

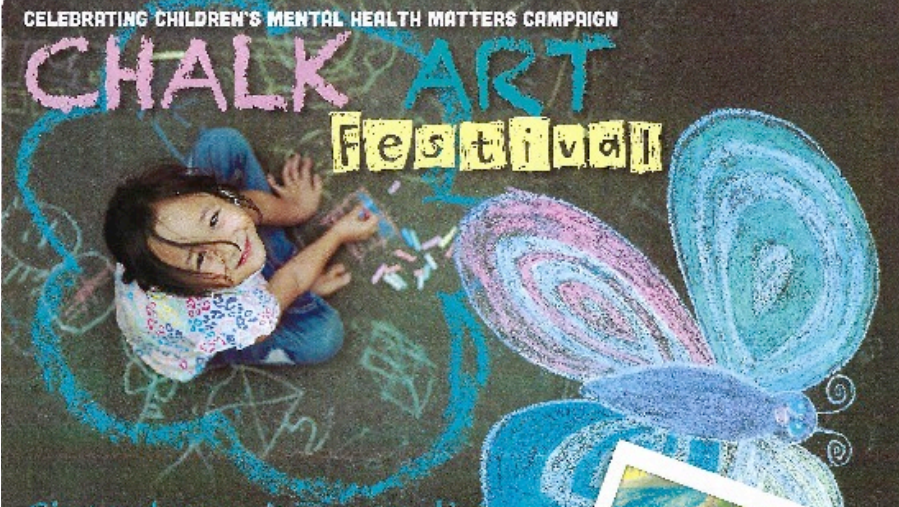
Children's Mental Health Matters!

Prince George's County Participation in the Statewide Initiative

May 2020

CELEBRATING CHILDREN'S MENTAL HEALTH MATTERS CAMPAIGN

CHALK ART Festival



Channel your inner creative
Where chalk meets pavement!

Remember to follow these guidelines when sharing your artwork:

- First name only, no addresses or personal identifying information.
- Write a positive message to share with others.
- Be safe and practice social distancing.
- Be creative and have fun!
- Take a picture of your art work and email it to: Tiffany Thomas at TThomas@mhcmd.org

SUNDAY, MAY 3 – SATURDAY, MAY 9, 2020
AGES 18 & UNDER
PICK-UP YOUR CHALK FROM GRAB-N-GO SITES,
MONDAY, APRIL 27 THROUGH FRIDAY, MAY 1, FROM 12 NOON – 2 PM
(Locations are listed on the back of the flyer.)



Artwork will be displayed for public viewing on the Children's Mental Health Matters website at www.childrensmentalhealthmatters.org/whats-happening/blog/



A Maryland Public Education Campaign

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Executive Summary

The Prince George's Children's Mental Health Awareness Work Group convened in early spring to get what we thought would be an early start on our planning in the hopes of building on our continued and growing success in promoting children's mental health awareness. Each year we have seen an increase in the number of school and community champions participating in various events and educational programs during the month of May. Our plan was for 2020 to be the biggest and best ever and, for the first time, focus our community outreach effort to the southern part of Prince George's County. Our expansive plans and goals were soon delayed by the COVID-19 event which derailed most of those plans and caused us to re-focus our attention on what could be virtually.

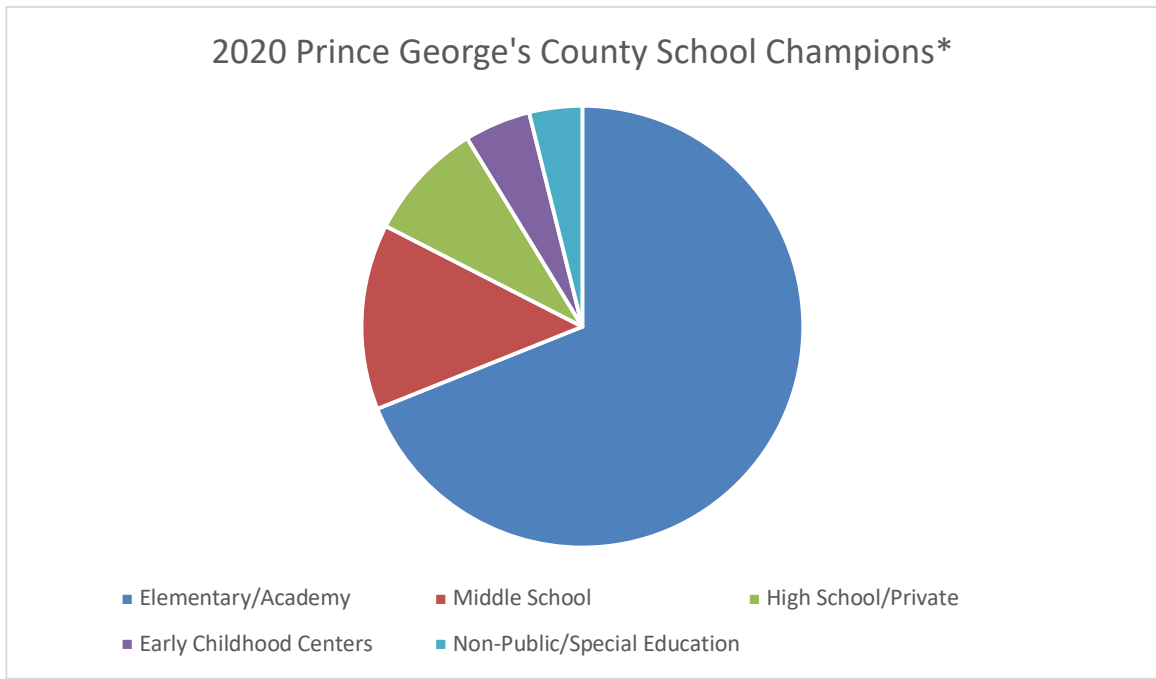
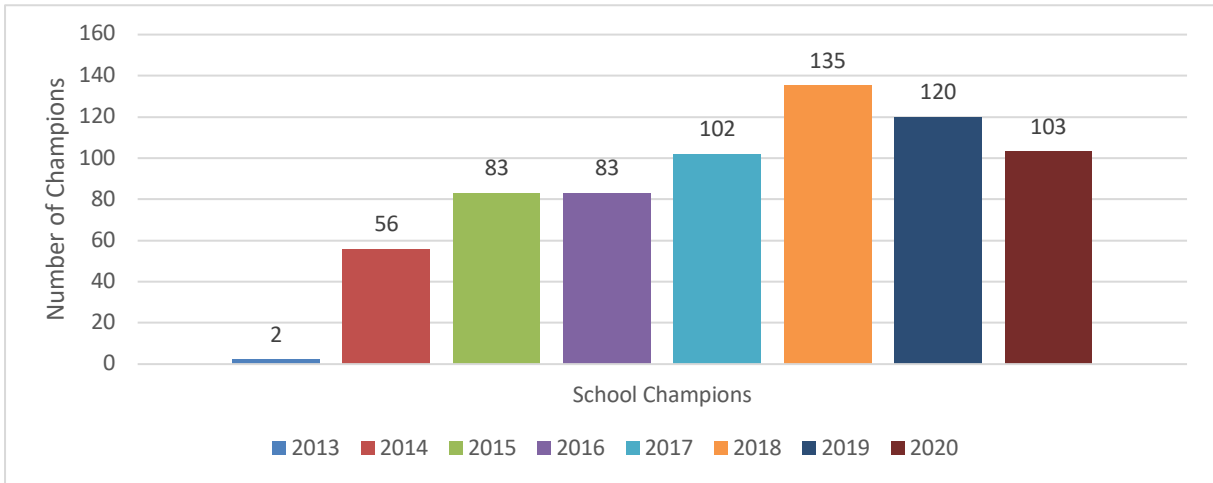
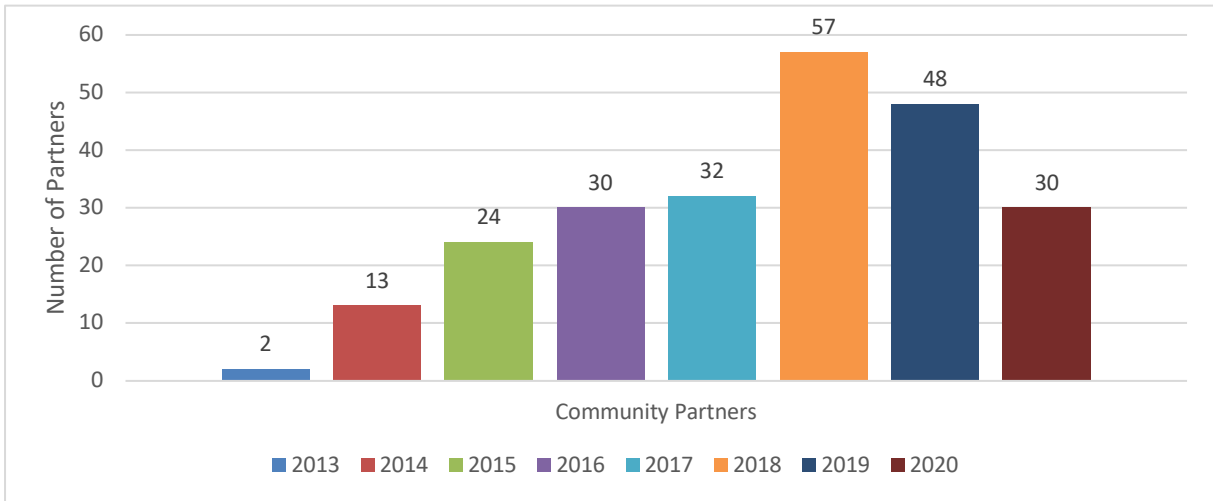
As we shifted focus, we were so fortunate to have a new community partner in the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission (M-NCPPC) led by Sandra Kellstrong and Eke Ijeoma from Prince George's Parks & Recreation, which helped us develop plans to save the campaign. Planning meetings became virtual and after some brainstorming, our efforts moved to the development of a virtual Chalk Arts Festival. With M-NCPPC and the Mental Health Association of Maryland Children's Mental Health Awareness Campaign resources we were able to advance the overall goals of the campaign under the auspices of Nonprofit Prince George's, Inc. With the support and assistance of Tiffany Thomas of the Mental Health Association of Maryland, plans were made to provide a link to children and youth who wanted to have their work displayed. Joining with the Prince George's County Public Schools and the various children's mental health services members resulted in what we think was a great community effort which you will learn about in the pages to follow.

As in past, the overall goal of the campaign was to bring together the nonprofit community, schools, agencies and local partners to raise public awareness of children's mental health and to help connect families with the resources they need in their local communities.



In addition to these general goals, the Work Group projected an anticipated outcome of providing constructive, creative activities for children and youth whose educational lessons were now all virtual. The opportunity provided an incentive for students to think creatively about positive thoughts and messages during this time of stress. Became an important component of the re-envisioned campaign.

While our number were somewhat decreased due to the pandemic, we are still quite proud of the continued support of both school and community partners. We were able to maintain a good cadre of both school champions as well as community champions even though: the school system had moved to all virtual learning and most agencies had also moved to remote services making direct face-to-face interaction with children limited.



*103 total School Champions/94 PGCPs

2020 Overall Activities

On the statewide effort, First Lady Yumi Hogan's very popular *Celebrating Through the Art: The First Lady's Mental Health Awareness Youth Art Display* continued this year, albeit virtually. The artwork was displayed on the campaign website and a link to the artwork is included in this report. Although we are not able to identify specifically which pieces of the artwork are from a Prince George's County school, we would like to point out that the Greenbelt Child Care Center young children did participate again this year and their artwork is contained in the link below:

<https://www.childrensmentalhealthmatters.org/get-involved/annual-youth-art-display>

With respect to School Champions, it is important to note that schools made adjustments and adapted to the changes that occurred due to pandemic closures. Schools continued to share mental health resources with staff and families virtually with emphasis on helping families cope with pandemic related challenges. Information about the Chalk Arts Festival activity was shared system-wide to encourage participation as well as some of the chalk was distributed at the Grab 'n Go sites where food was distributed to students and their families.

Community champion activities are included in this report if we are aware of them. Many other agencies may very well have continued their general education and resources on their websites; however, this was not tracked this year. One effort of the Work Group was to share the links to the Children's Mental Health Matters campaign resource published every Monday, entitled: *Mental Health Mondays* which focused on a different mental health issue and resources.

A few of our community partners did submit information about their activities. They included: The District Heights Family & Youth Services Bureau (YSB) who participated in the chalk distribution for the Chalk Arts Festival; highlighted the campaign throughout the month of May in their report to the City; utilized the words "Children's Mental Health Matters" in their monthly television show in May which was also to be aired on WOL-1450AM over the summer. A picture of Dr. Beverly Sargent, Executive Director of the YSB giving her presentation is included here:



Maryland Family Resources, Inc.

Maryland Family Resources, Inc. continued its traditional mental health outreach and educational efforts again this year as a community champion. While not able to be as active as last year due to the pandemic, the staff continued to provide resources for children and families electronically, especially with the schools in their district with which they have had an ongoing relationship over the years. Staff were available to respond to specific questions, need for resources and services remotely and through their website.

Chalk Arts Festival

The community-wide effort which the workgroup undertook this year is the *Chalk Arts Festival*. This was a major focus of the workgroup and was accomplished especially through the efforts and support of the various departments of M-NCPPC. A number of our community partners were able to reach out to young people to distribute chalk to those with whom they had an ongoing relationship. In addition, M-NCPPC stepped up in a way that is hard to even imagine. Planning efforts as well as outreach to community providers for participation were ongoing throughout April as we worked to be ready for our May deadline. A number of community partners were able to commit to participation in the effort to distribute chalk. Some needed the resource of chalk while others were able to identify their own resources of chalk. Through the efforts of M-NCPPC, chalk was secured, distributed to those community partners who needed chalk and to over 700 children and youth at the various Grab 'N Go sites located at identified community center sites in the County. Signage was designed to ensure there was good visibility, given that some of our prior traditional means of publicizing was not readily available. Large signs on A-frame stands were utilized and made available at all M-NCPPC sites as well as participating agencies.

Early on, these sites were originally identified as food distribution sites as part of the school system's efforts to reach out to those who traditionally received food at their school site. This effort was planned for the first week of May of the state-wide campaign, but proved to be so successful/popular that the M-NCPPC continued the distribution the next week as well. The concept was viewed as a success and met with so much enthusiasm from the M-NCPPC staff that the sites were enhanced with other activities to further meet the needs of youth by providing garden plants, STEM activities, books and recreational equipment. By continuing activities and resources throughout the summer, the resources and opportunities provided by M-NCPPC were crucial in the lives of many children and youth. With an emphasis on reading with some distribution of books but also opportunities to share socially distancing discussions about the stories, the sites also provided some activities for the participants to look forward to throughout the summer. While not specifically part of the Children's Mental Health Awareness campaign, these additional activities were certainly a great resource to the children and youth in the county and helped provide activities focusing not only on their emotional health but on the whole person through physical activities and intellectual stimulation.

With respect to the Chalk Arts Festival itself, an opportunity was provided to all to submit a picture of their artwork to a specific link if they were interested in doing so. When the campaign was over, this link was included on both the Children's Mental Health Awareness website and that of M-NCPPC. Following is the link:

<https://www.childrensmentalhealthmatters.org/2020/04/21/chalkartfestival>

While it was not a requirement that pictures be forwarded to the link, this was an opportunity for any budding artist to share/express their talents and his/her work. A good number of pictures were included which the workgroup considered a very important outcome of the activity. In addition, the opportunity for over 700+ children and youth to have an activity for entertainment and a learning opportunity regarding another way to express their feelings during this very strange pandemic time is considered a significant result. Following is a quote from one of the young participants who submitted her artwork:

Hello, my name is Morgan (age 16). I live in Upper Marlboro, MD. I was inspired to create my sidewalk art because the things we create are inspired by what we observe inside us and in our surroundings. Lady Bird Johnson once said "Where flowers bloom so does hope." What the world needs to remember today is that we all share hope for a brighter future. So, let hope bloom across the world.

This message sent to us is one of hope for our future and certainly in keeping with our goals for sponsoring a Children’s Mental Health Awareness campaign every year for the past eight years. Measuring/quantifying the value of this activity was difficult to gauge due to the lack of any in-person direct contact with the participants. While we can count the number of pictures submitted, this in no way provides us with a quantification of the actual number of young people who spent some time in their neighborhoods drawing pictures and messages, nor can we determine the positive impact their artwork may have had on their families and neighbors during this stressful time.

Participating Community Service Agencies in Chalk Arts Festival

Bowie Youth & Family Services Bureau
The Training Source
The Foundation Schools
Advanced Behavioral Health Services
Greenbelt CARES Youth Services Bureau
District Heights Youth & Family Services Bureau
Prince George’s Department of Family Services, Children, Youth & Family Division



In general, we believe the Children’s Mental Health Awareness campaign was able to reach our overall goals; however, we would definitely hope that in 2021 we will be able to again host educational programs and outreach activities throughout the county. It is clear to us that if the need arises, we will be even better prepared to hold virtual programs including some panel discussion and other zoom activities.

2020 Work Group Participants

We are pleased to acknowledge the work of so many individuals and community agency representatives without whom our 2020 effort would not have been possible:

Coordinators

- Bea Rodgers, Mental Health Association of Maryland
- Erica Chandler, Nationally Certified School Psychologist, Prince George's County Public Schools

Work Group Members

- Eugenia Greenhood, Local Behavioral Health Authority, Prince George's County Health Department
- Kelli Kunert, LCSW-C, The Foundations Schools
- Hillary Lindeman, Nonprofit Prince George's County
- Tiffany Turner-Allen, Nonprofit Prince George's County
- Dr. Beth Crawford, Maryland Family Resources
- Keira Hopkins, Prince George's Department of Social Services
- Jean Moore, NAMI Prince George's
- Debra Bennet, NAMI Prince George's
- Manuela Mbouma, NAMI Prince George's
- Liz Park Greenbelt CARES Youth Services Bureau
- Dr. Beverly Sargent, District Heights Youth & Family Services Bureau
- Rhonda Simons, Bowie Youth & Family Services Bureau
- Sandra Kellstrom, Prince George's Parks & Recreation
- Eke Ijeoma, Prince George's Parks & Recreation
- Tim Jansen, Community Crisis Services, Inc.
- Kim Rhim, The Training Source

Additional thanks to:

Maryland- National Capital Park & Planning Commission

Special Programs Division

Anthony Nolan
Mary Bowie
Tanya Biggs
Anthony Broxton
Stephan Makle
Kimberly James

Warehouse

Chris Hicks
Gregory Ervin

Tommy Melanson

Exhibit Shop

Charles Jackson
Cheri Lewis

Coordination of Grab 'N' Go Sites

MK Fitzsimons
Mark Bonitatibus
Anica O'Neil

Marlow Heights Community Center

Sparkle Canady
Vicent Ware
Sharon Harkless
DeLarenta Lee
Jasmia Hawkins

Oakcrest Community Center

Ostra Mack
Audrey Smith
Renee Smith
Judith Donelson
Toni Gale
Keven Simms
Thomas Jackson
Melvin McCray
Brian Shivers
Russell Lewis
Ahmed Seray-Wuire

Glenarden Community Center

Margaret Williams
Jada Thomas
Destiny Paul
Cynthia Johnson
Ignashious Harrison

Youth Services Arts

Stewart Seal
Kayla Fryer
Christina Neves

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Sony Satterlund-Zorza, for design and editing of 2020 Children's Mental Health Awareness Annual Report.

