

MENTAL HEALTH TIDBIT (BETTER INFORMED TOGETHER)

MAY IS MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS MONTH



DAUPHIN COUNTY MH/A/DP
MAY 2021 MENTAL HEALTH TIDBIT

One popular topic in the United States this past year has been mental health. A positive outcome of these challenging times is that we are aware of and talking about our mental health more than ever! Talking more about mental health means we have more opportunities to change the way we think about our own mental health and that of others.

May is the perfect time to have these discussions since it is national mental health awareness month. The theme for Children's Mental Health awareness this year is **"Flip the Script on Mental Health"**.

Often people associate the term mental health with words like, "Depression, anxiety, suicide, therapy or medication." Alternatively, people often associate the term physical health with things like, "Exercise, good nutrition, and getting plenty of rest." Mental Health includes our emotional, psychological, and social well-being. It affects how we think, feel, and act. It also helps determine how we handle stress, relate to others, and make choices. Mental health is important at every stage of life, from childhood and adolescence, through adulthood. Our ideas on mental health and learning to care for it – like we do our physical health – begin in childhood. It is time to flip the script! Take the opportunity to change hearts, minds, and attitudes about mental health and begin to think about mental health more inclusively and in more positive and preventative ways, like we think about physical health.

Addressing the mental health needs of children is the responsibility of all community members. Parents, caregivers, family members, teachers and doctors all impact how children and youth care for their own mental health and how they treat others who have mental health challenges. Now is the time to shape a brighter, healthier future for the next generation.

Beginning now, we can focus on educating individuals and communities about the importance of teaching children and youth the following:

- **That caring for their mental health is a vital part of living a healthy, fulfilling life.**
- **That experiencing mental health challenges during their lifetime is not uncommon (1 in 5) and that is not just okay, but it is important, to ask for help when they do.**
- **To offer acceptance, support and respect for others who have mental health challenges in their lives and communities.**

For more information and activities for children's mental health week and supporting mental health visit:

[Awareness Week | National Federation of Families \(ffcmh.org\)](https://www.ffcmh.org/)
[Supporting Your Teen's Mental Health | Psychology Today](https://www.psychologytoday.com/)