



Dear Families and Community Partners –



As the COVID-19 quarantine period continues into May, G.E.A.R. Parent Network must also cancel our scheduled **Children's Mental Health Awareness Week** events: at the State House Hall of Flags and Bangor and Augusta Children's Discovery Museums. As an alternative we are offering fun family friendly **webinar based activities (in green below)**. In addition, we are implementing for parents/caregivers an **online support group** to have a place to talk, vent, and learn about resources and to feel that you are not alone. This is scheduled every Wednesday from 1-3 p.m. as it is so important to support each other during these very challenging times!

For parents/Caregivers/Community Partners we continue to offer free educational supportive webinars that you can participate in safely from the comfort of your home! Please contact us (800-264-9224) if you would like information about **Children's Mental Health Awareness!**

Wednesdays, April 29 through June 2020 from 1-3 p.m.

Join us for a webinar based video chat **support group** for parents and caregivers of children's with emotional and behavioral health concerns. Pre-registration is required to preserve participant confidentiality. (1-800-264-9224)

Tuesday, May 5, 2020 from 6-8 p.m.

"Surviving Parenting: Self-Care is NEVER Selfish" Presented by Rebecca Williamson, CFPS, Regional Parent Support Coordinator

Self-care often becomes an afterthought for parents and caregivers. The ability to treat and understand oneself with respect and kindness can be especially elusive when raising a family. In this webinar, you will learn how stress and anxiety affect all of us and what you can do about it. You will complete a self-care checkup and tools will be shared to create positive thinking. Join us to discover how to cope when your life is full but your energy tank is running on empty.

Thursday, May 7, 2020 from 10-12 p.m.

"ACEs, Being a Trauma-Informed Parent: Linking Childhood Trauma to Long-Term Health & Social Consequence" Presented by Diane Bouffard, CFPS, 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 is a study that demonstrates the connection between childhood trauma and a wide array of physical and 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. Learn about ACEs and how individuals, families, and communities can influence the development of protective factors in a child's life that can mitigate the impact of ACEs on his or her development.

Friday, May 8, 2020 from 1-3 p.m.

"Let's Create a Family Time Capsule!" Facilitated by Shannan Boyorak, Regional Parent Support Coordinator and family!

Join us in this family activity where we will document our experience during the COVID-19 pandemic by creating a time capsule that will help us capture what life is like for us during this unique historical time. This is a wonderful opportunity for people of all ages to participate in an activity that you can look at in years to come that will remind you just how resourceful and resilient your family became and to remember the ways that you were able to cope in a challenging situation.

Tuesday, May 12, 2020 from 6-8 p.m.

“Managing Stress: Strategies for Recognizing & Reducing Stress” Presented by Shannan Boyorak, Regional Parent Support Coordinator

We all have stress in our lives. The stress is even greater for parents of a child with behavioral health needs. Please join us in the conversation and discovery of what stress is, how stress affects us, how to differentiate between good and bad stress and learn about some different stress relief and reduction strategies that can help us to live healthier lives.

Wednesday, May 13, 2020 from 9-11 a.m.

“Helping Your Child Manage Their Meltdowns” Presented by Presented by Diane Bouffard, CFPS, Team Leader

Are you feeling like you are always walking on eggshells when dealing with your child’s meltdowns? Are you at a loss about how to help your child to be successful? You’re not alone! Join in the discussion about what meltdowns are and strategies that can be used to help your child better manage these meltdowns.

Thursday, May 14, 2020 from 5:30–7:30 p.m.

“What’s Your Parenting Style? Identifying Your Style and How it Affects Your Interaction with Your Children” Presented by Jessica Hall, Regional Parent Support Coordinator

This workshop is intended to help you learn and identify your current parenting style and recognize the large impact that it has on your child’s development. We will review each of the four parenting styles. Through sharing of information and discussion you will be given the tools to use to evaluate both positive and negative influences in your lives and how it relates to your parenting style. Parents and caregivers can improve their skills by having an understanding of parenting styles, discipline, cultural influences and environmental issues.

Tuesday, May 19, 2020 from 1-3 p.m.

“Do You Speak Teen? ‘mNE Ps dnt bleev der is a gNR8N d/c b/t em n thr teen” Presented by Rebecca Williamson, CFPS, Regional Parent Support Coordinator

Communicating with teens today is more challenging than ever but not impossible! This workshop will explore modern technology and give you some new ideas to peek into your teen’s world. The framework of the 40 Developmental Assets® will also be shared. Minneapolis-based Search Institute® has identified 40 building blocks of healthy development – known as “developmental assets” – that help influence choices young people make and help them become caring and responsible adults.

Thursday, May 21, 2020 from 10-12 p.m.

“Impulsivity & Disruptive Behaviors in Children & Youth” Presented by Shannan Boyorak, Regional Parent Support Coordinator

All children have outbursts from time to time; however, some children have chronic problems in their ability to regulate emotions and behaviors even when adverse consequences may occur. This lack of self-control can cause significant distress or impairment in a child’s or youth’s life. A number of different diagnoses are unified by impulsive and disruptive behaviors, including oppositional defiant disorder (ODD), conduct disorder (CD), and impulse control disorder (ICD). In this workshop you will learn more about the disorders defined in the chapter on disruptive, impulse-control, and conduct disorders by the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, Fifth Edition (DSM-5)*, what treatments are available, and what parents/caregivers can do to better respond to disruptive behavior.

Friday, May 22, 2020 from 1-3 p.m.

“Family Rock Painting” Presented by Jessica Hall, Regional Parent Support Coordinator

Children’s Mental Health Awareness Week is celebrated nationally and in Maine to bring to light the importance of caring for every child’s mental health needs and highlights that positive mental health is essential to a child’s healthy development. **Children’s Mental Health Matters!** This year, G.E.A.R Parent Network invites you and your family to celebrate with us virtually with ROCK PAINTING! We will use our imagination to take us under the sea and use our creativity to make our “school” of Children’s Mental Health Matters fish!

Call G.E.A.R. Parent Network today to register at 1-800-264-9224!