



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Maryland Celebrates Children's Mental Health Awareness Week, May 6-12

More than 600 organizations, agencies and schools will come together to raise awareness about the importance of children's mental health.

The Mental Health Association of Maryland and the Maryland Coalition of Families are coordinating Children's Mental Health Awareness Week on May 6-12, 2018, with organized events, awareness tools and resources. The campaign brings together more than 600 nonprofit organizations, schools, agencies and other Champions to raise awareness about the importance of children's mental health and substance use. The campaign also works to help connect Maryland families to the resources they need.

Despite the growing attention on mental health, awareness remains a challenge as does access to quality care. In Maryland, as many as one in five children experience a mental, emotional or behavioral health problem before the age of 18 - regardless of demographic group, education, income level, race or culture. **However, 70 percent of school-aged children with a diagnosable mental illness do not receive treatment.**

This awareness week seeks to reduce the stigma that children and families with mental health issues face and educate the general public about the important role everyone plays in promoting good mental health. Throughout the week, events will be held to raise this awareness. The Children's Mental Health Matters! Campaign website features a page with event information and dates [here](#). Events include:

- Celebrating through Art: The First Lady's Mental Health Awareness Youth Art Display, hosted by The First Lady of Maryland, Mrs. Yumi Hogan, a children's art show that highlights the expressive power of art for all young people. A reception honoring the artists will be held on May 7 in Annapolis.
- A flash mob coordinated by UMBC that celebrated mental health awareness, which took place on May 1. Watch the video [here](#).
- National Children's Mental Health Awareness Day on May 10, which encourages people to wear green in support of mental health awareness.
- A May 10 webinar facilitated by Rachel Larkin, director, Crisis Prevention & Intervention at EveryMind, on the impact of social media on youth mental health.
- Come Out & Play!, a May 11 event for families, caregivers and advocates to enjoy an evening of fun while learning about childhood mental health resources that are available throughout Prince George's County.

Parents, educators and others who care for children are also encouraged to visit the Children's Mental Health Matters! [website](#) to access a comprehensive menu of resources, including:

- Vital information on mental illness [signs and symptoms](#) and where to go for help.
- A [Family Resource Kit](#) with numerous fact sheets on topics ranging from depression, anxiety, bullying and suicide to substance abuse, trauma, crisis services and more.
- An [Educator Resource Kit](#) with fact sheets on topics that are more focused toward people who work with children.

(more)

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To keep up on all of the week's activities, like the campaign's [Facebook page](#).

About the Children's Mental Health Matters! Campaign

Now in its tenth year, the Children's Mental Health Matters! Campaign, coordinated by the Mental Health Association of Maryland and the Maryland Coalition of Families with support from the Department of Health– Behavioral Health Administration, aims to reduce the stigma of mental health, let parents know they are not alone in caring for children with mental health needs and connect Maryland families with resources and services to help their child.

www.ChildrensMentalHealthMatters.org.

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