

About the Children's Mental Health Matters Campaign

CHILDREN'S MENTAL HEALTH IS MORE CRITICAL NOW THAN EVER.

Mental health is not simply the absence of a mental disorder. Mental health affects how children think, feel, and act. Being mentally healthy during childhood means reaching developmental and emotional milestones, and learning healthy social skills and how to cope when there are problems. Mentally healthy children have a positive quality of life and can function well at home, in school, and in their communities.

Children who have caregivers and communities that create safe, positive relationships with children, while practicing nurturing parenting skills and providing emotional support are less likely to be abused or neglected, further enhancing a protective environment for wellbeing.

According to a 2021 report released by the Child Mind Institute on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on children's mental health, about 70% of both children and adults reported some degree of mental discomfort, resulting in loneliness, irritability, or fidgetiness. Of those children, 55% felt more "sad, depressed or unhappy," versus 25% of adults. By equipping adults with resources and improved understanding, we have the opportunity to change the trajectory of children's lives.

CHILDREN'S MENTAL HEALTH MATTERS CAMPAIGN

This initiative of the Mental Health Association of Maryland (MHAMD), with support from the Maryland Department of Health—Behavioral Health Administration and Maryland Family Network, includes many other partners and stakeholders. For more than 20 years, the Campaign has brought together partners, schools, non-profits, and other agencies with the following goals:

Increase public acceptance of children's mental health as important component of child well-being

Open up conversations about mental health and substance use and reduce stigma

Strengthen access for children and their families to the resources necessary to prevent and support mental health challenges

Highlight and celebrate innovative efforts of Champions for Children's Mental Health

Provide opportunity for Campaign Partners and Champions to amplify their voices

BECOME A CHAMPION

Each year we invite school and community organizations to join the Campaign as a [Champion for Children's Mental Health](#), focusing on participation during our annual Awareness Week. In joining, we provide them with various technical assistance to support a successful effort. Benefits include a digital toolkit complete with ideas on how to increase awareness of the importance of children's mental health within their communities and encourage them to partner with others to promote their local efforts, Champion Rallies that provide a forum for sharing, training, and support with campaign activities. Each Champion that participates is spotlighted on our website, invited to use a special Children's Mental Health Matters Champion 2024 badge, and invited to be nominated for Champion of the Year for their creative and innovative awareness efforts. [Go here to become a Champion.](#)

SHARE RESOURCES

Our Campaign resources are available for digital download or can be ordered in physical copy free of charge. These resources can be shared via email, social media, or made available physically in your schools, offices, and more. [Access our resources and downloads here.](#)

AWARENESS WEEK: MAY 5–11, 2024

Campaign Champions, partners, and sponsors across the state will elevate the importance of children's mental health on a local level. Be sure to follow the Campaign on social media platforms to see the exciting activities that take place.



THANK YOU TO OUR CAMPAIGN PARTNERS!



MARYLAND
Department of Health



Behavioral Health System
Baltimore



MARYLAND
FAMILY
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Maryland
DEPARTMENT OF DISABILITIES



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