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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: October 11, 2018**

## **The System of Care Office of The White Mountains Regional School District World Mental Health Awareness Day**

Whitefield, NH: The WMRSD System of Care Office in partnership with NAMI (National Alliance on Mental Illness) New Hampshire and The White Mountains Regional High School Student Assistance Program, recognized World Mental Health Awareness Day on October 10th. According to the National Institute of Mental Health, 1 in 5 children have, or will have a serious mental illness. Approximately 20% of youth ages 13-18 live with a mental health condition. Within that 20%, 11% suffer from a mood disorder, 10% have a behavior or conduct disorder and 8% have an anxiety disorder. 50% of all lifetime cases of mental illness begin by age 14 and 75% by age 24%.

By working towards the normalization of mental illness and striving to eliminate the stigma, we're spreading the message of "It's OK not to be OK" and helping youth to understand the importance of "Being Kind to Your Mind". The goal is to help start a dialog and to inform students of the many resources available to them.

There was a great turn-out and enthusiastic participation by the student body and some staff at the White Mountains Regional high school with several students volunteering at the display table. Resources and promotional items including flashlights, keyrings, stress balls, water bottles and T-shirts were handed out, along with green ribbons symbolizing community commitment towards mental health awareness for all.

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