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## CHILDREN'S MENTAL HEALTH MATTERS

1301 York Road, Suite 505, Lutherville, Maryland 21093



# 2022 Wrap-Up Report

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# The Current Mental Health Crisis

For over 20 years, the Children’s Mental Health Matters Campaign has been dedicated to raising awareness of mental health and substance use challenges in youth, decreasing stigma, and supporting Champions who work in local communities throughout Maryland in sharing resources and supports with families. As the COVID-19 pandemic drags on, the numbers of youth impacted, and the acuity of their mental health needs has skyrocketed. Together with our partners, Champions, and families across the state, we remain committed to the goal of improved mental wellness for all youth.



*“As a school counselor, I’m very excited to see people take it seriously and have discussions about mental health. I have seen more people feel more comfortable expressing their own mental health challenges.”*

*School Champion, submitted via 2022 Survey*

The pandemic has impacted our world dramatically. It has affected how children relate to themselves and others, how they manage change and stress, handle life situations, think, feel, act, develop, and learn. Recent research covering 80,000 youth globally found that depressive and anxiety symptoms doubled during the pandemic, with 25% of youth experiencing depressive symptoms and 20% experiencing anxiety symptoms<sup>1</sup>. In 2021, emergency department visits in the United States for suspected suicide attempts were 51% higher for adolescent girls and 4% higher for adolescent boys compared to the same time period in 2019<sup>2</sup>. Pandemic related safety

measures reduced in-person interactions between peers, social supports, and professionals (teachers, counselors, pediatricians, child welfare, etc.), making it increasingly difficult to recognize signs of abuse, mental health concerns, and other challenges<sup>3</sup>.

Groups at higher risk of mental health challenges during the pandemic include<sup>1</sup>:

- Youth with intellectual and developmental disabilities
- Racial and ethnic minority youth
- LGBTQIA+ youth
- Low-income youth
- Youth in rural areas
- Youth in immigrant households

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## The Current Mental Health Crisis CONT.

- Special youth populations: youth involved in juvenile justice, child welfare systems, runaway youth, youth experiencing homelessness
- Youth experiencing multiple risk factors

The Children’s Mental Health Matters Campaign has never been more critical. By equipping adults with resources and improved understanding of youth mental health challenges we have the opportunity to change the trajectory of children’s lives throughout Maryland.

### Sources:

1. Protecting Youth Mental Health, The U.S. Surgeon General’s Advisory 2021, <https://www.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/surgeon-general-youth-mental-health-advisory.pdf>
2. Answering the Call, Scaling Support for Children’s Mental Health, Child Mind Institute’s 2021 Annual Report, <https://childmind.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/Child-Mind-Institute-Annual-Report-2021.pdf>
3. Emergency Department Visits for Suspected Suicide Attempts Among Persons Aged 12–25 Years Before and During the COVID-19 Pandemic — United States, January 2019–May 2021, [https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/70/wr/mm7024e1.htm?s\\_cid=mm7024e1\\_w](https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/70/wr/mm7024e1.htm?s_cid=mm7024e1_w)

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## Partnerships

The Children’s Mental Health Matters campaign is a collaboration of the Mental Health Association of Maryland and the Maryland Coalition of Families with support from the Maryland Department of Health—Behavioral Health Administration. The campaign brings together non-profits, schools, and other agencies with the following goals: raise public awareness of the importance of children’s mental health and substance use, help reduce the stigma of mental health, and connect families, educators, and providers with resources to help children throughout Maryland.



*The Mental Health Association of Maryland addresses the mental health needs of Marylanders of all ages through programs that educate the public to increase understanding and provide resources, advance public policy to improve care and outcomes, and monitor the quality of services received by individuals living with mental illness and substance use disorders. Learn more at [mhamd.org](http://mhamd.org).*



*The Maryland Coalition of Families is dedicated to connecting, supporting, and empowering families who are experiencing behavioral health challenges. MCF advocates to improve services and systems that impact individuals with behavioral health challenges and to reduce stigma related to behavioral health. Learn more at [mdcoalition.org](http://mdcoalition.org).*

### PARTNERS:

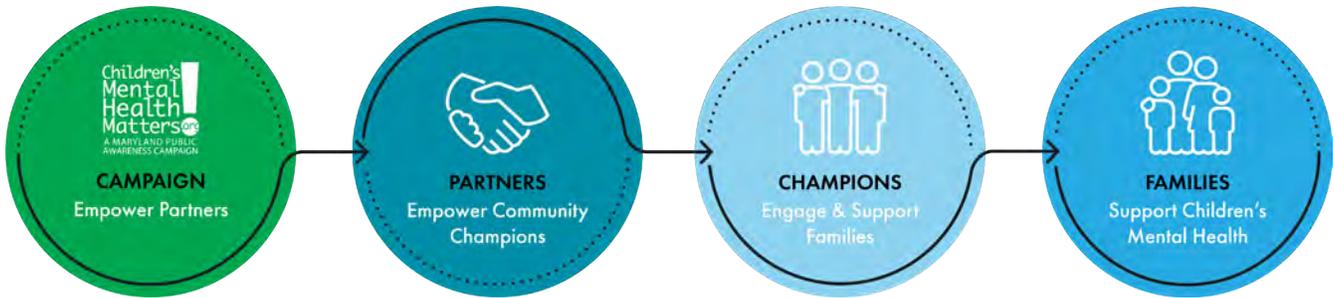
The Mental Health Association of Maryland cannot do this important work alone and that is why we collaborate with other organizations across Maryland who are dedicated to, and passionate about, supporting the mental wellbeing of children and families. Together we provide expert evidence-based information, share resources, coordinate awareness raising events, serve on advocacy groups, recruit school and organization participation, and much more.



**MARYLAND**  
Department of Health



# Dedicated to Children’s Wellbeing



Each year the campaign invites Maryland schools, non-profits, businesses, and others to come together and participate as a School or Community Champion for children’s mental health. As a Champion, these schools and organization are joining a vibrant network of like-minded leaders who are committed to raising awareness of the importance of children’s mental health, reducing the stigma surrounding mental health, and providing resources to improve overall well-being in this great time of need.

Families are another part of the campaign as they receive resources to support the children in their homes and communities. Each year we connect with families who are aware of the campaign and those who are new to it. These families receive resources, tools, and activities to use as learning opportunities. We want to thank all parents and caregivers who have made great strides to shine a light on what it takes to be a healthy youth. We applaud these adults for making it a priority to talk about mental health, learning how to nurture it, and promoting wellbeing by incorporating important practices in their homes and routines.

## STATEWIDE CHAMPION REACH:

County	Total
Statewide	19
Allegany	5
Anne Arundel	10
Baltimore City	63
Baltimore Co	59
Calvert	18
Caroline	25
Carroll	49
Cecil	12
Charles	9
Dorchester	21
Frederick	41
Garrett	3
Harford	24
Howard	17
Kent	14
Montgomery	21
Prince George’s	69
Queen Anne’s	17
St. Mary’s	3
Somerset	12
Talbot	13
Washington	10
Wicomico	37
Worcester	23

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# Campaign Goals and 2022 Highlights

The 2022 Children’s Mental Health Matters Campaign made an incredible impact, with over 500 Champions leading efforts in their local communities.

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**388**  
SCHOOL CHAMPIONS

**147**  
COMMUNITY CHAMPIONS

**225,000+**  
STUDENTS SUPPORTED THROUGH  
CAMPAIGN RESOURCES

**1,032,208**  
MATERIALS DISTRIBUTED

**6**  
CAMPAIGN PARTNERS

**350+**  
ATTENDED CHAMPION LAUNCH MEETING  
THROUGHOUT THE YEAR — A 180% INCREASE  
FROM 2021

## YTD WEBSITE & SOCIAL MEDIA DATA:

**WEBSITE**  
Pageviews  
60,704

Resource  
Downloads  
19,612

**FACEBOOK**  
Total Likes  
3,037

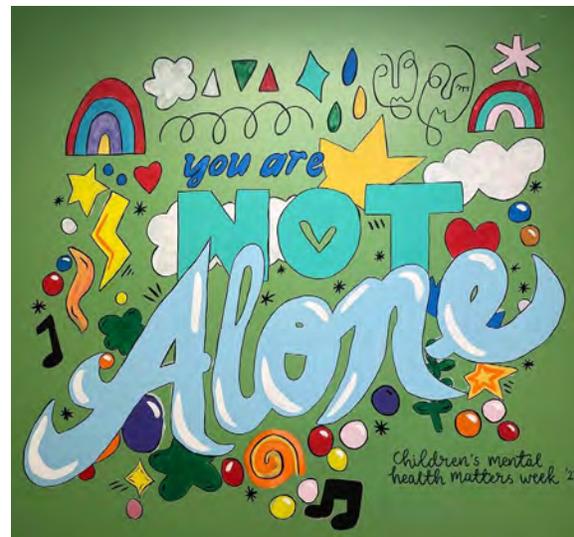
Total Reach  
55,365

**TWITTER**  
Total Impressions  
38,125

Total Followers  
1,464

**INSTAGRAM**  
Total Reach  
5,840

Total Followers  
2,077



# Listening to Our Champions

Following Children’s Mental Health Awareness Week, Community Champions and School Champions were asked to complete an online survey to share their experience and feedback about the 2022 Campaign.

## CHAMPION PARTICIPATION:

**44%** OF CHAMPIONS SURVEYED WERE FIRST OR SECOND YEAR PARTICIPANTS

**56%** OF CHAMPIONS SURVEYED HAVE PARTICIPATED FOR 3-5+ YEARS

**87%** OF RESPONDENTS LEARNED ABOUT THE CAMPAIGN FROM EMAIL/NEWSLETTER

**350+** ATTENDED CHAMPION LAUNCH MEETINGS DURING THE CAMPAIGN YEAR

## RESOURCES/ACTIVITIES:

**69%** OF CHAMPIONS SURVEYED USED CAMPAIGN RESOURCES, LOCAL RESOURCES, OR CREATED NEW THEIR OWN

**27%** OF CHAMPIONS UTILIZED A TEAM OR COMMITTEE, COLLABORATED WITH OTHER LOCAL SCHOOLS OR ORGANIZATIONS, OR HAD STUDENT INVOLVEMENT FOR THEIR AWARENESS WEEK ACTIVITIES



## IMPACT INTERVIEWS:

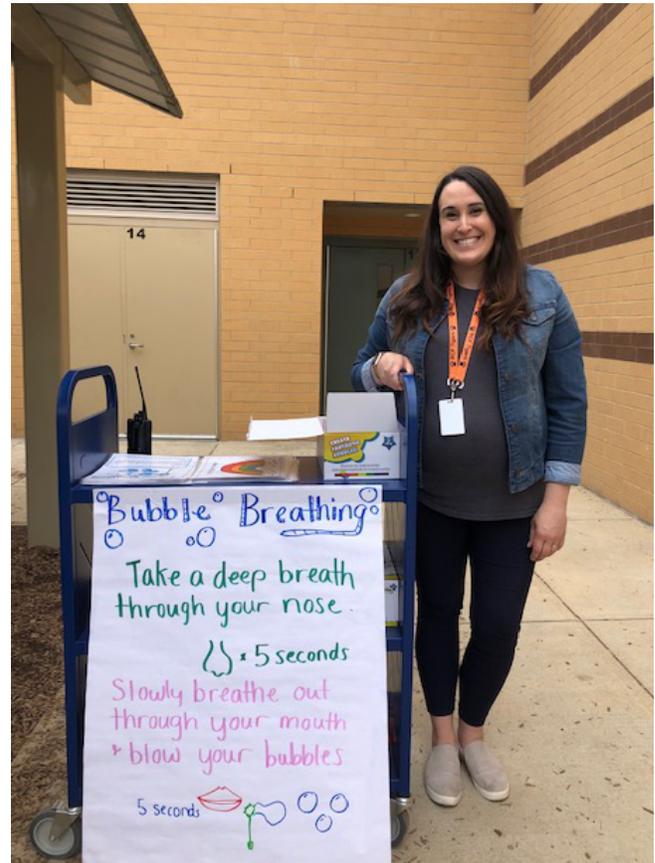
The impact of the campaign has made such a difference in local communities across the state. We interviewed passionate Champions who shared why children’s mental health is important to them. [Go here to watch the interviews.](#)



# Champions of the Year

## SCHOOL CHAMPION: ROCK CREEK FOREST ELEMENTARY Montgomery County

During Awareness Week, coordinator Lynsay Gillis and Rock Creek Forest Elementary School held daily school-wide activities focused on promoting effective coping strategies and reducing stigma. A few of the activities included: an online event where Broadway stars shared their mental health stories, a deep breathing learning exercise with the counseling team on the playground (700+ students attended), a feelings identification and healthy coping skills scavenger hunt, a school-wide reading from the campaign book list, and more. School-wide events promoted diversity, equity, and inclusion to allow all students a safe space to learn and thrive.



## COMMUNITY CHAMPION: THE PARTNERSHIP FOR A HEALTHIER CARROLL COUNTY Carroll County

The Partnership for a Healthier Carroll County held its first annual Cultivating Compassion Art Show – showcasing artwork of all ages (7-80 years old) in multiple media. The artwork illustrated the beauty and uniqueness of each individual's mental health experience. Over 70 people attended the event, which was held from May 2-6th. All attendees received bags with CMHM, NAMI, and local resources.

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## Champions of the Year CONT.

### STUDENT CHAMPION:

### SEVERNA PARK MIDDLE SCHOOL MENTAL HEALTH MATTERS GROUP

Anne Arundel County

Students made dozens of pinwheels to place at the front of the school building, serving as a visual representation of the importance of mental health. In addition, students created a fundraiser where they sold bracelets with positive messages printed on them. After researching nonprofits, the students decided to donate the proceeds (\$1,000) to the National Alliance on Mental Illness.



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# Celebrating Through Art: The First Lady's Mental Health Awareness Youth Art Display

In her eighth and final year hosting Celebrating Through Art: The First Lady's Mental Health Awareness Youth Art Display, Mrs. Yumi Hogan, Maryland's First Lady, welcomed youth, educators, and families to a virtual art showcase on Monday, May 2, 2022. Students from across Maryland gathered and shared their artwork which illustrated **what makes them feel mentally happy, healthy, or hopeful**. We heard from students at Gilman School who spoke on their artwork based on and studies of Vincent Van Gogh (thanks to their art teacher who helped to shed light on mental health and art).



Thank you to Secretary Carol A. Beatty and her team at the Maryland Department of Disabilities for eight years of partnership, passion, and hard work making this event such a success and delight for students, educators, families, and advocates.

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# Awareness Week, May 1-7, 2022

Community and School Champions engaged thousands of Marylanders during Awareness Week, May 1-7, 2022. See photos below from the exciting, impactful, and inspiring activities from across the state.



# Awareness Week, May 1-7, 2022 CONT.



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## Resources

This year, the campaign was able to create, refresh, and distribute hundreds of thousands of informative mental health resources across the state.

### Below are noteworthy campaign activities:

- Increased our reach to Spanish speaking families through translated Family Resource Kits
- Convened a family advisory workgroup to revise the Telemental Health Tip sheets in partnership with MD-BHIPP whose contract was increased in 2021-2022 — adding family voices to our materials
- Provided up-to-date book lists for children, families, and libraries
- Created self-affirmation resources in partnership with Mind Resilience
  - Affirmation calendar for May 2022
  - Printable affirmation cards
- Revised annual digital Champion toolkit in partnership with National Center for School Mental Health
- Selected the artwork for the 17th annual Children’s Mental Health Matters poster in partnership with the Maryland Association of Nonpublic Special Education Facilities and students from Phillips School
- Provided Champion Resource Toolkits to use for Mental Health Month
- Awarded a one-time only grant from Behavioral Health Systems Baltimore to provide art supplies at no cost to children in Baltimore City
- Provided 100 copies of our Family Resource Kits, in English and Spanish, to each school in Baltimore City over the summer with the same one-time only award above



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## Looking Ahead

In 2022-2023, the Campaign will continue with a hybrid approach to support campaign activities across Maryland. This will allow greater reach of the campaign through technology coupled with in-person activities in local communities. The campaign is dedicated to connecting children and families with resources for prevention and support of mental health challenges and increasing reach across Maryland.

### During next year's campaign, we plan to:

- Continue to offer virtual engagement to increase state-wide campaign reach
- Increase technical assistance to Champions to maximize their community impact
- Provide quarterly stakeholder sharing meetings to increase both reach and impact of campaign efforts
- Capture and share stories of positive campaign impact across Maryland
- Empower partners and Champions to engage new Champions
- Showcase youth voices through innovative approaches





The Children's Mental Health Matters! Campaign is a collaboration of the Mental Health Association of Maryland and the Maryland Coalition of Families with support from the Maryland Department of Health - Behavioral Health Administration. The Campaign goal, with School and Community Champions across the state, is to raise public awareness of the importance of children's mental health.

**For more information, please visit [www.ChildrensMentalHealthMatters.org](http://www.ChildrensMentalHealthMatters.org).**

**Connect with us on social media:**

