



Mental Health Awareness Month TOOLKIT

May 2022

Make It OK

MakeltOK.org/IOWA

Presented by:



Make It

Thank you for participating in Mental Health Awareness Month 2022!

Mental Health Awareness Month is a great time to reduce stigma by starting conversations and increasing understanding about mental illness throughout the month of May.

The Make It OK campaign is a resource and messaging tool to help you share your passion for mental health with your friends, family members, neighbors and co-workers.

With nearly 1 in 5 adults living with a mental illness, raising awareness about the importance of mental health and reducing barriers to treatment, such as stigma, are more important than ever.

This toolkit will give you the tools and resources to educate your networks about mental health. This toolkit includes:

- Links to Make It OK and mental health resources
- Social media posts and graphics
- Letter to the Editor sample
- Make It OK posters (*print and display in home or office window*)

Together we can eliminate mental illness stigma and support those who are struggling to find the resources and treatment they deserve.



Mental Health Awareness Month 2022
is presented by:





Make It OK and mental health resources

Educate yourself and others on what mental illness is and use the ideas and resources to create a more supportive culture.

For workplaces and organizations:

- Share Make It OK social media posts on company channels
- Share mental health resources via internal newsletters or intranet
- Create a wellness challenge that rewards mental health activities
- Host virtual “lunch and learns” with speakers or HR team members
- Re-circulate EAP benefits related to mental health

For ambassadors and individuals:

- Share Make It OK social media posts on personal pages
- Share mental health resources via personal email or social media pages
- Check-in on others: Schedule phone calls or video chats with loved ones, deliver care packages to nearby friends
- Take care of yourself: Move your body daily, start a mindfulness routine, eat nourishing foods and maintain a sleep routine

BLOGS TO SHARE:

- [Mental illness: What is it & common conditions](#)
- [Report: Mental illness in farmers and rural communities](#)
- [How to help someone experiencing a mental health crisis](#)
- [Stories: First-hand experiences from lowans living with mental illness](#)

RESOURCES TO USE:

- [Mental Health Awareness Month Mental Health Checklist](#)
- [What to say & what not to say: Tips for talking about mental illness](#)
- [Mental health & COVID-19: Resources to help you cope](#)



Make It OK social media posts

Use any of the social media posts below. Feel free to also write your own posts including personal experience or company efforts related to mental health. Remember to always include the hashtag **#MakeltOK**.

Click to download: [MAKE IT OK SOCIAL MEDIA GRAPHICS](#)

Copy + paste messages to share:

May is Mental Health Awareness Month! Together, let's end mental illness stigma and support those who are seeking treatment. Learn more: [MakeltOK.org/iowa](#) #MakeltOK

It's OK to have a mental illness — many people do. #MakeltOK is a community campaign to reduce stigma by increasing understanding about mental illness. Learn more: [MakeltOK.org/iowa](#)

It's OK to not be OK. You are not alone and you deserve to feel better. Access free mental health resources: [MakeltOK.org/iowa](#) #MakeltOK

It's OK to talk about mental illness — talking makes people feel less alone. #MakeltOK is a community campaign to reduce stigma by starting conversations. Learn more: [MakeltOK.org/iowa](#)

Ending mental illness stigma starts with understanding. Learn more about mental illness and how to be supportive: [MakeltOK.org/iowa](#) #MakeltOK

It's OK to get help with mental illness — life can get better. Let's end mental illness stigma and support those who are seeking treatment. Learn more: [MakeltOK.org/iowa](#) #MakeltOK



Letter to the Editor (Sample)

Share Make It OK with the community by submitting this Letter to the Editor from you as an ambassador or from a leader at your workplace. Feel free to submit the following letter as is or customize it. Follow submission guidelines for your specific publication, usually printed or posted online.

Dear Editor,

1 in 5 people will have some kind of mental illness in a given year. Stigma is the greatest barrier to individuals seeking help regarding their mental illness.

Now, more than ever before, many of us could be feeling increased anxiety, stress or loneliness. It is OK to not be OK right now.

May is Mental Health Awareness Month and serves as a great opportunity for our community to begin eliminating stigma by starting conversations and increasing understanding about mental illness.

By breaking down the stigma around mental illness, we can support those who are struggling to find the resources and treatment they deserve. To learn more about how you can help end mental illness stigma and access free mental health resources, visit: MakeltOK.org/iowa

CHOOSE APPLICABLE SENTENCE:

I am proud to be a Make It OK Ambassador.

[ORGANIZATION] is proud to be a Make It OK Registered Workplace.

Sincerely,

[INSERT NAME]

[INSERT TITLE, IF APPLICABLE]



Make It OK Proclamation Sample Language

WHEREAS, mental health is essential to everyone's overall health and well-being; and

WHEREAS, there is a proven connection between good mental health and overall personal health; and

WHEREAS, mental illnesses are real and prevalent in our county regardless of socioeconomic boundaries; and

WHEREAS, stigma and fear of discrimination keep many who would benefit from mental health services from seeking help; and

WHEREAS, education is an effective way to reduce the stigma of mental health illnesses; and

WHEREAS, we encourage our citizens to get help for mental illnesses and to understand it is as important to treat as any other illnesses, such as diabetes or heart disease; and

WHEREAS, people with mental illnesses recover if given the necessary services and supports in their communities; and

WHEREAS, people with mental illnesses make important contributions to our families, our workplaces, our schools and our communities; and

WHEREAS, good mental health is critical to the well-being and economic viability of our families, communities, schools, and businesses; and

WHEREAS, greater public awareness about mental illnesses can change negative attitudes and behaviors toward people with mental illnesses;

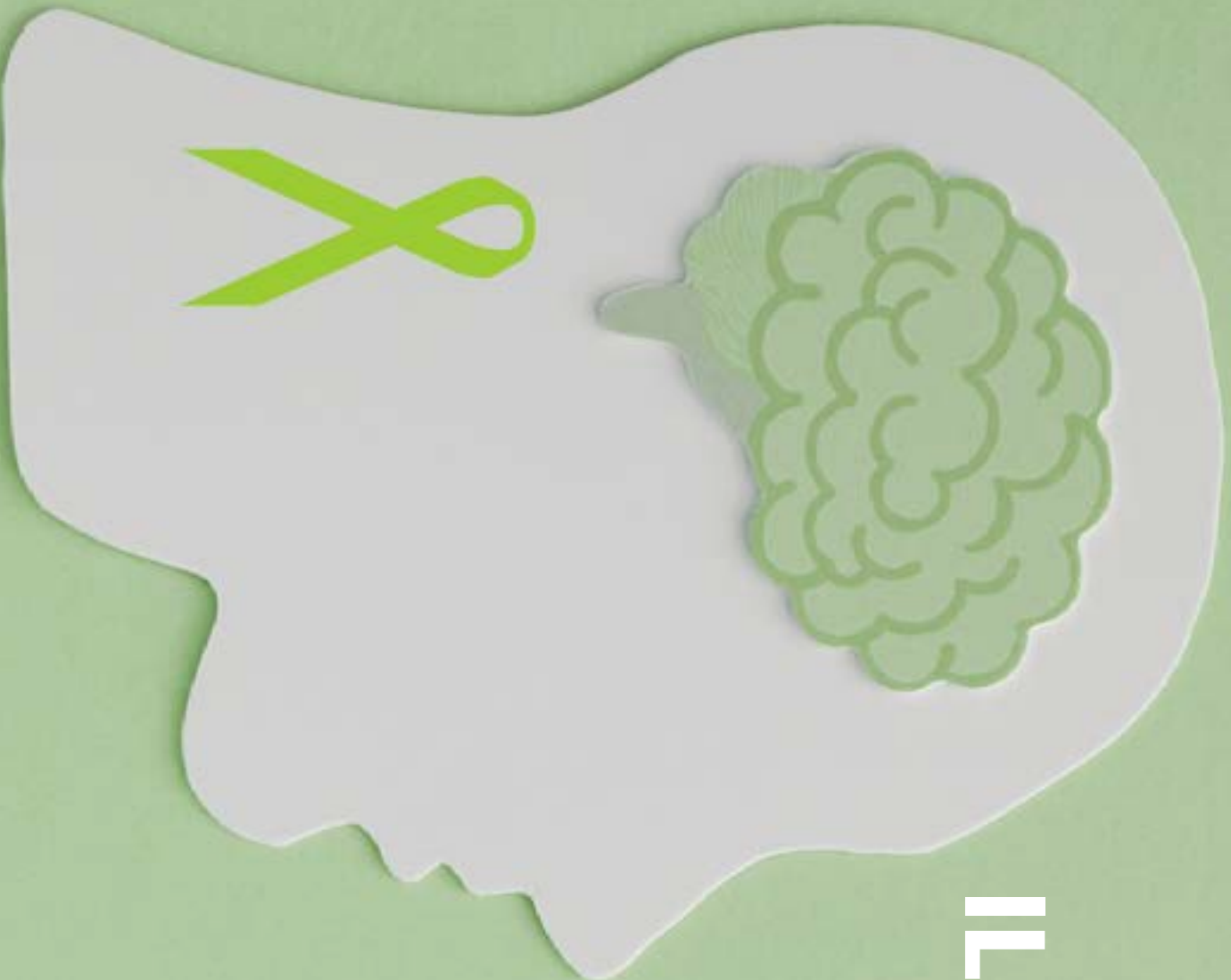
THEREFORE, I, [Name of Government Official, Name of City or Town], on behalf of [Name of City or Town], do hereby proclaim the month of [Month] as Make It OK Month. As the [Title of Government Official], I also call upon all [Name of City or Town] citizens, government agencies, public and private institutions, businesses, and schools to recommit our community to increasing awareness and understanding of mental health, reducing stigma and discrimination, and promoting appropriate and accessible services for all people with mental illnesses.

END MENTAL ILLNESS STIGMA

Mental Health

Awareness Month

Make It



**YOU ARE
NOT ALONE**

#MakeItOK

Make It  OK

MakeItOK.org/IOWA





Mental illnesses are OK

It's OK to have a mental illness – many of us do.

One in five Americans experience a mental illness each year. On average, people live with the symptoms of a mental illness for 10 years before seeking treatment, largely due to the stigma.

The sooner people get treatment, the greater their chances of recovery.

It's OK because it's a physical ailment – not a character flaw.

Mental illnesses are biological conditions that can be treated, just like cancer and diabetes.

They cannot be overcome through “will power” and are not related to a person's character or intelligence.

It's OK because it's treatable – life can get better.

The best treatments for serious mental illnesses today are highly effective. In fact, more than 70 percent of symptoms are reduced and people feel better when following their treatment plans.





Learn what to say to Make It OK

Talking about mental illnesses can be difficult. Here are some tips:

do say:

- “Thanks for opening up to me.”
- “How can I help?”
- “I’m sorry to hear that. It must be tough.”
- “I’m here for you when you need me.”
- “I can’t imagine what you’re going through.”
- “Can I drive you to an appointment?”
- “How are you feeling today?”

don’t say:

- “It could be worse ...”
- “Just deal with it.”
- “Everyone feels that way sometimes.”
- “We’ve all been there.”
- “You’ve got to pull yourself together.”
- “Maybe try thinking happier thoughts.”
- “Oh man, that sucks.”



Stop the silence – Make It OK

Mental illnesses are a touchy subject, creating voids in conversation. Here are some tips to help you.

Stop the silence. If someone shares with you that they're experiencing a mental illness, they are opening up to you in a big way. Ask questions, show concern and avoid awkward silences.

Be nice. It sounds simple enough, but try to say the right things with openness, warmth and caring.

Listen. In your conversation, try to do more listening and less searching for a solution.

Keep in contact. Offer to be available by phone, text, email or meet up in person. Just be there.

Don't ignore it. Don't be afraid to ask about someone's well-being if you think they might be hurting. Trust your judgment.

Offer support. Everyone is different, and may want very specific help or no help at all. Either way, ask and be open to the answer.



Tener enfermedades mentales está bien

Está bien tener una enfermedad mental – muchos de nosotros pasamos por eso.

Uno de cada cinco americanos experimenta una enfermedad mental cada año. En promedio, la gente vive con síntomas de alguna enfermedad mental por 10 años antes de buscar tratamiento. Todo debido en gran parte al estigma que hay. Entre más pronto reciben tratamiento las personas, mayores son sus posibilidades de recuperarse.

Está bien porque es una dolencia física, no un defecto de carácter.

Las enfermedades mentales son condiciones biológicas que pueden ser tratadas como el cáncer y la diabetes. No pueden ser superadas por medio de la fuerza de voluntad y no están relacionadas con el carácter de una persona o su inteligencia.

Está bien porque son tratable – la vida puede mejorar.

Los mejores tratamientos para enfermedades mentales graves hoy son altamente eficaces. De hecho, más del 70 por ciento de síntomas disminuyen y la gente se siente mejor cuando sigue su plan de tratamiento.



Aprende qué decir – Make It OK

Hablar sobre las enfermedades mentales puede ser difícil.

Aquí hay unos consejos:

di:

“Gracias por tener confianza.”

“¿Cómo puedo ayudarte?”

“Lamento escuchar eso. Debe ser difícil.”

“Estoy aquí para cuando me necesites.”

“No puedo imaginar por lo que estás pasando.”

“¿Puedo llevarte a la cita?”

“¿Cómo te sientes hoy?”

no digas:

“Pudiera ser peor ...”

“Sólo lidia con eso.”

“Todos nos sentimos así a veces.”

“Todos hemos pasado por eso.”

“Tienes que recuperarte.”

“Ten pensamientos felices.”

“Es una lástima.”





Evita el silencio – Make It OK

La salud mental es un tema delicado, cuando aparece en las conversaciones, puede crear silencios incómodos. Aquí hay unos consejos para ayudarte.

Evita el silencio. Si alguien comparte contigo que está experimentando algún tipo de problema de salud mental, está confiando en ti de una manera sensible. Haz preguntas, demuestra preocupación y evita silencios incómodos.

Sé amable. Suena simple, pero intenta responder con franqueza, amabilidad y cuidado.

Escucha. Intenta escuchar más, no ofrezcas una solución.

Mantente en contacto. Ofrece estar disponible por teléfono, mensaje de texto, correo electrónico o reunirte en persona. Es muy importante estar allí para ellos.

No lo ignores. No tengas miedo de preguntar sobre el bienestar de alguien si crees que está sufriendo. Confía en tu criterio.

Ofrece Apoyo. Todos somos diferentes y algunas personas querrán ayuda específica, otras no. De cualquier manera, pregunta y mantente atento para la eventual respuesta.

SAVE THE DATE!

MAY 20

WEAR GREEN FOR Make It **OK**



Show your support for Mental Health Awareness Month by wearing your favorite green shirt, pants or other apparel on **May 20**.

Make It OK is a community campaign to reduce stigma by starting conversations and increasing understanding about mental illness.

MakeltOK.org/IOWA

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SHARE A PHOTO ON SOCIAL MEDIA!

#MakeItOK

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