

October Health and Wellness Observances

The Health & Well-being Interest Group has reviewed several sources of information on national health-related observances held throughout the year, with the objective of selecting activities of interest to our employer members. These tools, educational resources and other relevant information are shared with our members in advance to support their workforce education and communication activities. The spotlighted observances for October appear below and in the Members Only section at www.gpbch.org.

BREAST CANCER AWARENESS MONTH

Breast Cancer Awareness Month occurs during the month of October to help increase attention and support for the awareness, early detection and treatment as well as palliative care of this disease. Breast cancer is the most common cancer in women in the United States, except for skin cancers. It is about 30% (or 1 in 3) of all new female cancers each year. The average risk of a woman in the United States developing breast cancer sometime in her life is about 13%. This means there is a 1 in 8 chance she will develop breast cancer. <https://www.cancer.org/cancer/breast-cancer/about/how-common-is-breast-cancer.html>



Risk Factors: Some factors associated with an increase in breast cancer risk — being a woman, your age, and your genetics, for example — can't be changed. Other factors — lack of exercise, smoking cigarettes, and eating certain foods — can be altered by *making lifestyle choices*. By choosing the healthiest lifestyle options possible, you can empower yourself and make sure your breast cancer risk is as low as possible. Review the known risk factors here: <https://www.breastcancer.org/risk/risk-factors>.

Early Detection: According to the [National Breast Cancer Foundation](http://www.nationalbreastcancer.org) (NBCF), when breast cancer is detected early, and is in the localized stage, the 5-year relative survival rate is 99%. Early detection includes doing monthly breast self-exams, and scheduling regular clinical breast exams and mammograms. <https://www.nationalbreastcancer.org/early-detection-of-breast-cancer>

Free Educational Guides: NBCF is dedicated to delivering comprehensive, educational information on breast health and healthy living. From understanding the importance of early detection, to knowing how to prepare for a mammogram, [NBCF's online resources](#) and guides aim to empower women and men with useful information. The full list can be [accessed here](#), several highlighted resources include:

- [Just Diagnosed with Breast Cancer...Now What?](#)
- [Smart Bites Cookbook: 7 Wholesome Recipes in 35 Minutes \(or Less!\)](#)
- [Weekly Healthy Living Tips](#)
- [The Cancer Caregiver Guide](#)

Additional Resources:

[Breast Cancer Care \(Alliance Cancer Specialists\)](#)

[Breast Cancer Myths](#)

[Everything Breast Cancer \(National Comprehensive Cancer Network\)](#)

[What is Breast Cancer?](#)



NATIONAL DEPRESSION AND MENTAL HEALTH SCREENING MONTH

Trying to tell the difference between what expected behaviors are and what might be the signs of a mental illness isn't always easy. There's no easy test that can let someone know if there is mental illness or if actions and thoughts might be typical behaviors of a person or the result of a physical illness. Each illness has its own symptoms, but a few common signs of mental illness in adults and adolescents can include the following: **excessive worrying or fear, prolonged or strong feelings of irritability or anger, avoiding friends and social activities, thinking of suicide, [among others](#).**

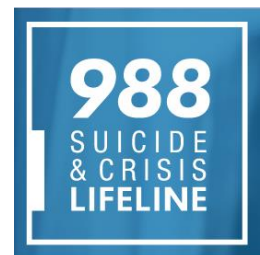


Mental Health Fast Facts:

- **1 in 5 adults** U.S. adults experience mental illness each year
- **Suicide** is the **2nd leading** cause of death among people aged 10-14 in the U.S.
- **50%** of all lifetime mental illness begins by age 14, and 75% by age 24
- Serious mental illness costs America **\$193.2 billion** in lost earnings per year.

988 Partner Toolkit

The 988 Partner Toolkit is designed to help states, territories, tribes, mental health and substance use disorder professionals, and others looking for information on understanding the background, history, funding opportunities, and implementation resources for strengthening suicide prevention and mental health crisis services. Learn more here: <https://www.samhsa.gov/find-help/988>.



MindWise Innovations

With behavioral health now more important than ever, MindWise offers videos, resources, and free consultations with their experts to all businesses and schools who need. MindWise Innovations equips schools, workplaces, colleges, and communities with tools to help them address mental health issues, substance use, and suicide risk – enabling their members to live healthier lives. <https://www.mindwise.org/>

National Alliance of Healthcare Purchaser Coalitions

Collaborating with key stakeholders and members, The National Alliance is a leading voice on future directions in mental health and is actively developing a consensus for a path forward to promote systemic improvements in mental health and broker solutions for serious conditions prevalent among the US workforce including depression, anxiety and substance use disorders. The National Alliance has numerous resources, including action briefs, which could be of value to your organization. Review their Mental Health Initiatives website here: <https://www.nationalalliancehealth.org/initiatives/initiatives-national/workplacemental-health>.

National Alliance on Mental Illness

NAMI, the National Alliance on Mental Illness, is the nation's largest grassroots mental health organization dedicated to building better lives for the millions of Americans affected by mental illness. NAMI is an association of hundreds of local affiliates, state organizations and volunteers who work in your community to raise awareness and provide support and education that was not previously available. See more at: <https://www.nami.org/>

NAMI offers support groups that are peer-led and offer participants an opportunity to share their experiences and gain support from other attendees. To access these groups, which include NAMI Connection and NAMI Family Support Group, click here: <https://www.nami.org/Support-Education/Support-Groups>.

You can also visit the local NAMI partners at:

Delaware: <http://www.namidelaware.org/>

Philadelphia: <http://dbhids.org/>

New Jersey: <https://naminj.org/>

The Right Direction

The Right Direction is a free initiative designed to provide employers with tools and actionable strategies to raise awareness about depression and to improve workplace mental health for a happier, more engaged, and productive workplace. The program features turnkey and customizable resources and materials to increase awareness, reduce stigma, and encourage help-seeking behaviors.

<http://www.rightdirectionforme.com/ForEmployers.html>.



Mental Health First Aid®

Mental Health First Aid at Work is a course that teaches how to identify, understand and respond to signs of mental illnesses and substance use disorders. The training gives the skills needed to reach out and provide initial help and support to someone who may be developing a mental health or substance use problem or experiencing a crisis. To learn more visit <https://www.mentalhealthfirstaid.org/>.

To schedule Mental Health First Aid training at your worksite, contact:

- Philadelphia: <http://healthymindsphilly.org/en/mhfa>
- Southeastern PA: <https://www.fivecountymh.org/index.html>
- Nationwide: <https://www.mentalhealthfirstaid.org/cs/>

Shatterproof

Shatterproof is a national nonprofit organization dedicated to reversing the addiction crisis in the United States. Their goal is to work together to reduce the devastating impact of addiction on families across America by helping parents to prevent their children from developing an addiction to alcohol and other drugs. They want to ensure that those afflicted with this disease gain access to proven and effective treatments and long-term recovery. Visit their website to learn more: <https://www.shatterproof.org/about>.

Trauma Informed Care

The National Council for Mental Wellbeing consultation on advancing trauma-informed approaches is designed to help assess, develop, and implement trauma-informed practices, policies, and procedures in an organization. To find out more on how to schedule training and consulting opportunities for your organization, visit: <https://www.thenationalcouncil.org/center-for-consulting-training/consulting-training-request/>.



[Click here to access the October Spotlighted Observance – You Are NOT Alone](#). This document is a ready-to-distribute flyer for your employees and colleagues.

HEALTHY MINDS
STRONG COMMUNITIES

Additional Resources:

[GPBCH 2024 Mental Health Resource Guide](#)

[Achieving Value in Mental Health Support](#)

[Action Brief: Mental Health – Accelerating Action for Parity & Peak Performance](#)

[Action Brief: Hope & Healing for Mental Illness is Possible](#)