



I Matter.

Mental Health Awareness Month Toolkit





We appreciate you!

May is Mental Health Awareness Month and we'd like your help in sharing support for Colorado's youth. We thank you for your interest in promoting mental health wellness during this important month and year round! This toolkit provides information about I Matter and resources to share with your community. Thank you for promoting mental health wellness with I Matter during Mental Health Awareness Month.

The Colorado Behavioral Health Administration established I Matter in 2021 to provide access to **up to six free therapy sessions** for all youth in Colorado.

- The program is open to youth 18 years of age or younger, or 21 years of age or younger if receiving special education services.
- Youth and their parents can visit IMatterColorado.org to take a confidential online survey about their mental health and schedule sessions with a licensed therapist.
- Spanish language services can be found at YoImportoColorado.org, and the program has therapists who can provide sessions in Spanish.
- Following the six free sessions, the program connects youth to a care navigator to ensure ongoing care.

May is Mental Health Awareness Month, and we want to ensure that all Colorado youth are getting the help they need for their mental well-being. **That's where you come in.**





How To Use The Toolkit

We encourage you to take all of the resources and materials in this toolkit to encourage students at your school or organization to get mental health support, throughout the month of May and beyond. Pick a week to promote mental health awareness, or do it the whole month of May!

We encourage you to get a group of students involved in promoting mental health and wellness, and connect them to I Matter. Positive peer influence is the most effective way to encourage adoption of a mindset or program by other youth.

A toolkit with digital content can be found at bit.ly/IMatterColorado.

What's Included

- Ideas for Spreading the Word
 - Get the Message Out
 - Post on Social Media
 - Send a Newsletter or Share a Blog
 - Set Up An Information Table
 - Get Others Involved
- Social Media Toolkit
- Sample Blog Post
- Sample Newsletter Insert
- I Matter FAQ

We'd love to hear from you on how this toolkit was used at your school or within your organization! Please share a summary of your efforts and the result with cdhs_bha_outreach@state.co.us.

If you have photos you would like to share that have people in them, please ensure all individuals in the photos have provided their consent. Images may be shared on social media by the Colorado Behavioral Health Administration to promote I Matter.

I Matter.

Ideas for Spreading The Word

Get The Message Out



I Matter has free posters, info cards, stickers, yard signs and schoolyard banners available to you! To order, visit bit.ly/IMatterMaterials.

- Hang up posters around your school or organization. Each poster has a message about mental health, and a QR code that takes them right to the I Matter website.
- Make sure the front office and the counselors' offices have information cards for students to learn more.
- Order yard signs or a schoolyard banner to hang up outside of your school or organization, so that the community can learn about I Matter.
- Use sidewalk chalk to write messages outside of the school or organization so that youth see them as they're walking in. These might wear off quickly as people walk on them, or if it rains, so you should plan to refresh them every few days throughout the week or month. We recommend sharing short messages with the I Matter website underneath it (IMatterColorado.org and/or YoImportoColorado.org). We've included some examples here, but we encourage you to write your own!
 - Free therapy at IMatterColorado.org.
 - Terapia gratuita en YoImportoColorado.org
 - Need to talk? Free therapy at IMatterColorado.org.
 - You matter. Get free therapy at IMatterColorado.org.
 - ¿Necesitas hablar? Terapia gratuita en YoImportoColorado.org
 - Tú importas. Obtén terapia gratis en YoImportoColorado.org



Post on Social Media

Post about I Matter on social media! Use the social media posts and graphics in this Mental Health Awareness Month toolkit or the general toolkit at bit.ly/IMatterColorado to post on your personal social media accounts, or on the school's or organization's social media accounts.

Send a Newsletter or Share a Blog

Include an I Matter mention in your weekly or monthly newsletter, or write a blog post on how I Matter relates to your school or organization's mission to serve youth. Later on in this toolkit we have some sample newsletter content and blog posts that you can use!

Set Up An Information Table

Set up an information table in the cafeteria or near the school entrance for before and after school, and during lunch, as a way to talk with students and share information about mental health and I Matter. Make sure to ask permission from your school's office manager to set-up a table. If you're a community organization, set up a table at your next event!

You can order free I Matter print materials to make available at your table. Order at bit.ly/IMatterMaterials

If you have a budget you can use to support efforts like promoting mental health and wellness, you could do a raffle to win prizes, like a gift card or items you have on hand like shirts or pencils with your school's name, logo, or mascot on them. This is a great way to get students to come to the booth and learn more about I Matter and the importance of mental health. Here are some ideas:

- **Set up a drawing:** Each student who visits the table can put in their name to win. At the end of the week or month, draw one lucky name!
- **Make it a contest:** Have students guess the number of jelly beans in a jar, write an essay about what mental wellness means to them, etc. Winner gets to take home the gift card or prize.

Ensure you're following your school or organization's rules for contests like these. Ask your school's office manager for help in determining what these rules are.

Get Others Involved

- **Ask Teachers, Counselors & Coaches to Help:**
 - Encourage teachers, counselors, coaches, and/or organizational leaders to talk about I Matter with their students, and keep I Matter info cards and stickers in their classrooms or on hand.



- Another way adults can help is to offer their classrooms or offices as a safe and quiet place for virtual therapy sessions, as school and organization policy allows.
- **Make An Announcement:** Reach out to whoever is in charge of morning (or weekly) announcements, and ask them to talk about Mental Health Awareness Month and I Matter. Sample announcements include:
 - If your school has video announcements, you could ask them to share one of the videos included in the online toolkit: bit.ly/IMatterColorado.
 - "Feeling sad, angry or anxious? Talking to a professional can help. You can access free therapy at IMatterColorado.org."
 - "Therapy can benefit anyone. If you've been feeling sad or anxious, speaking to a therapist can help. Learn more at IMatterColorado.org."
 - "It helps to talk. Visit IMatterColorado.org to learn more about free therapy."
 - "You matter. Visit IMatterColorado.org to learn more about how you can get free therapy."
- **Post on School's Social Media & Website:**
 - Ask your school to post about I Matter and the importance of mental health on social media platforms, and to share information on the program in the school newsletter, to spread awareness of the program with parents. Social media posts, as well as sample school newsletter content can be found in this Mental Health Awareness Month toolkit and evergreen posts and content for year-round sharing can be accessed at bit.ly/IMatterColorado.
 - Encourage a school administrator to post the I Matter web banner on the school's site. This web banner can be found in the digital toolkit: bit.ly/IMatterColorado.



Social Media Toolkit

This toolkit provides social media posts that can be used by your organization to promote Mental Health Awareness Month and free therapy for Colorado's youth. The goal of these posts is to ensure that youth and trusted adults in Colorado are aware of I Matter.

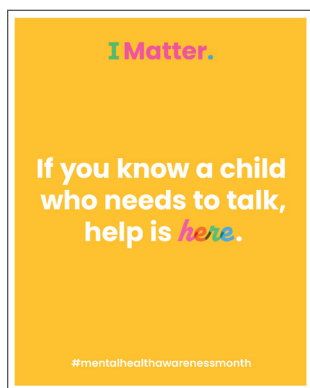
There is **a folder in the Dropbox toolkit** that contains image and video files to go with the sample post text (captions) below, that speak to Mental Health Awareness Month. We encourage you to share these posts on any social platforms used by your organization. Please tag @bhaconnect in your social post! For Instagram posts, update the link in your bio to ensure users can easily access the program. You can use free platforms like **Linktree** to link to multiple different things at once from your Instagram bio, without needing to swap out links regularly.



General

Social Copy: Colorado's youth matter. So does their mental health. We're using #MentalHealthAwarenessMonth to promote the importance of youth mental health. I Matter offers free therapy sessions to children and teens who want to speak to a professional. To learn more, visit IMatterColorado.org.

Associated Image: **I Matter Social General Struggles Alone**

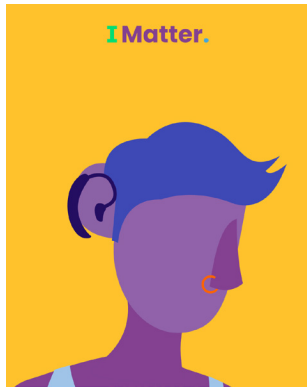


Trusted Adult

Social Copy: Mental health matters year-round, but during #MentalHealthAwarenessMonth, we want to focus a spotlight on it. Colorado's youth are struggling with their mental health. Luckily, free therapy sessions are available to children and teens who want to speak to someone. If you know someone in need, visit IMatterColorado.org to learn more.

Associated Image: **I Matter Social Trusted Adult Help Here**

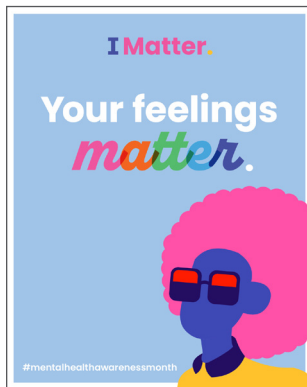
I Matter.



Trusted Adult

Social Copy: It's #MentalHealthAwareness month, so let's talk mental health. Colorado's youth are struggling. Speaking to a professional can provide much needed relief and guidance. I Matter offers free, confidential therapy sessions to children and teens in need. Visit IMatterColorado.org to learn more.

Associated Video: [I Matter Social Trusted Adult Usual Self](#)



Youth

Social Copy: No matter what you're feeling, it's valid. I Matter allows you to find a therapist to listen and provide professional support. I Matter is free and confidential, so visit IMatterColorado.org to learn more. #MentalHealthAwarenessMonth

Associated Image: [I Matter Social Youth Feelings Matter](#)



Youth

Social Copy: It's #MentalHealthAwareness month, so let's talk mental health. Colorado's youth are struggling. Speaking to a professional can provide much needed relief and guidance. I Matter offers free, confidential therapy sessions to children and teens in need. Visit IMatterColorado.org to learn more.

Associated Video: [I Matter Social Youth Take Over](#)



Sample Newsletter Insert

Free Therapy for Colorado Youth

I Matter provides up to six free therapy sessions for any Colorado youth 18 and younger, or 21 and younger who are receiving special education services. This Mental Health Awareness Month, support mental health wellness for youth, and visit IMatterColorado.org to sign up for in-person or telehealth services in English, or YoImportoColorado.org for services in Spanish. Youth 12 and older can sign up for services without parent or guardian consent. Youth 11 and younger can have their parent or guardian sign them up.

Celebrate Mental Health Awareness Month by sharing about I Matter in your communities! Visit the [digital toolkit](#), where you can download social media posts and a platform overview that explains what to expect when using the website and services. You can also order free I Matter materials through this online [ordering form](#).

Questions? Access the I Matter [FAQs](#) here.



Sample Blog Post

Spread the Word about Free Youth Therapy Sessions

It's Mental Health Awareness Month, and we're here to celebrate mental wellness, talking about a Colorado program called I Matter.

Last May, the Colorado State Legislature renewed I Matter, a program that provides up to six free therapy sessions for any Colorado youth. All Colorado youth ages 18 or younger—or 21 and younger if receiving special education services—are eligible to receive free services.

Youth and their parents or guardians can visit the I Matter website to take a confidential online survey about their mental health and schedule sessions with a licensed therapist. Youth 12 and older can sign up for therapy sessions without a parent or guardian's consent.

More than 25,000 counseling appointments have been scheduled since I Matter launched, serving youth from all over Colorado. There are currently over 180 licensed therapists supporting I Matter, and that list is growing!

Spanish language services are also available at YoImportoColorado.org.

An easy way to share news of this important resource for Colorado youth is by sharing [these social media graphics](#) and ordering free I Matter materials such as posters, rack cards, banners, stickers and lawn signs through [this order form](#).

The testimonials from families who have received therapy through I Matter are incredibly moving. Here is one of our favorites from Melyssa, a parent in Fort Collins:

My son, who is a high school freshman, just used the service. I have nothing but praise. Starting with the website: it is awesome from a user experience. Easy to navigate and book online with a lot of providers to choose from. Clear communication about what to expect and when the appointments would be. Then, the part I am floored about, is that the sessions are free.

I literally spent six weeks trying to find counseling services locally for my son. I even had a list of resources I reached out to via email and phone calls. There were delays, with a lot of relaying of personal information before being told there wasn't availability, or that we would need to do prescreening for \$250 and then another \$150+ per session when times opened up.

I get it - there's a mental crisis happening across the country and therapists are struggling to keep up. But all that changed when Kailee at Restore (a restorative justice



program) told me about I Matter. Within minutes, my son had booked an appointment and within days, had his online appointment.

After the six sessions, as recommended by the licensed therapist, I Matter's care navigators can help youth after their free sessions, and, where possible, connect youth with providers who accept their insurance, such as Medicaid or their private insurance. When children are uninsured, care navigators can connect families to resources to help with cost. I Matter may be able to pay for more than six sessions depending on demand and availability.

If you have questions about the program, please see the FAQs for more information [here](#).



I Matter FAQs

What is I Matter?

I Matter provides up to six free therapy sessions for youth in Colorado and reimburses participating licensed therapists, which are licensed clinicians from Colorado agencies and independent contractors.

How did the I Matter program start? How is it funded?

House Bill 21-1258 charged the Colorado Behavioral Health Administration with creating a temporary youth mental health services program, I Matter. The program funding has been renewed via **House Bill 22-1243** through at least June 30, 2023.

Where can I learn more about the progress of the program?

View the I Matter reports [here](#).

Who can use the I Matter program?

All youth aged 18 and younger are eligible, as well as all young people aged 21 and younger who receive special education services.

Will legal status be considered for youth wanting to access I Matter services?

All Colorado youth are welcome, and participants and their parents/caregivers will never be asked for their legal status.

What's the process to sign up for the program's free sessions?

We've put together a document that walks you through the process, that can be found [here](#). Youth 12 and older can sign up for the program without parent/guardian assistance or consent. Youth 11 and younger must have a parent/guardian sign up for the program on their behalf. I Matter provides youth up to six free mental health sessions with a licensed therapist.

If a child is already seeing a therapist for mental health services, would I Matter pay that therapist?

I Matter pays for therapy provided by licensed therapists contracted with I Matter. While it's possible that the child's therapist is part of I Matter, it is not guaranteed, and the child or their parent/guardian will need to take the short survey on the I Matter website to be paired with a therapist. If a child has an existing relationship with a therapist and they feel that their therapy is benefiting them, we encourage the youth to continue that relationship.



Are there in-person options through the program?

Yes! Most of the appointments are virtual, but there are some providers offering in-person appointments.

What's the average wait time for an appointment?

Telehealth appointments are generally available immediately. The program generally has more than 100 appointment slots available over a two week period. All appointments listed through the I Matter platform are within two weeks.

Does I Matter employ licensed therapists?

Yes, I Matter has more than 180 licensed therapists providing services.

How were providers recruited for I Matter? How do I become a provider for I Matter?

Providers were recruited via outreach to all professionals licensed in the state of Colorado, as well as all Community Mental Health Centers in the state. Licensed therapists who want to provide services through I Matter can contact providers@imattercolorado.org.

How long does it take to get an appointment with a licensed therapist?

Virtual appointments are generally available within the next two weeks.

Are crisis counselors available through I Matter?

For any youth in crisis, they or their parents should reach out to Colorado Crisis Services for immediate attention. Call 844-493-TALK (8255) or text TALK to 38255. You can visit [ColoradoCrisisServices.org](https://coloradocrisiservices.org) for more information.

Is counseling offered in languages other than English?

Yes, I Matter sessions are available in Spanish and English. When a youth or their parent/guardian completes the survey on the I Matter website, it will ask them whether they want services in English or Spanish. Spanish services can also be accessed on our Spanish language website, YoImportoColorado.org. We are still exploring translation services and/or partners who could enable us to provide services in other languages.



Once a youth completes up to 6 free sessions offered as part of I Matter, are they able to continue meeting with the licensed therapist after? What will the fees look like after the free sessions?

As of January 2022, I Matter is providing up to 6 free sessions to all Colorado youth. This is due to the program's current budget capacity, which is presently able to offer as many as 6 free sessions per youth.

After approximately 3 to 6 sessions, as recommended by the licensed therapist, I Matter's care navigators can help connect youth with providers who accept their insurance, such as Medicaid or their private insurance. When children are uninsured, care navigators can connect families to resources to help with cost. I Matter may be able to pay for more than six sessions depending on demand and availability.

Free or low cost counseling is also available through the state's **Community Mental Health Centers**.

I want to promote I Matter within my organization or school. How do I do that?

We'd love to help you with that! You can access the program's digital toolkit at bit.ly/IMatterColorado. The toolkit has social media posts, newsletter copy, digital banners, etc. You can also order free program materials here: bit.ly/IMatterMaterials.

I ordered materials for my event, but it says they will take 4-6 weeks to ship, and my event is next week.

In the event that you need materials sooner than the typical shipping window, please contact julianne@ameliecompany.com with your situation. If we're able, we will do our best to expedite materials to you.

If you have additional questions about I Matter services, please email support@imattercolorado.org.

**I Matter.
YoImporto.**



COLORADO
Behavioral Health
Administration