

# MAY: MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS MONTH

## – What Caregivers Need to Know –

### Basic Definitions

**Mental health awareness** involves recognizing and understanding the importance of mental well-being in youth, just as much as physical health. It means being attentive to signs of mental health issues, such as changes in mood or behavior, and knowing how to provide support or seek professional help. For example, if a teenager suddenly becomes withdrawn and anxious, mental health awareness encourages parents to explore these changes, communicate openly, and consider seeking counseling or alternative support to address their concerns.

### Tips and Strategies

Keep reading for ideas on how you can participate in and celebrate MHAM:

- **Join Local Community Events:** Look for free or low-cost mental health awareness events hosted by local organizations, schools, or community centers. The DC Public Library often offers workshops and discussions on mental health topics that are open to the public!
- **Mindful Minutes:** Short on time? Take 60 seconds to try a mindful or relaxing activity like deep breathing, stretching, or just noticing your surroundings.
- **Talk It Out:** It can feel awkward to talk about mental health, and it's okay to acknowledge that! Being honest about this can relieve tension and make space for open conversations with your child about other emotions.

### Resources and Links

[Child Mind Institute](#) has resources for parents on accessing care, navigating crisis, and recognizing challenges such as anxiety in children.

Check out this quick and interactive read aloud book for younger kids titled [Move Your Mood](#).



[On Our Minds](#) is an award-winning, student-run podcast covering mental health, wellness, and teen related topics!

Explore the upcoming events the many [DC Public Library](#) locations have to offer!