

2023 Campaign Toolkit



Welcome to the Children's Mental Health Matters Campaign's 2023 Digital Toolkit!

Thank you for making a commitment to support the health and wellbeing of Maryland's families by becoming a 2023 Champion.

As a 2023 Champion, you have committed to organizing at least one event or activity that raises awareness or provides education on the importance of mental health for your school or community organization during Awareness Week, May 7-13, 2023, and May - Mental Health Month. All Champions will be spotlighted on our website and invited to be nominated for Champion of the Year for the creativity and innovation of awareness efforts.

This toolkit is full of resources, activities, and ready-to-use content to support you on your journey. We are grateful for your commitment to strengthen community awareness, advocacy, and support for children and families.

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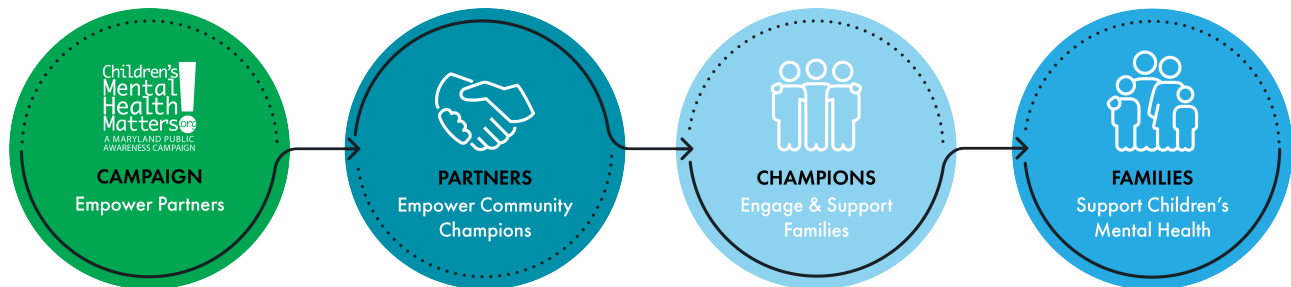
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About the Children's Mental Health Matters Campaign

The Children's Mental Health Matters Campaign has been a Maryland tradition for a quarter of a century —bringing together more than 500 school and community organizations annually to support children's mental health by increasing public awareness, reducing stigma, and connecting children, families, educators, and providers with resources for prevention and support for mental health conditions.

The campaign is year-round, culminating with a series of awareness events that take place during Children's Mental Health Awareness Week, May 7-13, 2023.

The Campaign is organized by the Mental Health Association of Maryland (MHAMD) and the Maryland Coalition of Families (MCF) with support from the Maryland Department of Health — Behavioral Health Administration. Together, MHAMD and MCF partner with other organizations who are dedicated to improving children's mental health.



Important Dates & Champion Checklist

IMPORTANT DATES

- **May 7 - 13:** Children's Mental Health Awareness Week
- **May 11:** Wear **Green** for National Children's Mental Health Awareness Day
- **May 11 at 8:00PM:** 3rd Annual Children's Mental Health Matter's Twitter Chat with Dr. Sally Spencer-Thomas (@sspencerthomas)
- **May 18 from 11:30AM-12:30PM:** May Mental Wellness Social (Virtual Event)
- **May is Mental Health Awareness Month**
- Check out the [CMHM Events Calendar](#) to learn about upcoming awareness events



CHAMPION CHECKLIST

- Make sure you are registered as a School or Community Champion
- Update your email signature line (ideas included on page 9)
- Plan an activity or event for your school or community (suggestions included)
- Plan social media posts
- Create awareness week flyers for your school, organization, and/or community
- Find something green to wear for May 11 – National Children's Mental Health Awareness Day
- Find resources on the [CMHM website](#) or mental health resources [local to your community](#) to share with children and families

Ideas & Tips for Champions

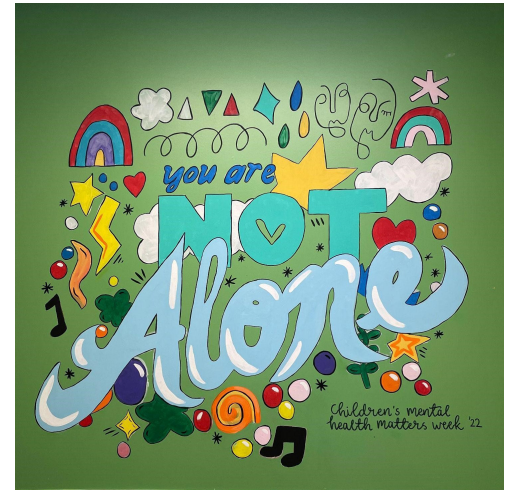
- Share updates about the Campaign with your network via email, social media, newsletters, etc. (see samples on page 7-9).
- Post a prominent link to [ChildrensMentalHealthMatters.org](https://www.ChildrensMentalHealthMatters.org) on your website.
- Include information about the Campaign in your email signature (see samples on page 8).
- Encourage other schools, organizations, or businesses in your community to [join the Campaign as a School or Community Champion](#).
- Follow the Campaign on social media and share the sample posts (page 7-8), as well as photos and videos from your events and activities during Awareness Week! Make sure to tag us #CMHMMaryland
- Wear green on May 11th for National Children's Mental Health Awareness Day. Invite family, friends, classrooms/schools, staff/team, and more to join you. Take a picture and share on social media using the hashtag #CMHMMaryland or email tthomas@mhamd.org.
- Share [our digital resources](#) with your network, families, and anyone you know who could benefit from them.
- Take a [Youth Mental Health First Aid \(YMHFA\) Course](#) or contact mhfatraining@mhamd.org to host a training for a group. [Research shows that YMHFA](#) increases mental health literacy, confidence and likelihood to help a young person in distress, and empathy/acceptance toward youth with mental health challenges.
- Contact campaign coordinators to host a virtual educational event about children's mental health.
- Write a letter to your newspaper editor about the importance of children's mental health.
- Plan an outdoor community event: share resources, food, music, dance, spoken word, art, etc.
- Plan a day of wellness: learn new skills to practice mental wellness such as coping skills, yoga, art therapy, and more.
- Organize a school-wide or community-based essay contest.
- Host a teen town hall that includes youth voice, opening the floor for teens to problem solve and have adults rally around them to foster a community of support.

To brainstorm with other champions in your county, email tthomas@mhamd.org.

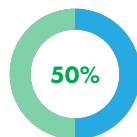
Impact of Mental Health & Fast Facts

Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, up to 1 in 5 children, ages 3 to 17, in the US reported a mental, emotional, developmental, or behavioral disorder¹. In 2016, of the 7.7 million children with treatable mental health conditions, about half did not receive adequate treatment². 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 period in 2019³.

In the Center for Disease Control's Youth Risk Behavior Survey Data Summary and Trends Report: 2011-2021, it is reported that nearly all indicators of poor mental health and suicidal thoughts and behaviors increased from 2011 to 2021; the percentage of students who experience persistent feelings of sadness or hopelessness, seriously considered attempting suicide, made a suicide plan, and attempted suicide increased; and the percentage of students who were injured in a suicide attempt did not change⁴.



FAST FACTS FROM THE NATIONAL INSTITUTE ON MENTAL HEALTH



50% of all lifetime mental illnesses begin by age 14.

1:15,000

1 child psychiatrist is available for every 15,000 youth under 18.

2nd

Suicide is the second leading cause of death among persons aged 15 to 25.



1 in 5 children has a significantly impairing mental disorder, yet less than half get the treatment they need.

[1] Perou, R., Bitsko, R. H., Blumberg, S. J., Pastor, P., Ghandour, R. M., Gfroerer, J. C., Hedden, S. L., Crosby, A. E., Visser, S. N., Schieve, L. A., Parks, S. E., Hall, J. E., Brody, D., Simile, C. M., Thompson, W. W., Baio, J., Avenevoli, S., Kogan, M. D., Huang, L. N., & Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) (2013). Mental health surveillance among children--United States, 2005-2011. *MMWR. Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report Supplements*, 62(2), 1-35.

[2] Whitney, D.G. & Peterson, M. (2019). US national and state-level prevalence of mental health disorders and disparities of mental health care use in children. *JAMA Pediatrics*, 173(4), 389-391. doi:10.1001/jamapediatrics.2018.5399

[3] Yard, E., Radhakrishnan, L., Ballesteros, M. F., Sheppard, M., Gates, A., Stein, Z., Hartnett, K., Kite-Powell, A., Rodgers, L., Adjemian, J., Ehlman, D. C., Holland, K., Idaikkadar, N., Ivey-Stephenson, A., Martinez, P., Low, R., & Stone, D. M. (2021). 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. *MMWR. Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report*, 70(24), 888-894. <https://doi.org/10.15585/mmwr.mm7024e1>

[4] Center for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for HIV, Viral Hepatitis, STD, and TB Prevention. (2023) Youth Risk Behavior Survey Data Summary Trends Report 2011-2021, 60-69. https://www.cdc.gov/healthyyouth/data/yrbs/pdf/YRBS_Data-Summary-Trends_Report2023_508.pdf

Key Messaging

- “Mental health challenges in children, adolescents, and young adults are real and they are widespread. But most importantly, they are treatable and often preventable.” - Dr. Vivek H. Murthy, U.S. Surgeon General
- 1 in 5 children and adolescents may have a mental health condition at any given time. It is important to recognize that a child’s mental health is just as important as their physical health.
- Children of all ages, even young infants, can experience mental health conditions. It can be difficult knowing the kinds of behaviors and moods that are usual for the stage of development a child is in and a child has gone beyond the norm and needs help.
- Mental health, also known as emotional or behavioral health, is a vital part of your child’s medical health and development. It affects how individuals think, feel, and act. All children and teens have periods of anger, frustration, and sadness. However, for some kids, these feelings can reach a tipping point and interfere with everyday life.
- Early intervention is the best way to prevent long-term or severe conditions into adulthood.
- Mental health applies to everyone throughout their lives regardless of age, gender, race, culture, income, or education. Mental health awareness helps all children have opportunities to be successful in school, at home, in the community, and in their future adult lives.
- As parents, family members, educators, or community members: we may have a lot on our plates or face our own mental health challenges. It can feel easy to push our own needs to the side. However, making time for ourselves is essential to our overall well-being and being a role model for the children in our lives.



Social Media: Handles & Graphics

Below are sample social media posts that promote the CMHM Campaign and mental health awareness. We encourage you to post photos, videos, stories, and more from your activities and events — tag us and use the hashtag #CMHMMaryland.

Ask other Champions, schools, community members to join in online and share their involvement to help drive participation!

FOLLOW US ON THE FOLLOWING PLATFORMS:



[@ChildrensMentalHealthMatters](https://www.facebook.com/ChildrensMentalHealthMatters)



[@childrensmentalhealthmatters](https://www.instagram.com/childrensmentalhealthmatters)



[@childrensmentalhealthmatters](https://www.linkedin.com/company/childrensmentalhealthmatters)



[@ChildrensMHM](https://twitter.com/ChildrensMHM)

SOCIAL MEDIA GRAPHICS:

To download, click on the image below. In your browser, right click on the image and select “Save Image As” and save to your computer. The image should be available in your downloads folder.



Social Media: Sample Posts

- “Mental health challenges in children, adolescents, and young adults are real and they are widespread. But most importantly, they are treatable and often preventable.” - Dr. Vivek H. Murthy, U.S. Surgeon General #CMHMMaryland
- 1 in 5 children and adolescents may have a mental health condition at any given time. By spreading awareness, we can help children get the support they need to thrive. #CMHMMaryland
- Children of all ages, even young infants, can experience mental health conditions. It can be challenging to know the typical behaviors and moods for a child’s developmental stage and if they have gone beyond the norm and need help. Download a Family Resource Kit: www.bit.ly/CMHMCampaignResources
- Mental health, also known as emotional or behavioral health, is a vital part of your child’s medical health and development. It affects how individuals think, feel, and act. All children and teens have periods of anger, frustration, and sadness. For some kids, feelings can reach a tipping point and interfere with everyday life. Find resources to support a child in your community: www.bit.ly/CMHMCountyResources
- Mental health applies to everyone throughout their lives regardless of age, gender, race, culture, income, or education. Mental health awareness helps all children have opportunities to be successful in school, at home, in the community, and in their future adult lives. Download School Services Tip Sheet: www.bit.ly/CMHMSchoolServices
- As parents, family members, educators, or community members: we may have a lot on our plates or could be facing our own mental health challenges. It can feel easy to push our own needs to the side. However, making time for ourselves is essential to our overall well-being and being a role model for the children in our lives.
- As a parent, it can be tough to navigate your child’s mental health challenges. The Family Resource Kit from the Children’s Mental Health Matters Campaign provides guidance, support, and resources to help your child thrive. Download the kit here: www.bit.ly/CMHMCampaignResources

Email Signatures & Digital Engagement Assets

Use these provided email signature templates between now and the end of May to promote Children’s Mental Health Awareness Week and your involvement with the Campaign. [Go here for instructions on how to create an email signature.](#)

- Want to reduce stigma and raise awareness around the importance of children’s mental health? [Join us as a Children’s Mental Health Matters Champion today!](#)
- Help support the health and wellbeing of Maryland’s families by [becoming a Champion for Children’s Mental Health](#) during Children’s Mental Health Awareness Week, May 7-13, 2023!
- I am a [School Champion](#) in [Insert County Name Here] for the 2023 Children’s Mental Health Matters! Campaign. You too can make a difference in the lives of children and families in your Maryland school or community. Learn more: [ChildrensMentalHealthMatters.org](#)
- I am a [Community Champion](#) in [Insert County Name Here] for the 2023 Children’s Mental Health Matters! Campaign. You too can make a difference in the lives of children and families in your Maryland school or community. Learn more: [ChildrensMentalHealthMatters.org](#)
- Children’s Mental Health Awareness Week is May 7-13, 2023! By spreading awareness, we can help children get the support they need to thrive. Learn how you can get involved at [ChildrensMentalHealthMatters.org](#).

DIGITAL ENGAGEMENT

To download, click on the image below. In your browser, right click on the image and select “Save Image As” and save to your computer. The image should be available in your downloads folder.



Color Logo



White Logo



Green Logo



Black Logo



School Champion
Badge



Community
Champion
Badge



Virtual Meeting Background

Campaign Resources/Activity List

We realize your life is busy and are here to support you along the way. The resources and activities listed below can be used in the classroom, at home, at an awareness event, or however you see fit.

- Family Resource Kit – Includes information on when and where to seek professional help, common behaviors or diagnoses, and more.
 - » [English](#)
 - » [Spanish](#)
- [Educator Resource Kit](#) – Includes information on a wide range of behavioral health issues for teachers/school personnel.
- Telemental Health Care Tip Sheets:
 - » What is Telemental Health Care? [\(English\)](#)/[\(Spanish\)](#)
 - » Tips for Discussing Your Child’s Mental Health Care Provider [\(English\)](#)/[\(Spanish\)](#)
 - » Preparing for a Telemental Health Care Visit [\(English\)](#)/[\(Spanish\)](#)
- Booklists – Age-appropriate mental health books that can help a child/teen name and understand feelings, deal with painful experiences, cope with strong emotions, and more.
 - » [Toddler/Preschool \(0-4\)](#)
 - » [Early Elementary \(5-7\)](#)
 - » [Upper Elm & Middle \(9-12\)](#)
 - » [Teens \(13+\)](#)
- Printable coloring sheets:
 - » [Today I Feel \(English\)](#)
 - » [Today I Feel \(Spanish\)](#)
- [What Does Mental Health Mean to Me? Activity](#)
- [Coping Skills Cards](#)
- [Coping Skills Bookmark Activity](#)
- [Inside Out Movie and Discussion Prompt](#)
- [Calming Phone Image Activity \(Middle/High School\)](#)
- [Assertive Statements Activity](#)
- [Breathing Wands Activity](#)
- [Emotion Planning Activity](#)
- [Family Self-Care Tips](#)

School Resource List

The resources listed on the previous page and those on the following pages (12-16) can be used in the classroom to facilitate lessons on mental health.

Our school resources are ready to print, or you can copy and paste them into your own format.

PAGES 12-16 INCLUDE:

- Morning Announcement Scripts (Page 12)
- Give Yourself a Mental Health Grade (Page 13)
- Mental Health Goal Setting (Page 14)
- Mental Health Discussion Prompts (Page 15)
- Mental Health Essay Prompt (Page 16)



Morning Announcement Scripts

Students or staff can use the following scripts during the school's morning announcements to increase awareness of and reduce stigma around children's mental health. Example scripts are listed below and can be modified to meet your needs.

MONDAY: May 7-13, 2023, is Children's Mental Health Awareness Week! What is mental health? Mental health has to do with how you think, feel, and act. Mental health includes how well you take care of yourself, the quality of your relationships with other people, and how well you handle difficult situations, stress, and problems. Mental health is something everyone has, and it is important to check-in on our mental health regularly, just like we check-in on our physical health. Reach out an adult you trust if you need help.

TUESDAY: Everyone has times when they struggle with their mental health. It is normal to have times when you might feel sad, nervous, worried, or when you might have a hard time managing your emotions and stress. If you are having a hard time, you are not alone! In fact, one in five people experience a mental health problem before age 18. Reach out an adult you trust if you need help.

WEDNESDAY: Even though we all have difficulty with our mental health sometimes, it can be difficult for people to talk about their mental health because they might feel embarrassed or ashamed, or they might worry that other people will think badly of them. This is called stigma. Stigma can make it harder to talk to someone when we are struggling with our mental health, but it is really important to talk to someone you trust so that you can get the help and support you need to feel your best!

** Mention specific individuals within your school who students can talk to.*

THURSDAY: For kids who struggle with their mental health, talking to someone and getting extra support or help can make a big difference. Check in on your mental health, talk to someone you trust, and ask for help when you need it. Remember, YOUR MENTAL HEALTH MATTERS!

FRIDAY: Did you know that students who are feeling stressed, sad, or even thinking about suicide are very likely to tell a friend or teacher? If someone shares with you that they are very sad, having a hard time and/or feel like they want to die, the most important thing you can do is take their feelings seriously, listen without judgment, and help them get to a trusted adult for more support. Remember, your mental health matters!

Give Yourself a Mental Health Grade

Instructions: Use the rubric below to give yourself a grade on different aspects of your mental health. The report card can be completed one section at a time or all at once.

Area	Rubric	Grade	Comments
Healthy Habits/Self-Care Healthy habits/self-care refer to things you do on a regular basis to maintain your physical/mental health (sleep, eating habits, physical activity, activities you enjoy, reaching out for help)	A - Almost always maintain healthy habits in most areas B - I usually maintain healthy habits in most areas C - I maintain healthy habits in some areas D - I do not maintain healthy habits in multiple areas F - I do not maintain healthy habits in most areas		
Mood How is your mood on most days? Do you feel good, positive, and content or unhappy, down or depressed?	A - I feel good most days B - I usually feel good with a few exceptions C - I usually feel ok D - I feel down or unhappy several days a week F - I feel sad or unhappy most of the time		
Relationships Relationships include friendships, relationships with your parents/caregivers, siblings, and other family members, and relationships with other peers and adults. Do you have positive and supportive relationships with these people?	A - I have good relationships with many people B - I have good relationships with most of the people in my life C - I occasionally have issues in certain relationships D - I have problems in one or more relationships or I do not have many positive relationships F - I do not have positive and supportive relationships		
Self-Esteem How do you feel about yourself? Are the thoughts you have about yourself and the messages you tell yourself accurate, positive, and encouraging?	A - I almost always feel good about myself B - I usually feel good about myself C - I feel okay with who I am D - I could work on my self esteem F - I do not feel good about myself		
Coping Skills When faced with a difficult or challenging situation, do you have several healthy strategies to use to help you overcome them?	A - I have a variety of coping skills I use often B - I have a few coping skills I use most of the time C - I sometimes use effective coping skills D - I do not have enough coping skills or do not use them often F - I do not have or use healthy coping skills		
Conflict Resolution When you have a problem, a decision you need to make, or a disagreement with someone, how well are you able to resolve the problem?	A - I almost always solve problems well B - I usually solve most problems well C - I sometimes have difficulty solving problems D - I usually have a hard time solving problems F - I almost always have difficulty solving problems well		
Making Good Choices How often do you make choices that help you achieve your goals and that have positive outcomes?	A - I almost always make good choices B - I usually make good choices C - Sometimes I make good choices D - I occasionally make poor choices F - I usually make poor choices		
Overall Mental Health Think about how you would rate your mental health across all areas. How are you doing on average?	A - I rated almost all areas as an A or B B - I rated most areas as an A or B C - I rated most areas as a C D - I rated several areas at a D or lower F - I rated most areas at a D or lower		

Mental Health Goal Setting

Instructions: Using the information on your mental health report card, identify area(s) for improvement and use the templates and examples below to create a mental health goal related to that area.

Template 1:

By or in _____ (set a specific deadline or amount of time), I will _____ (what behavior/action you will take) and _____ (include specific, measurable details about how you will improve this area of your mental health).

Template 2:

I will _____ (what behavior/action you will take) and _____ (include specific, measurable details about how you will improve this area of your mental health) _____ (how much/how often you will do the behavior.)

Example Goals:

- By January 31st, I will create a new sleep routine and will follow the new schedule (sleeping at least 8 hours of sleep per night) at least 80% of the time (6 out of 7 days per week).
- I will make a list of at least 10 different activities I enjoy, and I will do one activity for at least 10 minutes each day.
- By the end of this month, I will identify/find someone I feel comfortable talking to and check in with them at least once a week.
- I will write down positive affirmations and recite them to myself whenever I notice I am thinking badly about myself.
- In the next three months, I will learn and/or identify at least five different coping skills I can use to help me manage stress and difficult situations and I will use them as needed.
- I will learn a new conflict resolution strategy and I will use the strategy when in an argument or faced with a problem at least 75% of the time (in 3 out of every 4 conflicts).

My Mental Health Goal(s):

By _____ I will _____ and _____.

In _____ I will _____ and _____.

I will _____ and _____.

Mental Health Discussion Prompts

The discussion prompts below can be used for additional conversation and action with students.

Topic/Area	Discussion Prompt
<p>Healthy Habits Self-Care</p>	<p>Sleep: How much sleep per night is recommended for someone your age and are you getting enough sleep? What are your sleep habits? Do you feel tired/fatigued during the day?</p> <p>Eating: Are you getting the nutrition your body needs to function well? What are your current eating habits? Are you making healthy food choices?</p> <p>Activities: What physical activities do you do on a regular basis? What are the things you do that make you feel good, productive, or accomplished? What additional activities could you add to your life? Do you make time to relax and have fun?</p>
<p>Mood</p>	<p>Everyone has times when they feel sad or down. If you notice that you are feeling sad for longer than usual, the feeling of sadness is intense, or your low mood is getting in the way of things you need to do, those can be signs that your mental health might be suffering. How often do you check in on your mood? Who/how can you talk to when you are feeling down or not like yourself?</p>
<p>Relationships</p>	<p>Think about all the people you interact with in your life. This can include family or anyone who lives in your home, teachers/coaches, friends at home or at school, neighbors, extended family members, etc. What are your relationships with these people like? How would you rate each of your relationships overall on a scale from 1-10? What makes a healthy relationship? Where do you see room for improvement in your relationships?</p>
<p>Self-Esteem</p>	<p>When you think about yourself, what comes to mind? Can you identify your strengths and positive qualities? Do you have confidence and faith in yourself to be successful? Do you use your strengths to your advantage to help you be successful? Do you think the same way about yourself as others do? How could you improve your view of yourself?</p>
<p>Coping Skills</p>	<p>When you get upset, what do you do to calm down or feel better? Do those strategies work? Do the strategies you use create more problems or only help in the short-term? What coping skills would you like to try, or which would be realistic for you?</p>
<p>Conflict Resolution</p>	<p>Consider how you solve different kinds of problems –arguments/disagreements with other people versus solving personal problems. Are there ways you could improve your problem-solving skills? Are there certain situations where your problem-solving skills could be improved?</p>
<p>Making Good Choices</p>	<p>How do you usually feel about the choices you make? When you have made good choices, how did you make those choices? When you have made poor choices, why and how did you make those decisions? What is important for you to think about before you make a decision?</p>
<p>Overall Mental Health</p>	<p>Mental health is something everyone has, just like physical health. Why is our mental health important? Why is it important to check in on our mental health? How often do you check in on your mental health? Who can you talk to or get support from if you need help?</p>

Awareness Week Proclamation Sample

Children's Mental Health Awareness Week

May 7-13, 2023

WHEREAS, mental health and substance use conditions are the unseen casualties that often go unrecognized in children, youth and families; and

WHEREAS, we must create compassionate communities across our state in which every child is seen, uplifted, and supported; and

WHEREAS, the lack of accessible and affordable health and mental health care continues to hold our state and its people back; and

WHEREAS, equitable, culturally relevant and effective health and behavioral health care creates pathways for all of Maryland's youth to work, wages, and prosperity; and

WHEREAS, unlocking the potential of every Marylander and better supporting youth as they navigate mental health and substance use challenges is essential for our state and all Marylanders to thrive; and

WHEREAS, it is essential that we work together to increase awareness of children's mental health, promote the well-being of Maryland's children and families, and reduce stigma; and

WHEREAS, Children's Mental Health Awareness Week is celebrated annually during May to raise awareness and promote understanding of children's mental health and wellbeing.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, [_____], do hereby proclaim May 7-13, 2023, to be Children's Mental Health Awareness Week in Maryland and call upon citizens, government agencies, public and private institutions, businesses, and schools to join together to increase awareness, understanding and compassion regarding children's mental health.