Thank you for committing to share messages with your network for Children’s Mental Health Awareness Week. The first years of a child’s life are the period of the most rapid brain development and lay the foundation for all future learning. Healthy brains are built through positive interactions, early identification and effective intervention of developmental delays, and support for families. Addressing the complex mental health needs of children, youth and families is fundamental to the future of Wisconsin. We all have a part to play. This information is critically important to share. We want this to reach far and wide, especially reaching Milwaukee’s and Wisconsin’s early childhood funders, teachers, administrators, and parents.

This document is intended to allow you to copy and paste directly into your Facebook accounts; however, feel free to mix and match with resources (your own or elsewhere in the toolkit), hashtags, and other things you want to say. You can adapt these messages to your other social media and communication channels too.

We want to acknowledge that much of our messaging comes from the [Early Childhood Colorado Partnership](http://eccp.civiccanopy.org/message-platform/#section2), which worked with [Frameworks Institute.](https://www.frameworksinstitute.org/) The messages and metaphors on their website are tested with audiences such as parents, early childhood educators, and the general public. In addition, please utilize additional photos from Early Childhood Colorado Partnership on their [photobank webpage](http://eccp.civiccanopy.org/photo-bank/) or profile pictures, cover photos, or other images from the Mental Health America [Mental Health Awareness Month Toolkit](http://www.mhawisconsin.org/may).

We have plenty of resources on our website intended to be shared liberally, including three stories from our Coalition members about their experiences raising children or supporting other parents in raising children with mental health concerns. Find more at <https://www.mkekids.org/how-to-help/toolkit>.

**HASHTAGS:**

* #RethinkDiscipline
* #EndExpulsion #IgniteInclusion
* #ChildrensMentalHealth #ChildrensMentalHealthAwareness
* #WobblyTables
* #AllTogetherforProsperity
* #ItTakesAVillage #WeAreTheVillage
* #NoSuchThingAsABadKid
* #SupportTheFutureLeaders
* #ActEarly
* #StrongFoundationforMentalHealth
* #AllParentsNeedSupport

**MESSAGES AND RESOURCES (April 30th - May 9th)**

**Thursday, April 30th:**

Tomorrow starts Mental Health Awareness Month and a week from today (Thursday, May 7th) is Children’s Mental Health Awareness Day. Join us in spreading awareness, building healthy brains, and ending exclusionary discipline for our youngest kids.

#ChildrensMentalHealthAwareness #EndExpulsion #IgniteInclusion #RethinkDiscipline

<https://www.mkekids.org/how-to-help/toolkit>

**Friday, May 1st:**

***Post 1*:** A Strong Foundation for mental health begins early – we all have mental health, even babies and very young children. Let’s all work together to support this! Share these messages far and wide! Celebrate Children’s Mental Health Awareness next week (Thursday, May 7th is Awareness Day)!

#AllTogetherforProsperity #ActEarly #StrongFoundationforMentalHealth

<https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/pdf/what-is-early-childhood-mental-health-tipsheet.pdf>

***Post 2:*** Just as the levelness of a table is what makes it functional, the mental health of children is what enables them to function well in all areas of life. We need a strong foundation early in life to build healthy brains so kids can have healthy relationships with others and succeed in school and life. All of us have a role to play in providing positive experiences to young kids.

#ChildrensMentalHealthAwareness #WobblyTables #SupportTheFutureLeaders

<http://eccp.civiccanopy.org/message-platform/#section2>

**Saturday, May 2nd:**

***Post 1:*** All parents need support, especially in times like these. There are many resources in the community ready to support and connect parents to one another. Children’s Mental Health Awareness Week is a great time to explore and share these opportunities!

#ChildrensMentalHealthAwareness #AllParentsNeedSupport #ItTakesAVillage @TheParentingNetwork

<https://fiveforfamilies.org/hear-from-parents/>

***Post 2***: You can’t know it all, but you can do a lot. Connect with community resources, especially mental health professionals, to help you when you are unsure or when something is extra challenging.

#ChildrensMentalHealthAwareness #WobblyTables #StrongFoundationforMentalHealth

<https://www.mkekids.org/resources/for-providers/iechmc.html>

**Sunday, May 3rd:**

***Post 1***: This week is Children’s Mental Health Awareness Week! Each day, we will share resources, tips, and facts to help community members, teachers, parents, and resource providers work together. Build healthy young brains to set kids up for success in long-term learning, relationships, and health.

#ChildrensMentalHealthAwareness #ActEarly #StrongFoundationforMentalHealth

<https://www.mkekids.org/how-to-help/toolkit/story-early-support.html>

***Post 2***: You can use your voice and resources to advocate for better outcomes for kids. Whether it is speaking up in a meeting with a funder, working with families to petition an elected official, or sharing information far and wide, you can make a difference. This week is also NAMI Wisconsin’s week of Action Online! Learn how to advocate, learn about the issues, and talk to your legislators.

#AllTogetherforProsperity #ItTakesAVillage #WeAreTheVillage

<https://namiwisconsin.org/nami-wisconsin-events/action-on-the-square/>

**Monday, May 4th:**

***Post 1***: Most children begin to sort shapes and colors by the age of 2! This is also when kids get excited with other children and may do what they have been told not to do. And that’s okay! These are some of the many developmental milestones to look for in your child.

#ChildrensMentalHealthAwareness #NoSuchThingAsABadKid #RethinkDiscipline

<https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/actearly/milestones/index.html>

***Post 2***: Adults can help one another help kids. Mental health professionals called Early Childhood Mental Health Consultants can work with teachers, caregivers, and home visitors to better support kids in their social and emotional development. It is effective and cost efficient.

#AllTogetherforProsperity #ActEarly #SupportTheFutureLeaders

<https://www.mkekids.org/resources/for-providers/iechmc.html>

**Tuesday, May 5th:**

***Post 1***: Work together to name your kids’ emotions. “Children aren’t born knowing how to make friends, wait patiently, care for others, and manage their emotions.”

#ChildrensMentalHealthAwareness #SupportTheFutureLeaders #ActEarly

<https://www2.ed.gov/about/inits/ed/earlylearning/talk-read-sing/feelings-families.pdf>

***Post 2***: Kids do well if they can. “Challenging behavior is the way children communicate to us that their social and emotional needs are not being met or are not as well-developed”. Give extra support to kids who are tired, hungry, or angry. Everyone has bad days, even young kids!

#WobblyTables #NoSuchThingAsABadKid #RethinkDiscipline

<https://livesinthebalance.org/step-one-first-video>

**Wednesday, May 6th:**

***Post 1***: Everyone has bad days, even young kids! Name your own emotions and help kids name theirs. Show kids how to de-stress like with deep belly breaths and the Breathe, Think, Do! strategy.

#WobblyTables #NoSuchThingAsABadKid #RethinkDiscipline

[https://medium.com/@KaylaEMatthews/6-deep-breathing-apps-to-keep-you-calm-and-focused-5b4beaf760f6](https://medium.com/%40KaylaEMatthews/6-deep-breathing-apps-to-keep-you-calm-and-focused-5b4beaf760f6)

***Post 2***: You can support kids’ social and emotional health by using children’s books, turning daily routines into activities, giving effective praise, and modeling back and forth. Warmth and affection—even on bad days and when children are adding to your stress —are critical to children’s well-being, especially in the early years.

#ChildrensMentalHealthAwareness #ItTakesAVillage #ActEarly

<https://www.naeyc.org/resources/pubs/yc/mar2018/promoting-social-and-emotional-health#books>

**Thursday, May 7th – Children’s Mental Health Awareness Day**

 ***Post 1***: Today is Children’s Mental Health Awareness Day. We have focused this week on how to build healthy young brains. These tips are also helpful for ending discipline that excludes young kids from preschools and other early education centers. Too many young kids in Milwaukee are suspended or expelled.

#ChildrensMentalHealthAwareness #EndExpulsion #IgniteInclusion

<https://www.mkekids.org/how-to-help/toolkit/factsheets.html>

***Post 2***: A Strong Foundation for mental health begins early – we all have mental health, even babies and very young children. Let’s all work together to support this! Share information and advocate!

#ItTakesAVillage #WeAreTheVillage #StrongFoundationforMentalHealth

<https://www.zerotothree.org/resources/1844-what-can-advocates-and-policymakers-do>

**Friday, May 8th:**

***Post 1***: Build partnerships with families. All parents need support navigating how to raise a kid and any stresses that are part of it. Guide parents to community resources.

#ItTakesAVillage #WeAreTheVillage #AllParentsNeedSupport @TheParentingNetwork

<https://www.bbcmkids.org/play-cloud/>

***Post 2***: The voice of caregivers is valuable when it comes to the health of their children. If there is a group of people making a decision about a child, then caregivers need to be involved in that decision. Lift up family leaders.

#ChildrensMentalHealthAwareness #SupportTheFutureLeaders #AllTogetherforProsperity

<https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/pdf/building-partnerships-developing-relationships-families.pdf>

**Saturday, May 9th:**

***Post 1*: “**Crawl an inch in their socks” = “walk a mile in their shoes”. Take the kid’s perspective, especially if the kid is from a different background.

#ChildrensMentalHealthAwareness #EndExpulsion #IgniteInclusion

<https://www.nea.org/assets/docs/23840%20Confronting%20Implicit%20Bias%20Thru%20Exemp%20Teacher%20Prep-v2.pdf>

***Post 2***: Give permission to kids, especially to boys, to express their emotions. Praise them and support them in doing so in a helpful way. Help them know that is okay to cry.

#RethinkDiscipline #NoSuchThingAsABadKid #ActEarly

<https://www.mkekids.org/how-to-help/toolkit/story-boys.html>