

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 25 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 wellbeing

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 our campaign as a [Champion for children's mental health](#), with a focus on participation during Childrens Mental Health Awareness Week. As Champions, they receive a variety of technical assistance from the campaign to support their efforts. Benefits include a comprehensive digital toolkit filled with ideas for raising awareness about the importance of children's mental health in their communities and strategies for partnering with others to strengthen local efforts; they also have access to "Champion Rallies," which offer opportunities for sharing insights, receiving training, and getting support for campaign activities. Participating Champions are featured on our website, invited to use a special Children's Mental Health Matters Champion 2026 badge, and recognized 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. 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 3-9, 2026

Campaign Champions, partners, and sponsors across the state will elevate the importance of children's mental health on a local level during Childrens Mental Health Awareness Week, May 3-9, 2026. Be sure to **wear green on Thursday, May 7th** for National Children's Mental Health Awareness Day and follow us on social media to see the exciting activities that take place throughout Awareness Week.



THANK YOU TO OUR CAMPAIGN PARTNERS!

