



Indiana Department of Education

Dr. Katie Jenner, Secretary of Education

Thursday, May 5, is Children's Mental Health Awareness Day and throughout the month of May we celebrate Mental Health Awareness. Green ribbons are displayed during this month to show solidarity with those that may be struggling and promote positive mental health and wellness for all. Green is used to fight stigma associated with mental illness and help-seeking behaviors and represents new growth, new beginnings, and new life. After the last two years of pandemic living, many people are realizing that stress, isolation, and uncertainty have taken a toll on their well-being.

Through Project AWARE, The Indiana Department of Education (IDOE) and the Division of Mental Health and Addiction have been working to build comprehensive school mental health systems and supports, reduce the stigma associated with mental illness, and increase training and support for schools to promote positive mental health in their schools and communities. Please share [this link](#) with both school and community members to emphasize the importance of mental health and wellness and offer practical tips for building positive mental health. For weekly inspiration, text MENTALHEALTH to (317)-676-6730.



Mental Health America develops an annual toolkit to empower local organizations to celebrate Mental Health Month. The messaging and information within the toolkit will help you and your school community build awareness, provide foundational knowledge about mental health & mental health conditions, and inform others on steps they can take if they feel concern for their mental health. The toolkit can be downloaded [here](#).

It's never too early – or too late – to seek help. In the U.S., the average amount of time between the onset of symptoms of a mental health condition or challenge and a diagnosis is 11 years. In 2021, 12.9% of Indiana youth seriously considered attempting suicide (Indiana Prevention Resource Center) and 3,746 calls by individuals ages 24 and under were made to the Indiana Suicide Hotline from March 2020 to March 2022 (Indiana Family and Social Services Administration). For more information on the state of youth mental health in Indiana, please visit the Indiana Youth Institute's recently released [Data Spotlight on Youth Mental Health](#).

If you or someone you know needs to be connected to an expert who will understand what you are experiencing and how to help, they can connect with a trained crisis counselor at the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline 800-273-8255 (TALK).