**Send Date**: Monday, April 27th, 2020
**Email Subject**: “Each Mind Matters: Express Yourself May Activation Kit"

Next week kicks off Mental Health Matters Month. We are excited to share this year’s theme for the 2020 Mental Health Matters Month Activation Kit: “Each Mind Matters: Express Yourself.” The online activation kit includes many activities that can be done virtually or from home!

The benefits of creative expression on our mental health and wellbeing have been widely documented. Art therapy (a clinical intervention where a person engages in a specifically designed artistic activity under the guidance of a trained art therapist) has been demonstrated to reduce the symptoms of depression, anxiety, and trauma while improving mood, coping, quality of life, cognition, and self-esteem.

While using art to treat a mental health condition is best accomplished with the help of a professional therapist, anyone can benefit from incorporating creative self-expression into their wellness routine. Evidence shows that “artistic talent” or training in the arts simply isn’t necessary to obtain the benefits of engaging in an artistic outlet -- it’s not the outcome that matters, it’s the process. Even activities as simple as doodling have been shown to activate the reward pathways in our brain, elevating mood and making us feel better.

With resources in English and Spanish, this year’s activation kit focuses on how expressing ourselves in different ways can raise awareness about mental health, break down barriers between people, build our own wellness and strengthen our communities.

Download the bilingual Activation Kit here for materials that include:

* Mental Health Matters Month Posters (English & Spanish)
* Activity Tip Sheet with these new activities:
	+ Sticky Note Wall with instructional poster
	+ Coloring Pages
	+ Chalk Art
	+ Plant Care
* Activities to Create Online Communities of Support
* Mental Health Support Guides (English & Spanish)
* Message Card and Get-Well Card Animations
* Social Media Guide, including pre-written posts, images, Instagram story gifs, and Instagram stickers

Stay tuned every Monday in May for weekly emails:

* Week 1: Express Your Support
* Week 2: Express Your Well-being
* Week 3: Express Encouragement
* Week 4: Express Unity

Connect with Each Mind Matters online throughout the month! Tag @EachMindMatters and use the hashtags #EachMindMatters and #SanaMente.