



**21 Years! Proud Sponsor of Children's Mental Health Acceptance Week and the Green Ribbon Campaign!**

Each year gives us the opportunity to shine the light on children and youth - to focus on equity and inclusion for our young people who are impacted by mental health challenges. Only through acceptance, advocacy, and action can we move toward social justice for families and impact social change - beginning with our children and youth.



This year, the Children's Mental Health Action Week (CMHAW) theme is *Beyond the Screen: Education, Prevention, Connection*. During CMHAW and throughout Mental Health Month in May, we will explore the relationship between technology, family life, and the mental health of our children and youth. In our kickoff event listed below we look forward to sharing current research, important trends, resources for parents and caregivers, and strategies to protect, preserve, and promote family relationships and vital human bonds that support the mental health of our children and youth.

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## Parents, Youth, Caregivers, and Children's Services Providers -

This year Children's Mental Health Action Week is May 3rd-9th, we invite you to join us during this week and throughout the rest of the month of May for special educational workshops and activities related to Children's Mental Health. Register for all events at <https://gearparentnetwork.org/events/>

### Children's Mental Health Action Week Kickoff Event - May 5, 2026 from 10am-12:00p.m.

**"Building Healthy Digital Habits for Families"** Presented by Shannan King, Certified Family Peer Specialist, Regional Parent Support Coordinator

Join us for the premiere of our new workshop which is designed to empower families by offering tools for how to talk to your youth around current research on screen time management, providing information about social media sites, offering tips for online safety, and helping you build healthier habits around screen time for your family.

### May 7, 2026 from 10am-12:30p.m.

**"Reactive Attachment Disorder/RAD"** Presented by Robert (Bob) Walker, Ph.D., LMHC, of Robert A. Walker and Associates, Counseling and Consulting Center, Warwick, RI. Robert is an adoptive parent of two special needs children (now adults). Dr. Walker has almost forty years of experience training and supporting parents and professionals in the areas of adoption, foster care, and attachment related trauma. He holds a Bachelor's Degree in Psychology, and a Master's Degree in Mental Health Counseling. His Ph.D. work focused on communication, attachment, and emotion in biological and non-biological family systems. His dissertation research examined the effects of dysregulated children on their biological and non-biological families and their family environments.

Join us for this special Children's Mental Health Action Week event, where Dr. Walker will discuss the implications of making a home for an Attachment Disordered child. He will discuss the effects of such a placement on the environment of the family and the implications of RAD on the parenting methods that must be employed in an effort to help the child overcome the effects of their early life trauma. Dr. Walker believes that by increasing your understanding of the true nature of the deficits caused by early life trauma, parents can more easily address those needs and by doing so, improve the climate within their families. Questions from the audience will be answered at the end of his presentation.

### May 19, 2026 from 5:30-7 p.m. in-person only at The Opportunity Center, 161 Davis Rd, Bangor

**"ADHD 101 - What We Want to Know but Forgot to Ask!"** Presented by Shannan King, Certified Family Peer Specialist, Regional Parent Support Coordinator

Attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) is a neurodevelopmental disorder and one of the most common mental health disorders affecting children's behavior. This workshop will offer the framework to help us understand what Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder is, what causes it, and who can diagnose it; the symptoms, what helps, the treatment and management of ADHD. Come and join in the conversation as we journey together toward greater success.

**May 20, 2026 from 10 a.m.-12p.m.**

**“ACEs, Being a Trauma-Informed Parent: Linking Childhood Trauma to Long-Term Health & Social Consequence”** Presented by Diane Bouffard, *Certified Family Peer Specialist, Regional Parent Support Coordinator, Team Leader*

Traumatic childhood experiences such as abuse, neglect, domestic violence, or substance abuse in the home can have long-term physical, psychological, behavioral and economic consequences. The Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) Study demonstrates the connection between childhood trauma and a wide array of physical & mental health problems. Despite the trauma in their lives, children can survive and even thrive. Protective factors, including healthy relationships with parents and caregivers, foster resilience in children and help them to overcome early adversity.

**May 26, 2026 from 10 a.m.-12p.m.**

**“Managing Caregiver Stress: Strategies for Recognizing & Reducing Stress”** Presented by Linda Philbrook, *Regional Parent Support Coordinator and Cindy Seekins, CFPS, Director*

We all have stress in our lives. The stress is even greater for parents or caregivers raising a child or youth with emotional and behavioral health needs. Please join us for this presentation and have conversation and discovery of what stress is, how stress affects us, how to differentiate between good and bad stress; you will also and learn about different forms of stress relief and reduction strategies that can help us to live healthier lives.

**These Events are held April through June 2026-****April 15, 2026 from 10 a.m.-12p.m.**

**“What is Considered Child Abuse & Neglect in Maine?”** Presented by Diane Bouffard, *Certified Family Peer Specialist, Regional Parent Support Coordinator, Team Leader*

Our children are our future and child abuse and neglect is everybody's business! In this workshop learn what is considered child abuse; state and national statistics; what Maine law is and how to report child abuse or neglect; the difference between “punishment” vs. “discipline”; child behavioral management examples and what are family and child protective factors; in addition to sharing stories of parenting lessons learned.

**April 28, 2026 from 5:30p-7p in person at The Opportunity Center, 161 Davis Rd, Bangor**

**“Building Stronger Families Through Effective Communication”** Presented by Shannan King, *CFPS, Regional Parent Support Coordinator*  
Effective communication skills are vitally important for thriving family relationships. Using tools such as non-violent and non-verbal communication can improve our ability to resolve conflicts that arise and strengthen bonds within families. As parents, we can master these skills and model them for our children. Join us in learning the various strategies that are at the heart of good communication.

**June 23, 2026 from 5:30p-7p in person at The Opportunity Center, 161 Davis Rd, Bangor**

**“Summer Safety: Keeping it Cool! Preventing Heat Related Illness and Sun Safety for Children”** Presented by Shannan King, *CFPS, Regional Parent Support Coordinator*

Sunburn, heat cramps, heat stroke and skin cancer often are not thought of when you are enjoying the outdoors. Come learn about the importance of keeping your children and yourself safe while having fun in the sun! Parents may share their challenges and some ideas how they deal with the sun protection and summertime issues.

## Ongoing Events -

**"Nurturing Parenting for Families in Recovery"** Held virtually every Tuesday afternoon from 3:30-5 p.m., Facilitated by Diane Bouffard, CFPS, Team Leader

If you are a parent, caregiver or working on your recovery and want to learn more about the effects of substance use on your family, parenting style, and your relationship with your child/youth, please join us for this FREE 12-week program. You will explore hands on activities, along with guided discussions to enhance your self-awareness and increase your ability to relate to your child/children/youth in a safe and supportive environment surrounded by parents and caregivers who share similar life experiences. Join us to explore ideas and build skills; strengthen your connection with your child or youth! Register online for **Tuesday mornings 10:00 - 11:30 a.m.** Link to register: <https://forms.gle/kUzJvzXDMH24SpxJ7>  
**OR Tuesday afternoons from 3:30 - 5:00 p.m.** Link to register: <https://forms.gle/xT1y8T9uZVShR89P9> or call Megan Dickinson at 207-859-1580.

\*All are welcome to attend workshops & events at no cost that are held virtually - and on location when specified. **Green listings are special Children's Mental Health Awareness events.** Note: All these interactive trainings are not recorded in order to safeguard the personal information shared by participants.

**You are NOT Alone!** If you are a parent wanting support, or are a parent/caregiver of a child with behavioral, emotional, or developmental health needs, please consider joining us to meet and compare notes with other parents who truly understand the journey you are on. Parenting and raising a child/youth is often challenging, however even more so with a child or youth with an emotional or behavioral health concern. Join us in this safe place with no shame, blame or judgment either in person when specified below, or virtually from the comfort of your home and chat with other parents who share similar life experiences. **Register here** <https://gearparentnetwork.org/events/>

## Reach Us Directly:

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**Shannan King, CFPS, Regional Parent Support Coordinator** covering Aroostook, Piscataquis, Penobscot, Hancock, Washington, Waldo, Knox Counties, Ph: 944-4295 or Email: [sking@kbhmaine.org](mailto:sking@kbhmaine.org)

**Diane Bouffard, CFPS, Team Leader/Training Coordinator** covering Kennebec, Somerset and Franklin Counties Ph: 207-649-1626 or Email: [dbouffard@kbhmaine.org](mailto:dbouffard@kbhmaine.org)



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