



CHILDREN'S MENTAL HEALTH
ACCEPTANCE WEEK
MAY 7-13, 2023

Promoting "Accept. Advocate. Act."

Promoting an event starts with the 5 W's: Who, What, When, Where, & Why. While first four tie directly into your event logistics, it's the "Why" that explain the reason for Children's Mental Health Acceptance Week (CMHAW) and our **Accept. Advocate. Act.** Campaign.

Whether you are talking to your legislator, your community, or pitching a story to a reporter, you'll want to tie your work to the goal of educating and building acceptance for children and youth who experience mental health and/or substance use challenges - and their families.

How Do YOU Accept, Advocate, And Act?

The best way to get your message across to connect how your work, efforts, and outcomes make a difference supporting families, parents, caregivers, and children across the lifespan. Look at the three concepts of the campaign and create examples of how your work aligns:

- **ACCEPT:** How have we educated others about mental health? Do we offer family training, family peer support, and/or public events?
- **ADVOCATE:** How and where do we advocate? Are we involved with state or local boards? Do we assist local/state initiatives, or evaluate systems and programs?
- **ACT:** Where did we take action to positively impact families and children in the mental health community? What changes in the system can we take credit for? Was there positive news coverage of our work this year? Did we present at a conference?

Now that you know how your work aligns with the campaign, integrate your answers with our CMHAW talking points.

- This is our second year for Children's Mental Health Acceptance Week. Until last year the "A" stood for Awareness but when it comes to children's mental health, we know "awareness" isn't enough.
- We believe Acceptance more directly combats discrimination, prejudice, and subconscious bias.
- We know that COVID-19 pandemic negatively affected many people's mental health, creating more barriers for children and families experiencing mental health and/or substance use challenges.
- Acceptance demands we advocate and act to change attitudes, behaviors, and systems. Acceptance **is** social justice.
- That's why we joined the National Federation of Families 2023 campaign "Accept. Advocate. Act." We want our children across the lifespan accepted - and that means systemic change in how children's mental health is viewed.
- We must improve access, resources, and support for families and children of any age who are in need.
- As parents and advocates, we know it's time for this social justice movement to ensure our children live their lives to their fullest potential.

www.ffcmh.org/acceptanceweek