

FOREWARD

Welcome to our 69th Mental Health Month! I hope you enjoy and share widely our brand-new 2018 Mental Health Month toolkit.

Launched in 1949 by Mental Health America, *May is Mental Health Month* is the most highly recognized mental health awareness event in the nation. While many organizations create their own mental health month materials, many thousands more choose to use our official *May is Mental Health Month* materials. They reach millions of people with messages of health, wellness, prevention, and recovery.

This year, our theme is *Fitness #4Mind4Body*. It tracks closely with the *Fit for the Future* theme of our June 2018 conference. During the month of May, we'll focus on what we as individuals can do to be fit for our own futures – no matter where we happen to be on our own personal journeys to health and wellness.

In this year's toolkit, you will find a range of materials, including:

- Fact sheets on mental health is affected by diet, sleep, stress, gut health, and exercise;
- Worksheets on making life changes;
- A promotional poster, sample social media posts with images, and web banners;
- A sample press release and a drop-in article; and a sample proclamation for public officials to recognize May as Mental Health Month and the work of local mental health advocates.

When we talk about health, we can't just focus on heart health, or liver health, or brain health, and not whole health. You have to see the whole person, and make use of the tools and resources that benefit minds and bodies together. That's why this toolkit for everyone, whether or not they have a mental health concern. And if they do, it will give them tools to enhance recovery at any stage of the disease process – and, most especially, before Stage 4.

These tools connect to other MHA resources, too. If you are taking steps to live a healthy lifestyle but still feel like you are struggling with your mental health, visit www.mhascreening.org to check your symptoms. It's free, confidential, and anonymous. Once you have your results, we now give you customized information especially for you, to help you find tools and resources to feel better.

Also, join MHA this May as we challenge ourselves each day to make small changes – both physically and mentally – to create huge gains for our overall fitness. Visit www.bit.ly/MHACHallenge or follow us on Facebook, Twitter or Instagram for the challenge of the day and share your successes with us by posting with #4mind4body!

Finally, let us know what you think. We listen to your feedback, and are always looking for ways to make our *May is Mental Health Month* materials as impactful as possible.



Paul Gionfriddo
President and CEO



INTRODUCTION

The theme for May is Mental Health Month in 2018 is Fitness #4Mind4Body. Information will focus on increasing understanding of how the body's various systems impact mental health based on recent research. From food to fitness to gut flora, we will be diving into the elements that make up personal wellness.

This May, MHA is calling on individuals to join us as we challenge ourselves to make small changes - both mentally and physically - to create huge gains for our overall health. A daily challenge will be posted online on MHA's website and across our social media networks. We're asking for people to share their participation and progress by posting on social media with #4mind4body.

By using the toolkit materials, you will help members of your community:

- Understand how the health of the body impacts the health of the mind and vice versa;
- Start talking about mental health B4Stage4;
- Assess their own mental health through use of MHA's screening tools; and
- Take actions to improve their overall health through the #4mind4body Challenge by tagging social media posts with #4mind4body, or uploading content directly to MHA's website.

This year's toolkit includes:

Media Materials

- Key Messages
- Sample Press Release
- Drop-In Article
- May is Mental Health Month Proclamation

Social Media and Web Components

- Sample Facebook and Twitter Posts
- Facebook Profile, Cover, and Shareable Images
- Twitter Profile, Header, and Shareable Images
- Instagram Profile and Shareable Images
- Call to Action Buttons for Screening and the #4mind4body Challenge
- Horizontal Banner Image
- Vertical Banner Image

Fact Sheets and Handouts

- Fact Sheet: Diet and Nutrition
- Fact Sheet: Exercise
- Fact Sheet: The Gut-Brain Connection
- Fact Sheet: Sleep
- Fact Sheet: Stress
- May is Mental Health Month #4mind4body ChallengePoster
- Worksheets to help guide lifestyle changes

QUESTIONS?

If you have further questions about Mental Health Month, please contact Danielle Fritze, Senior Director of Public Education and Visual Communications at dfritze@mentalhealthamerica.net.