

# Mental Health Matters

## EVERYONE HAS A STORY



*You're not alone. Help is available.*

**988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline**  
988 or 988Lifeline.org

**FindSupport.gov**

**Veterans Crisis Line**  
Dial 988 (press 1)

**SAMHSA's  
National Helpline**  
1-800-662-HELP (4357)

**Disaster Distress Helpline**  
1-800-985-5990

**FindTreatment.gov**

*SAMHSA*

### IN THIS EDITION

- Veterans Day & Military Families Month
- Diabetes Awareness Month
- National Adoption Month
- Giving Tuesday
- Prevention & Support Staff Spotlight
- World Kindness Day
- Native American Heritage Month

Daylight Savings



November 3

• • •

N o v e m b e r  
2 0 2 4

• • •

# National Veterans & Military Families Month

November is Veterans and Military Families Month. It was first declared in 1996 as a time to acknowledge the tremendous sacrifices our military families make.

In A Proclamation on National Veterans and Military Families Month 2024, President Joe Biden stated “...as a Nation, we have many obligations, but only one is truly sacred; to prepare and equip those we send into harm’s way and to care for them and their families when they come home.”



## LIFELINE<sup>FOR</sup>VETS

[www.nvf.org/veteran-resources](http://www.nvf.org/veteran-resources)



November is National Diabetes Month. It is an opportunity to bring attention to the disease and it’s impact on millions of Americans. The month also honors the birthday of Dr. Frederick Banting, who discovered insulin in 1921. Diabetes is a chronic condition that occurs when the body does not produce enough insulin or cannot use it properly. This results in too much sugar in the bloodstream, which can damage the eyes, kidneys, nerves, and heart.

Diabetes impacts all social, socioeconomic, and ethnic backgrounds. According to the Center for Disease and Control, an estimated 37.3 million people (11.3% of the U.S. population) have Diabetes.

[www.diabetesresearch.org](http://www.diabetesresearch.org)





# National Adoption Month

November is National Adoption Month. There are many ways to adopt children, both domestically and internationally. Due to modern medicine, many families are able to adopt embryos. Robertsedale High School's Social Worker, Mrs. Maribel Peturis and her husband, Adam, adopted their beautiful baby girl, Eliana, via a donated IVF embryo. Ms. Bonnie J Hindman, Social Worker for Baldwin County Preparatory Academy, Baldwin County Virtual School, and BCBE Mental Health Service Facilitator, adopted her son, Tommy, via a private domestic adoption. See their inspiring stories below.

"Adoption has always been something we wanted to pursue as a couple, but we never imagined it would be our only choice. We struggled with infertility for several years and we began exploring adoption soon into our journey. Upon doing some research, we settled on doing a "snowflake adoption" also known as an "embryo adoption." Embryo adoptions are adoptions where one can adopt embryos from IVF couples who have extra embryos they do not plan on using. There are 4 options IVF parents can do with frozen embryos: 1. adoption, 2. donate to science, 3. keep frozen indefinitely, or 4. terminate. Through the grace of God, we were able to adopt a couple of embryos from a local couple and we welcomed "Ellie" (Eliana) to our family last December! It has been fascinating to see what all can be done through science nowadays. We are eternally grateful to God for the sweet gift of a child. I thoroughly enjoyed carrying our adopted baby and cannot wait to do it all over again. Adoption Month will always hold a special place in our hearts." Mrs. Maribel Peturis



*Pictured : Mr. Adam Peturis and Mrs. Maribel Peturis with Eliana Marie Peturis*

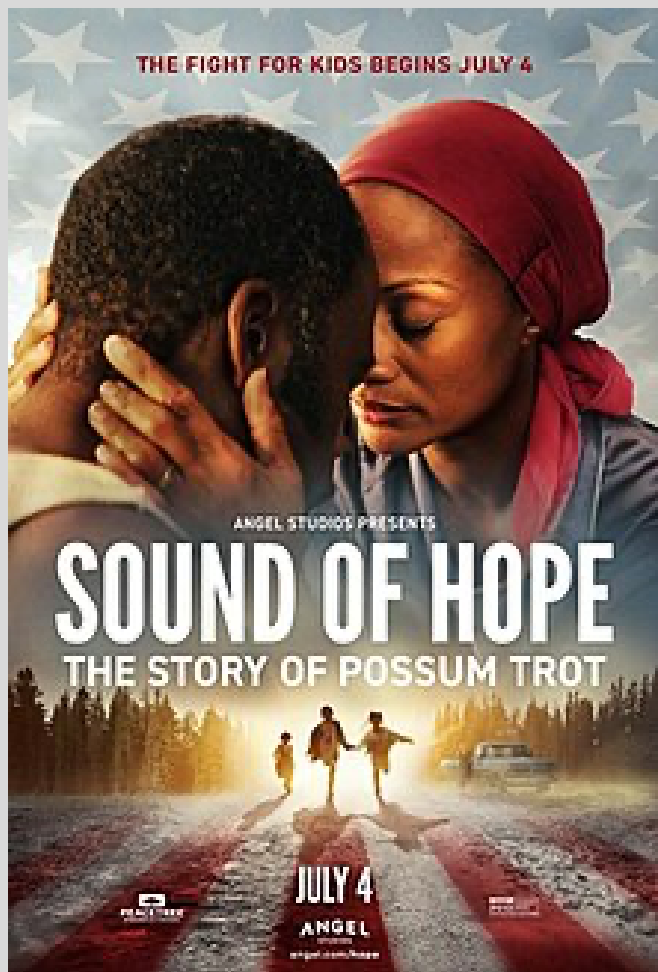


*Pictured : Ms. Bonnie J Hindman with Thomas David Hindman*

"Adoption has always been on my heart and after several attempts to pursue fostering and adoption, which left me heartbroken, I began fertility treatments. In July 2020, I was recovering from surgery after my first round of fertility treatment, which left me heartbroken. A dear friend whom I had not seen in a few years and who had no idea of my journey of longing to be a mom, asked to meet with me to catch up. She shared with me she had a dream about me the night before and in that dream I had a little boy she described to be "less than 2 years old" and I was "holding his hand waking down a beach." I went through 2 more failed fertility treatments and on September 22, 2020, I felt defeated after meeting with my doctor. That evening my dog passed away and as my friend was burying him, I received the first ding on my phone about Tommy, a little boy almost 2 years old, whose family was seeking to place him for adoption. Exactly one year later, I was awarded full custody of Tommy and on June 7, 2023, the adoption was finalized. I am in constant awe of this miraculous journey and eternally grateful for God's provision and for our incredible village. Tommy began kindergarten this year in a Baldwin County School and he is thriving!" Ms. Bonnie J Hindman

# National Adoption Month Cont.

As of spring 2024, there were just over 355,000 children in foster care in the United States. In 2023, there were 5,788 Alabama children in foster care. Here in Baldwin County, there are approximately 200 children in foster care. For more information on becoming a foster/adoptive parent or to learn ways you can help here in the state of Alabama, visit [www.heartgalleryalabama.com](http://www.heartgalleryalabama.com)



*The Sound of Hope: The Story of Possum Trot* is a film that was released this past summer. It is inspired by the true story of Donna and Reverend W.C. Martin of Possum Trot, Texas (pictured above). During the 1990's the couple led a movement in their community for families to adopt children from the foster care system. 22 families adopted 77 children in Possum Trot and the Martins' story inspired a national movement for our most vulnerable children.



# GIVING TUESDAY

## ***Tuesday December 3***

Giving Tuesday is a global generosity movement that occurs annually on the Tuesday following Thanksgiving. Giving Tuesday began in 2012 as a simple idea to create a day set aside to do goodwill. It has since grown into a year round global movement that inspires hundreds of millions of people to give, collaborate, and celebrate generosity.



# Prevention & Support Staff Spotlight

## *Mrs. Davina Gantt*

Mrs. Davina Gantt is the school counselor at Summerdale School. She has been in education for 26 years. She began her career at Mobile County Schools where she taught 3rd through 6th grades for seven years before joining the Baldwin Proud team. This is her 19th year with Baldwin County Schools and she spent many years at Pine Grove Elementary School. She has been with Summerdale School since 2016 except for one year when she was at Spanish Fort Elementary School. Mrs. Gantt earned both her Bachelor of Science in Elementary Education and her Masters in School Counseling from the University of South Alabama. Mrs. Gantt has lived in Baldwin County since she was in the 7th grade. She graduated from Fairhope High School. She and her husband now live in Foley and they have two adult children and five grandchildren. Mrs. Gantt loves to travel with her husband and her favorite destination has been Alaska. When asked what she enjoys most about being the school counselor at Summerdale School, she conveys her love for the students and the Summerdale community. Her office is constantly bustling with students coming and going to tell her hi and to give her hugs.

## Summerdale School



**Dedicated to Excellence in Education**



## National Kindness Day

World Kindness Day is November 13, 2024. This year's theme is "Kindness: A Global Movement". This theme highlights the collective power of kindness and encourages everyone to spread goodwill across the globe. World Kindness Day was first introduced in 1998 and began in Tokyo, Japan. Let us all make kindness our default setting today and everyday!



# Native American Heritage Month

According to the National Congress of American Indians, November is Native American Heritage Month, or as it is commonly referred to, American Indian and Alaska Native Heritage Month. The month is a time to celebrate rich and diverse cultures, traditions, and histories and to acknowledge the important contributions of Native people. Native American Heritage Month is also an opportune time to educate the general public about tribes, to raise a general awareness about the unique challenges Native people have faced, both historically and in the present, and the ways in which tribal citizens have worked to conquer these challenges.

Wesley Studi, Cherokee, is an American actor and producer, best known for his roles in *Dances with Wolves* and *Last of the Mohicans*. His most recent project is the Netflix animated show, *Spirit Rangers*, which follows three American Indian children who become park rangers with secret identities.

