

MAY MENTAL HEALTH NEWSLETTER

MAY 2023 CELEBRATIONS
LET'S CELEBRATE!
MAY IS MENTAL HEALTH MONTH!

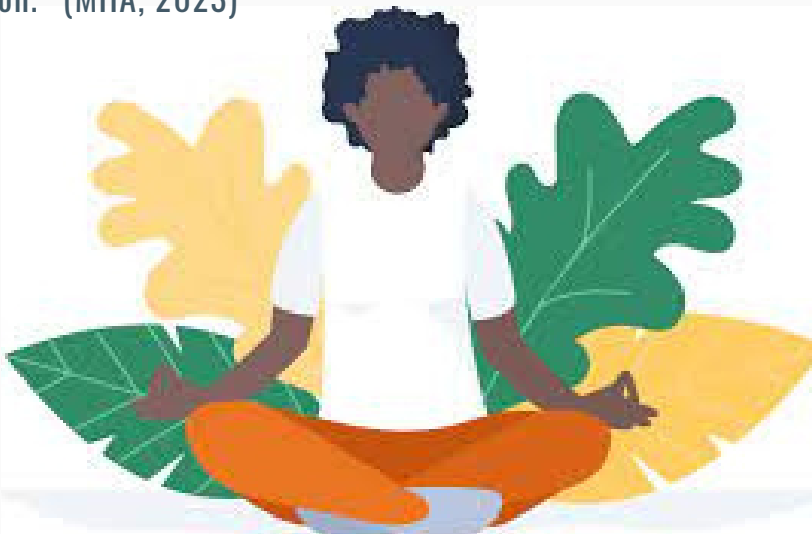
- MAY 1ST: BELTANE
- MAY 1ST: LEI DAY
- MAY 5TH: CINCO DE MAYO
- MAY 5TH: VESAK
- MAY 14TH: MOTHER'S DAY
- MAY 26-27TH: SHAVUOT

To recognize it, we want to provide resources for parents as they navigate supporting their children with diverse mental health needs. We also want to provide resources for parents who may be struggling with their own mental health. As you are supporting your child, remember that you are human, and give yourself the space to feel and make mistakes. We hope to provide resources as you are navigating your own mental health and supporting your children. We hope that during mental health awareness month, you practice mental health exercises which you can continue in the following months and share with your family. Some suggestions to begin your mental health journey include: mindfulness and meditation, yoga, journaling, therapy, engage in a creative activity, invest in friendships.

To best communicate with your children, create conversations about what support they need. Ask them questions such as "What can you do the next time you're in this situation?" or "What made you feel better the last time you felt this way?" (MHA, 2023). This will create trust and help them to be independent and in touch with their own emotions. Creating a calming environment for your children can help them regulate. Consider Softening your voice and use short, clear directions: "Come with me." "Sit down." "Take a deep breath." "Tell me what's going on." (MHA, 2023)

Reflection Questions

- What are ways in which you take part in self-care and work on your own mental health? Your children?
- What are strengths that you have? (social, emotional, personal, creative)
- What are areas that you may need help in or need support?



"MENTAL HEALTH...IS NOT A DESTINATION, BUT A PROCESS. IT'S ABOUT HOW YOU DRIVE, NOT WHERE YOU'RE GOING." — NOAM SHPANCER, PHD



Additional Resources

- Tips for parents: <https://mhanational.org/helping-home-tips-parents>
- How to find a mental health provider in MA: <https://www.massgeneral.org/psychiatry/about/patient-education/community-mental-health-services>
- Free mental health toolkit: <https://mhanational.org/mental-health-month>
- Free mindfulness activities: <https://www.freemindfulness.org/download>

Universal Pre-K Boston (UPK) Corner

Did you know that the Boston UPK preschool program is one of the strongest in the nation? Research shows that children who attend are more prepared for kindergarten in the areas of early math, reading, and social-emotional development.

Element description: When we are faced with a challenging situation, our first impulse might be to match the intensity that our child is presenting. This element of Positive Parenting suggests that, in these situations, we take a moment to go inward and steady ourselves first before attempting to help our children.

Ideas for using this in everyday moments: For example, if your child is having a tantrum in a grocery store, your first impulse might be to yell or carry your screaming child out of the store. To use this element of Positive Parenting, parents might instead consider taking a deep breath, or several deep breaths, before responding to the child. Recognizing our own emotions as parents in these situations and calming ourselves a little bit before addressing our children will likely lead to a better outcome for everyone.

Additional Resources: Want to learn more about this? Check out this article on [co-regulating](#) throughout a child's life. If you're interested in learning more about modeling self-regulation skills, check out this [article](#). Zero-To-Three published a full [article](#) on this Key Element.



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