

## Mental health rally set for Monday

*Times Staff Report*

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A Mental Health Awareness Rally is planned for 2 p.m. Monday at Gadsden Convention Hall. The rally is being held to talk about the proposed funding cuts to the Alabama Department of Mental Health.

Rally organizers said they believe these cuts threaten the very existence of the programs that have helped thousands of Alabamians for many years.

Local residents with intellectual and developmental disabilities and mental health diagnoses could lose treatment that is vital to their well being, organizers said. Treatment such as supervised residential care homes, day habilitation centers, employment training and crisis and emergency stabilization for people with serious mental illnesses could be affected or even eliminated by budget cuts.

"The loss in services will place a burden on families, law enforcement officials, hospitals and the community at large," organizers said in a press release. "We urge all concerned citizens of Etowah and County and surrounding counties, area legislators and members of city and county governments to attend this meeting."

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