



# HOWARD COUNTY MENTAL HEALTH COMMUNITY ADVISORY COUNCIL (MHCAC)

## Spring Newsletter-Connection and Partnership - March 2026



### Who are we...

The Howard County Mental Health Community Advisory Council was created in 2018 in partnership with Howard County Public Schools and the Howard County Local Children's Board. The MHCAC is made up of over 180 members from the community who are interested in removing barriers and building awareness for mental health support in Howard County for our children and families.

We meet the first Friday of every month from September to June. If you are interested in attending our monthly meetings, please email Cynthia Schulmeyer-Coordinator, Psychological Services at [cynthia\\_schulmeyer@hcpss.org](mailto:cynthia_schulmeyer@hcpss.org).

### Howard County Mental Health Resources

#### Grassroots Crisis Intervention

24/7 mental health assistance and walk-in clinic. Crisis services available.  
<https://grassrootscrisis.org>

#### Howard County Health Department

Howard County health and medical resource.  
<https://www.howardcountymd.gov/health>



#### Howard County Health Department-Behavioral Health Navigator:

Howard County Health Department for mental health resources.  
<https://www.howardcountymd.gov/health/behavioral-health-navigation>

#### Howard County Public Schools Mental Health Supports

<https://www.hcpss.org/supports/mental-health-wellness/>

#### NAMI-National Alliance on Mental Health

Mental health organization dedicated to improving the lives of individuals and families affected by mental illness.  
<https://namihowardcountymd.org>

#### NAMI-FAMILY CAREGIVER HOTLINE

CALL 1-800-950-NAMI (6264) Press "4" to connect with a skilled Family Caregiver HelpLine Specialist or TEXT Family to 62640.

#### CAREAPP

Resources for mental health services in Howard County.  
<https://www.hclhic.org/resources/access-to-care>



#### Howard County Network of Care

Resources for mental health services in Howard County.  
<https://mentalhealth.networkofcare.org/howard-md/HealthCare>

#### Howard County Behavioral Health Road Map

Review of mental health process.  
<https://www.howardcountymd.gov/office-local-childrens-board/youth-behavioral-health>

### Community Events

#### MARCH

March 8, 9:00-11:00 (\$5.00)  
Sensory Friendly Sunday-All Ages  
Robinson Nature Center  
6692 Cedar Lane - Columbia



March 30-April 3 - Spring Break for HCPSS

#### APRIL

April 11 - 10:00 - 1:00pm  
Children's Discovery Fair  
Howard County Office of Children and Families  
East Columbia 50+ Center  
6610 Cradlerock Way - Columbia  
<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/2026-childrens-discovery-fair-little-learners-big-discoveries-tickets-1980129213782?aff=ebdsoorgprofile>

April 25 - 10:00 - 1:00pm  
Free Behavioral Health Resource Fair  
Long Reach Village Center  
8775 Cloudless Court - Columbia  
<https://www.howardcountymd.gov/sites/default/files/2026-02/Behavioral%20Health%20Resource%20Fair%20Flier%202-9-26%20ENG.pdf>

April 25 - 10:00 - 2:00pm  
HC DrugFree Medication Disposal Event  
Wilde Lake Village Center Parking Lot  
5305 Village Center Drive - Columbia  
<https://hcdrugfree.org/drug-take-back-day-1/>

#### MAY MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS MONTH

For more events click below  
Howard County Local Health Improvement Coalition  
Community Events Calendar  
<https://www.hclhic.org/home/calendar?id=2026&subid=3&submit=+Go+To+Calendar>



## TOP 10 SPRING BREAK TIPS

TO HELP YOUR CHILD HAVE A GREAT SPRING BREAK

1. Connect with family, friends and the community
2. Make a plan together
3. Balance Screen Time
4. Engage their interests
5. Avoid over-scheduling
6. Do one new thing per day
7. Be Flexible but organized
8. Get outside and include movement in your plans
9. Promote, practice and model mindfulness
10. Prepare for the return to school



## MORE RESOURCES FOR SPRING BREAK

<https://www.parents.com/fun/activities/indoor/spring-break-activities-and-ideas-for-kids-at-home/>

<https://www.camp-sequoia.com/spring-break-bliss-a-guide-for-adhd-parents-and-professionals/>

<https://www.simplybeecounseling.net/blog/spring-break-reset>

<https://samantha-brown.com/destinations/spring-break-for-families-tips-advice/>

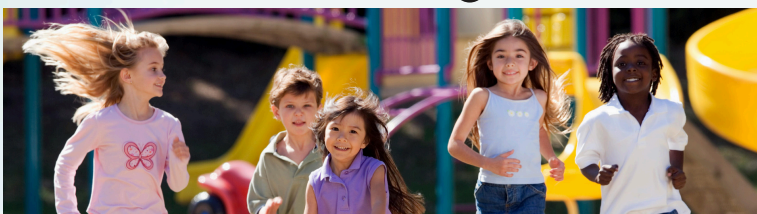
<https://www.plt.org/educator-tips/spring-movement-activities-young-kids>



**Howard County Kids Fest**  
**April 4, 11:00-2:00 pm (\$8.00)**

Howard County Rec and Parks  
 Meadowbrook Park  
 5001 Meadowbrook Lane - Ellicott City

[REGISTER HERE](#)



## STAYCATION IDEAS



- Family Cooking Competition
- Plan a Movie Marathon
- Set up a food taste test
- Volunteer in your community
- Work on a home project together
- Spring Egg Hunts
- Positive Memory Jar
- Spring Art Projects
- Interact with Nature
- Go on a nature hunt
- Make a homemade bird feeder
- Look on Pinterest for ideas



## EXPLORE LOCAL EVENTS AND OPPORTUNITIES

Howard County Library:

<https://howardcounty.librarycalendar.com>

Howard County Rec and Parks:

<https://www.howardcountymd.gov/rap>

Howard County Community Events:

<https://www.howardcountymd.gov/events>



\*\*\*\*Please note that resources and information provided in this newsletter are just a sample of what is available and not an all inclusive list. For more information on mental health topics please use the links listed in the Howard County Mental Health Resources section. You can also reach out to the the Howard County Health Department Behavioral Health Navigator at 410-313-6240 or [bhnavigator@howardcountymd.gov](mailto:bhnavigator@howardcountymd.gov).

**\*\*\*\*If you or a loved one are experiencing a mental health crisis, call/ text 988.\*\*\*\***



# MENTAL HEALTH PARTNERSHIPS AND TRAINING

## Sheppard Pratt Psychiatric Urgent Care



## Active Minds

Are you looking for a way for your teen to get involved in mental health advocacy in high school?

Check out the Active Minds Club at their high school.

Active Minds is the largest nonprofit in the United States mobilizing youth and young adults to transform mental health norms across society. Together, we are building a diverse movement of champions. Active Minds Chapters are a network of 500+ peer-led mental health advocacy groups, focused on positive social change and a mentally healthier future in colleges and high schools across the United States.



<https://activeminds.org/programs/chapters/>

Sheppard Pratt's Psychiatric Urgent Care is specially designed for people who need an immediate psychiatric triage. We see and evaluate people in need of urgent psychiatric care and refer them on to the best next steps for them.

Our goal is to provide immediate care but wait times can vary. If you are walking in later in the day, you may have to return the following business day to receive care. Licensed clinicians at Psychiatric Urgent Care do not write or refill prescriptions.

Baltimore/Washington Campus  
Psychiatric Urgent Care Hours  
Monday - Sunday, 10:00 a.m. - 9:00 p.m.  
7220 Discovery Drive - Eldridge  
(410) 938-5302

Towson Campus  
Psychiatric Urgent Care Hours  
Monday - Friday, 10:00 a.m. - 9:00 p.m.; Saturdays  
11:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.; Closed on Sundays  
6501 North Charles Street - Baltimore  
(410) 938-3000

## Sheppard Pratt Resources



## Mental Health First Aid Training

Mental Health First Aid teaches you how to help a loved one who may be struggling. Through this training, you'll learn how to recognize, understand and respond to signs of mental health or substance use challenges - and offer the first level of support. Mental Health First Aid is working toward a world where we all have the skills to support someone living with mental health or substance use challenges. We aim to train 1 in 15 Americans in our evidence-based, early intervention training - so no one feels alone when they need help. Click on the link below for more information.





## COPING SKILL CORNER



### Growth Mindset and Positive Self-Talk

Teaching and showing children how to use positive self-talk and have a growth mindset helps them become stronger when things are hard.



A growth mindset means believing you can get better at something if you practice and keep trying. It grows when you talk to yourself in a kind and encouraging way. Instead of saying, "I can't do this," you can say, "I can't do this yet, but I can learn."

Positive self-talk means being kind to yourself and thinking about yourself in a positive way. It can help you feel more confident, feel less stressed, and be happier.



Positive self-talk and a growth mindset takes practice. The more you practice the easier it becomes and more helpful it can be. Talk to your children about how they feel when they hear or say positive and negative statements. Use real life opportunities for yourself and your children to model positive self-talk during hard and difficult times .



## Check out this video



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rUJkbWNnNy4>

This video explores the characteristics of a fixed mindset and a growth mindset. It busts the myth of perfection and teaches students to appreciate their mistakes and failures. It explains that fear is a natural universal emotion, how challenges help students grow, and provides students with tips on how to switch on their growth mindset.

## COPING SKILL RESOURCES

<https://mentalhealthcenterkids.com/blogs/articles/positive-self-talk>

<https://mentalhealthcenterkids.com/blogs/articles/coping-skills-for-teens>

<https://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/stress-management/in-depth/positive-thinking/art-20043950>

<https://www.theottoolbox.com/kids-positive-self-talk/>

<https://childmind.org/resources/>

<https://cosmickids.com/positive-affirmations-for-kids/>

<https://www.socialemotionalworkshop.com/9-positive-thinking-strategies/>

<https://www.thepathway2success.com/101-positive-affirmations-for-kids/>

<https://mentalhealthcenterkids.com/blogs/articles/books-on-positive-thinking>



## CULTURE OF KINDNESS

Did you know that there is an entire field of research dedicated to kindness? Simple acts of kindness are linked to a variety of physical & mental health benefits:

- *Psychological benefits* include reduced stress & a “helper’s high” where the helper experiences a boost in mood & well-being.
- *Health impacts* include improved health outcomes, such as lower blood pressure & reduced cortisol.
- *Educational benefits* include improved peer relationships & reduced bullying.

“Kindness is something you can spread from one person to another. Creating a culture of kindness allows for fewer instances of anger and evil. It can promote a more welcoming environment as positivity becomes the driving force.”

*Source: The Power of Positivity – Psychology Explains How to Build A Culture of Kindness*

### Model kindness at home and in the community...

- Provide specific positive feedback
- Draw a handmade card
- Bake a treat for someone
- Leave out bird seed
- Offer a compliment to a stranger
- Leave notes of encouragement
- Hold a door open for someone
- Write a “thank you” note
- Donate to a local food bank
- Send a kind text message to a friend
- Donate to a shelter for people and animals
- Recycle



For more ideas:

<https://schoolofkindness.org/random-acts-of-kindness-for-kids>

## KINDNESS RESOURCES



The Action for Happiness website provides resources on how to lead a happier, kinder lifestyle. Check out the monthly calendars with daily tips, listen to a talk, or explore other free resources!

Have you considered the ripple effect that comes from one small, simple act? Watch this short video on The Power of Kindness.



Kids can get in on the fun too! This video shares easy ways that children can promote kindness at school. Find checklists and other resources at the Great Kindness Challenge and make the world a little brighter.

