

# choose kindness Connection

MAY IS MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS MONTH



## Why are connections important?

Connections are vital for mental and physical health because they fulfill the innate human need to belong. Connected relationships allow you to open up, be authentic, and feel supported by those around you.

## What are some ways I build and strengthen connections with people?

- **Be your authentic self**
- **Respect people's boundaries** – be mindful of asking personal questions early in the conversation, build the foundation of basic information first!
- **Stay focused and be present** – don't be looking at your phone or thinking about what to have for dinner. Make sure your body language shows you are paying attention to the conversation.
- **Move past the surface level** – don't be afraid to ask deeper questions.
- **Share the conversation** – make sure you leave space for the other person to talk and you listen.
- **Be genuine with your admiration** – actively show sincere appreciation, remember that sometimes less is more.
- **Be a good listener** – make sure you are actively listening to the person who is speaking to you. Listening with an open mind also helps you to get to know the person better.
- **Schedule your time** – make sure you have the proper energy to connect!
- **Maintain eye contact** – maintaining a normal amount of eye contact (don't stare) makes people feel like they can trust you more, helps people open up, and keeps the conversation flowing
- **Offer a smile** – it can also reduce stress and awkwardness!

To speak to someone at Easterseals MORC, call 1.800.75.SEALS.

If you or a loved one is experiencing a mental health emergency, call or text 988 or chat at [988lifeline.org](https://www.988lifeline.org).



Scan the QR code to take a free, anonymous, online mental health screening