



NATIONAL RECREATION
AND PARK ASSOCIATION



**Mental Health Awareness Month
Marketing and Communications Toolkit**

TOOLKIT OVERVIEW

Each May, in recognition of Mental Health Awareness Month, the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA), highlights the vital role parks and recreation plays in supporting mental health and overall health and well-being. It provides safe, welcoming access to green spaces, encourages physical activity and creates meaningful opportunities for community connection.

This toolkit includes messaging that will support park and recreation professionals in recognizing Mental Health Awareness Month and planning awareness and advocacy activities. We thank you for the important work you are doing!

Your points of contact for this toolkit are:

Allison Colman (she/her/hers)
Senior Director of Programs
703.858.2156 | acolman@nrpa.org

Charissa Hipp (she/her/hers)
NRPA Marketing and Engagement Manager
703.858.2158 | chipp@nrpa.org

CONTENTS

- Toolkit Overview 2
- Key Messaging 3
- Sample Website/Newsletter Language 3
- Social Media Campaign/ Sample Posts..... 3
- Community Engagement Ideas 5
- Outreach And Advocacy 5
- Leveraging Your Agency’s Existing Communications 5

KEY MESSAGING

- Park and recreation professionals create spaces and programs that help people connect, recharge and find calm — offering opportunities to nurture both personal and community wellness.
- Whether it's a quiet moment in nature or the energy of a group class, parks and recreation connects people to the things that help them feel their best: movement, nature, community and joy. These experiences — both big and small — promote healing, hope and peace of mind.
- Peace of mind begins with parks and recreation. Whether you're walking a trail, joining a class or simply taking a moment to breathe outside — park and recreation spaces are places of healing and hope.
- Parks and recreation is essential community infrastructure because consistent access to green space and recreational programming is foundational to mental health and well-being.
- Park and recreation professionals are trained and empowered as leaders in community health. Their work creates safe, welcoming spaces by cultivating programs that reduce isolation and foster connection — two critical aspects of mental well-being.

SAMPLE WEBSITE/NEWSLETTER LANGUAGE

This May, in recognition of Mental Health Awareness Month, [Agency Name] is joining with the National Recreation and Park Association to highlight the power of parks and recreation in support of mental health and overall well-being in [City/Community Name]. Parks and recreation is essential to creating environments that support emotional and mental well-being by providing safe, welcoming access to green spaces, encouraging physical activity and creating meaningful opportunities for community connection.

SOCIAL MEDIA CAMPAIGN/ SAMPLE POSTS

Connect with NRPA on the following platforms, and please tag NRPA as noted:

- Facebook: [@National Recreation and Park Association](#)
- X: [@NRPA News](#)
- Instagram: [@NRPA](#)
- YouTube: [NRPA](#)
- LinkedIn: [NRPA](#)
- Threads: [@NRPA](#)
- Bluesky: [@nrpa-news.bsky.social](#)

*Feel free to adapt the language below for various social media platforms. Be sure to update the handles and use hashtags when appropriate. Using hashtags amplifies our message and makes social conversations trackable.

#MentalHealthInParks

#MentalHealthAwarenessMonth

- Use your communication channels to share mental health facts and promote the mental health benefits of parks, green space and nature.
- Use facts from reliable sources like [Mental Health America](#) or the [National Alliance on Mental Illness](#). Both organizations have Mental Health Awareness Month promotional toolkits and promotional resources.
- Idea: Share short videos/reels of calming park scenes or Yoga/Tai Chi classes.
- Idea: Collect and re-post “Park Moment of the Day” user-submitted photos and stories.
- Idea: Feature personal stories from community members who use parks to support their mental health in a blog series or video montage.
- Idea: Emphasize photos and stories that showcase movement, mindfulness and social connections as keys to mental health and well-being.

[Agency Name] is proud to support mental health and well-being in [City/Community Name] through the power of parks and recreation. This May, along with the [National Recreation and Park Association], we’re highlighting that parks and recreation connects people with things that help them feel their best: movement, nature, community and joy. #MentalHealthInParks #MentalHealthAwarenessMonth

Peace of mind starts with parks and recreation, and it starts close to home! This May, [Agency Name] joins the [National Recreation and Park Association] in recognizing #MentalHealthAwarenessMonth by highlighting the importance of parks and recreation in [City/Community Name]. From quiet time in nature to energizing group activities and classes, these spaces and programs offer peace, purpose and connection for all community members. #MentalHealthInParks

May is #MentalHealthAwarenessMonth and parks and recreation is a powerful ally for our well-being. Through access to nature, movement and community, [Agency Name] supports mental health in [City/Community Name] every day. #MentalHealthInParks

Feeling stressed? A walk in the park might help! Park and recreation spaces offer more than play; they provide peace, connection and support for your mental health and well-being. This #MentalHealthAwarenessMonth, [Agency Name] is joining the [National Recreation and Park Association] to celebrate the role of parks and recreation in creating healthier, more joyful communities. #MentalHealthInParks

Parks and recreation helps build strong communities by bringing people together, providing opportunities for movement and supporting intergenerational connections. [Agency Name] invites you to join a group walk, class or event this month and feel the power of connection as we celebrate #MentalHealthAwarenessMonth in [City/Community Name]: [link to website]. #MentalHealthInParks

Ninety-three percent of U.S. adults say that activities offered by park and recreation agencies are beneficial to their mental health. Why? Because socializing, exercising and enjoying nature is good for you! Check out the upcoming programs [Agency Name] has to support your mind, body and spirit in

[City/Community Name]: [link to program schedule]. #MentalHealthInParks
#MentalHealthAwarenessMonth

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT IDEAS

- Organize a community run, mindfulness walk, pop-up art or music event with a mental health focus.
- Host a mental health screening, training, forum, webinar or other educational event like Mental Health First Aid.
- Partner with local mental health professionals, service providers and wellness organizations to host a wellness fair. Highlight community resources or sponsor prevention activities to build awareness of mental health across the community.
- Offer a preview day of programs that promote mindfulness and social connection like outdoor Yoga or Tai Chi, nature walks, forest bathing, nature journaling and guided meditation.
- Launch a [Park Prescription initiative](#) by collaborating with local health professionals who can encourage time in parks as part of health care.

OUTREACH AND ADVOCACY

- Light up the facilities and public spaces your agency manages in green, the official awareness color for mental health.
- Collaborate with local and state legislators to plan an advocacy event and encourage advocates, consumers, concerned citizens, and community and business leaders to discuss your community's mental health needs with policymakers.
- Join a local community coalition focused on expanding mental health awareness. Leverage your organization's networks and resources to help advance community-wide practices, policies, norms and other approaches.
- Share stories and results of park and recreation programming with elected officials — showing that investing in parks is investing in well-being.

LEVERAGING YOUR AGENCY'S EXISTING COMMUNICATIONS

Consider what untapped resources your agency already has in place for communication about Mental Health Awareness Month. By effectively leveraging your agency's existing communications, you can enhance the impact of your messaging, ensure consistency and maximize your reach to engage your audience more effectively.

- **Audit existing communication channels.** Identify current platforms by listing all the communication channels your agency currently uses, such as email newsletters, social media, press releases, blogs, internal memos, etc. Evaluate the effectiveness of each platform by reviewing its performance and any metrics or data you collect like open rates, engagement rates and audience feedback.
- **Be consistent with your messaging.** Ensure all communications have a unified voice that reflects the agency's mission and values. Consistency not only builds trust but also reinforces your message. Follow established brand guidelines for tone, style and any visual elements across all platforms.
- **Repurpose content when appropriate.** Adapt content across platforms, keeping the platform and audience in mind. Highlight key messages by using excerpts from longer communications in shorter, more digestible formats.
- **Engage with stakeholders.** Try to keep communications interactive by encouraging feedback and interaction through surveys, polls, etc. Personalize communications by tailoring to different stakeholder groups, based on their interests and needs.
- **Leverage analytics.** Track the performance of your communications by using analytic tools to monitor the effectiveness. Adjust your strategies based on data insights and refine your messaging and delivery methods to better engage your audience.
- **Maximize your reach.** Collaborate with partner organizations to expand the reach of your communications whenever applicable.