



STATE OF RHODE ISLAND AND PROVIDENCE PLANTATIONS
Department of Children, Youth and Families
DIVISION OF CHILDREN'S BEHAVIORAL HEALTH and EDUCATION
101 Friendship Street, 3rd Floor
Providence, RI 02903



Dear Partner:

The Rhode Island Positive Educational Partnership (RIPEP), an initiative of the Department of Children, Youth and Families (DCYF), invites you to become a partner in Rhode Island's efforts to participate in National Children's Mental Health Awareness Day, May 6, 2010, "Promoting Positive Mental Health".

National Children's Mental Health Awareness Day is a time for everyone across the country to observe the day with events, youth demonstrations, and social networking campaigns to raise awareness about the importance of mental health and increase understanding of the mental health needs of children and their families. Awareness Day 2010 will specifically focus on increasing basic awareness of the importance positive mental health has on a child's healthy development, with the key message that "positive mental health is essential to a child's healthy development from birth."

RIPEP has participated in Awareness Day activities for the last four years and has collaborated with families, youth, pediatricians, early care settings, schools, behavioral health providers, and communities, to implement successful events and raise public awareness. This year RIPEP is once again reaching out to all partners to help us promote the following activities:

1. Integrate mental health into every environment that impacts child development from birth
2. Nurture the social and emotional well-being of children from birth
3. Look for and discuss milestones of a child's social and emotional development from birth

RIPEP is requesting partners to make a commitment to help us promote positive mental health by agreeing to participate in one of the below activities. We have included some tips for implementing specific activities and we encourage you to be as creative as you would like. Please visit www.ripep.org to learn more about awareness day and to find helpful resource information. Major activities this year will include:

"My Feelings Are a Work of Art" Art Action: Art Action is a child-centered activity designed to take place on Thursday, May 6, 2010, in observance of National Children's Mental Health Awareness Day. Using the theme "My Feelings are a Work of Art," communities across the country will lead young children in preschool through 3rd grade in art activities, such as painting or drawing, to initiate conversations between adults and young children about having and expressing feelings. See enclosed tips and event planning documents.

"When I Grow Up" Youth Action: Youth Action is an opportunity for youth older than 8 years to become mental health advocates and raise awareness about the mental health needs of children and youth throughout the United States. Youth participating in the Youth Action can access [customizable signs](#) messages that feature the headline "When I Grow Up... ". The signs' format provides space to write a message or draw an image that expresses the aspirations of young children and the goals of youth participating in the Youth Action. The back of the signs feature facts and statistics that speak to how providing services and supports for children's mental health and their social and emotional development increases the likelihood that all children can attain their goals and see their childhood dreams become realities. The Youth Action will take place simultaneously across the country on National Children's Mental Health Awareness Day at 1 pm eastern time on Thursday, May 6, 2010.

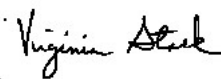
"Promoting Positive Mental Health" Awareness Action: Awareness action is an opportunity for all community partners to work together to promote positive mental health and the importance of social, emotional health and well-being for all children, youth and their families by helping to conduct events or share information and promotional items with those individuals you come in contact with everyday . This can include putting information in your electronic communications or newsletters; having information available in reception areas; and increasing your own understanding about children's mental health. RIPEP will be highlighting the work of birth to three, where programs are helping to connect with families to promote positive mental health.

Enclosed is a pledge form that RIPEP is requesting that you return so that we can learn more about the activities you are willing to implement. We are available to provide assistance with your planning and implementation. If you have questions, please feel free to contact, Lisa Conlan, Director of Development and Training, at Parent Support Network. She can be reached at 401-467-6855 or l.conlan@psnri.org.

Thank you again for your commitment to children and families and we look forward to your participation in helping to raise awareness and promote positive mental health.
Sincerely,



Janet Anderson, Ed.D
Assistant Director of DCYF for Community Services
and Behavioral Health
Rhode Island Positive Educational Partnership
Principal Investigator



Ginny Stack, MS
Rhode Island Positive Educational
Partnership
Project Director



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration
www.samhsa.gov