



#ITSNOTEASYBEINGGREEN

Children's Mental Health Week

May 3—9 , 2015

The Parent/Professional Advocacy League invites you to join us in celebrating Children's Mental Health Week 2015.

Children's Mental Health Week was originally created by a group of parents in Missouri who wanted to fight stigma and raise awareness about the challenges our children, youth and families face.

PPAL brought Children's Mental Health Week to Massachusetts in 1996, and each year since it has grown in size, reaching more people with a message of dignity and inclusion.

It's not
easy being
GREEN



The 2015 theme, "**Mental Health is Fundamental**" reminds us that mental health is essential to overall health!

Why Wear A Green Ribbon?

In 2007, the National Federation of Families for Children's Mental Health launched its Annual **Green** Campaign, one of their most important and education **green** ribbon guishing fea- dren's Mental Health Week publicity efforts. Wearing a **green** ribbon during Children's Mental Health Week is a positive way to show your support and solidarity with our mission to promote health, awareness and dialogue throughout communities nationally and internationally.



Did you know...?

- ...3 children in every classroom have a diagnosable mental health problem
- ...Half of those with lifetime mental health issues first experience symptoms by the age of 14
- ...As many as 75% of people with a mental illness have experienced the negative effect of stigma
- ...You can fight stigma by referring to a person, not their illness—use phrases such as "a person with schizophrenia" rather than labels like "a schizophrenic"
- ...Since 2002, the Governor of Massachusetts has issued an official proclamation for Children's Mental Health Week

Facts About Stigma

Stigma unfortunately is a common experience for people who have mental health needs. Stigma can be obvious, such as someone making a negative remark about your mental illness or your treatment. Or it may be subtle, such as someone assuming you could be unstable, violent or dangerous because you have a mental health condition. You may even judge yourself.

What can we do?

- ◆ Challenge disrespectful terms used to refer to people with a mental illness such as psycho / lunatic
- ◆ Refer first to a person, not their illness – use phrases such as “a person with schizophrenia” rather than labels like “a schizophrenic”
- ◆ Include mental illness in discussions about acceptance of diversity
- ◆ Emphasize abilities not limitations of children



Tips for Teaching Mental Health Awareness in Schools

- Host a contest: Essay/poster design for older students or a coloring contest for younger children
- Invite an individual or group to give a talk on mental health
- Encourage students and teachers to wear green
- Send students home with PPAL's Calendar of Facts or email directly to parents. Visit ppal.net/about to request materials

Use **#ITSNOTEASYBEINGGREEN** to follow PPAL on Facebook and Twitter during Children's Mental Health Week!



@ppalboston facebook.com/ppal.net



Ask for help or seek the advice of a professional—give your child's mental health the attention it needs and deserves