

SUPPORTING YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH

| a manual for Baltimore teachers and faculty

PREPARED BY THE:

YOUTH PROGRAMMING ADVISORY COUNCIL AT NAMI METRO BALTIMORE

START HAVING CONVERSATIONS ABOUT MENTAL HEALTH TODAY.



Metropolitan
Baltimore

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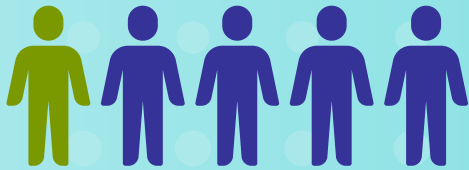
Local resources and how to find them, along with additional helpful phone numbers.

19 ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Special thanks to everyone who contributed to the creation of this resource guide.

YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH BY THE NUMBERS

Millions of youth and young adults are affected by mental illness each year, yet stigma and a lack of understanding around mental health conditions prevent people from speaking up and seeking help.



1 out of 5 youth experience a mental health condition in a given year.

1/2

of all lifetime cases of mental illness begin by age 14.

17%

of high school students seriously consider suicide.

50%

of students 14+ with a mental health condition **drop out of high school.**



50-75%

of youth in juvenile justice systems experience a mental health condition.



**Only
half**

of children ages 8 - 15 with a mental health condition receive treatment, and often there are long delays between onset of symptoms and treatment.

Suicide is the **2nd leading cause**

of death for people ages 15 - 24, and 90% of youth who die by suicide had one or more mental health conditions.

HOW MENTAL ILLNESS IMPACTS STUDENTS

A mental illness is a condition that affects a person's thinking, feeling, behavior or mood. These conditions deeply impact day-to-day living and may also affect the ability to relate to others.

Students experiencing mental illnesses may have more difficulty paying attention in class, completing schoolwork on time, or complying with other rules. It's important to remember that each person will have different experiences, even if people have the same diagnosis. **Early engagement and support** are critical to improving outcomes and increasing the chance of recovery.



Remember, personality and behavior changes of adolescence may mimic or mask symptoms of a mental health condition. **In general, if a student is not acting like themselves for 2 or more weeks**, it's essential to reach out.

School faculty and staff

are in a unique position to provide support to students, as they are close observers of student behavior outside of families and friends.

Below are the 4 Steps to early intervention.



Know the
Warning Signs



Reach out and
Respond



Work with
Families & Students



Provide Resources
& Support

COMMON WARNING SIGNS OF MENTAL ILLNESS

Since school faculty and staff are close observers of their students, it's important that they become familiar with the below common warning signs of mental illness.

- 1 Feeling very sad or withdrawn for more than 2 weeks
- 2 Seriously trying to self harm or making plans to do so
- 3 Severe out-of-control, risk-taking behaviors
- 4 Sudden, overwhelming fear for no apparent reason
- 5 Not eating, fixating on weight loss - significant weight loss or gain
- 6 Seeing, hearing, or believing things that are not real
- 7 Repeatedly using drugs or alcohol
- 8 Drastic changes in mood, behavior, personality, or sleeping habits
- 9 Extreme difficulty in concentrating or staying still
- 10 Intense worries or fears that get in the way of daily activities

It's important to consider:



Intensity:

How severe are the symptoms?



Duration:

Do they last 2 or more weeks?



Level of Distress:

How much do symptoms impair daily functioning?

Students might also present symptoms differently at home and in school, so connecting with their parent or guardian if you have concerns is key to getting a full picture.

HOW TO RESPOND WITH CARE



If you notice any of the warning signs mentioned on the prior page are persisting in a student for over 2 weeks, don't be afraid to reach out to the student, family, or your school counselor or social worker and **share your concerns.**

1 Start the Conversation

- ✓ Open the conversation by sharing specific signs you've observed.
- ✓ If you think your student is thinking about suicide, ask the direct question "Are you thinking about suicide?". Do not leave them alone if they say yes. You need to talk with their family or seek help from school counselors.

2 Listen Non-Judgmentally

- ✓ Focus on being understanding, caring, and non-judgmental, by saying things like:
"You're not alone, I'm here for you."
"I might not know exactly how you feel, but I care about you and want to help."
- ✓ Ask open-ended questions to understand how your student feels.

3 Make Student Aware of Options

- ✓ Depending on the student's age, including them in the decision-making process can help show that their feelings matter.
- ✓ Sharing concerns with the family and making them aware of IEP options to support their child are also an important part of this conversation.

4 Know What to Do in a Crisis

- ✓ Knowing the contact point in your school to turn to in the event of a mental health crisis is essential to being prepared to respond.
- ✓ **Remember:** Don't leave the student alone. Be sure to contact the family, and keep mental health resources in your back pocket in case of a crisis. (Hotlines are on the following pages.)

CONNECTING STUDENTS TO CARE & SUPPORT

Each school's mental health support system might look a little different, but most schools have guidance counselors, school nurses, and special programs available if a student needs support.

Below are a few suggestions for what to seek out at your school, so you will be prepared if a student requires mental health support.

School Social Worker or Guidance Counselor



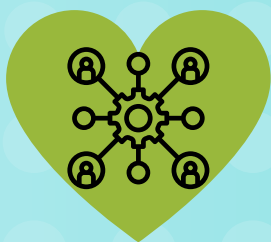
A trained professional who would be aware of possible accommodations and steps to take to support a student's mental health.

Individualized Education Programs



Unique lesson plans to support students with learning disabilities.

Initiatives that Promote Social and Emotional Learning in Your School District



Baltimore County Public Schools

Division of School Climate and Safety Social-Emotional Support

https://scs.bcps.org/departments/social_emotional_support

Baltimore City Public and Charter Schools

Expanded School Mental Health and Hope Health Systems Inc.

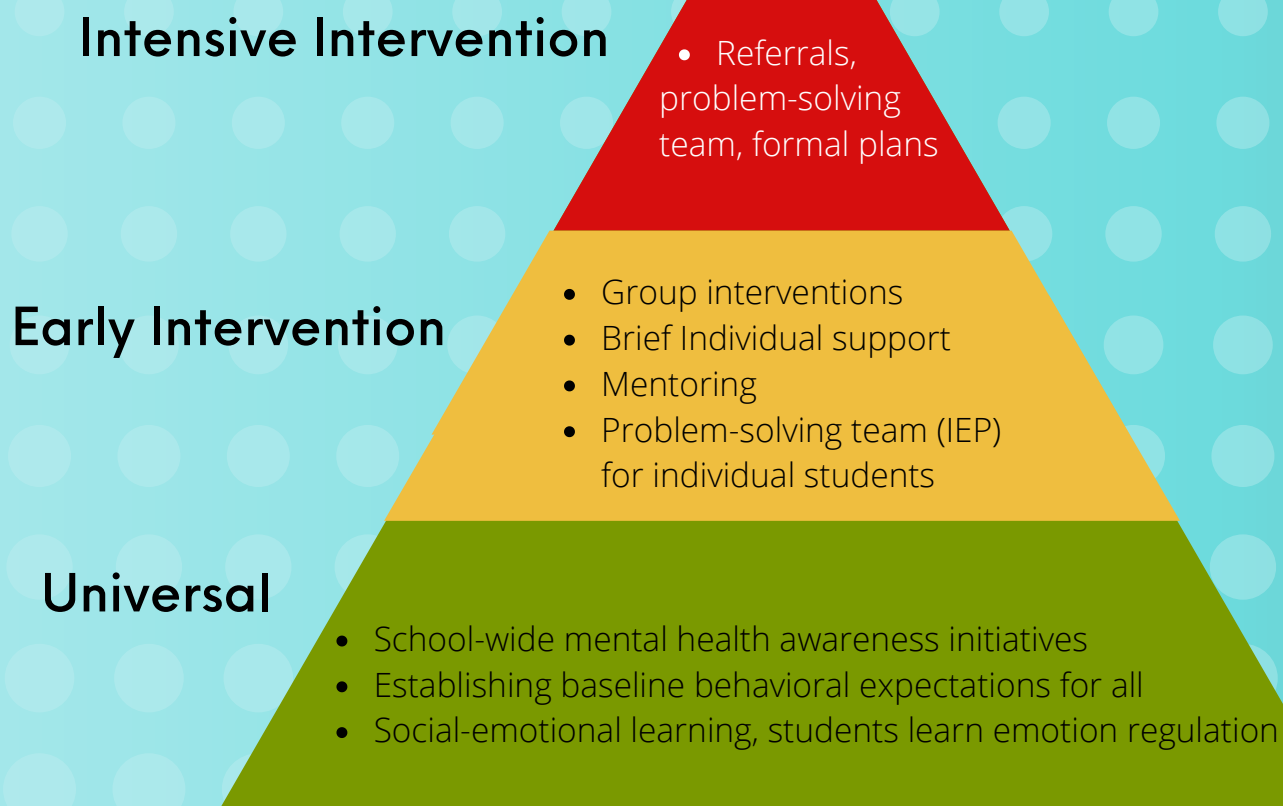
<https://www.baltimorecityschools.org/health-services>

CONNECTING STUDENTS TO CARE & SUPPORT, CONTINUED

Many schools follow an **Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS)** which is a framework that guides decision-making around what kind of intervention methods might best support a student who is struggling.

The pyramid below highlights just a few of the MTSS interventions and prevention methods. It's important to remember that every student's situation is different, and that one size does not fit all.

For a more in-depth view of the Multi-Tiered System of Supports and various interventions, **[click here](#)** or visit bit.ly/mtssbcps. Your school guidance counselor or nurse is also likely familiar with these interventions.



NUMBERS TO CALL IN A CRISIS

Baltimore County



Baltimore County Crisis Response

24/7, Year Round Mental Health Crisis Hotline | The Mobile Crisis Team provides health services to persons in mental, behavioral or emotional crisis. They provide an on-site, emergency police response to persons in need of crisis intervention, assess individuals in need of services, offer resources and referrals, and complete emergency petitions when warranted. Specially-trained police officers are paired with licensed mental health clinicians in an unmarked police car and wear plain clothes (khaki pants and black polo shirts).

(410) 931 - 2214

Baltimore City

Here2Help Hotline & Baltimore Crisis Response Inc.

24/7, Year Round Mental Health Crisis Hotline | The Here2Help Hotline is available 24/7, 365 days a year. Call now to get connected to mental health services, talk to a supportive listener or have a mental health specialist come to you. If you or a loved one are experiencing a mental health emergency, you can call the hotline instead of 911 to have a mental health specialist, rather than law enforcement, come to you and connect you to the support you need.

(410) 433 - 5175

State and Nationwide Numbers

Maryland Youth Crisis Hotline

State-wide 24-hour crisis intervention and supportive counseling hotline for suicide, family and relationship problems, shelter needs, violent or threatening domestic situations, loneliness, depression, chemical dependency issues and others.

1 (800) 422-0009

National Suicide Prevention Hotline

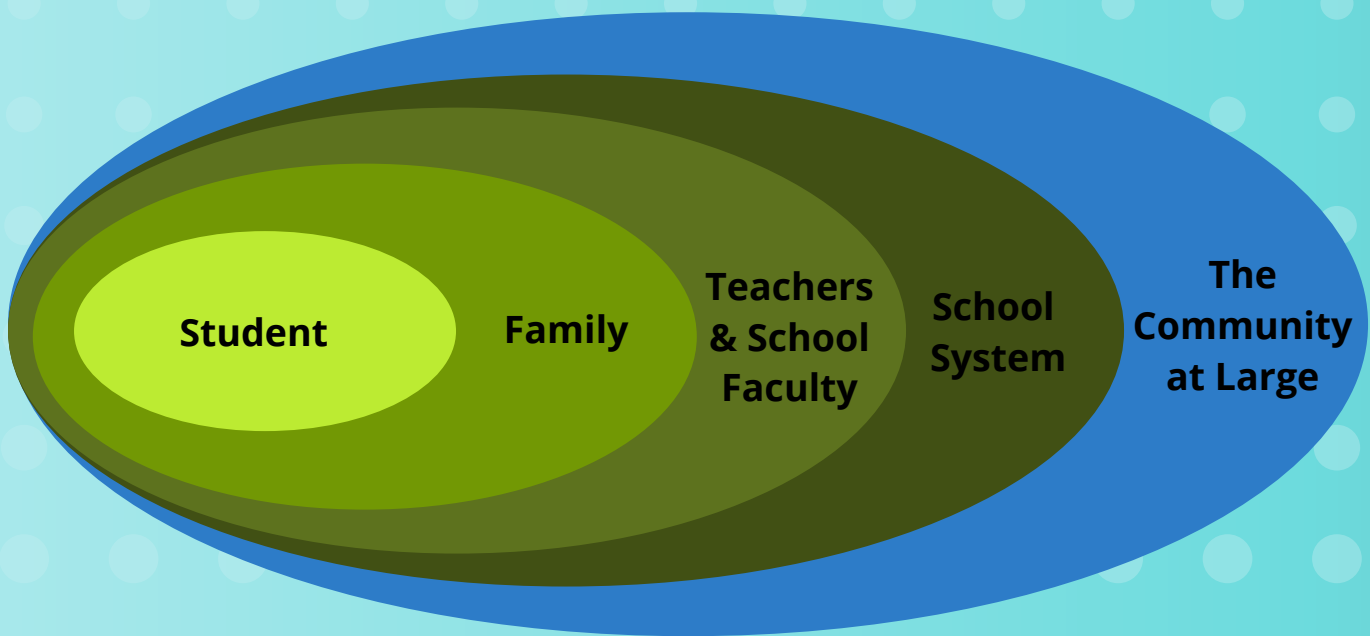
The Lifeline provides 24/7, free and confidential support for people in distress, prevention and crisis resources for you or your loved ones, and best practices for professionals in the United States.

1 (800) 273-8255

211

211 connects you to expert, caring help. Every call is completely confidential.

CULTIVATING A CULTURE OF CARE AND OPENNESS AROUND MENTAL HEALTH



The stigma around mental health conditions has the potential to prevent a student from seeking out the care they need and deserve if they are experiencing a mental health condition. The graphic above showcases the various spheres of influence where we have an opportunity to end stigma and cultivate a culture of care.

There are proactive steps that we can take to support the mental health of youth and students in our community. Many schools understand the importance of social and emotional learning, and have incorporated routine activities into the school day to reinforce that mental health and emotional well-being are essential to being a successful and healthy student.

The following section includes steps that you can take to create a culture of care and openness around mental health in your school and classroom.

EDUCATION & STIGMA REDUCTION INITIATIVES



THE SECTION BELOW INCLUDES THE FOLLOWING MENTAL HEALTH RESOURCES AND PROGRAMS.

- ✓ NAMI Ending the Silence Presentations
- ✓ Offering Youth Mental Health First Aid
- ✓ ACE's Trauma Informed Trainings for Staff
- ✓ How to Create a Week-Long Mental Health Campaign



NAMI ENDING THE SILENCE



NAMI Ending the Silence Presentations

NAMI Ending the Silence is an hour-long presentation led by two leaders: one who shares an informative presentation with key statistics and facts on mental health conditions, and a young adult with a mental health condition who shares their journey of recovery.

Audience members can ask questions and gain understanding of an often-misunderstood topic. Through dialogue, we can help grow the movement to end stigma, so people seek support, sooner.

Learn more about the impact at bit.ly/etsstats

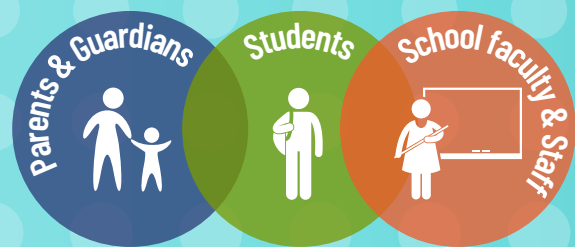
What does it cover?



- Warning signs and symptoms
- How to reach out and support a student in distress
- Where to seek mental health support
- Healthy coping strategies
- Mental health resources
- A young adult's lived experience

Who is it for?

The presentation is tailored to 3 audiences to ensure that the information shared is relevant and helpful for the participants.



Want to schedule a presentation or want to learn more?

Get in touch!



info@namibaltimore.org



HelpLine at (410) 435 - 2600

OFFERING YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AID & MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AID FOR TEENS



The National Council for Mental Wellbeing has developed curricula for people who work closely with teens, as well as teenagers themselves, so that they can learn about how the brain develops, how to identify early symptoms of mental illness, how to be prepared to respond to mental health crises, and more.

Mental Health First Aid will teach you how to:

- Assess for risk of suicide or self harm
- Listen non-judgmentally
- Give reassurance and information
- Encourage appropriate professional help
- Encourage self-help and other support strategies

The courses are typically about 8-hours long and may be split up over two days. At the conclusion of the course, participants will receive a certification indicating that they have completed this training.

You can learn more about the training at:

<https://www.mentalhealthfirstaid.org/population-focused-modules/youth/>

ADVERSE CHILDHOOD EXPERIENCES & TRAUMA-INFORMED CARE TRAINING



1 in 7



children experience abuse in any given year.

Research has shown that traumatic events experienced during childhood have the potential to impact brain development and adult mental health. "The cycle of violence, generational poverty and abuse, homelessness, substance abuse, incarceration, perpetration and victimization of violence are all related to Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE)'s."

By becoming aware of how such events can impact childhood development and learning how to identify and intervene in such instances, teachers and school faculty can begin taking steps to reduce risk of exposure to abuse and build resilience and restore a sense of safety in students who have experienced ACE's.

You can learn more about ACE Trainings at:

<https://www.zeroabuseproject.org/adverse-childhood-experiences-trauma-informed-care-training/>

PLANNING A WEEK-LONG MENTAL HEALTH CAMPAIGN



Out of the calendar year, there are many designated times when the mental health community comes together to raise awareness about mental illness, and the ways we can do better as a society to support people impacted by mental illness.

See the list to the right to help you plan an awareness campaign at your school.

On the following page are resources that can help you get your mental health campaign started.

Mental Health Dates of Note

NAMI Maryland Advocacy Day

Mental Illness Awareness Week

NAMI Suicide Prevention Month

NAMI Suicide Prevention Week

Minority Mental Health Month

Children's Mental Health Week

National Bullying Prevention Month

*National Eating Disorders
Awareness Week*

RESOURCES TO HELP PLAN YOUR MENTAL HEALTH CAMPAIGN



Each year, NAMI Metro Baltimore hosts NAMIWalks, I Will Listen, Advocacy Day, and numerous educational community mental health presentations to engage the public in mental health awareness activities.

Our volunteers share their personal stories about mental health and recovery, and are a voice of hope that challenges stereotypes that many hold around mental illness.

With decades of experience organizing these advocacy and awareness efforts, we can help your school plan events that encourage students, faculty, and staff to learn more about mental illnesses, and the ways they can be allies to people impacted by them.

Get in touch!



Email us at info@namibaltimore.org



HelpLine at (410) 435 - 2600

NAMI FAMILY-TO-FAMILY



A free, 8-session educational program for family, significant others, and friends of adults living with mental illness. It is a designated evidenced-based program. Research shows that the program significantly improves the coping and problem-solving abilities of the people closest to an individual living with a mental health condition.

NAMI Family-to-Family is taught by NAMI-trained family members who have been there, and includes presentations, discussion and interactive exercises.

What does NAMI Family-to-Family cover?

- Solving problems and communicating effectively
- Taking care of yourself and managing your stress
- Supporting your loved one with compassion
- Finding and using local supports and services
- Up-to-date information on mental health conditions and how they affect the brain
- Ways to handle a crisis
- Current treatments and therapies
- Impact of mental health conditions on the entire family

To Take NAMI Family-to-Family:

Email info@namibaltimore.org or visit www.namibaltimore.org.

NAMI FAMILY SUPPORT GROUP



NAMI Family Support Group is a peer-led support group for family members, caregivers, and loved ones of individuals living with mental health conditions.

Led by family members of people with mental health conditions, participants gain insight from the challenges and successes of others facing similar circumstances. Support groups meet weekly.

How will this support group help you?

- Learn about new coping skills
- Find strength in sharing experiences
- Not judge anyone's pain
- Forgive ourselves and reject guilt
- Embrace humor as healthy
- Accept that we cannot solve every problem
- Understand mental health conditions are no one's fault and can be traumatic experiences

To join a NAMI Family Support Group in Baltimore:

Visit

www.namibaltimore.org/find-support/support-groups/

NAMI BASICS



A free, 6-week education program for parents, family, and caregivers of children and teens who are experiencing symptoms of a mental illness or whom have already been diagnosed.

NAMI Basics is offered on-demand on the NAMI National website, so that participants can take the class and gain knowledge at their convenience from the comfort of their own home.

What does NAMI Basics cover?

- The impact mental health conditions can have on your entire family
- Types of mental health care providers, available treatment options, and therapies
- An overview of the public mental health care, school and juvenile justice systems and resources to help you navigate these systems
- Ways to advocate for your child's rights at school and in health care settings
- Ways to prepare for and respond to crises (self-harm, suicide attempts, etc.)
- The importance of taking care of yourself

Visit <https://www.nami.org/Videos/NAMI-Basics-OnDemand>

To Take NAMI Basics:

or

Email info@namibaltimore.org to learn about available classes.

BALTIMORE AREA YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH RESOURCES

Support Groups for Youth:

Tidemark Interventions

Confidential support groups for school aged youth.

1-800-TIS-6028 | View support groups at www.tidemarkinterventions.com/groups



Psychology Today Navigator

Empowers lay individuals to search for mental health services with a comprehensive, customizable directory.

<https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/groups/>

NAMI Metro Baltimore (ages 18-39)

A free and confidential support group led by 2 young adults living in recovery with a mental health condition. The group is ideal for high schoolers over the age of 18 seeking mental health support, and it meets 2nd and 4th Wednesdays every month, via Zoom.

<https://bit.ly/youngadultsupportnmb>

Mentoring:

Mentors through the Y of Central Maryland

Having a steady and supportive presence in a student's life can help them get care and support, and have someone in their lives that they can talk to.

<https://ymaryland.org/volunteer/mentoring>

CentroSOL Mentorship Program

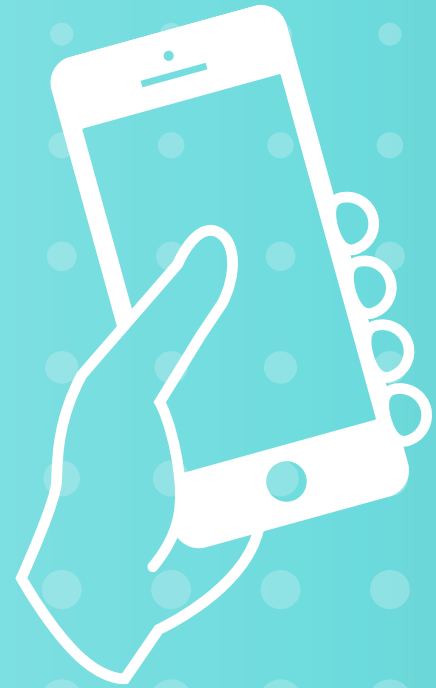
With the Mentoring Program, Centro SOL aims to empower Latinx youth by connecting them with passionate mentors that can offer meaningful guidance and support.

<https://www.jhcentrosol.org/education-mentoring-program>

GLOW with Purpose

A mentorship program that teaches young girls how to be resilient, goal set, and prioritize their mental health.

ADDITIONAL HELPFUL PHONE NUMBERS



Helplines:

24/7 Crisis Text Line

Text "NAMI" to 741-741

NAMI Metropolitan Baltimore Helpline

Monday - Friday, 9AM to 5PM, 410-435-2600

Baltimore City Crisis Response

410-433-5175

Baltimore County Crisis Response

410-931-2214

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline

24/7 hotline with skilled, trained counselors at a local crisis center, 1-800-273-8255

Spanish Suicide Prevention Hotline

24/7 hotline; will be connected to a skilled trained counselor, 1-800-784-2432

Maryland Crisis Hotline

24/7 hotline for an emergency situation concerning an adult or child's mental health, 1-800-422-0009

Youth Support:

Help4MDYouth Chat

Confidential talk with experts about thoughts, feelings, and suicide before exploring positive next steps. 1-800-422-0009 Crisis Chat Link: www.help4mdyouth.org/chat

Baltimore Child and Adolescent Response System

BCARS provides brief and intensive community-based services for children in psychiatric crisis to divert or shorten in-patient hospitalization and to link clients to community providers that will serve them for ongoing care. <https://www.catholiccharities-md.org/services/bcars-baltimore-child-adolescent-response-system/>

Child Mind Institute

Counseling & therapies designed for family and caregivers. General inquiries- 212-308-3118 <https://childmind.org/>

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS



This resource guide was made possible by the contributions of school counselors and social workers, mental health advocates, and community partners local to Baltimore, Maryland. We wish to give a special thanks to Courtney Blair, Tiamo Johnson, Bria Robinson, Brandon Johnson, Stephanie Perez, and Niamh McQuillan for their participation on the NAMI Metropolitan Baltimore Youth Programming Advisory Council, and for the insights and guidance they shared as we navigated how we could best lend our resources to support youth mental health during the COVID-19 Pandemic.

We aim to continue to use these insights to further support the mental health of youth, and this includes educating and supporting their support networks. This resource guide, as well as a resource guide for parents and guardians, and students will live on our website at www.namibaltimore.org. For any questions, please reach out to us at info@namibaltimore.org or (410) 435-2600.