



MCF
maryland coalition of families

Family Focus

Problem Gambling Awareness Month

This month, we shine a light on Problem Gambling Awareness. Problem gambling can affect anyone, regardless of age, gender, or background, and its repercussions extend beyond the individual to their loved ones. By fostering open conversations and understanding, we empower each other to recognize the signs and seek help when needed. Let's come together as a community to support those impacted by problem gambling and promote healthier choices for ourselves and our families.



Maryland Coalition of Families stands alongside caregivers, offering resources, guidance, and a compassionate ear for those navigating the complexities of loved ones struggling with problem gambling. Together, we can harness the strength of our community to provide understanding, encouragement, and practical assistance to those in need.

[Learn About the National Council on Problem Gambling](#)

Children's Mental Health Campaign Poster Winner Announced!

Every year, MCF organizes an art contest to select the artwork for the annual Children's Mental Health Matters! poster. This year, we were blown away by the creativity of over 100 submissions from students across the state, each conveying

inspiring messages about mental health awareness. With more than 130 votes cast, we're excited to unveil the winning artwork by Brynn, an exceptionally talented 11-year-old. Brynn's piece beautifully encapsulates mental wellness with her statement: "Everyone should be kind to their mind. Take the time to nurture yourself as you would your flowers."



The Children's Mental Health Matters Campaign, hosted in partnership with the Mental Health Association of Maryland, brings together non-profits, schools, and other agencies to raise public awareness of the importance of children's mental health and substance use, reduce the stigma of mental health, and connect children and families with resources for prevention and support of mental health conditions.

Posters are available at no cost. To request a poster, please send your name and address to info@mdcoalition.org.

And there is still time to become a Children's Mental Health Matters Champion! Click the link below to learn more!

[Become a Champion Today!](#)

MCF Teams Up With Univision DC to Raise Awareness and Decrease Stigma

MCF was honored to partner with Univision DC to shed light on community resources and services to address mental health and substance use challenges.

Jackeline Quijano Jovel, a Univision DC reporter, recently visited MCF's Central Office to talk with MCF's Baneza Rivera and Ely Lanza about the services and program officered by the Maryland Coalition of Families. Ely and Baneza, along with other MCF staff who speak Spanish, are making incredible strides connecting with Spanish-speaking families and advocating for accessible behavioral health care across Maryland.



During this exclusive interview, we delve into our commitment to bridging gaps and ensuring equitable support for all families in need.

[Watch Here](#)

MCF Awarded the Platinum Bell Seal for Workplace Mental Health

The Maryland Coalition of Families is proud to announce that it has been awarded the Platinum Bell Seal for Workplace Mental Health by Mental Health America. This national certification program recognizes employers committed to creating mentally healthy workplaces and affirms the importance of policies and practices that support employees' wellbeing.



2024
PLATINUM

“As a family peer support organization, we know how critical it is to make sure the people who work hard every day to support Maryland families have the support, resources, and flexibility to take care of themselves and their loved ones,” says MCF Executive Director, Christi Green. “We’re honored that our policies and practices meet the highest standards of the Bell Seal and we’re committed to continuing to find ways to support our staff.”

In addition to a robust Employee Assistance Program and insurance coverage that provides substantial benefits to cover mental health and substance use services, MCF has explored other ways to promote employee self-care. For example, MCF offers a weekly virtual yoga session led by a certified yoga instructor who is also a Family Peer Support Specialist. In the last two years, the organization has provided paid time off between the week of Christmas and New Year's Day so that employees have time to spend with their families. Last summer, a pilot program to close at noon on Fridays was so successful that it will be implemented again this year.

MCF is thrilled to be recognized as an organization who cares about the people who make our work possible and advance the mission.



Celebrating International Women's Month

March marks International Women's Month, a time to celebrate the remarkable women who shape our lives every day. This year, let's take a moment to acknowledge the unsung heroes: the female caregivers who selflessly dedicate themselves to the well-being of others. From nurturing mothers to devoted healthcare professionals, their sacrifices often go unnoticed. Yet, their love, compassion, and resilience are the bedrock of our society.

Let's express our heartfelt gratitude for their tireless efforts and unwavering support. Together, let's ensure they receive the recognition, resources, and care they truly deserve. Family peer support can be invaluable for caregivers, providing a safe space to share experiences and find strength in community.

Check out these events honoring women in caregiving!

Parent CRAFT

A Tool to Guide Conversations About Substance Use



Parent CRAFT is a self-paced online video course that teaches parents the skills they need to meet the risks of substance abuse. Parent CRAFT is based on the proven CRAFT method and is for parents who know their youth is using substances or who need support to help their child accept treatment.

The course is designed to empower parents to build effective communication skills and teaches participants how to use positive reinforcement and natural consequences to help their child break the cycle of using substances. Parent CRAFT has a 71% success rate at getting adolescents to accept professional help and is shown to decrease episodes of anger, anxiety, depression and negative physical symptoms that impact the entire family.

Join us on April 23rd at 6:00 PM to learn more

[Register Here](#)

Parent CRAFT is made freely available to parents in Maryland by the National Center for School Mental Health at the University of Maryland School of Medicine, with funding from the Maryland Behavioral Health Administration and the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration.

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 are 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!

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!

MCF Employment Opportunities

MCF is growing, and 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 Team Supervisor**
- **Bilingual Family Peer Support Specialist**
- **Program Manager**
- **Youth Engagement Specialist**

[Employment Opportunities](#)



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