



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Department of Health highlights children's mental health services for Mental Health Awareness Month

HONOLULU – May is National Children's Mental Health Awareness Month. In light of the challenges related to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Hawai'i Department of Health (DOH) and the Children's Mental Health Awareness Planning Group are hosting a series of virtual events to encourage parents and families to talk about mental health with their children and to seek out resources if needed. Children and adolescents who are struggling may benefit from access to timely resources and services that are family-driven, youth-guided and culturally appropriate.

"Hawaii's youth have faced challenges to their social, emotional and mental well-being amid the pandemic," said Dr. Scott Shimabukuro, acting administrator for the DOH Child & Adolescent Mental Health Division (CAMHD). "We want to remind families that mental wellness is as important as physical wellness. Keiki who feel a sense of being cared for, supported and belonging at school and home are more likely to experience positive mental health outcomes in adulthood."

Virtual events for this year's National Children's Mental Health Awareness Month include:

- **May 4: Mental Health Forum** on KHII at 7:30-8:00 p.m. and KHON2 at 9:30-10:00 p.m. featuring Dr. Lesley Slavin, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Division (CAMHD), Melissa Harper-Osai, Child and Family Service (CFS) 'Ohana Support Services, and Billie-Ann Bruce, EPIC 'Ohana.
- **May 6: Virtual Sign Waving.** Participants are encouraged to wear green and share how they take care of their mental health as part of the social media campaign. For more information visit health.hawaii.gov/camhd/cmha21.
- **May 14: Mental Health Awareness and Awards Celebration:** Raising Voices to Save Lives from 9:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m presented by Mental Health America of Hawai'i and Sutter Health Kāhi Mōhala. To attend this online event, visit the Mental Health America of Hawai'i [Facebook](#) page.
- **May 17-21: Aloha Tower Green Light Display** to bring awareness to children's mental health issues.

- **May 19: Keiki Self-Care Webinar** hosted by Mental Health America of Hawai'i (MHA) in partnership with Child and Adolescent Mental Health Division, highlights Keiki Self-Care from 2:00-3:00 p.m. Parents will learn how keiki express and experience emotions and practice skills to help keiki build emotional toolboxes and get community resources to share. [Email](#) MHA with questions and register [here](#) to attend.
- **May 22-26: A Virtual Youth Mental Health Film Festival** online showcase of short films produced by youth during Hawai'i Women in Filmmaking programs, hosted by Mental Health America of Hawai'i and Hawai'i Women in Filmmaking. Films are available [online](#) from May 22 at 8:00 a.m. until May 26 at 3 p.m. On May 26 from 4:00 to 5:00 pm. join a Zoom Q&A with the filmmakers. Register [here](#) for the Q&A.
- **May 24-28: Honolulu Hale Green Light Display** in support of children's mental health.
- **May 28: Brown Bag Webinar** about the services and programs available through CAMHD featuring Medical Director Dr. Kurt Humphrey and Neighbor Island Services Branch Chief Keli Acquaro, from 12:00-1:00 p.m. Register [here](#).

Free mental health resources are available to Hawaii's children, youth and families through [Help Your Keiki](#) and [Mental Health America of Hawai'i](#). [The National Federation of Families for Children's Mental Health](#) also offers resources and activities to help families get involved throughout May.

The Children's Mental Health Awareness Planning Group is led by the DOH CAMHD and dedicates itself to serving children and families and leading children's mental health awareness efforts in our islands. Participating organizations include [CAMHD Safe Spaces Committee](#), [Center for Cognitive Behavior Therapy University of Hawai'i at Mānoa](#), [Child and Family Service](#), [Community Children's Councils](#), [Hawai'i State Department of Education](#), [EPIC 'Ohana](#), [Evidence-Based Services](#), [Hawai'i Women in Filmmaking](#), [Hawai'i Families as Allies](#), [Help Your Keiki](#), [Mental Health America of Hawai'i](#), and [Sutter Health Kāhi Mōhala](#).

If you or your child is experiencing a crisis or needs access to mental health resources, call [Hawai'i CARES](#) for free 24/7 support at 1-800-753-6879 or contact the [Crisis Text Line](#) by texting ALOHA to 741741. For more information about children's mental health services, visit <https://health.hawaii.gov/camhd/>.

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