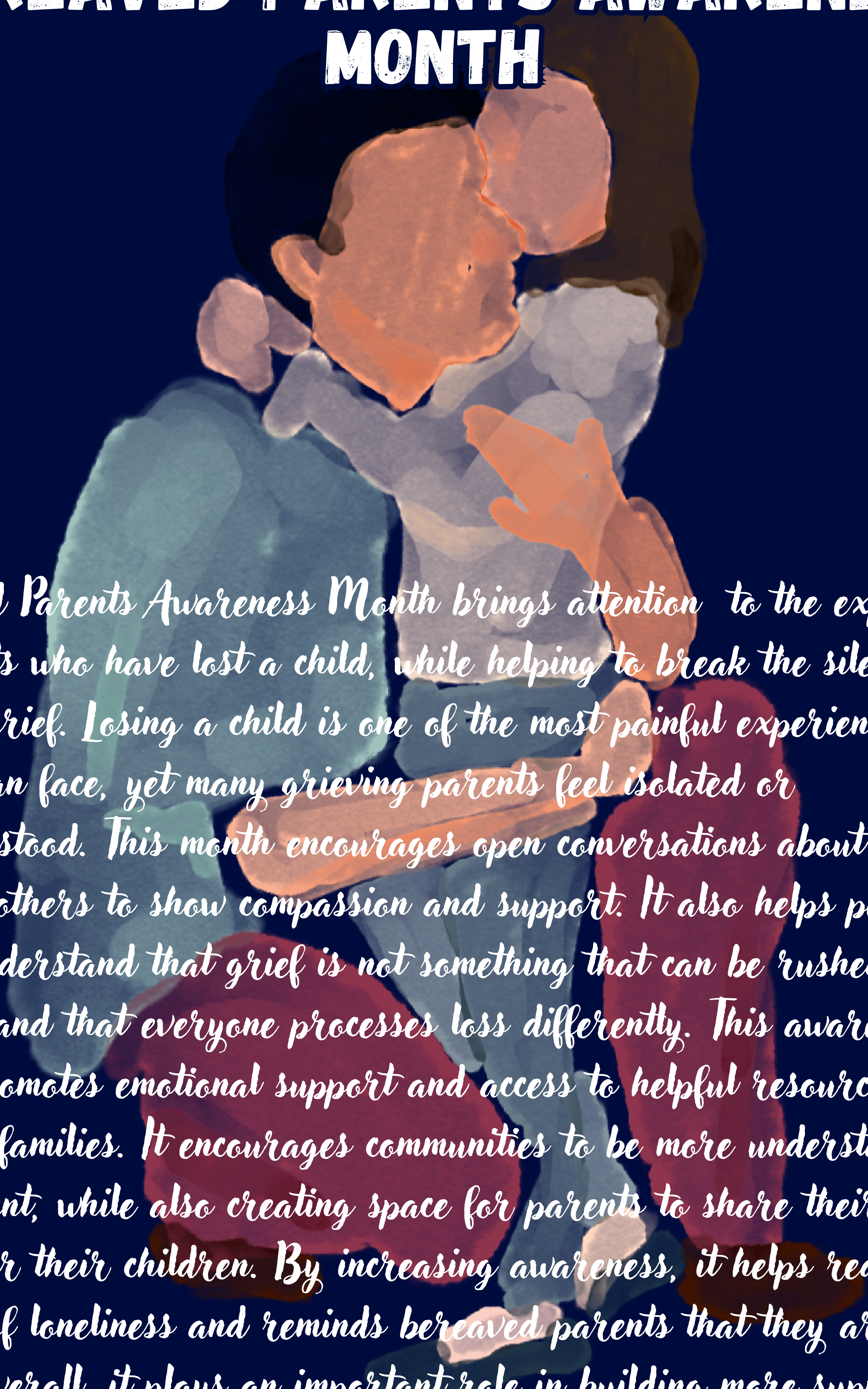
It raises awareness about the barriers people with disabilities may face, including physical, social, and attitudinal obstacles. It also builds empathy and care for those who feel isolated or alone as they may have no one to turn to.

BIPOC MENTAL HEALTH

BIPOC Mental Health Month was originally known as National "Minority Mental Health Month". This month raises awareness about mental health in Black, Indigenous, and People of Color communities while helping to break the stigma around talking about emotional well-being. In many communities, mental health is not always openly discussed, which can make it harder for individuals to seek help. This month encourages honest conversations and reminds people that it is okay to ask for support. It also brings attention to the real barriers many people face, such as limited access to care, cultural misunderstandings, and financial challenges, which can prevent them from getting the help they need.



BEREAVED PARENTS AWARENESS MONTH



Bereaved Parents Awareness Month brings attention to the experiences of parents who have lost a child, while helping to break the silence around grief. Losing a child is one of the most painful experiences a person can face, yet many grieving parents feel isolated or misunderstood. This month encourages open conversations about loss and reminds others to show compassion and support. It also helps people better understand that grief is not something that can be rushed or "fixed," and that everyone processes loss differently. This awareness month promotes emotional support and access to helpful resources for grieving families. It encourages communities to be more understanding and patient, while also creating space for parents to share their stories and honor their children. By increasing awareness, it helps reduce feelings of loneliness and reminds bereaved parents that they are not alone. Overall, it plays an important role in building more supportive communities and promoting healing, empathy, and remembrance.

UV SAFETY MONTH

As summer has arrived and things start to heat up, it's easy to enjoy being outside and forget that too much sun exposure can lead to things like painful sunburns or long-term skin damage. This month encourages people to take small, simple steps, like wearing sunscreen, sunglasses, or sitting in the shade, that can make a big difference over time. It's really about protecting yourself without giving up the things you enjoy, especially during the warmer months.



It also helps people build better habits and look out for each other. Whether it's reminding a friend to reapply sunscreen or making sure kids are protected when they're playing outside, these small actions show care and awareness. UV Safety Month isn't just about avoiding harm, it's about being mindful, staying healthy, and making sure you can keep enjoying sunny days safely now and in the future.

PLASTIC FREE JULY



Plastic Free July strongly encourages people to become more aware of how much plastic they use in their everyday lives and how it impacts the environment. It's easy to rely on things like plastic bottles, bags, and packaging without thinking twice, but this month is a reminder that those small habits add up. By making simple changes, like using reusable bags, water bottles, or containers, people can reduce waste and help protect oceans, wildlife, and the planet overall. It's not about being perfect, but about making more mindful choices.

It also brings people together to care more about the environment and support healthier habits. Whether someone swaps out one plastic item or makes bigger lifestyle changes, every effort counts. Plastic Free July helps people feel like they're part of something bigger, showing that even small actions can lead to real change over time. It's about building awareness, responsibility, and a more sustainable future for everyone.

LOCAL SUMMER EVENTS

Laurel Independence Day Celebration (July 4): Granville Gude Park

Star Spangled Spectacular (July 4): Prince George's Stadium

Four Old Breads on the High Seas (July 10-17): A comedic play following four senior women on a murder mystery cruise at Laurel Mill Play House

Drive-In Movies (July 10): Prince George's Stadium

Fairwood Arts Festival (July 19): An outdoor community event celebrating soul and funk music, along with local artists and family-friendly vendor tables at Fairwood Community Park in Bowie.

Taratibu at Publick Playhouse (July 2): Bring the kids (ages 5-16) to experience a high-energy, educational performing arts show highlighting the dances and cultural history of the African diaspora in Hyattsville.

Buddy Attick Summer Fun Run Series (July 9-August 13): Join the running community every Thursday evening at the Greenbelt Youth Center. You can walk or run a 1.75-mile or 3-mile course around the scenic Buddy Attick Park lake path.

DIRECTOR'S CORNER



THE JOY OF SUMMER

JULY IS HERE, BRINGING LONGER DAYS, SUNSHINE, AND COUNTLESS OPPORTUNITIES TO FOCUS ON YOUR OVERALL WELL-BEING. SUMMER IS THE PERFECT TIME TO STEP OUTSIDE, RECONNECT WITH NATURE, AND MAKE YOUR HEALTH A PRIORITY.

AT EMBRACING TRANQUILITY, WE BELIEVE THAT MENTAL WELLNESS IS HOLISTIC WELLNESS. CARING FOR YOUR MENTAL HEALTH ALSO MEANS CARING FOR YOUR PHYSICAL HEALTH. SOMETHING AS SIMPLE AS TAKING A WALK, VISITING A LOCAL PARK, ATTENDING A FREE COMMUNITY CONCERT, PARTICIPATING IN AN OUTDOOR FITNESS CLASS, OR SPENDING TIME WITH FAMILY AND FRIENDS CAN HAVE A POSITIVE IMPACT ON YOUR MOOD, REDUCE STRESS, AND IMPROVE YOUR OVERALL WELL-BEING.

THIS MONTH, I ENCOURAGE EVERYONE TO GET OUT AND MOVE. MANY COMMUNITIES OFFER FREE OR LOW-COST SUMMER EVENTS, INCLUDING FESTIVALS, OUTDOOR MOVIES, FARMERS MARKETS, FITNESS PROGRAMS, AND FAMILY-FRIENDLY ACTIVITIES. TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THESE OPPORTUNITIES TO STAY ACTIVE, CONNECT WITH OTHERS, AND CREATE LASTING MEMORIES.

AS YOU ENJOY THE SUMMER SEASON, REMEMBER TO MAKE TIME FOR YOURSELF. DRINK PLENTY OF WATER, GET MOVING, SPEND TIME OUTDOORS, PRACTICE GRATITUDE, AND PRIORITIZE YOUR PEACE. SMALL, INTENTIONAL STEPS EACH DAY CAN MAKE A LASTING DIFFERENCE IN YOUR MENTAL AND PHYSICAL HEALTH.

WISHING YOU A SAFE, HEALTHY, AND JOY-FILLED JULY!

WITH GRATITUDE,

ERICA COLEMAN, CPRP