Children’s Mental Health Awareness Week is May 4 - 10, 2014 in Maryland. This week is dedicated to increasing public awareness of the importance of children’s mental health. It is especially important to emphasize the importance of family and youth involvement in the children’s mental health movement. We are encouraging you to show your support of Children’s Mental Health in your school by promoting positive mental health, well-being and social development for all children and youth.

Here are some ways your school can participate:

Host an essay contest
Encourage students to write an essay on a topic related to mental health. Some topic suggestions include:
- How can you deal with negative feelings?
- How does helping others help you feel good too?
- What does a positive friendship look like?
- What is empathy?
- Discuss the different things you do for yourself to help you feel better during difficult times.
- What is positive mental health?

Host a poster contest
Encourage students to produce a poster. Some ideas for posters include:
- Use pictures or drawings to show ways students can cope with their negative feelings
- Show helpful ways to express a range of feelings
- What is positive mental health?

Host a school-wide event
- Invite someone to give a special talk on promoting positive mental health
- Have an all-school assembly
- Host a special “wear green” day in your school for Mental Health Awareness
- Offer special awards for classroom activities

For younger children
- Offer a coloring contest
- Create a how do you feel classroom activity
- Send home activities and information for families

For older children
- Develop classroom lessons
- Have the students create a skit
- Host a video contest

For parents and families
- Invite a speaker for PTA
- Email one Fact Sheet (provided by the Campaign) home to families each day during Children's Mental Health Awareness Week
- Send home fliers on the Children’s Mental Health Matters! Campaign and links to the new Family Resource Kits

www.ChildrensMentalHealthMatters.org
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 Mental Hygiene Administration and MD CARES. The Campaign goal, with over 80 partners across the state, is to raise public awareness of the importance of children’s mental health. For more information, please visit www.ChildrensMentalHealthMatters.org

**Curriculum Guides**
National Institute of Mental Health
The Science of Mental Illness (for Grades 6 - 8)

Summary of Recognized Evidence-Based Programs Implemented by Expanded School Mental Health (ESMH) Programs
http://www.schoolmentalhealth.org/searchresult.html?cx=002195921870275950921%3Adkraeuakf0u&cof=FORID%3A11&q=summary+of+recognized+Evidence+ Based+Programs+Implemented+by&sa=Search&siteurl=www.schoolmentalhealth.org%2F&ref=

**Resources/Links**
Building Blocks for a Healthy Future
A website developed by the U.S. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) geared toward caregivers of younger children (ages 3 - 6).
www.bblocks.samhsa.gov/family/default.aspx

Maryland State Department of Education - Learning Links
http://MarylandLearningLinks.org

ThinkPort from Maryland Public Television & Johns Hopkins University Center for Technology in Education
http://www.thinkport.org/Tools/Search/Default.aspx?Keywords=mental%20health

Mental Health Association of Maryland
410-235-1178
www.mhamd.org

Maryland Coalition of Families for Children’s Mental Health
410-730-8267
www.mdcoalition.org

Children’s Mental Health Matters!
www.ChildrensMentalHealthMatters.org

Speak Up For Kids
www.childmind.org

**Topics to consider**
- Bullying
- Overall mental health
- Problem solving/conflict resolution
- Resiliency
- Feelings identification/expression