



October 2017

Talking About Mental Health Doesn't Have to Be Scary
Celebrate Mental Health Awareness Week to Help Reduce Stigma



What is mental health stigma? Mental health stigma can be divided into two types: social stigma and perceived stigma. **Social stigma** is characterized by prejudicial attitudes and discriminating behavior directed toward individuals with mental health problems. In contrast, **perceived stigma** or self-stigma is the internalizing by the mental health sufferer of their perceptions of discrimination. Perceived stigma can significantly affect feelings of shame and lead to poor treatment outcomes.

Efforts to normalize mental health treatment are a great first step in reducing and eliminating the stigma that surrounds mental health issues and treatment. People and the media should also be cognizant of their portrayals of people with mental illness because those portrayals can do very real damage to viewers who would otherwise seek help. Part of the danger of using words like "crazy," even jokingly, is that people see that word as being synonymous with mental illness, but it is really a stigmatizing phrase used to demean and belittle people suffering from real diseases. Perpetuating the

use of these seemingly innocuous words is a huge part of the problem that is keeping people from seeking help or being transparent about their daily struggles. This leads to secrecy, shame, and denial, which can deepen someone's mental health challenges.

The Sanctuary Model, which Morrison is in its third year of implementing, values Open Communication as one of its seven core commitments. Here are some tips to promote open dialogue about mental health issues and treatment:

- Listen without judgement.
- Learn. Seek out information that can help you better understand what the person is going through so your mind is not clouded by what you may think you already know.
- Words matter. Avoid stigmatizing language in daily speech (try saying "That's wild!" instead of "That's crazy!")
- Ask how someone is feeling. Each day, Morrison employees are encouraged to have community meetings that always begin with asking each team member, "How are you feeling today?"
- Find ways to begin conversations about mental health: [It's Up to Us](#) Conversation Starters, [Mental Health America](#) Starting the Conversation with Youth and Teens, and [The National Alliance on Mental Illness](#) (NAMI) guide for college kids could apply to a broad audience as well.

Mental illness exists in every community and it is often invisible. Celebrate Mental Health Awareness week by opening up honest conversations with your family and community about social and perceived stigmas of mental healthcare.

Share Your Home and Your Heart

Become a Foster Parent

Currently, there are over 10,000 children in Oregon's Foster Care System, and there aren't enough homes for them. Are you the family they are waiting for?

Morrison serves foster children, ages 3 to 17, who have experienced significant trauma and are in need of a safe, nurturing place to call home while they grow and heal through therapy and tender care. Morrison has six foster care programs, including long-term Therapeutic Foster Care, Adolescent Programs, Respite Services, and Short-Term Care.

Morrison's Foster Care program embraces diversity of all kinds in our foster parents. What all of our foster homes have in common is a desire to learn how to care for kids with trauma, a willingness to share their life experience and home, and a desire to be part of a healing team for a child or teen. Morrison provides its foster parents with excellent training, superior support, generous tax-free monthly stipends, and the appreciation of a professional therapeutic team.



To learn more, please contact Shaun Matthias at (503) 736-6570.

LGBTQ Foster Youth and You

Free Event at Portland's Q Center

On Saturday, October 7th, join foster youth, foster parents, and system partners to discuss becoming a foster parent or a volunteer and learn about the specific need for LGBTQ-affirming families. Morrison will have representatives at this outstanding event supporting foster care within the LGBTQ community. Visit our booth and learn about Morrison foster care!



There are two identical sessions, 9am-11:30am and 12:30pm-3pm, with a social opportunity for everyone from 11:30am-12:30pm. Coffee and light snacks will be served during the event and a light lunch will be provided. We encourage you to attend to get the chance to talk one-on-one with DHS workers and other community partners.

Click [HERE](#) to register.

Get to Know Morrison

Featured Staff: **McCurtis Grayson**

October's featured Morrison staff member is McCurtis Grayson of the IT Team. McCurtis, whose title is Desktop Analyst, just celebrated his 3rd anniversary with Morrison last month. In his time with our organization, he has noticed a trend of rapid technology changes that keep him and his team working hard to ensure all of our technology is up to date.

One of the first things that people notice about McCurtis is his shoes. He has an extensive sneaker collection, many of which are inspired by musicians and artists he likes. He has even designed some of his pairs, like the ones recently featured on [Morrison's Instagram page](#).

McCurtis is driven by service to the community, which is one of the main reasons why he was drawn to work at Morrison. He also volunteers at soup kitchens. He is happy that Morrison plays a key role in rehabilitating kids and families as support to the community is important to him. When his family and friends ask about his job, they are pleased and proud that he is using his love for computers to give back to the community. Morrison is glad to have McCurtis, as well!

McCurtis is compelled to continue his work at Morrison because his voice is respected and he plays an important role in expanding equity at the organization. As a member of the African American Resource Group, which supports employees and clients who identify as African American, McCurtis promotes an inclusive and culturally-responsive work environment and contributes to the African American representation.

What would he say to someone thinking of contributing to Morrison? That it is a great place to put your energy and resources, that the organization supports people from all walks of life, and that it is a fun place to work. In his free time, McCurtis likes to listen to music, check out comic books and art, lift weights, spend time with his wife and her family, and play basketball.

Thanks, McCurtis, for all that you do for Morrison and our community!





Contact Deanna at Deanna.kavanaugh@morrisonkids.org to learn more.

Morrison's Silver Linings Luncheon 2018

We are 6 Months Away from Our Annual Community Luncheon

On March 14, 2018, we will host our 5th Annual Silver Linings Luncheon in the Governor Ballroom at the Historic Sentinel Hotel in downtown Portland. More than 300 of our city's most prominent business and community leaders will gather to celebrate the programs and services Morrison Child and Family Services provides.

Silver Linings is an opportunity to increase public awareness of Morrison's community impact. It is also a chance to visit our program gallery and to meet the staff who work directly with the children and families we so proudly serve.

To learn more about how your company can sponsor our event, please contact Deanna Kavanaugh at 503-258-4244 or deanna.kavanaugh@morrisonkids.org.



Sustainability Tip of the Month

Green Your Autumn as the Leaves Change

As the summer transitions into fall, it's a perfect time to prepare for the colder and wetter weather by evaluating your home's energy use. Here are some tips to save some green this winter:

1. Keep your home cozy by seeking out and blocking drafts. To find the leaks, slowly move a stick of incense or a candle around your windows and doors - when the flame flickers, you have found your leak. Seal up the leak with caulk or plastic wrap.



2. If you have a crack under your doors, cover it up with a draft stopper. While you could run out to your local hardware store or internet retailer to buy a brand-new draft stopper, the more sustainable option is to make one at home using recycled materials. It can even be [a fun craft that you make with your kids!](#) Or, now that summer is over, you could recycle old pool noodles by cutting them in half and inserting them on the bottom of your doors to stop the drafts.
3. Run your ceiling fan in reverse to push the warm air that has risen to your ceilings back down. Keep it at a low speed.
4. Area rugs are a great way to prevent heat loss through your floors.
5. Save energy and money by [insulating your water heater](#). If your hot water heater is warm to the touch, it is losing power and costing you money.
6. Bake cookies! When you are done, turn the oven off and leave the oven door cracked open so the heat can escape into your home (just be careful that kids and pets steer clear).
7. Put on a sweater before turning up the thermostat.
8. If you can, consider purchasing renewable energy for your home. [PGE's Green Source](#) power allows you to buy all of your electricity from renewable sources for about \$6 more each month.
9. Check out [Energy.gov](#) for more fall and winter energy-saving tips.

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Our Mission

At Morrison Child and Family Services, we partner with families and communities to provide effective and responsive services for children and youth coping with adversity and trauma.

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