

MENTAL HEALTH ACCEPTANCE

Because awareness ISN'T ENOUGH.

In 2022, the National Children's Mental Health Week campaign was redefined to emphasize the need to move beyond awareness.



Acceptance means recognizing that our mental health is **as important** as all other health issues.

It means acknowledging that we all have mental health needs that **require care**, just like brushing our teeth.

It means responding to mental health conditions with **treatment and support** like any other disease.

Acceptance would mean my child **feels safe** to say she is going to see her therapist, just as freely as she says she is going to the doctor or dentist.



We asked children, youth and families – "What does acceptance of mental health challenges mean to you?"

It means a more **empathetic approach** towards children who struggle with mental health issues and recognizing it's not something they can turn on and off.

Acceptance means understanding that a mental health diagnosis is **not the end** – that coping skills and support are available.

It means understanding when someone has an emotional disability and is symptomatic, they need **support, not punishment**.



Acceptance means my child **isn't embarrassed or afraid** to ask for help.

It means children with mental health challenges are accepted, supported, and **feel wanted and worthy**.

It means **being held** in the caring hands of everyone in the community.

It means being treated with the same **dignity and respect** as others.

It means being brought **into the fold** – into the group. It feels like protection.

It means my kids are happier and **feel understood**.

Acceptance means I am loved and cared for **as I am**.

It means having patience and making the effort to **try to understand** what someone is going through.

Acceptance means having the right to be unique – to express your feelings, thoughts, and opinions **without judgment**.

It means **feeling free** to discuss your challenges without feeling like others are judging or discrediting your experiences.

It means seeing **people first** – acknowledging their strengths, not just their challenges or diagnosis.



Acceptance means educators and community members would understand my child's behavior, and that is a reflection of trauma that she experienced – not her personality or our parenting skills.

Acceptance means respecting that I am the expert on my child and trusting that I know what's best for him/her.

Acceptance means the world!

