



Family Focus

Suicide Prevention Awareness Month



This September, we focus on the urgent need for awareness and action around suicide prevention, especially for children and teens. It's a time to learn how to recognize signs of emotional distress, reach out for support, and create spaces where conversations about mental health are open and normalized.

Early intervention and support can make all the difference. By coming together, we can raise awareness, reduce stigma, and remind every young person that there is hope and help.

If you or someone you know is struggling, call or text 988, the 24/7 crisis lifeline for suicide prevention, mental health, and substance use support. Together, we can make this a month of awareness, action, and hope.

[988 Lifeline](#)

[Warning Signs in Children](#)

Your Voice Can Shape the Future for Maryland Families

We know firsthand what it means to care for a child with mental and behavioral health challenges. Our experiences have shown us that family voices are crucial to building a better future for our children and families.

Alone, our stories are powerful. Together, we are unstoppable.

That is why your input is so important. By sharing your experiences as part of our **2026 Children's Behavioral Health Priorities Survey**, you can help ensure that family



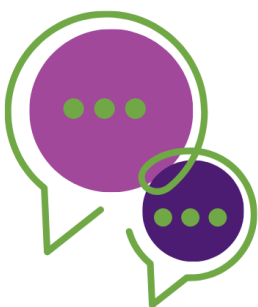
voices shape policies and drive meaningful, lasting improvements to the systems that support children and families across Maryland. Responses from our most recent Survey provided rich data and compelling testimonials from caregivers across Maryland, strengthening MCF's advocacy efforts to build a behavioral health system that works for everyone.

At the heart of meaningful change are the voices of families. Please take a few moments to share your perspective on key behavioral health topics. We understand the demands on your time, but your feedback helps ensure that family experiences, needs, and priorities are heard and considered in critical discussions and decisions that affect our communities.

The Survey will remain open until **September 28th**, so please click on the link below to bring your voice to the conversation. And thank you for helping us create positive change for children and families throughout our state.

[Take the Survey](#)

Another Opportunity to Advocate! Community Conversations



We want to hear from you!

Karen Duffy, Executive Director of MCF, is hosting conversations with communities across Maryland to give parents and caregivers an opportunity to share their experiences navigating the behavioral health system and the challenges they face when trying to access support for their children.

Join us to share what you've experienced, what's working, what isn't, and what you want to see change. Your voice will help shape our advocacy priorities and keep Maryland family voices at the center of efforts to improve behavioral health services and supports.

Click the link below to find an upcoming Community Conversation in your area.

[Events Calendar](#)

Have You Heard About Maryland's Action Plan to Prevent Suicide in Schools?

Did you know Maryland has a resource specifically designed to help schools prevent, respond to, and recover from suicide-related crises?

The Maryland Action Plan to Prevent Suicide in Schools (MAPS) is a comprehensive guide developed for K-12 school communities, with resources tailored for school administrators, mental health professionals, teachers, students, and caregivers.

Whether you're looking for prevention strategies, guidance on responding to a crisis, or support for what comes afterward, MAPS offers practical, evidence-based tools to



help schools and communities better support young people.

[Learn More About MAPS](#)

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

[Find a Support Group](#)

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 to participants. Visit our website to learn more!

[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.

- Supervisor (Must Live in Harford County, Baltimore County, or Baltimore City)
- Youth Engagement Specialist (Must Live in PG County)
- Family Peer Support Specialist - Mental Health (Must Live in Allegany County)
- Family Peer Support Specialist - Mental Health (Must Live in Somerset County)
- Family Peer Support Specialist - Mental Health (Must Live in Worcester County)
- Family Peer Support Specialist - Substance Use (Must Live in Baltimore City)

[Employment Opportunities](#)

We're here because we've been there too



www.mdcoalition.org



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Maryland Coalition of Families | 8950 State Route 108 Suite 223 | Columbia, MD 21045 US

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