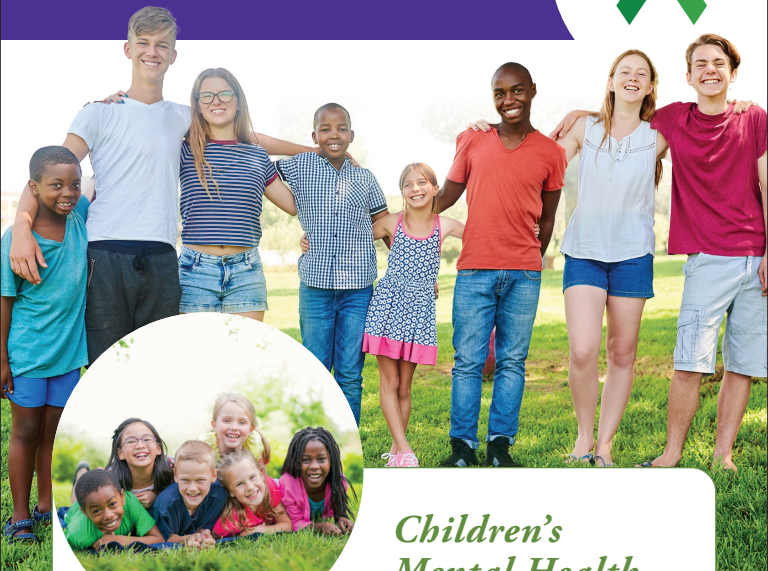


May is Children's Mental Health Awareness Month

#breakthestigma



Children's Mental Health Matters!

We wear a green ribbon during Children's Mental Health Awareness Month to raise awareness about the importance of children's mental health and caring for the needs of children and families who have experienced trauma.

Why green? In the 1800s, green was used to brand people who were labeled "insane." The mental health community has reclaimed the color green to combat stigma. Green is the color of nature and signifies growth and new beginnings.

G.E.A.R. Parent Network is a statewide family support, information and advocacy organization focused on the behavioral, emotional, mental, and social health of children and youth in Maine. Through parent-to-parent sharing of experiences and knowledge, we empower parents and caregivers to build on their family's strengths. We are parents helping parents. We want you to know you are not alone!



10 Caldwell Rd., Augusta, ME 04330
1.800.264.9224 www.gearparentnetwork.org

Mental Health is a Family Affair

Do you know the warning signs that may indicate emotional or mental health concerns in children and adolescents?

Pay Attention if You Note the Following in a Child or Adolescent

Troubled by Feeling

- Excessively sad or tearful
- Hopeless
- Angry or irritable
- Worthless or guilty
- Unable to recover from a loss
- Fearful
- Anxious or worried
- Overly concerned about physical appearance

Experiencing Big Changes

- Is doing much worse at school
- Loses interest in things he or she once enjoyed
- Has changes in sleeping or eating habits
- Avoids friends or wants to be alone much of the time
- Feels life is too hard or considers suicide
- Hears voices that can't be explained

Behaves in Problematic Ways

- Uses alcohol or other drugs
- Constantly violates boundaries
- Eats large amounts of food and then throws up
- Abuses laxatives to avoid gaining weight
- Diets and exercises obsessively despite being thin
- Is reckless in ways that could cause harm or death
- Involved in multiple fights

Trust Your Gut

The bottom line is YOU know your child better than anyone! If you think there is a problem, trust your instincts. It's very important to seek help as soon as possible. You can talk with your pediatrician or family doctor. You will be glad you did!

If you are concerned about safety or if you or anyone you know are in need of crisis support call:

MAINE STATEWIDE CRISIS 1-888-568-1112

