

Children's Mental Health Week

May 4 – 10, 2014



The Parent/Professional Advocacy League invites you to join us in celebrating Children's Mental Health Week 2014.

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.

The 2014 theme, "Building Circles of Wellness" reminds us that true wellbeing is a community effort!

What is Emotional Wellness?

Being emotionally well is more than just handling stress. It also involves being attentive to your thoughts, feelings and behaviors, whether positive or negative.

Emotional Wellness implies the ability to:

- Know and accept feelings, not to deny them
- Have an optimistic approach to life
- Express and manage feelings freely and effectively
- Express emotions appropriately
- Adjust to change
- Cope with stress in a healthy way
- Enjoy life despite its occasional disappointments and frustrations
- Live and work independently while realizing the importance of seeking and appreciating support
- Form independent relationships with others based on mutual trust and respect
- Take on challenges, take reasonable chances, and recognize conflict as being potentially healthy
- Manage life in personally rewarding ways, and take responsibility for your actions

www.aacap.org/publications/factsfamdisaster.htm

Tips for Teaching Mental Health Awareness in Schools

PPAL encourages you to bring the message of Children's Mental Health Week to your school.

Parents, children and youth of all ages can participate in a variety of educational and awareness-raising activities, including:

- ✚ 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

Topics to consider:

- ✓ Bullying
- ✓ General topic on Mental Health
- ✓ Positive friendships
- ✓ Problem solving



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 visible awareness and education campaigns. The green ribbon is now a distinguishing feature in most Children'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.

Stay up-to-date on events and updates for Children's Mental Health Week. In Massachusetts, we celebrate all month long! Visit www.ppal.net/about to learn more

Did you know ... ?

... Children's Mental Health Week is dedicated to increasing public awareness about the triumphs and challenges in children's mental health

... Children's Mental Health Week was started in 1991 by a group of parents in Missouri

... The Parent/Professional Advocacy League brought Children's Mental Health Week to Massachusetts in 1996

... The mayors of Amesbury, Lynn, Lowell and Worcester have all committed to issuing an official proclamation for Children's Mental Health Week 2014

... Since 2002, the Governor of Massachusetts has issued an official proclamation for Children's Mental Health Week

Whereas, the citizens of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts value their health and mental health and that of their families; therefore, they are proud to support observances such as Children's Mental Health Week; and

Whereas, one in five children has a diagnosable mental health disorder and one-half of all lifetime instances of mental illness begin before age 14; and even some children and youth with the most intense needs and some who are insured may not receive services; and

Whereas, children and youth with mental health needs in elementary, middle and high school are more likely to be bullied, absent, suspended, expelled or fail to graduate; and

Whereas, learning to recognize the early warning signs of mental health needs and where to obtain the necessary support, assistance and treatment gives children and youth better opportunities to lead full and productive lives; and

Whereas, the participation and partnership of family members in the assessment and treatment of children and youth is essential to positive outcomes; and

Whereas, our nation's future depends on the health and well-being of its families and their children; and

Whereas, Children's Mental Health Week was developed by families of children with emotional, behavioral and mental health needs, to focus on the needs of their children and families; in celebrating this year's theme: "**Building Circles of Wellness**" it is fitting to increase public awareness among all Massachusetts citizens of this important issue;

Now, Therefore, I, Deval Patrick, Governor of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, do hereby proclaim May 4th – 10th, 2014 as

Children's Mental Health Week