

CHILDREN'S MENTAL HEALTH WEEK STARTS MAY 6TH!

Mental health affects so many families across Massachusetts, in the United States, and throughout the world. We celebrate Mental Health Month this May to give hope to those who need it, and to break down the stigma and the silence around mental health, especially children's mental health.

Ways You Can Fight Stigma:

- Get treatment if someone in your family needs it. Don't let the fear of being "labeled" prevent you from seeking help.
- Don't let stigma create feelings of self-doubt and shame. Mental health conditions are NOT a sign of personal weakness.
- Don't isolate yourself. If someone in your family faces mental health challenges, you may be reluctant to tell anyone about it. Have the courage to confide in others (family members, friends, clergy, etc.) and reach out to people you trust for the compassion, support, and the understanding you need.
- Don't equate the person with the illness. No one is an "illness". So instead of saying, "He's bipolar" or "She's ADHD", say, "He has bipolar disorder" or "She's been diagnosed with ADHD". Use person-centered language.
- Join a support group. PPAL and other family organizations offer support groups and resources that help reduce stigma by educating parents and the general public.
- Get help at school. If your child has mental health needs that affect learning, find out what plans and programs might help. Discrimination against students because of mental health needs is against the law and schools are required to accommodate them.