



Dear Friends and Neighbors,

It's been hard to find the words to fully express my profound sadness and anger in the wake of the senseless murders of 10 of our neighbors on May 14th. And now, nearly a decade after Sandy Hook, we face the cruel reality that 19 children and two teachers have been murdered in their classrooms in Texas. Clearly, we have a problem in this country, fueled by easy access to assault weapons, the prevalence of online racist hate speech, and the radicalization of too many people who find the answers to their grievances in violence. I offer my deepest sympathies and heartbroken prayers to all the families of the victims of senseless gun violence. I do so, however, knowing that such condolences only go so far. Action must come at all levels of government, starting with an honest conversation about racism in our country, in our state, and in Western New York.

In the meantime, we can honor the victims by assisting the community in their names. Since the Buffalo shooting, many people have learned that the neighborhood where this attack took place is a food desert and the Tops Market is the only supermarket in the neighborhood. As residents of the City of Good Neighbors, many have come forward to donate food or lend a hand. FeedMore WNY is always available to accept donations of food and personal care items. You can visit their website to learn more at feedmorewny.org. If you know someone who has been impacted, the Community Resource Center at 347 East Ferry Street in Buffalo can help with groceries, utilities, banking services, and mental health counseling. Many resources for community assistance have been inundated with donations and are managing the outpouring of support. This is a credit to the heart of Buffalo and WNY, but for information on other ways that you can help and make sure your contributions are going where they are needed most, email helpbuffalo@thepartnership.org or call [716-541-1701](tel:716-541-1701).

Although we are still very much in the early stages of the relief effort in Uvalde, many have already come forward to help. The Community Foundation of the Texas Hill Country is a non-profit based in San Antonio, and has set up the Uvalde Strong Fund. The fund is for relief for the victims' families and others in the small community of Uvalde in the wake of yesterday's tragedy.



MAY IS MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS MONTH

Together, we can raise awareness and support
New Yorkers struggling with their mental health.

We Must Continue to Fight for Mental Health Awareness

Each year, millions of Americans learn that they are living with a mental illness. For many, the past two years of physical and emotional challenges have only exacerbated these collective mental health struggles. May is Mental Health Awareness Month, a time to recognize and better our understanding of the challenges of those dealing with mental illness. In that spirit, I join the National Alliance on Mental Health in spreading their message of “Together for Mental Health.” I will continue advocating for greater access to mental health care, fighting stigma, providing support, educating the public and securing policies for those struggling with mental illness and their families.

For many families, the COVID-19 pandemic has caused uncertainty, financial strain and social isolation, which has had a negative impact on the mental health of New Yorkers. To ensure our communities have access to the resources they need to weather these challenges, I made sure the 2022-23 state budget invests in mental health services, including capital funds for municipal and nonprofit organizations to increase capacity and expand mental health and substance use disorder services. Furthermore, our kids were forced to adapt to a new world of social distancing and regulations they may not have been equipped to understand. The budget provides increased funding for children’s mental health programs operated by the state Office of Mental Health (OMH), along with additional funding for mental health grants for schools.

University students faced numerous hardships over the past few years, often finding unexpected roadblocks during a particularly pivotal time in their lives. This year’s budget provides the State University of New York (SUNY) with increased funding for mental health services to ensure students have access to the help they need to succeed. Additionally, our veterans have been among the most negatively impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, which made it harder to access critical in-person services. That’s why I fought for a state budget that includes \$7.7 million to fund a statewide expansion of the Dwyer Program, which provides peer-to-peer support and counseling to veterans transitioning into civilian life and dealing with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), depression and traumatic brain injury (TBI), along with other mental health issues.

Finally, the 2022-23 state budget supports the implementation of the 988 Suicide and Behavioral Health Crisis Hotline. This hotline provides assistance to those experiencing a mental health or substance use disorder crisis and ensures New Yorkers can access culturally competent behavioral health specialists.

Mental health issues often sneak up silently and unexpectedly, causing significant disruption to our lives or the lives of our loved ones. In light of recent events, it's important to emphasize that people dealing with mental illness are more often the victims of crime, rather than the perpetrators. During Mental Health Awareness Month, it's more important than ever that we come together to support those dealing with mental illness and their families.

Mental Health Resources

Below is a list of resources committed to treating or helping those with various mental health conditions or crises. From right here in Western New York and across the state, there is no shortage of well-trained professionals ready to help:

DIAL 911 IF YOU NEED IMMEDIATE MEDICAL ASSISTANCE

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline | suicidepreventionlifeline.org | [1-800-273-8255](tel:1-800-273-8255)

NY Project Hope Emotional Support Helpline | Open 8 a.m.-10 p.m., 7 days a week | nyprojecthope.org | [1-844-863-9314](tel:1-844-863-9314)

New York State's Domestic Violence Hotline | opdv.ny.gov/survivors-victims | [1-800-932-6906](tel:1-800-932-6906)

National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) of Buffalo and Erie County | [716-226-6264](tel:716-226-6264), info@namibuffalony.org or namibuffalony.org

The Trevor Project | The Trevor Project is a suicide prevention hotline devoted to LGBTQ+ youth | [1-866-488-7386](tel:1-866-488-7386)

Mental Health Advocates of WNY | Offering non-clinical services that promote mental well-being and provide assistance with navigating the mental health delivery system, referrals to clinics and mental health professionals, workshops, support groups, and community education training. | mhawny.org | [716-886-1242](tel:716-886-1242)

Erie County Department of Mental Health | www3.erie.gov/mentalhealth/ | 716-858-8530

Erie County Crisis Services | A 24-hour comprehensive crisis center and community resource. | crisisservices.org | [716-834-3131](tel:716-834-3131)

Niagara County Crisis Services | 24-hour free, confidential support and guidance in accessing the most appropriate resources and/or treatment options available to individuals based on their needs. | niagaracounty.com/Departments/Mental-Health-Substance-Abuse-Services/Crisis-Services | [716-285-3515](tel:716-285-3515)

211 WNY | 211WNY.org | Dial 211 or [1-888-696-9211](tel:1-888-696-9211)

Spectrum Health and Human Services | Helps families and children in crisis. | shswny.org | [716-710-5172](tel:716-710-5172)

UBMD Psychiatry | Provides comprehensive mental health evaluation and treatment for children, adolescents, adults, and senior citizens.
| ubmd.com/practices/psychiatry.html

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) National Helpline | samhsa.gov/find-help/national-helpline | 1-800-662-HELP (4357)

Trans Lifeline | Provides trans peer support that is completely divested from police and is run by and for trans people. | translifeline.org | [1-877-565-8860](tel:1-877-565-8860)

The National Runaway Safeline | The National Runaway Safeline for confidential and LGBTQIA affirming support. | 1800runaway.org | [1-800-786-2929](tel:1-800-786-2929)

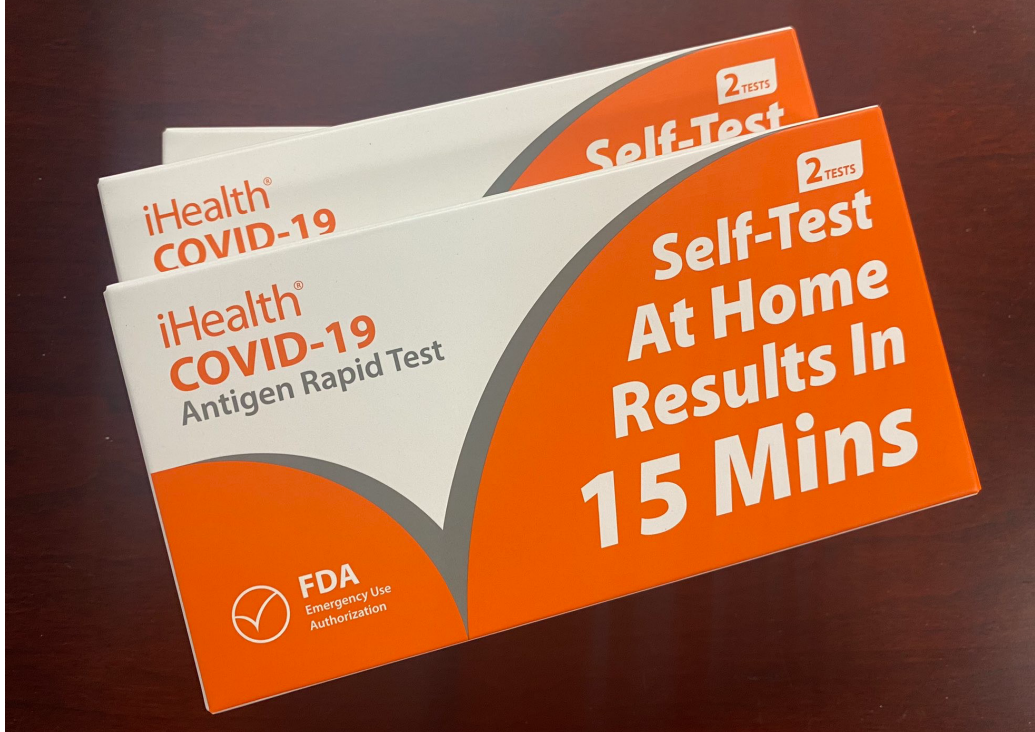
Postpartum Resource Center of New York - Parents Line | 9 a.m.-5 p.m., 7 days a week | postpartumny.org | [1-855-631-0001](tel:1-855-631-0001)



There is Still Time to Submit an Earth Day Photo!

In the spirit of Earth Day, and now that the weather is warm and bright, head outdoors and snap a photo of the natural spaces in Amherst, Williamsville, and Pendleton! Whether it's a park, trail, waterway, or forest, the 146th District has so much to offer. Send your photo submission to McMahonK@nyassembly.gov for a chance to have your work featured on our website, social media, and in our District Office! (Be sure to include "Earth Day Photo Contest Entry" in the subject line of your email)

Submissions will be accepted until **May 31st**.



COVID-19 Home Rapid Tests Kits Available

COVID-19 home rapid test kits are still available through my office. Individual test kits are free to pick up in the atrium of our building, 5500 Main Street, Williamsville from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. on business days. Bulk quantities for non-profit organizations are available while supplies last. Please contact my office at McMahonK@nyassembly.gov or [716-634-1895](tel:716-634-1895) to discuss pick-up or delivery options.

Recent Events



Assemblymember McMahon delivers remarks at the Broadway Market advocating for legislation to create employment opportunities for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

Assemblymember McMahon addresses the crowd at the Asian Indian Community Foundation of WNY's annual Mother's Day Walk at Ellicott Creek Trailway Park.



Assemblymember McMahon visiting members of the Building

Trades and laying tile.



Assemblymember McMahon speaks on the importance of independent living and housing access for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities at a press conference with Home of My Own WNY.



Assemblymember McMahon joins in the ribbon cutting at the Asian American Heritage Festival at the Buffalo Niagara Heritage Village.

To see more of what I've been up to lately, [click here!](#)

Difficult but necessary conversations lie ahead as we slowly heal from the racist act of violence of May 14th. We are a resilient community, though—one that seeks to lend a hand and prop our neighbors up in their most painful moments. That is the character of Western New York, and it will always be our proud reputation.

As the legislative session wraps up in the coming weeks, I will continue to push for resources for our community, access to housing and employment for individuals with developmental disabilities, a greener future for our environment, and other important issues facing our state. If you have any questions about these or any other issue, please don't hesitate to contact my office at McMahonK@nyassembly.gov or [716-634-1895](tel:716-634-1895).



Sincerely,

Karen McMahon

New York State Assemblymember - 146th District

✉ mcmahonk@nyassembly.gov ☎ (716) 634-1895



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 FORWARD EMAIL

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