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www.kanehealth.com

Children's Mental Health Awareness Day – May 9th

The Kane County Health Department along with the AOK Early Childhood Network, Association for Individual Development, Family Service Association of Greater Elgin, the Juvenile Justice Council and Tri City Family Services will join more than 1,100 communities across the country to celebrate Children's Mental Health Awareness Day on May 9th.

Mental health is significant in the development of children and is an essential part of their overall health. According to the National Alliance on Mental Illness, 1 in 5 children ages 13-18 have, or will have a serious mental illness. Mental health has a huge impact on whether a child can succeed in school and ultimately in society. Sadly, there is often a delay of as long as 10 years between when a child's symptoms begin and when they start treatment. This could be due to lack of knowledge and access, or stigma. Untreated mental illness can lead to devastating consequences for children and families. The National Institute for Mental Health reports suicide as the 2nd leading cause of death among individuals between the ages of 10-34.

Children's Mental Health Awareness Day shines a spotlight on the importance of caring for every child's mental health and reinforces that positive mental health is essential to a child's healthy development. To celebrate Awareness Day locally, The Kane County Health Department and community partners will host a free, family friendly event on Thursday, May 9th from 5:30pm to 7:30pm at Peck Farm Park (4038 Kaneville Rd., Geneva, IL 60134). Professionals and community members are invited to celebrate the positive impact they can have when they support children's mental health. Green (the color associated with mental health awareness) kites will be provided to children and families to "help stigma fly away". Sheriff Ron Hain is a featured speaker and community resources will be available. Children's Mental Health Awareness Day activities will be held at the covered picnic shelter rain or shine. In the event of severe weather, you can find information about cancellation on the Kane County Health Department's Facebook page. For more information, contact Anna Czerniak 630-264-7670.

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