



## February 2026 HVMHC Newsletter



### A Word From our Executive Director, Erik Sievers:

#### Here for All—Today and Tomorrow

Even amid uncertainty and division, Hiawatha Valley Mental Health Center remains steadfast in our mission. We are here for all, providing accessible, compassionate mental health and substance use services to our communities when they need us most.

Our ability to serve depends on the collective care of our community. Together, we can ensure HVMHC continues to be a trusted place of support and healing.

As we look ahead, we invite you to support two important efforts:

**Erik Sievers, MBA, MSW, LICSW**  
HVMHC Executive Director

- Capital improvements at our Winona Sarnia Clinic, including a new roof and chiller unit, critical to maintaining a safe and reliable space for care.
- Bringing Light into Darkness, our annual suicide prevention and mental health awareness event taking place this September.

Your generosity helps ensure that HVMHC remains a place of hope, healing, and connection. To give, visit: **Donate Today**

**Be Well-Erik**

# Bringing Light Into Darkness

Tuesday, February 3rd

Spring Grove's Fest Building

110 N Division Ave, Spring Grove, MN

Join us for a 100% FREE, powerful community event featuring suicide prevention advocate Emma Benoit.

Enjoy a resource fair and free community meal from Fat Pat's then watch Emma's documentary film *My Ascension*. Stay for an interactive panel discussion with Emma and local experts.



4:30pm-6:00pm Resource Fair & Free Pulled Pork Meal  
Provided by Fat Pats

6:00pm-7:30pm Showing of *My Ascension*

7:30pm-8:30pm Panel Discussion Featuring Emma Benoit

Sponsored By:



Dakota Johnson



Emma Benoit  
& *My  
Ascension*



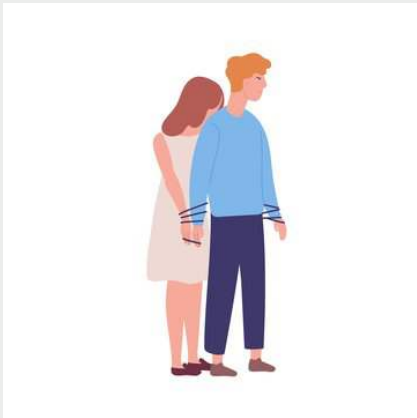
## Bringing Light into Darkness - Spring Grove February 3rd

Spring Grove, Minn — Community members from Spring Grove and the surrounding area are invited to attend *Bringing Light into Darkness – Spring Grove*, a free community event focused on mental health and suicide awareness, on Tuesday, February 3, at the Spring Grove Fest Building (110 N. Division Ave, Spring Grove, MN).

Read More

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**Codependency: When Love Makes You Sick**



Written by Rose Gruye, SUD & OP Behavioral Health Intern at HVMHC

Love can be the greatest feeling on earth, connecting individuals on a deep emotional level. But what happens when one's love for another becomes dysfunctional.

**Continue**

# LAC



# INFORMATIONAL MEETING

**THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 5TH  
FROM 1:00–3:00PM**

**IN THE GARDEN ROOM AT  
HVMHC'S WINONA CLINIC  
420 E SARNIA ST, WINONA, MN 55987**

## About the Meeting

Come learn how Local Advisory Councils (LACs) help shape local mental-health services and share your input to support positive change. Guest speaker Megan Toney from NAMI Southeast MN will be joining us!

### At our informational meeting, you'll have the opportunity to:

- Share your experiences and opinions
- Learn how LACs influence services in our region
- Connect with others invested in mental-health improvement
- Help identify unmet needs and drive meaningful change

**Snacks and refreshments provided**

**Open to residents in Fillmore, Houston, Winona & Wabasha Counties**

**Attend Virtually**



## LAC Informational Meeting - Thursday, February 6th

Winona, Minn — Hiawatha Valley Mental Health Center (HVMHC) will host a Local Advisory Council (LAC) Informational Meeting on Thursday, February 5, from 1:00–3:00 p.m. at its Winona Clinic, located at 420 E. Sarnia Street, Winona, MN. A virtual attendance option will be available via Microsoft Teams.

[Read More](#)

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## Celebrating Employee Milestones

### Welcome New Hires:

1/6 - John Littrell,  
Marketing Intern - Winona  
1/12 - Delaney Weber,  
Adult Behavioral Health  
1/12 - Mariana Yanta,  
Adult Behavioral Health  
1/19 - Sarah Anderson,  
Receptionist - Caledonia

### Workaversaries:

1/19 - Kasey Green, Billing  
Coordinator - Winona  
1/19 - Dorothy Moore,  
Receptionist - Winona  
1/19 - Samantha Schiller,  
Adult Behavioral Health

### Workaversaries:

2/1 - Tina Mullen - 1st  
2/11 - Jane Stoyke - 11th  
2/17 - Celeste Jensen - 1st  
2/18 - Melissa Fitzpatrick - 6th  
2/18 - Liz Krage - 6th  
2/28 - Dan Konkel - 4th

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## Open Position Spotlight:

### Outpatient Therapist - Red Wing/Wabasha

Hiawatha Valley Mental Health Center (HVMHC) is hiring an Outpatient Mental Health Therapist to serve individuals, couples, and families in the Red Wing and Wabasha areas.

Founded in 1965, HVMHC is a nonprofit community mental health center dedicated to person-centered, high-quality care across Southeast Minnesota. We offer a supportive, collaborative work environment with flexible scheduling, free clinical supervision for licensure, and innovative tools like Eleos AI-assisted documentation—so clinicians can spend more time with clients and less time on paperwork.

Qualified candidates hold Minnesota licensure (or are licensure-eligible) as an LP, LICSW, LMFT, or LPCC. Full-time and part-time positions are available, along with a comprehensive benefits package that includes paid time off, health insurance, retirement match, and professional development support.

**Learn More: [Apply Today](#)**

[View all HVMHC Job Openings](#)

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# Hiawatha Valley

## MENTAL HEALTH CENTER

### Crisis Response

1-844-272-7472

#### Need Help? HVMHC's 24/7 Crisis Line is Here

HVMHC's 24/7 Emergency Crisis Response Line connects individuals in mental health or substance use crises with trained professionals—anytime, day or night.

Why it matters:

- Immediate, judgment-free support
- Reduces ER visits and hospitalizations
- Available to individuals, families, and community partners
- In-person or phone response based on need
- FREE & Confidential

 **Call 1-800-CRISIS2 or 1-800-274-7472—we're here when it matters most.**

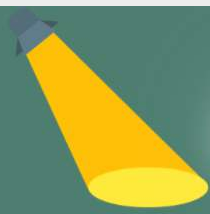
#### A Message from HVMHC's Mobile Crisis Team: Valentine's Day Is Around the Corner (Cue the Collective Sigh)

Written by Dina Robinson, HVMHC Crisis Response Lead

Valentine's Day is not just a holiday - it's a yearly emotional assessment we did not schedule. Suddenly everything is pink, heart-shaped, and quietly asking, "So...how's your love life."



**Continue**



# Employee Spotlight

**Ami Sholes**

**Title: Adult Mental Health Practitioner**

**Tell us about yourself:**

Outside of work I value balance and self-care. I enjoy time with family and family is incredibly important to me and plays a big role in keeping me grounded. I value spending quality time with loved ones; whether that's sharing meals, celebrating milestones or simply everyday moments together. I believe these connections are vital for wellbeing and continually remind me of the importance of balance in life. I also love getting outdoors, spending time with Honey and Denali, my Golden Retrievers. 😊

**Tell us how long you've worked at HVMHC, what your role is and what your favorite part of working here is:**

I have been with HVMHC for 5 years (2020, Aug) where I am an adult mental health practitioner. I have a strong passion for supporting individuals through life's challenges and transitions. My focus is creating a safe place where people feel heard, respected and empowered. I believe meaningful change happens when people feel supported to move at their own pace. What I love most about working at HVMHC is that I am given the opportunity to promote recovery, wellbeing and independence to others and I am so grateful for my team here. I feel fortunate to work with amazing people!

**Tell us something about you that people might be surprised to know or your favorite memory from this year:**

I was blessed to be a hair stylist and nail technician for 13+ years. I also worked as a career specialist and worked with disabled adults in my former career. My favorite memory of 2025 was my daughter's beautiful wedding.



Honey and Denali

Ami and Family



# Board Spotlight

## Emmy Husfloen

Title: Board Member - Goodhue Co

### Tell us about yourself:

I am a dedicated advocate for mental health support, suicide prevention, and community outreach, working to break the stigma surrounding mental health in Red Wing and the surrounding areas. As a resident of one of the five counties served by Hiawatha Valley Mental Health Center, I bring both lived experience and long-standing community involvement to my advocacy. After losing my son to suicide, I am deeply committed to ensuring individuals and families feel supported, seen, and able to access critical resources.

Professionally, I have worked at 3M Fall Protection in Red Wing for over 20 years and also serves as an Afterschool Program Coordinator with RiseUp Partnership, helping provide engaging, community-connected programming for local youth. I have volunteered with numerous local organizations, including the Red Wing Area Food Shelf, American Foundation for Suicide Prevention - Out of the Darkness Community Walks & International Survivors of Suicide Loss Day, Habitat for Humanity, Goodhue County Master Gardener and Hope & Harbor Homeless shelter.

I live in Red Wing with my husband Luke, daughter Marley, their dog Penny, and cats Bo and Bella.

### Tell us something about you that people might be surprised to know

Outside of work and advocacy, I enjoy gardening—my home is fondly known as “The Sunflower House” I love giving garden tours and educating people about pollinators.



Emmy



## **Donor Spotlight: Elizabeth Callender King Foundation**

Winona, Minn - Hiawatha Valley Mental Health Center is deeply grateful to the Elizabeth Callender King Foundation for their generous \$10,000 gift received in November. Their support reflects a shared commitment to strengthening mental health care and supporting the well-being of individuals and families in our community.

This contribution helped fund the addition of new provider offices at HVMHC's clinic in Winona, which were completed last fall. These updates expanded our capacity and allow us to serve more people seeking mental health care. We are thankful for the Foundation's partnership and their investment in increasing access to services across southeast Minnesota.

[Donate to Hiawatha Valley Mental Health Center Today](#)

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## **February HVMHC Monthly Give Back: Mom and Baby Essentials Drive**



# Mom & Baby Essentials Drive

## HOW TO HELP

There will be drop-off bins for supplies at four of our agency locations listed below. All donations will be dispersed to organizations within our five-county service area which are listed below. There are specific items needed for each place and can be accessed through their websites or call for more information. We have provided a general list of items needed.

## ITEMS NEEDED

- Baby Wipes
- Diapers (size 1 and up)
- Journals
- Baby monitors
- Pull-ups (size 3-4T, 5-6T)
- Baby clothes (all genders & sizes)
- New socks and underwear all sizes
- Baby Blankets
- Formula or baby food
- New pacifiers, teethers, bottles, or toys

HOPE Coalition, Rochester Women's Shelter & Support Center (serves all 5 counties), Birthright, SEMCAC, Bundles of Love, and Bluff Country Family Resources Center

## DONATIONS ACCEPTED FEBRUARY 1-28

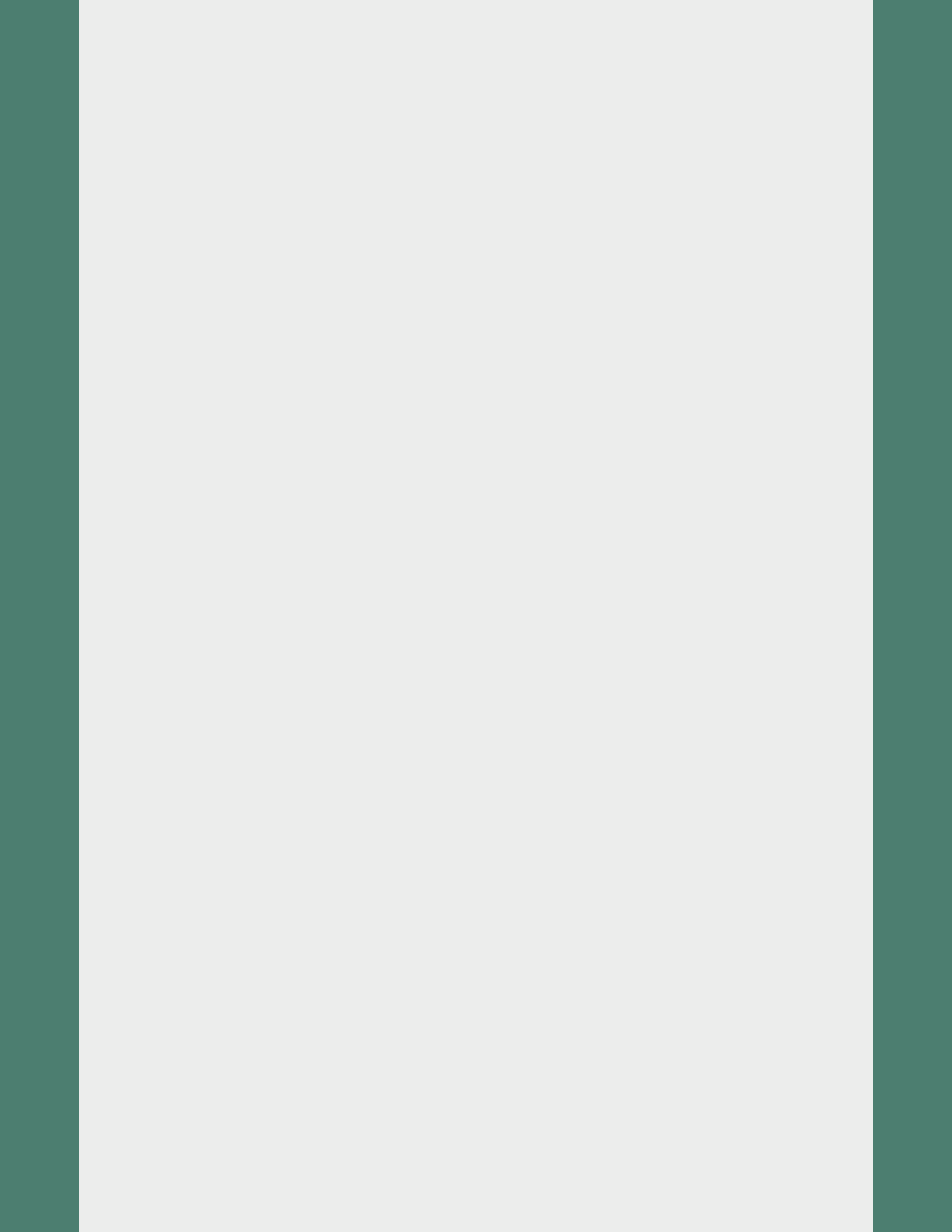
WINONA OFFICE	RED WING OFFICE	CALEDONIA OFFICE	WABASHA OFFICE
420 E Sarnia Street, Winona, MN 55987	2835 S Service Dr. Suite 103, Red Wing, MN 55066	221 S Kingston St, Caledonia, MN 55921	611 Broadway Suite 100, Wabasha, MN 55981



Questions?  
Contact Jen Dieck (jend@hvmhc.org), Taylor Dauer (taylord@hvmhc.org), or Brianna Corey (briannac@hvmhc.org)

Winona, Minn - Hiawatha Valley Mental Health Center (HVMHC) is collecting mom and baby essentials throughout the month of February as part of its ongoing monthly Giveback Program. Donations will be accepted at all four HVMHC clinic locations and distributed to local organizations serving families across southeast Minnesota.

Continue Reading



February 2026

# CULTURAL HUMILITY AND MENTAL HEALTH IN TIMES OF COMMUNITY STRESS

## UNDERSTANDING HOW CONTEXT SHAPES ACCESS, SAFETY, AND WELLBEING

### From the Cultural Humility Group:

At Hiawatha Valley Mental Health Center, cultural humility reflects our commitment to dignity, respect, and compassionate care. It encourages us to look beyond individual experiences and consider how broader context shapes mental health and wellbeing.

**It reminds us that access to care, feelings of safety, and trust in systems are not experienced the same by everyone.**

Recognizing these differences helps all of us respond with greater understanding and care.

### How Community Stress Affects Mental Health

Mental Health is influenced by more than personal circumstances. Community conditions, uncertainty, and chronic stress can significantly affect emotional and psychological wellbeing.

During periods of heightened stress in the community, individuals may experience:

- Increased anxiety or worry
- Difficulty sleeping or concentrating
- Heightened vigilance or stress responses
- Hesitation to engage with services or systems

These responses are common and understandable reactions to ongoing stress and uncertainty.

### Unequal Experiences of Safety and Access

In shared systems and community spaces, people experience very different levels of safety.

Some move through the world trusting that systems will protect them.

Others move cautiously, shaped by past harm and present risk.

This reality affects how people access care, what they share, and whether they seek support at all.

**Access, safety, and trust are not evenly distributed.**

*Awareness of these differences strengthens our ability to respond with care.*

### Discomfort as Part of Learning

Learning about inequity and unequal experience can feel uncomfortable, particularly for those who are less directly impacted.

Discomfort may show up as uncertainty, emotional tension, or the desire to move on or disengage.

It is important to distinguish between discomfort and harm.

**Discomfort is not harm.**

Discomfort can be part of learning, growth, and developing a greater understanding of experiences different from our own.

### Cultural Humility is an Active Practice

Cultural humility is an ongoing practice for individuals, families, organizations, and communities. It is not about having all the answers, but about remaining open, reflective, and willing to learn.

### What Support Can Look Like

Support does not require knowing someone's personal story.

In families, workplaces, service settings, and community spaces, support can look like:

This practice includes:

- Self-reflection and awareness
- Willingness to listen and learn from others
- Attention to how power, access, and trust operate in everyday interactions

Cultural humility is not neutrality.

It involves recognizing differences and responding with intention and care.

- Recognizing that stress affects people differently
- Allowing individuals to decide what feels safe to share
- Responding with patience, flexibility, and respect
- Understanding that silence or distance may reflect a need for safety

Supportive language can be simple and human:

"There's a lot happening right now. We're here with you."

"We can take this one step at a time."

## Growth, Responsibility, and Reflection

Engaging in cultural humility may require reexamining assumptions about fairness, access, and engagement. It can mean letting go of the belief that systems work the same for everyone, or that growth should always feel comfortable.

**Growth often requires releasing comfort, not values.**

Take some time to pause and reflect:

- Where have I noticed differences in safety, access, or engagement?
- How might stress or uncertainty be affecting people around me?
- What is one way I can respond with greater awareness or compassion this month?

Join Us for a Community Screening  
La Crescent-Hokah School District is  
Presenting...

# SCREEN AGERS

**ELEMENTARY SCHOOL AGE EDITION**

**Help Your Kids Thrive in the Digital Age**

Screenagers: Elementary School Age Edition updates the original movie with the latest research, expert insights and advice, specifically tailored for the students, parents and educators of elementary schools to help them better navigate this digital age.

LEARN MORE



**5:30 PM Showing**



**Tuesday, Feb 24th**



**High School Auditorium**

Event  
Sponsor:



**\*Free meal & resource fair from  
4:30 PM – 7:30 PM**

Schedule an Appointment with HVMHC



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