



Family Focus

ADHD Awareness Month



October is ADHD Awareness Month, an opportunity to raise awareness, reduce stigma, and celebrate the unique strengths of children with Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD). It is a reminder that every child deserves patience, understanding, and support.

ADHD can affect a child's attention, impulse control, activity level, and emotional regulation. Behaviors such as difficulty

following directions, managing frustration, or staying focused may sometimes be misunderstood as intentional misbehavior. Understanding that children may need extra support with these skills helps us respond with compassion rather than judgment.

How can parents and caregivers help?

- Establish routines: Predictable schedules and clear expectations help children feel secure.
- Celebrate progress: Recognize effort, positive choices, and small accomplishments.
- Support emotional regulation: Help children identify their feelings and practice calming strategies.
- Focus on strengths: Encourage creativity, curiosity, and individual interests.
- Ask for support: Partner with teachers, healthcare providers, and behavioral health professionals to identify strategies that meet your child's needs.

Remember, you are not alone in this journey. Supporting a child with behavioral health challenges can be difficult, and caregivers deserve compassion and encouragement, too.

This ADHD Awareness Month, let's look beyond behaviors, celebrate each child's strengths, and create environments where every child feels understood, valued, and supported. With patience, connection, and the right support, children can build confidence and thrive.

[Request Support from MCF](#)

Supporting LGBTQ+ Youth

Every child and young person deserves to feel safe, accepted, and supported. For LGBTQ+ youth experiencing behavioral health challenges, access to compassionate, affirming mental health support can make a meaningful difference.

The Trevor Project recently shared an update on the return of the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline's specialized services for LGBTQ+ youth, known as "Press 3." This resource highlights the importance of accessible crisis support for young people who may be struggling with their mental health.



Parents and caregivers can help by creating a safe space for open conversations, listening without judgment, and connecting youth with appropriate support when needed.

Want to learn more? Visit [The Trevor Project's](#) website to read about this important update and learn more about supporting LGBTQ+ youth.

Together, we can help every young person feel seen, valued, and supported.

[Read More](#)

Helping Every Child Enjoy a Happy Halloween

Halloween can be an exciting time for children, but for children experiencing behavioral health challenges, it can also bring sensory overload, changes in routine, social pressures, and unexpected transitions. With a little preparation, parents and caregivers can help make the holiday more comfortable, inclusive, and enjoyable for everyone.

Tips for a Happy Halloween

- Prepare ahead of time. Talk about Halloween plans and practice what to expect, including trick-or-treating and other activities.
- Choose comfortable costumes. Avoid itchy fabrics, tight clothing, masks, or accessories that may cause sensory discomfort.



- Plan for sensory needs. Consider noise-reducing headphones, quieter neighborhoods, or shorter outings if crowds and loud noises feel overwhelming.
- Keep routines when possible. Maintain familiar meal times and bedtime routines to help children feel secure.
- Offer choices. Let children choose their costumes, activities, and how long they want to participate.
- Prioritize safety. Stay together, plan a familiar route, and remind children about street safety and asking for help.
- Celebrate in different ways. Pumpkin decorating, Halloween crafts, a movie night, or a small gathering at home can be fun alternatives to trick-or-treating.
- Celebrate small successes. Encourage children's efforts and allow breaks without pressure to participate.

Every child has different needs, and flexibility can make a meaningful difference. Focus on your child's comfort, celebrate small moments of joy, and create positive memories together.

This Halloween, let's lead with patience, understanding, and inclusion so every child feels safe, supported, and free to enjoy the holiday in their own way!

Resource Spotlight



Lighthouse Lessons

The Parent and Teen YouTube Channel, created by the Center for Parent and Teen Communication at Children's Hospital of Philadelphia, offers science-backed strategies to strengthen family connections and help young people thrive.

Their Lighthouse Lessons series features short videos on topics such as coping strategies, honest communication, and other ways to support your teen's well-being.

Check out the videos for practical tips to help you navigate the teen years and build a stronger relationship with your child!

Lighthouse Lessons

50 Positive What-If Questions To Help Reframe Negative Thoughts and Calm Your Mind

Negative thoughts can sometimes lead us to expect the worst. This article from Verywell Mind shares 50 positive "what if" questions to help shift your perspective, challenge negative thinking, and approach life's challenges with greater hope and self-compassion. Check it out for simple prompts you can use in everyday life!

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.

- Youth Engagement Specialist (Must Live in PG County)
- Family Peer Support Specialist - Mental Health (Must Live in Worcester County)
- Family Peer Support Specialist - Mental Health (Must Live in Allegany County)

[Employment Opportunities](#)

We're here because we've been there too



www.mdcoalition.org



[Donate Today!](#)



Try email & social marketing for free!