



MCF
maryland coalition of families

Family Focus

Understanding ADHD: Empowering Families Through Awareness

October is ADHD Awareness Month, a time to educate ourselves about Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) and its impact on families. ADHD is a neurodevelopmental disorder that affects both children and adults, leading to challenges in attention, impulsivity, and hyperactivity.



At MCF, we recognize the unique struggles families face when navigating the complexities of ADHD. Many parents find themselves overwhelmed, searching for resources, support, and strategies to help their children thrive. Our family peer support specialists are here to offer guidance, share their experiences, and connect families with valuable resources.

This month, we encourage families to engage in open conversations about ADHD, seek out information, and participate in local events focused on awareness and education. Together, we can break down stigmas, foster understanding, and empower families to advocate for their children's needs.

Remember, you are not alone in this journey. Our community is here to support you every step of the way. For more information on ADHD resources and support services, please reach out to us!

[Request Services Now](#)

Honoring Cynthia Kirk: A Legacy of Compassion and Commitment

Cynthia Kirk has been an invaluable member of Maryland Coalition of Families for 17 years, starting her journey under the



leadership of our first Executive Director, Jane Walker, when MCF was still in its early stages. At that time, there were no families for her to work with yet, but true to her character, Cynthia immersed herself in learning everything she could about special education and other essential topics. This dedication prepared her to support families when the opportunity arose, helping her grow into a powerhouse of knowledge, perseverance, and dedication that has benefited thousands of families in Howard County.

Over the years, countless families in Howard County have received peer support from Cynthia, consistently sharing heartwarming words of appreciation for her dedication. Many families have praised her exceptional ability to connect and support

families in need, and it's no surprise given the profound impact she consistently makes.

Cynthia's warmth, compassion, and ability to create a safe space for families to share their struggles and triumphs have made her a beloved figure in our community. From support groups to drum circles, her positive energy and collaborative spirit have inspired both the families she serves and her colleagues.

This year, Cynthia was honored with the Ginger Rosela Spirit Award, recognizing her as an extraordinary family peer support specialist who embodies the essence of our mission. Cynthia's recognition brought joy to our staff meeting, where we celebrated her well-deserved accolades. Additionally, she received a Certificate of Recognition from Dr. Calvin Ball, the Howard County Executive, acknowledging her remarkable contributions to the community.

Cynthia retired in October and as she embarks on her next chapter, we want to extend our deepest gratitude for her tireless dedication and the profound impact she has made on the lives of so many. Cynthia, your legacy of love and support will continue to guide and inspire us all. Thank you for being an incredible colleague and a cherished member of our family. Please join us in celebrating Cynthia's much-deserved retirement!

MCF Legislative Advocacy: Amplifying Family Voices

Since 2000, Maryland Coalition of Families has been committed to ensuring that family voices are heard in Annapolis, helping elected representatives understand the impact of proposed legislation on individuals with behavioral health challenges.

During the annual Maryland General Assembly session, MCF brings families from across the state to meet with their legislators, sharing personal stories and perspectives on key bills affecting behavioral health. This experience empowers families, and legislators often highlight how these stories shape their understanding of critical issues.

MCF provides transportation, meals, and organizes meetings for participating families. Additionally, MCF encourages families to testify on legislation, offering support in drafting statements and preparing for hearings.

If you can't attend, consider sponsoring a family or youth! A donation of \$100 for a family or \$50 for a youth helps MCF provide this critical day of advocacy, learning, and empowerment to all who want their voices heard in Annapolis.



Sponsorship

Help Us Celebrate 25 Years!



This year, Maryland Coalition of Families celebrates 25 years of providing family peer support across Maryland! Over the past two and a half decades, we've had the privilege of standing by countless families, offering support, resources, and hope. As we mark this incredible milestone, we're asking for your help to ensure we can continue this important work for years to come.

In honor of our 25th anniversary, we're launching a special challenge this month: **We're looking for 25 people to donate \$25 to MCF this month.** Every donation helps us reach more families and make a lasting impact. Let's celebrate 25 years of connection and support by building an even stronger future together!

\$25 for 25 years!

Get Connected! Stay Informed!

Online and In Person
Support Groups

Workshops, Trainings &
Other Events

MCF offers many support groups to provide a safe space for you to learn, share and receive compassionate help. All are facilitated by trained Family Peer Support Specialists who have dealt with similar challenges in their own families. Groups are free for all participants and are held on different days of the week and different times of day. Find one or more that can work for you and join us soon!

MCF offers a wide range of events, trainings and workshops for families who have a loved one with mental health, substance use or problem gambling challenges. Events are held in communities across the state or virtually and are offered at no cost to participants. Visit our website to learn more!

[Find a Support Group](#)

[Past and Upcoming Events](#)

MCF Employment Opportunities

MCF is growing, and we have employment opportunities that might be perfect for you or someone you know! We currently have openings in many areas of the State. Please check our website for a complete list of openings.

- **Program Coordinator (Remote Worker - Must Live in Maryland)**
- **Family Peer Support Specialist - Bilingual (Remote Worker - Must Live in Maryland)**
- **Family Peer Support Specialist - Substance Use (Remote Worker - Must Live in Baltimore City)**
- **Youth Engagement Specialist (Remote Worker - Must Live in PG County)**

[Employment Opportunities](#)



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