



# Mental Health Awareness Week

October 5-11, 2014

## What is Mental Health Awareness Week (MHAW)?

- October 5-11, 2014 is a week when people across California will come together to spread awareness about the importance of mental health.
- This week is also called Mental Illness Awareness Week. In 1990, the U.S. Congress established the first full week of October as Mental Illness Awareness Week (MIAW) in recognition of NAMI's efforts to raise mental illness awareness.
- During this week, we can grow the community of individuals and organizations dedicated to a shared vision of mental wellness and equality by sharing information and resources.

## Why is Mental Health Awareness Week important?

- ***One in four American adults lives with a diagnosable mental illness in a given year.***<sup>1</sup> Millions of people are personally affected by mental health challenges, and family, friends and co-workers also want to show support. MHAW is one opportunity during the year for us to increase awareness and speak out against stigma.
- ***Research shows that half of all mental illnesses start by age 14.***<sup>2</sup> The stigma associated with mental illness can be more destructive than the illness itself. Early support and help for mental health challenges can reduce suffering and save lives. MHAW is a time for us to let others know that people are not defined by a mental health diagnosis.
- ***An average of 6 to 8 years pass after the onset of symptoms before young people get help.***<sup>3</sup> By increasing mental health awareness, we have the power to create an environment where young people feel comfortable seeking help.

<sup>1</sup> National Institutes of Health, National Institute of Mental Health. Statistics: Any Disorder Among Adults. [http://www.nimh.nih.gov/statistics/1ANYDIS\\_ADULT.shtm](http://www.nimh.nih.gov/statistics/1ANYDIS_ADULT.shtm)

<sup>2</sup> Kessler RC, Berglund P, Demler O, Jin R, Merikangas KR, Walters EE. Lifetime prevalence and age-of-onset distributions of DSM-IV disorders in the National Comorbidity Survey Replication. Arch Gen Psychiatry. 2005 Jun. <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/15939837>

<sup>3</sup> Wang PS, Berglund P, Olfson M, Pincus HA, Wells KB, Kessler RC. Failure and delay in initial treatment contact after first onset of mental disorders in the National Comorbidity Survey Replication. Arch Gen Psychiatry. 2005 Jun. <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/15939838>



## How can I get involved in Mental Health Awareness Week?

- There are many activities that you can plan or participate in during MHAW. Check out [EachMindMatters.org](http://EachMindMatters.org) for more information, or email [Jeanine](mailto:Jeanine) to get involved today.
- Add your voice to the Each Mind Matters social media community on [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/eachmindmatters) and [Twitter](https://twitter.com/eachmindmatters). Follow us to get the latest updates about MHAW and California's Mental Health Movement.
- [NAMI California affiliates](http://www.namicalocal.org) are a great resource for local events and activities. For more information on how to connect with your local NAMI, contact Kelly at [Kelly@namica.org](mailto:Kelly@namica.org) or visit [www.namica.org](http://www.namica.org).

## Get involved with Mental Health Awareness Week

- Sunday**      **Take a pledge against stigma!** Visit [EachMindMatters.org](http://EachMindMatters.org) and become a Change Agent.
- Monday**      **Show your support!** Add the [Each Mind Matters ribbon](https://www.facebook.com/eachmindmatters) to your Facebook and Twitter profile photo.
- Tuesday**      **Pain isn't always obvious.** Learn the signs for suicide prevention by visiting [SuicidelsPreventable.org](http://SuicidelsPreventable.org).
- Wednesday**      **Go lime green at work or school!** Show your support by wearing a lime green ribbon or shirt, paint your fingernails or put on a lime green tie.
- Thursday**      **Follow the campaign!** Follow Each Mind Matters on [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/eachmindmatters) and [Twitter](https://twitter.com/eachmindmatters) and share a post with your followers to spread awareness.
- Friday**      **Why do you believe Each Mind Matters?** Take a few minutes to complete your Lime Green Ribbon story and share it at [EachMindMatters.org](http://EachMindMatters.org).
- Saturday**      **Start a conversation!** Wear your lime green ribbon all weekend and talk to your family and friends about why you believe Each Mind Matters.





# EACH MIND MATTERS

California's Mental Health Movement

## Lime Green Ribbon KEY MESSAGES

Thank you for being part of California's Mental Health Movement. By wearing the lime green ribbon, you are showing support for people living with mental health challenges and helping to break down the barriers that prevent many people from seeking the help they need.

### *WHAT SHOULD I TELL PEOPLE ABOUT THE LIME GREEN RIBBON?*

- Lime green is the national color of mental health awareness.
- I wear my lime green ribbon because I support mental health awareness and I believe that Each Mind Matters.
- I wear my lime green ribbon because I'm part of the movement to raise awareness about mental health.
- I wear my lime green ribbon in support of the millions of Californians affected by mental health challenges. I know I can help save lives by talking honestly about mental health.
- You can join the movement at [EachMindMatters.org](http://EachMindMatters.org).

### *ARE YOU READY TO TELL YOUR STORY?*

The lime green ribbon is a great way to open an honest dialogue with friends, family, classmates and co-workers. When you share your story, you let others know that it is okay to talk about mental illness. By talking openly, we offer each other support and can break down the barriers that prevent people from seeking help.

Here are some messages to help you share your story:

- Like millions of Californians...
  - I have experienced mental health challenges.
  - People I love have experienced mental health challenges.
  - I know what it's like to experience mental health challenges.





# EACH MIND MATTERS

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## *ARE YOU READY TO TELL YOUR STORY? (CONTINUED)*

- I know that I am not defined by a diagnosis; it's just one part of who I am. (My family member/friend is not defined by their diagnosis; it's just one part of who they are.)
- It's not always easy to tell my story, but I do because I know I can help save lives.
- You can show your support by wearing the lime green ribbon, too.

## *WHAT IS EACH MIND MATTERS?*

- Each Mind Matters is California's Mental Health Movement.
- Each Mind Matters brings people together to eliminate the stigma around mental illness that stops people from seeking help when they need it.
- We are opening hearts and minds to a new understanding of mental wellness for all.
- Learn more at [EachMindMatters.org](http://EachMindMatters.org).

## *WHAT CAN I SAY TO THOSE WHO ARE HURTING AND/OR WANT TO GET INVOLVED?*

- We all have mental health. As with our physical health, sometimes we are doing well, other times we could use some help. Our minds deserve the same attention as our bodies.
- Early support and help for mental health challenges can reduce suffering and save lives.
- By engaging with the Each Mind Matters community and taking action, we not only heal ourselves, we can help others heal as well.

## *HOW CAN I ENCOURAGE OTHERS TO WEAR LIME GREEN AND TELL THEIR STORY?*

- Ask family members and friends to wear the ribbon too. Share your lime green story with them, and ask them to share theirs with others.
- Post selfies wearing your lime green ribbon on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram and encourage others to do the same. Use the hashtag #EachMindMatters.





***HOW CAN I ENCOURAGE OTHERS TO WEAR LIME GREEN AND TELL THEIR STORY?  
(CONTINUED)***

- Order a supply of lime green ribbons at [EachMindMatters.org](http://EachMindMatters.org) and keep them in your desk, car, backpack or purse to offer when you are asked about your ribbon.
- Wear lime green clothes, paint your nails lime green, or even put a streak of green in your hair. Let everyone know that Each Mind Matters!

