

Tips for Parents and Caregivers

May Is Mental Health Month

Celebrate Children's Mental Well-Being

(NAPSA)—You may not realize it, but chances are a child or adolescent you know has a serious mental health need. In fact, mental health problems affect one in five young people.

Mental health problems are painful—emotionally, spiritually and socially—especially for children and adolescents. Words that make fun of mental health create a sense of shame, feelings of guilt and loss of self-esteem. Children and adolescents exposed to such a negative view of themselves feel rejected, lonely and isolated. For a child with a mental health problem, this “stigma” is often the greatest barrier to a complete and satisfying life.

You can help. There are many things that parents and caregivers can do to support children's emotional health and well-being. Make a commitment to help the children and adolescents in your life. May—officially recognized as “Mental Health Month” by Congress since 1949—is a perfect time for parents and caregivers to focus on this issue. You can demonstrate your support for Mental Health Month by doing the following:

- **Learn more about mental well-being in children**
- **Celebrate the accomplishments and strengths of children**
- **Foster self-worth and independence in children**
- **Help children express their feelings**
- **Promote mutual respect and trust**



- **Recognize the strengths in all children**
- **Appreciate each child's uniqueness**
- **Encourage individual talents**
- **Help children set goals based on their abilities and interests**
- **Show confidence in their ability to handle problems and tackle new experiences**

The *Caring for Every Child's Mental Health Campaign* is part of the Comprehensive Community Mental Health Services for Children and Their Families Program of the federal Center for Mental Health Services. Parents and caregivers who wish to learn more about mental well-being in children can call 1-800-789-2647 (toll-free) or visit www.mentalhealth.org/child to download a free publications catalog (Order No. CA-0000) or bookmark with nurturing tips (Order No. CA-BK-MARKR). The federal Center for Mental Health Services is an agency of the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.