



Family Focus

BIPOC Mental Health Awareness Month

July is BIPOC Mental Health Awareness Month, also known as Bebe Moore Campbell National Minority Mental Health Awareness Month. It is a time to recognize the importance of culturally responsive mental health care and to honor the unique experiences, strengths, and mental health needs of Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC).

For many children, youth, and families, culture, identity, language, and lived experiences shape how mental health is understood and how support is accessed. Unfortunately, many BIPOC families continue to face barriers to care, including stigma, limited access to culturally responsive providers, and systemic inequities. Recognizing these challenges is an important step toward ensuring every family has access to care that is respectful, affirming, and responsive to their needs.

This month is an opportunity to learn, have open conversations about mental wellness, and support one another in building stronger, healthier communities. If you or someone you know is looking for culturally responsive mental health resources, these sites offer valuable information and provider directories:

celebrate
BIPOC
MENTAL
HEALTH
MONTH

**BIPOC Mental Health
Resources**

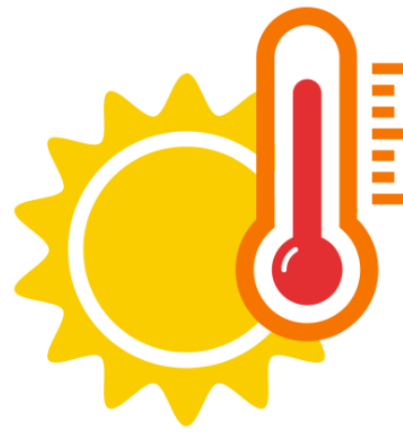
Inclusive Therapists Directory

Stay Safe This Summer: Find a Cooling Center Near You

This summer has been a hot one! If you need a place to cool off, check out this list of cooling centers across the state to find a safe, air-conditioned space near you. Cooling centers are available during periods of extreme heat and can be a valuable resource for families, older adults, and anyone without reliable air conditioning.

Whether you're planning ahead or need relief during the next heat wave, we encourage you to keep this list handy.

Don't forget to drink plenty of water, avoid strenuous outdoor activities during the hottest part of the day, and check in on neighbors, friends, and loved ones who may need extra support.



Maryland Cooling Centers

Upcoming Focus Group Opportunity

Have you or a member of your family had experience with your local child welfare or social services office within the past seven years? If so, we want to hear from you.

On behalf of the Maryland Department of Human Services Social Services Administration and MCF, families are invited to share their experiences and perspectives to help inform and improve services for children and families across Maryland.



Birth families, youth, kinship caregivers, and individuals with experience in out-of-home placements are all encouraged to participate. Participation is completely confidential and anonymous.

To accommodate different schedules, we've offered several session dates. You only need to register for and attend one.

Virtual sessions are currently planned for October 6, October 15, October 22 (Spanish-language session), and October 27 (youth) from 6:30-8:30 p.m.

[Register Here](#)

[Regístrate Aquí](#)

Back-to-School Starts Now: Small Steps for a Smoother Transition

It may feel like summer just began, but late July is a great time to start preparing for the new school year, especially for children who thrive on routine or receive behavioral health supports.

Making small changes now can help ease anxiety, reduce stress, and make the transition back to school a little smoother for the whole family. Whether your child is excited, nervous, or somewhere in between, talking about the upcoming school year and gradually reintroducing school routines can make a big difference.



You don't have to do everything at once. Taking one step at a time can help your child feel more confident and give you time to address any questions or concerns before the first day of school. If your child has an IEP, 504 Plan, or receives school-based behavioral health services, now is also a good time to reconnect with your school team and make sure supports are in place.

[Back to School Checklist](#)

Expanded Medicaid Coverage

Don't guess...
Check ✓

Almost half of all uninsured residents in Maryland **qualify for free or low-cost Medicaid.**



More Maryland residents may now qualify for free or low-cost health coverage through Medicaid. Recent changes have expanded eligibility, making coverage available to more individuals and families than before. Even if you've applied in the past and didn't qualify, or you think your income is too high, it's worth checking again.

The application is free, and enrollment is open year-round, there's no need to wait for a special enrollment period. A few minutes could help you access health care, prescriptions, preventive services, and more.

Visit the link below to check your eligibility and apply today!

[GetMedicaid.org](https://getmedicaid.org)

Get Connected & Stay Informed!

Online and In-Person Support Groups

MCF offers many support groups to provide a safe space for you to learn, share and receive compassionate help. All are facilitated by trained Family Peer Support Specialists who have dealt with similar challenges in their own families. Groups are free for all participants and held on different

Workshops, Trainings, & Other Events

MCF offers a wide range of events, trainings and workshops for families who have a loved one with mental health, substance use or problem gambling challenges. Events are held in communities across the state or virtually and are offered at no cost

days of the week and different times of day. Find one or more that can work for you and join us soon!

to participants. Visit our website to learn more!

[Find a Support Group](#)

[Past and Upcoming Events](#)

Employment Opportunities

We have employment opportunities that might be perfect for you or someone you know! We currently have openings in many areas of the State. Please check our website for a complete list of openings.

- Family Peer Support Specialist (Bilingual) - Substance Use (Must live in Baltimore)
- Family Peer Support Specialist - Mental Health (Must Live in Howard County)
- Family Peer Support Specialist - Mental Health (Must Live in Allegany County)
- Family Peer Support Specialist - Mental Health (Must Live in Somerset County)

[Employment Opportunities](#)

We're here because we've been there too



www.mdcoalition.org



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