

# TAKING INITIATIVE

What's Happening at the St. Lawrence Health Initiative

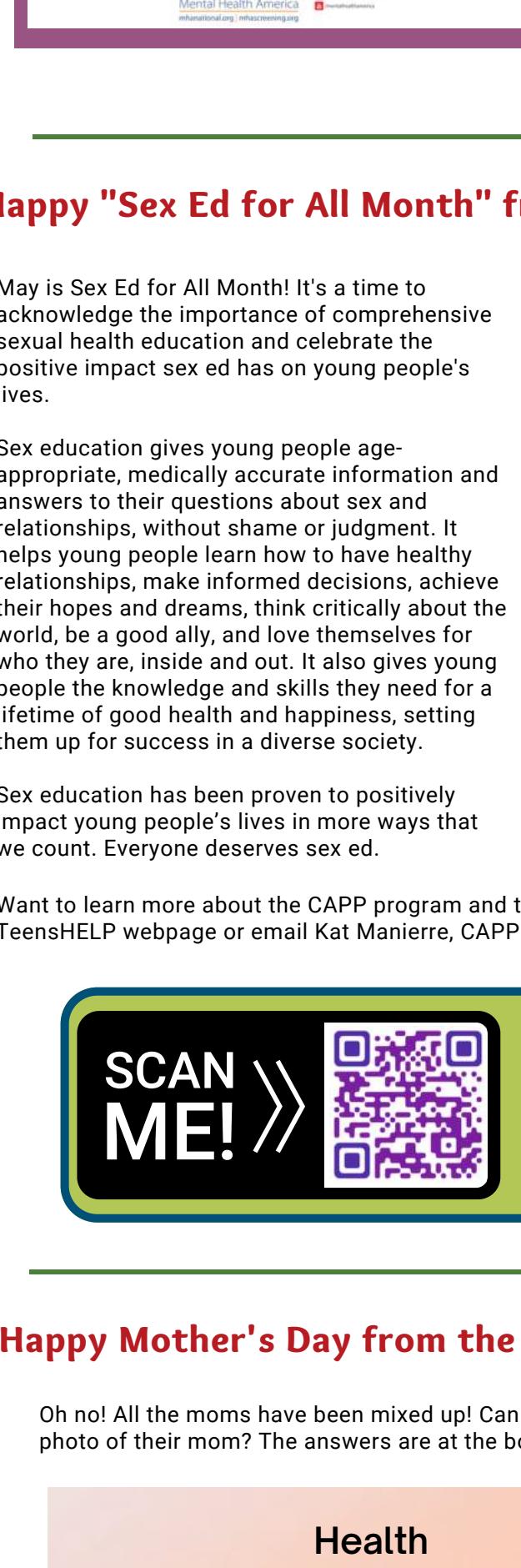


Connecting communities. Improving well-being. Getting healthy.

## From the Executive Director

**May is Mental Health Month.** We often forget that mental health is just as important as physical health. When was the last time you focused on your mental health? Here is a great read from our friends at Mental Health America:

Look Around, Look Within: Your surroundings say a lot about your mental health. Take a moment to consider your surroundings. Do you feel safe? Do you have access to health care and grocery stores? Does your home support you, both physically and mentally? This Mental Health Month, challenge yourself to look at your world and how different factors can affect your mental health.



Where a person is born, lives, learns, works, plays, and gathers, as well as their economic stability and social connections, are part of what is called "social determinants of health" (SDOH). The more these factors work in your favor means you are more likely to have better mental well-being. However, when it seems like the world is working against you, your mental health can suffer.

While many parts of your environment can be out of your control, there are steps you can take to change your space and protect your well-being.

- Work toward securing safe and stable housing: This can be challenging due to finances, age, and other reasons, but there are a few things you can try, such as reaching out to state/local agencies to secure housing or removing safety hazards in the home.
- Focus on your home: Consider keeping your space tidy, sleep-friendly, and well-ventilated. Surround yourself with items that help you feel calm and positive.
- Create bonds with your neighborhood and community: Get to know the people living around you.
- Connect with nature: Hike in a forest, sit in a park, bring a plant inside, or keep the shades open to absorb natural light.

Visit [www.mhanational.org](http://www.mhanational.org) to learn more about Mental Health Month and to access a variety of mental health screening tools, tips for staying well, and ways to find help if you need it.

## Happy "Sex Ed for All Month" from the TeensHELP CAPP Team!

May is Sex Ed for All Month! It's a time to acknowledge the importance of comprehensive sexual health education and celebrate the positive impact sex ed has on young people's lives.

Sex education gives young people age-appropriate, medically accurate information and answers to their questions about sex and relationships, without shame or judgment. It helps young people learn how to have healthy relationships, make informed decisions, achieve their hopes and dreams, think critically about the world, be a good ally, and love themselves for who they are, inside and out. It also gives young people the knowledge and skills they need for a lifetime of good health and happiness, setting them up for success in a diverse society.

Sex education has been proven to positively impact young people's lives in more ways than we count. Everyone deserves sex ed.

Want to learn more about the CAPP program and the evidence-based sexual health programs we offer? Visit the TeensHELP webpage or email Kat Manierre, CAPP Health Educator Supervisor, at [kat@gethealthyslc.org](mailto:kat@gethealthyslc.org).

SCAN  
ME! >>



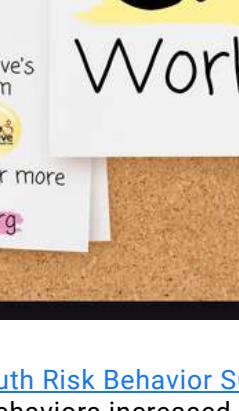
Do you or a young person in your life have a sexual health question in need of answering? Scan this QR code to submit an anonymous question to our team of highly trained sexual health educators. We will post an age-appropriate, medically accurate, non-judgmental answer on our webpage.



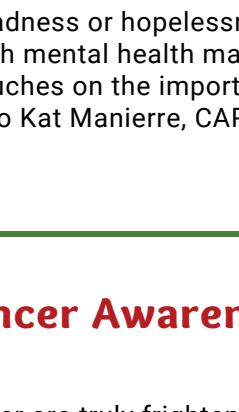
## Happy Mother's Day from the Health Initiative Staff!

Oh no! All the moms have been mixed up! Can you match the Health Initiative staff member up with the photo of their mom? The answers are at the bottom of the newsletter, but no cheating!

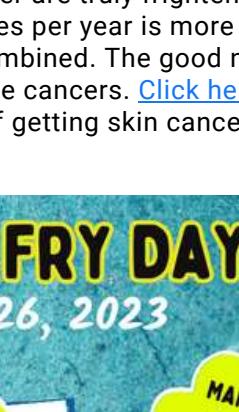
### Health Initiative Staff



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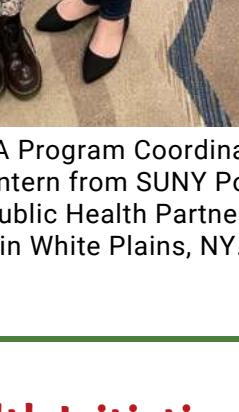
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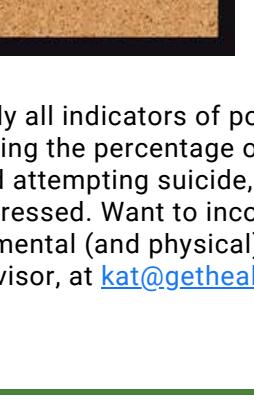


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### Their Moms



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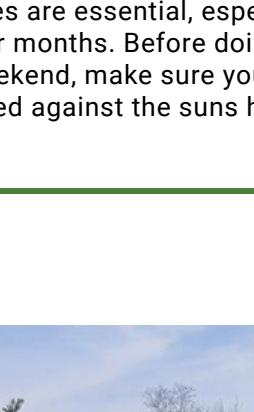
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HAPPY MOTHER'S DAY

## Youth Mental Health Matters: Schedule a Self-Care Workshop!



A young person's life is often thought to be more stressful and less safe than adults. While their lives have ups and downs, for the most part, teens are not stressed with the same responsibilities as adults. Given the nature of this thought process, it may come as a surprise to learn that approximately 50% of all lifetime cases of mental illness will develop before the age of 21. Unfortunately, teen mental health issues are often overlooked or written off as "typical" teen angst that will go away on its own.

According to a 2021 [Youth Risk Behavior Survey Trends Report](#), nearly all indicators of poor mental health and suicidal thoughts and behaviors increased from 2011 to 2021, including the percentage of students who experienced attempted suicide, youthlessness, and seriously considered suicide. Want to incorporate a social and emotional learning activity that touches on the importance of self-care on one's mental (and physical) health into your Self-Care Workshop? Reach out to Kat Manierre, CAPP Health Educator Supervisor, at [kat@gethealthyslc.org](mailto:kat@gethealthyslc.org) to schedule a Self-Care Workshop.

## May is Skin Cancer Awareness Month - Don't Fry Day is Coming Up!

The statistics on skin cancer are truly frightening. The number of skin cancer cases per year is more than all the other one of the most preventable cancers. [Click here](#) to learn how to reduce your risks of getting skin cancer later in life.



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