

Building Stronger Families

together

WHAT'S INSIDE:

PAGE 1: MESSAGE FROM THE CAMDEN FSO TEAM
 PAGE 1: WHY MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS MATTERS FOR FAMILIES
 PAGE 2: CAREGIVER CORNER: YOU DESERVE SUPPORT TOO
 PAGE 2: SELF CARE SQUARE
 PAGE 2: YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH: SIGNS A YOUNG PERSON MAY NEED SUPPORT
 PAGE 3: FAMILY MENTAL HEALTH CHECK-IN: A SIMPLE TOOL FOR BIG FEELINGS
 PAGE 3: HOW TO OVERCOME THE STIGMA OF MENTAL HEALTH
 PAGE 4: LEARN MORE: ARTICLES & LINKS FOR MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT
 PAGE 5: CAMDEN FSO & CMO YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH RESOURCE FAIR AND WALK!
 PAGE 6: MAY 2026 CALENDAR OF EVENTS
 PAGE 6: ADVOCACY IN ACTION: SHARE YOUR STORY



Hello Camden County Families,

May is a meaningful month for our families and community. Mental Health Awareness Month gives us a chance to talk openly about emotional wellness, stress, anxiety, grief, behavior, and the importance of support. Many children, teens, caregivers, and families are carrying more than others may see. Some families are managing school concerns, emotional outbursts, anxiety, depression, developmental needs, family changes, system involvement, or everyday life stress. These challenges can feel heavy, but support is available. This month, we encourage every family to pause and ask:

How are we really doing? What support do we need? Who can we reach out to?

You do not need to have all the answers before asking for help. You do not need to wait until things are "bad enough." Support can begin with one conversation, one resource, one group, or one safe person. Camden FSO is here to walk alongside families with compassion, respect, and lived experience. Thank you for allowing us to be part of your family's journey.

With love and support ~ The Camden FSO Team 



Why Mental Health Awareness Matters for Families

Mental health affects how we think, feel, communicate, learn, parent, and cope with stress. For children and youth, mental health can show up through behavior, school struggles, sleep changes, anger, sadness, worry, isolation, or difficulty following directions. Sometimes families are told a child is "acting out" when the child may really be overwhelmed, anxious, depressed, overstimulated, grieving, or unable to explain what they need.

Mental Health Awareness Month reminds us to look deeper. Instead of asking only, "What is wrong with this behavior?"

We can also ask:
 What is this child trying to communicate?
 What happened before the behavior?
 What stress is this family carrying?
 What support would help right now?
 What strengths can we build on?



When families are supported early, youth have a better chance to feel safe, understood, and connected.

CAREGIVER CORNER: YOU DESERVE SUPPORT TOO

CAREGIVERS OFTEN PUT EVERYONE ELSE FIRST. YOU MAY BE MANAGING APPOINTMENTS, SCHOOL MEETINGS, TRANSPORTATION, WORK, FAMILY RESPONSIBILITIES, BEHAVIOR CONCERNS, AND YOUR CHILD'S EMOTIONAL NEEDS – ALL WHILE TRYING TO STAY CALM AND STRONG.

BUT CAREGIVERS NEED CARE TOO. TAKING CARE OF YOURSELF DOES NOT MEAN YOU ARE IGNORING YOUR CHILD'S NEEDS. IT MEANS YOU ARE GIVING YOURSELF THE SUPPORT AND ENERGY NEEDED TO KEEP SHOWING UP.

THIS MONTH, TRY CHOOSING ONE SMALL CAREGIVER RESET:
TAKE A QUIET WALK.

DRINK WATER BEFORE YOUR NEXT TASK.
TEXT SOMEONE YOU TRUST.

STEP OUTSIDE FOR FIVE MINUTES.

SAY NO TO ONE THING THAT CAN WAIT.

ASK FOR HELP BEFORE YOU FEEL COMPLETELY OVERWHELMED.

ATTEND A CAREGIVER GROUP OR SUPPORT SPACE.

GIVE YOURSELF CREDIT FOR WHAT YOU DID TODAY.

YOU DO NOT HAVE TO EARN REST.

YOU DO NOT HAVE TO BE PERFECT TO BE A GOOD CAREGIVER.

YOU ARE ALLOWED TO NEED SUPPORT.

Self Care Square



Youth Mental Health: Signs a Young Person May Need Support

Children and teens do not always say, “I am depressed,” “I am anxious,” or “I need help.” Sometimes emotional pain shows up in other ways.

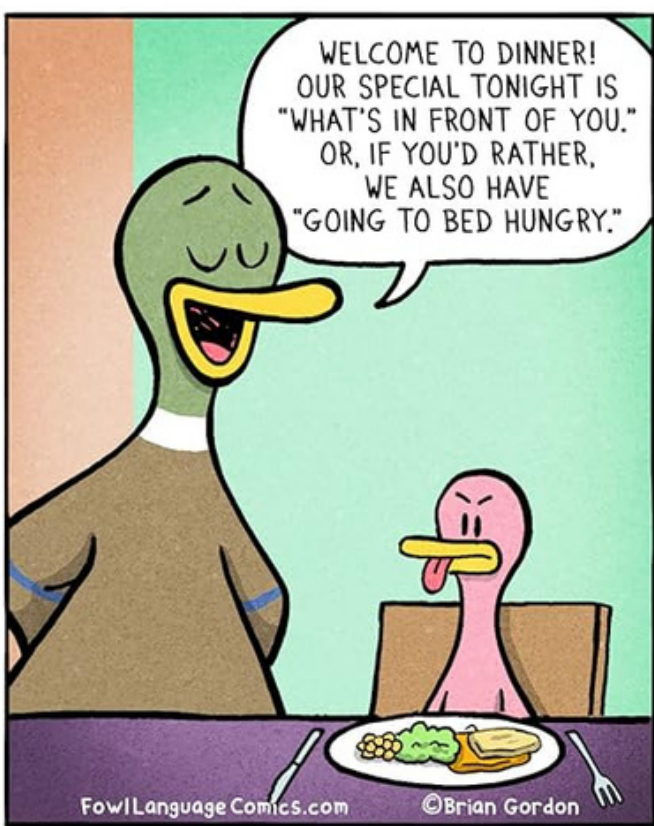
A youth may need extra support if you notice:

- Big changes in mood
- Pulling away from friends or family
- Crying more often
- Increased anger or irritability
- Trouble sleeping or sleeping too much
- Loss of interest in things they used to enjoy
- Increased school refusal or absences
- Drop in grades or motivation
- Risky behavior
- Talking about feeling hopeless
- Frequent stomachaches or headaches
- Feeling overwhelmed by everyday expectations

If you are worried about your child, trust your instincts. Reaching out early can help.

For immediate mental health support in New Jersey, families can contact PerformCare at 1-877-652-7624 to access Children's System of Care services.

If there is an immediate safety concern, call 988, 911, or go to the nearest emergency room.





FAMILY MENTAL HEALTH CHECK-IN: A SIMPLE TOOL FOR BIG FEELINGS

Taking care of mental health is just as important as taking care of physical health. The Mental Health Checkup & Toolkit ([found here](#)) from Dream A Play offers a simple, family-friendly way to help children, teens, and adults pause, notice how they are feeling, and choose a coping tool that may help. The toolkit reminds families that stress, worry, and feeling upset are normal, but we can practice healthy ways to respond.

The checkup encourages families to start by taking a breath and asking, "How do I feel right now?" Once a child or caregiver can name what is bothering them, they can choose one of four tools: a Distraction Tool, such as music, games, pets, crafts, or talking with someone; a Relaxation Tool, such as deep breathing or imagining a peaceful place; a Thinking Tool, which helps reframe unhelpful thoughts; or an Action Tool, such as keeping routines, sleeping, eating, drinking water, and moving the body.

This is a great activity to use at home, in school, or during stressful moments when emotions feel too big. Families can print the worksheet, talk through the tools together, and help youth build a coping plan before a crisis happens. The goal is not to make every hard feeling disappear, but to remind children and caregivers that they have choices, support, and skills they can practice.

Try it as a family this month: pick one tool, practice it when everyone is calm, and add it to your family's "calm-down plan."

CLICK [HERE](#) FOR OUR LINKTREE WITH THE MOST UP TO DATE EVENTS & INFO



HOW TO OVERCOME THE STIGMA OF MENTAL HEALTH

MENTAL HEALTH STIGMA HAPPENS WHEN PEOPLE FEEL JUDGED, EMBARRASSED, BLAMED, OR MISUNDERSTOOD BECAUSE THEY ARE STRUGGLING EMOTIONALLY. STIGMA CAN MAKE YOUTH AND CAREGIVERS STAY QUIET, AVOID SUPPORT, OR FEEL LIKE THEY HAVE TO HANDLE EVERYTHING ALONE. THE TRUTH IS THAT MENTAL HEALTH CHALLENGES ARE COMMON, AND ASKING FOR HELP IS A SIGN OF STRENGTH—NOT FAILURE.

ONE WAY TO REDUCE STIGMA IS TO TALK ABOUT MENTAL HEALTH THE SAME WAY WE TALK ABOUT PHYSICAL HEALTH. JUST LIKE SOMEONE MAY NEED A DOCTOR FOR ASTHMA, DIABETES, OR A BROKEN BONE, SOMEONE MAY NEED SUPPORT FOR ANXIETY, DEPRESSION, TRAUMA, GRIEF, OR STRESS. MENTAL HEALTH CARE IS HEALTH CARE. FAMILIES CAN ALSO HELP BY USING SUPPORTIVE LANGUAGE. INSTEAD OF SAYING SOMEONE IS "CRAZY," "BAD," "ATTENTION-SEEKING," OR "TOO MUCH," TRY SAYING, "THEY ARE HAVING A HARD TIME," "THEY MAY NEED SUPPORT," OR "THEIR BEHAVIOR MAY BE COMMUNICATING SOMETHING." THE WORDS WE USE CAN EITHER CREATE SHAME OR OPEN THE DOOR TO HEALING. ANOTHER IMPORTANT STEP IS CONNECTION. YOUTH ARE MORE LIKELY TO ASK FOR HELP WHEN THEY KNOW THEY WILL BE LISTENED TO WITHOUT JUDGMENT. CAREGIVERS CAN START WITH SIMPLE CHECK-INS LIKE, "I'M HERE FOR YOU," "YOU ARE NOT IN TROUBLE FOR HAVING FEELINGS," OR "WE CAN FIGURE THIS OUT TOGETHER."

OVERCOMING STIGMA STARTS WITH SMALL MOMENTS: ONE HONEST CONVERSATION, ONE SAFE ADULT, ONE SUPPORT GROUP, ONE THERAPY APPOINTMENT, OR ONE FAMILY CHOOSING NOT TO SUFFER IN SILENCE. NO FAMILY SHOULD FEEL ASHAMED FOR NEEDING HELP.

MENTAL HEALTH MATTERS. SUPPORT MATTERS. YOU ARE NOT ALONE.



Show your support in style

Check out the official Camden FSO Bonfire Store for T-shirts and gear that spread awareness and support families in our community. Every purchase helps us continue our mission of empowering youth and caregivers.

[CHECK IT OUT HERE!](#)



ARTICLES AND LINKS FOR SUPPORT

CLICK ON THE PARAGRAPHS BELOW TO FOLLOW
TO LINKS LEARN MORE!

Mental health support can look different for every family. Some youth need a crisis line. Some need a coping skill. Some need school advocacy. Some need a safe space to talk. This month, we encourage families to explore resources that meet youth where they are: text support, teen apps, creative coping tools, LGBTQIA+ affirming crisis support, caregiver conversation guides, and New Jersey system navigation. Start with one resource. Try one tool. Have one conversation. Small steps can create real support.



For Youth Who Need Someone to Talk To

2NDFLOOR Youth Helpline: A 24/7 helpline for New Jersey youth and young adults ages 10–24. Youth can call or text when they need someone to talk to about home, school, friendships, stress, anxiety, or feeling overwhelmed.

Soluna — Free Support for NJ Teens: Soluna offers free, confidential mental health support for New Jersey teens ages 13–18, including self-guided tools, peer support, and 1:1 chat with a professional.

The Trevor Project: The Trevor Project provides free, confidential crisis counseling for LGBTQ+ young people by phone, text, and chat, 24/7, all year.

Kids Mental Health Foundation: provides free, expert-created children's mental health resources for families

Caregivers, Educators, and Coaches

JED: offers resources to help caregivers recognize warning signs, talk with teens and young adults, and understand the difference between typical stress and serious distress. JED is helpful for families with teens and young adults who are navigating stress, school pressure, relationships, independence, or emotional changes.

CHOC: Creative Coping Skills for School-Aged Children, This resource shares fun, kid-friendly coping strategies that can help children practice calming down and handling hard feelings.

For Families Navigating School and Disability Supports

Center for Parent Information and Resources: This site offers family-friendly information about children with emotional, behavioral, mental health, developmental, and disability-related needs. When mental health impacts learning, behavior, attendance, or school success, families may need both emotional support and school advocacy tools.

PerformCare NJ: PerformCare is New Jersey's access point for Children's System of Care services, including behavioral health, intellectual/developmental disability services, and substance use treatment supports for eligible youth. Families can call 1-877-652-7624.

For Substance Use and Mental Health Support

SAMHSA National Helpline: SAMHSA's National Helpline provides free, confidential, 24/7 treatment referral and information for individuals and families facing mental health and substance use concerns.

People with Neurodivergent Support

988 Lifeline: Includes information and crisis resources for neurodivergent people, including autistic people and suicide warning sign considerations

Deaf Crisis Line / DeafLEAD

The Deaf Crisis Line: is designed for Deaf and Hard of Hearing people and ASL users. It operates through videophone and connects callers with trained crisis counselors fluent in ASL.

Join
-US-

COME BE A PART OF OUR FIRST
ANNUAL RESOURCE FAIR AND WALK IN
PARTNERSHIP WITH CAMDEN CMO!

TAKE A MENTAL HEALTH DAY!

CAMDEN FSO RESOURCE FAIR
& MENTAL HEALTH
AWARENESS WALK

THURSDAY, MAY 14TH

12PM-6PM @

COOPERS POYNT

WATERFRONT PARK

801-811 DELAWARE AVE.

CAMDEN, NJ 08102

RAIN OR SHINE!

FOR INFO CONTACT

PETER BURGOS 856-236-0090

PETER.BURGOS@CAMDENFSO.ORG

WWW.CAMDENFSO.ORG



Caregivers MAY 2026

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday	NOTES	
				1	2	3		<p>Office Closed for the holiday Monday, May 25th!</p> <p>Mental Health Awareness Walk & Resource Fair Thursday, May 14th 12pm-6pm</p>
4 Lean In Moms 6pm-8pm SNSG @ 6pm	5	6	7 Caregivers Coffee Talk 6:30pm-8:30pm	8	9	10		
11 Lean In Moms 6pm-8pm	12 Circle of Hope @12pm	13	14 Mental Health Awareness Walk & Resource Fair 12pm-6pm	15	16	17		
18 Lean In Moms 6pm-8pm	19 Orchards Support group 4:30pm-6:30pm SNSG @ Sector X @ 6pm	20 Father's Group 7pm-9pm	21 Caregivers Coffee Talk 6:30pm-8:30pm	22	23	24		
25 Office Closed Holiday!	26 Circle Of Hope @12pm	27 JIFEP Caregivers Coffee Talk 6pm-8pm	28 Caregivers Coffee Talk 6:30pm-8:30pm	29	30	31		

MAY 2026 Youth Partnership							NOTES	
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday		
					1	2		<p>Reminder!!! Office closed Monday May 25th for the holiday.</p> <p>TO DO</p> <p>Children's Mental Health Awareness Walk Thursday, May 14th from 12pm-6pm</p>
3	4 Glow 6pm-8pm YLS 6-7PM	5	6	7 Youth Partnership 6:30pm - 8:30pm	8	9		
10	11 Glow 6pm-8pm REACH 6pm-8pm	12	13	14 CMHAW & Resource Fair 12pm-6pm	15	16		
17	18 Glow 6pm-8pm YLS 6pm-7pm	19	20	21 Youth Partnership 6:30pm-8:30pm	22	23		
24	25 Office Closed Holiday	26	27 JIYP 6pm-8pm	28 Youth Partnership 6:30pm-8:30pm	29	30		
31								

ADVOCACY IN ACTION: REAL FAMILIES, REAL IMPACT

Has Camden FSO made a difference in your family's life? We'd love to hear your story! Parent, youth, and provider testimonials help us show the true impact of family-driven support and strengthen advocacy efforts across New Jersey. You can share by writing a short note, recording a video (we'll help!), or sitting down for a casual chat at our office.

✉ Ready to share? Email us at audrey.hvizdos@camdenfso.org.

Together, let's raise our voices to protect, grow, and celebrate the support families deserve. ✨

WWW.CAMDENFSO.ORG 1030 Kings Highway North Suite 210 Cherry Hill, NJ 08034 @camdenfso | 856.662.2600

