



Mental Health

By Multi-Tiered System of Supports Coordinator Jen Sahr

Look Around, Look Within: Your Surroundings Say A Lot About Your Mental Health

Take a moment to consider your surroundings. Do you feel safe? Do you have access to health care and groceries? Does your home support you, both physically and mentally? Throughout May's Mental Health Month, challenge yourself to look at your world and how different factors can affect your mental health.



Where a person is born, lives, learns, works, plays, and gathers, as well as their economic stability and social connections, are part of what is called “social determinants of health” (SDOH). The more these factors work in your favor means you are more likely to have better mental well-being. However, when it seems like the world is working against you, your mental health can suffer.

While many parts of your environment can be out of your control, there are steps you can take to change your space and protect your well-being.

- **Focus on your home:** Consider keeping your space tidy, sleep-friendly, and well-ventilated. Surround yourself with items that help you feel calm and positive.
- **Create bonds with your neighborhood and community:** Get to know the people living around you, join or start neighbors-helping-neighbors groups, and support local businesses to challenge gentrification.
- **Connect with nature:** Go for a walk, sit at the park, bring a plant inside, or keep the shades open to absorb natural light.

The world around us can be both positive and negative – bringing joy and sadness, hope and anxiety. [This Mental Health Month calendar](#) provides 31 easy and practical ideas to **Look Around, Look Within** for improving and maintaining mental well-being.

