

Weekly Dem radio address: Gov. Evers on the Year of Mental Health

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MADISON — Gov. Tony Evers today delivered the Democratic Radio Address on the Year of Mental Health and his efforts over the past year to invest in expanding access to mental and behavioral healthcare.

Hey there, folks. Governor Tony Evers here.

Earlier this year, I declared 2023 the Year of Mental Health, and I spent the year traveling across our state to meet with Wisconsinites in our schools, clinics, businesses, and communities.

From community organizations like Hope 4 U that serves Buffalo, Pepin, and Trempealeau Counties; to school-based initiatives like the McFarland Hope Squad and Ashland High School's Project AWARE; to our 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline, so many folks are doing great work to support their neighbors, classmates, and communities.

But they also all told me the same thing: we need to expand access to affordable mental and behavioral healthcare because it impacts everyone—from our kids in the classroom to workers being able to join and stay in our workforce.

We simply can't look back years from now and wonder whether we should've done more and sooner to take good care of our mental health.

I was proud to sign a budget this summer with some key investments, including:

- \$30 million for school-based mental health services;
- \$10 million to establish two crisis urgent care and observation centers; and

- *\$200,000 for DATCP's farmer mental health assistance program.*

And this year, thanks to Senator Baldwin, I was also proud to announce nearly \$17 million in federal funding to support operations of the 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline, which provides free and confidential support for anyone experiencing a mental health crisis.

But folks, we know there is much more work to do, and I won't stop fighting to make sure every Wisconsinite has access to affordable mental healthcare.

Remember, you are not alone, and help and hope are always available.

Thank you, and take care of yourselves this holiday.