



# APRIL: COMMUNITY & SOCIAL SUPPORTS

## – What Caregivers Need to Know –

### Basic Definitions

**Community:** A feeling of fellowship with others, because of sharing common attitudes, interests, and goals that can provide help and encouragement.

**Belonging:** A feeling that one has the right and power to contribute to, shape and influence their community.

**Social Support:** Emotional and practical assistance provided by friends, family, and peers.

### Did You Know?

The perception of help is often more impactful than actual help. The sense that one has a robust social support network can make stressors feel less daunting and more manageable.

**Remember!** Being part of a safe, positive community is vital for one's mental health and wellbeing. Community can include people from different groups including family, friends, teachers, teammates, and peers. Children and adolescents need to *feel* loved and supported by their communities, especially as they continue to grow and change.

### Tips and Strategies

- **Reflect on Connections:** Support youth in reflecting on their unique communities and the health of their relationships.
  - **Explore:** Thinking about what helps build connections between people like what we like, how we share space, and how often we see them.
- **Engage with Local Resources:** Explore community organizations and services that are free to the public.
  - **Explore:** Volunteering, joining a club, or planning an outing to a new place.
- **Expand Support Networks:** Encourage youth to be active in their communities.
  - **Explore:** Discussing how diverse communities are a strength and exploring your child's strengths and interests to help them connect with others of diverse backgrounds.

### Resources and Links

**Love is Respect:** <https://www.loveisrespect.org/>

A national resource developed to disrupt and prevent unhealthy relationships and intimate partner violence by empowering young people to practice healthy relationship habits.

**NAMI's Family & Caregiver Resource:**

<https://www.nami.org/your-journey/family-members-and-caregivers/> Offers tips and strategies for supporting loved ones through difficult life transitions.

**DC Public Library:**

<https://www.dclibrary.org/attend-event> The DC library hosts events like author talks, book clubs, sewing classes and more to help you feel more engaged.

**The Trevor Project:**

<https://www.thetrevorproject.org/> A leading resource for LGBTQ+ youth, offering crisis intervention, education, and family resources.

