



Dear Community Champion:

Thank you for joining the Children's Mental Health Matters! Campaign\* as a Community Champion and pledging your commitment to raise awareness about the importance of children's mental health. Please use your role as a Community Champion to share the campaign broadly during or around Awareness Week, May 5 – 11, 2019.

Within this packet you will find many resources to use during Awareness Week including:

- Examples of ways to be involved (page 2)
- Fast facts about children's mental health (page 3)
- Sample email signature (page 4)
- Sample newsletter article or blog post (page 5)
- Sample social media posts (page 6)
- Additional resources (page 9)

You can also participate in the **2019 Community Champion of the Year** contest by submitting photos and/or stories of your organization's awareness activities. The winner will receive recognition on our website and social media, as well as a certificate honoring your efforts. *All submissions must be received by May 24, 2019.*

Please send your contest submissions or questions to Tiffany Thomas at [tthomas@mhamd.org](mailto:tthomas@mhamd.org).

With appreciation,

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*\*The Children's Mental Health Matters! Campaign is a collaboration of 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. 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)*



## Examples of Ways to be Involved

- Share news of the Campaign with your constituents via email, press release, a newsletter article, etc.
- Provide a prominent link to [www.ChildrensMentalHealthMatters.org](http://www.ChildrensMentalHealthMatters.org) on your website from now through May 2019, using the CMHM logo provided
- Distribute Campaign items and brochures at related conferences, fairs, offices, or wherever you normally distribute materials
- Add our Campaign “Tagline” below your name to every email you send (sample follows)
- Write a letter to the editor about the importance of children’s mental health in your community
- Hold an Open House during May to support the Campaign and raise awareness
- Encourage other colleagues, peers and members of the community to join the Campaign
- Tweet about the Campaign (sample tweets follow)
- Post a link to the Campaign website on Facebook (sample Facebook posts follow)
- Identify a local community event and staff a booth with Campaign materials
- Display a Campaign poster in a prominent place in your office and have brochures available
- Partner with a local business to advertise Children’s Mental Health Awareness
- Ask your staff to wear green on May 9 in honor of National Children’s Mental Health Awareness Day



## Fast Facts about Children's Mental Health

- Mental health refers to a person's overall emotional, behavioral and psychological well-being. It impacts how we think, feel, and act, including how a child:
  1. Feels about himself/herself
  2. Relates to other children and adults
  3. Handles change, stress and other life situations
- One in five children may experience a mental, emotional or behavioral health problem before age 18. These problems affect children of all demographic groups, regardless of education, income, race or culture.
- 70% of school-aged children with a diagnosable mental illness do not receive treatment.
- Ultimately, our hope is that more Maryland families, schools and communities will recognize the importance of mental health and connect families to the help and support they need, so that all children have the opportunity to be successful in school, at home, in the community, and in their future adult lives.
- Read more about the signs and symptoms of mental health problems and find resources for help at [www.ChildrensMentalHealthMatters.org](http://www.ChildrensMentalHealthMatters.org).



## Sample Email Signature



Children's Mental Health Awareness Week is May 5-11, 2019!  
Visit [www.ChildrensMentalHealthMatters.org](http://www.ChildrensMentalHealthMatters.org) for resources or to  
get involved.



## Sample Newsletter Article or Blog Post

### **Children's Mental Health Matters!**

It's easy to know your child needs help dealing with a fever or a broken bone, but mental health problems can be harder to identify.

You may be surprised to learn that:

- 1 in 5 children experience a diagnosable mental health disorder each year, yet only 20% are identified and receive treatment.
- 1 in 9 youth aged 13-18 experience a substance use disorder, yet only 7% receive services.

The tricky part of parenting is knowing the kinds of behaviors and moods that are usual for the stage of development your child is in – and when your child needs help.

Visit [www.childrensmentalhealthmatters.org](http://www.childrensmentalhealthmatters.org) to learn:

- what to do if your child needs help,
- where to go for help, or
- how to access a wealth of free children's mental health resources.

### **About the Children's Mental Health Matters! Campaign:**

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 Community and School Champions across the state, is to raise awareness of the importance of children's mental health, and to connect parents and community members with resources. Children's Mental Health Awareness Week in Maryland is celebrated May 5-11. Visit [www.childrensmentalhealthmatters.org](http://www.childrensmentalhealthmatters.org) to learn more or to get involved.



## Social Media

All stakeholders (students, parents, school staff, mental health clinicians, community members) can spread the word about Children’s Mental Health Matters! Awareness week. Update your social media status or share these data points with your distribution lists of child-, youth-, and family-serving organizations, associations, agencies, and individuals and encouraging other to share with their contacts.

You can use these messages as stand-alone e-mail messages, a component of your signature block, or to post on your school’s website, blog, social media, and other means of communicating with colleagues and families.

A first step is to “like” the campaign on Facebook and “Follow” us on Twitter at <https://www.facebook.com/ChildrensMentalHealthMatters> and <https://twitter.com/ChildrensMHM>

When you post your stories and photos on social media, use the hashtag #CMHMMaryland so that your activities can be shared.

### 2019 Social Media Posts

Below are suggested posts for Children’s Mental Health Awareness Week in Maryland.

Date	Status
May 5	Children’s Mental Health Awareness Week is May 5-11, 2019 in Maryland. Visit for more information. <a href="http://www.ChildrensMentalHealthMatters.org">http://www.ChildrensMentalHealthMatters.org</a> #CMHMMaryland 
May 6	Did you know that 1 in 5 children may experience a mental, emotional, or behavioral health problem before the age of 18? Learn more at: <a href="http://www.ChildrensMentalHealthMatters.org">http://www.ChildrensMentalHealthMatters.org</a> . #CMHMMaryland



May 7	<p>Can you name 3 ways to help build resilience in a child? Some ways: listen, spend positive time, encourage play, encourage a good night's sleep, be consistent with rules and routines, promote mutual respect and trust. Find more facts and resources: <a href="http://www.ChildrensMentalHealthMatters.org/">http://www.ChildrensMentalHealthMatters.org/</a> #CMHMMaryland</p> <p><b>Twitter:</b> Looking for tips to foster resiliency in your child? Visit <a href="http://www.ChildrensMentalHealthMatters.org">http://www.ChildrensMentalHealthMatters.org</a> #CMHMMaryland</p>
May 8	<p>Every 13.7 minutes in the US, someone dies by suicide. Suicide is not the answer. Contact the Maryland Crisis Hotline if you need immediate help at 800-422-0009 or call 911 <a href="http://www.help4mdyouth.org/">http://www.help4mdyouth.org/</a> #CMHMMaryland</p>
May 9	<p>Only 20% of children with mental disorders are identified and receive mental health services. Download the Family Resource Kit for information on where to get help: <a href="http://www.ChildrensMentalHealthMatters.org">http://www.ChildrensMentalHealthMatters.org</a> #CMHMMaryland</p>
May 10	<p>Concerned about your children's mental health? Find facts and resources: <a href="http://www.ChildrensMentalHealthMatters.org/#CMHMMaryland">http://www.ChildrensMentalHealthMatters.org/#CMHMMaryland</a></p>
May 11	<p>Research indicates that early identification and intervention can minimize the long-term impact of mental disorders. Don't wait, get help today: <a href="http://www.ChildrensMentalHealthMatters.org/">http://www.ChildrensMentalHealthMatters.org/</a> #CMHMMaryland</p>

Got questions about children's mental health? Get answers: <http://www.ChildrensMentalHealthMatters.org/> #CMHMMaryland

How can you help foster positive mental health in a child you love? Get ideas: <http://www.ChildrensMentalHealthMatters.org/> #CMHMMaryland

Mental health challenges and disorders often develop during adolescence. Learn more about the signs and symptoms: <http://www.ChildrensMentalHealthMatters.org> #CMHMMaryland

Did you know that children who are bullied by their peers are likely to have increased thoughts about suicide that may persist into adulthood? For factsheets and tools to help STOP bullying: <http://www.ChildrensMentalHealthMatters.org/> <http://www.stopbullying.gov/> #CMHMMaryland



Depression in teens can often mimic what we consider “normal adolescent behaviors.” Talk to your pediatrician if you are concerned. <http://www.ChildrensMentalHealthMatters.org/> #CMHMMaryland

Year after year, suicide remains one of the top three leading causes of death for young people ages 15 to 24. If you or someone you know needs immediate help, call 800-422-0009, 911 or go to your nearest emergency room. <http://www.help4mdyouth.org/> #CMHMMaryland

As the number of traumatic events experienced during childhood increases, the risk for the following problems in adulthood increases: depression; alcoholism; drug abuse; suicide attempts; heart and liver disease; pregnancy problems; high stress; uncontrollable anger; and family, financial, and job problems. With help from families, providers, and the community, children and youth can be resilient when dealing with trauma. For more information on ways to build resilience: <http://www.ChildrensMentalHealthMatters.org/> #CMHMMaryland

Studies on the brain show that physical, emotional, or sexual abuse in childhood can cause permanent damage to the brain, reduce the size of parts of the brain, impact the way a child’s brain copes with daily stress, and can result in enduring problems such as depression, anxiety, aggression, impulsiveness, delinquency, hyperactivity, and substance abuse. With help from families, providers, and the community, young children can demonstrate resilience when dealing with trauma. For more information on ways to build resilience: <http://www.ChildrensMentalHealthMatters.org/> #CMHMMaryland

Young children exposed to 5 or more adverse or traumatic life events in the first 3 years of childhood face a 76% likelihood of having one or more delays in their cognitive, language, or emotional development. With help from families, providers, and the community, young children can demonstrate resilience when dealing with trauma. For more information on ways to build resilience: <http://www.ChildrensMentalHealthMatters.org/> #CMHMMaryland



## Additional Resources for Community Champions

### Materials available for download from the Campaign website:

- One page **Campaign Overview**
- Book list **for young children**
- Book list **for older children**
- Individual fact sheets from, or the entire contents of, a **Family Resource Kit**
- An **Educator Resource Kit** for those who work in a professional setting with children
- Looking for inspiration? **See how School and Community Champions celebrated Awareness Week in 2018.**