

April 5, 2018

Dear ASTHO, NASADAD, and NASMHPD members:

We have the great pleasure of jointly writing to encourage you and all your colleagues and constituents to participate in the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration's (SAMHSA) National Children's Mental Health Awareness Day 2018! Since 2005, states have been celebrating Awareness Day to raise awareness about the importance of children's mental health and to show that positive mental health is essential to a child's healthy development.

Awareness Day 2018 will be observed on Thursday, May 10. The national focus in 2018 will be on an integrated health approach to supporting children, youth, and young adults who have experienced trauma. Specifically, the event will address how to transform the children's mental health system, the child welfare system, and the public health system to become trauma-informed.

The event will include a "virtual" town hall meeting to provide an opportunity for state agency personnel, health and behavioral health providers, child-serving professionals, and families, youth, and young adults across the country to pose questions through email and social media. Experts in the fields of mental health and primary care, as well as family and youth leaders, will answer prescreened questions from the audience and share evidence-based strategies that are effective in improving the lives of children, youth, and young adults who have experienced trauma.

SAMHSA will webcast the event and NBC4 Washington, its sister stations, and Telemundo stations across the U.S. will livestream the event.

Each year for Awareness Day, SAMHSA identifies individuals who are dedicated to improving the behavioral health of children, youth, and young adults to serve as Honorary Chairpersons. Previous chairpersons have included Michael Phelps and Allison Schmitt, Demi Lovato, Cyndi Lauper, Howie Mandel, Goldie Hawn, and Jamie Lee Curtis. During the 2018 event, several governors' spouses who have demonstrated their commitment to mental health and trauma-informed care will be invited to serve as Honorary Chairpersons. SAMHSA will present a Special Recognition Award to the spouses for initiating trauma-informed efforts in their states.

There are several opportunities for you and your networks to participate in Awareness Day activities, including:

- Hosting a community or state-level event in honor of Awareness Day 2018
- Sharing information about Awareness Day activities through social media using the hashtag #HeroesofHope
- Promoting the national event through your organization's communication channels and sending in questions for the national event in advance of May 10 to [AwarenessDay@vancomm.com](mailto:AwarenessDay@vancomm.com)
- Watching the live national event webcast
- Sharing questions, insights, and perspectives during the live event

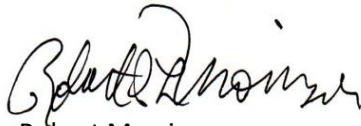
Please visit [www.samhsa.gov/children](http://www.samhsa.gov/children) to learn more about Awareness Day and find helpful resources for your Awareness Day planning.

We are delighted to share this opportunity and hope you will engage in Awareness Day 2018 by taking part in these events!

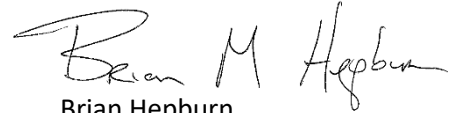
Sincerely,



Michael Fraser  
Executive Director  
ASTHO



Robert Morrison  
Executive Director/Director of  
Legislative Affairs  
NASADAD



Brian Hepburn  
Executive Director  
NASMHPD