

Outreach Ideas

Many of you are likely well on your way to planning for Mental Health Month. If not, here are some ideas to help you.

- Ask your governor or mayor to declare May as Mental Health Month, using the sample proclamation that is part of the toolkit.
- Contact your local heart, diabetes, cancer or lung association to partner and share messages about mental health and the importance of treating it like any other health condition. Offer to host a workshop for their members and during support group meetings.
- Organize a community run or walk for mental health. Reach out to your local media for assistance in promoting the event. Send a “viral” email to all of your partners, family members and friends, and local officials inviting them to participate.
- Host a mental health screening or other educational event at a local venue (e.g., town hall, firehouse, church, or library). Have computers or tablets available for people to go to mhascreening.org. Make sure to have a printer so people can print their results.
- Plan a day at your state Capitol. Invite advocates, consumers, concerned citizens and community and business leaders to visit each policymaker to discuss your community’s mental health.
- Host a meet-and-greet with local leaders in mental health and the community they serve at the local town square. Ask a consumer and local community leader to share why mental health is so important to them personally.
- If your community has a number of buildings with bell towers or a bell-ringing ensemble, ask them to ring their bells for mental health on May 1 or another day. Alert the public and the media in advance. Share materials with attendees on the importance of mental wellness.
- Team up with your local school district to promote children’s mental health during National Children’s Mental Health Awareness Day (Thursday, May 7).
- Post to your organization’s social media networks: Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest, LinkedIn, etc. to raise awareness of May as Mental Health Month. Make sure to use the May is Mental Health Month hashtags: [#mhmonth2015](https://twitter.com/hashtag/mhmonth2015) or [#B4Stage4](https://twitter.com/hashtag/B4Stage4).
- May is also Older American’s Month. Reach out to your local senior communities, including assisted living and nursing homes. Mental illnesses are not a normal part of aging!

We'll be reaching out in early June to ask about your outreach and impact. Make sure to keep track of your efforts by doing things like:

- Counting how many handouts you distribute
- Tracking media hits and impressions
- Keeping tally of likes, shares and retweets of your Mental Health Month posts on social media networks
- If you do a screening event or health fair, keep count of how many people visit your booth and/or take a screen
- Conducting a pre/post survey to see how you've increased knowledge about mental health issues among those you reach. Set up a quick survey online using SurveyMonkey.com.

Let us know what you've got planned!

Tell us about your events so we can post them on MHA's Web Calendar, and help you get the word out. Contact Antionette Means at ameans@mentalhealthamerica.net with the following information:

Name of Event
Date
Location
Brief Description
Registration/Sign-Up Instructions
Contact Person

Like our materials? Want more?

Brochures are available through the Mental Health America store to supplement the information provided in the 2015 B4Stage4 – May is Mental Health Month toolkit.

Visit the Mental Health America store by clicking the "Store" link on the dark blue menu bar at the top of the Mental Health America's website, www.mentalhealthamerica.net.

*MHA Affiliates – One of the benefits of being an affiliate is getting a discount on printed materials at the MHA store. To place an order, contact Antionette Means at 703-797-2592.

www.mentalhealthamerica.net/may



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