

MDCC to Host Inaugural Pickleball for Mental Health Tournament in Denver

DENVER, Colo., April 16, 2026 – On Saturday, May 2, the Maria Droste Counseling Center (MDCC) will host its inaugural *Pickleball for Mental Health* tournament and fundraiser at Mile Hi Pickleball in Denver, bringing together community members for an afternoon of connection, movement, and impact to kick-off Mental Health Awareness Month.

The event will run from 1–4 p.m. and feature a round-robin style tournament designed for players of all skill levels, along with opportunities to engage with community partners, including NAMI Colorado and The Blue Bench, and participate in a silent auction. A special appearance from Bernie, the mascot of the Colorado Avalanche, will add to the energy of the afternoon and help bring the community together around this important cause. Proceeds from the event will directly support MDCC's mission to provide affordable, accessible mental health care to individuals and families across the Denver metro area—regardless of ability to pay.

A highlight of the afternoon will be the opportunity to play, connect, and build community, bringing people together in a way that helps break down stigma and open up conversations around mental health.

"We're seeing more people than ever seeking support, and too many still face barriers to getting the care they need," said Laura Ferguson, Executive Director of Maria Droste Counseling Center. "This event is about meeting this moment in a way that feels approachable and community-driven—bringing people together to have fun while also making a real impact on access to mental health care in Denver."

Participants and supporters are encouraged to share their experience on social media to help raise awareness around mental health and the importance of accessible care.

Registration is \$50 per person, with all proceeds supporting MDCC's mental health counseling services, which serve individuals who are uninsured or underinsured. Community members can also participate in the silent auction, which will be available both in person and online. To register or learn more, visit: <https://pball4mh.funraise.org/>

About Maria Droste Counseling Center

Founded in 1989, the Maria Droste Counseling Center (MDCC) is a 501(c)3 nonprofit mental health in Denver focused on expanding access to affordable care. By combining sliding-scale counseling with a comprehensive clinical training program, MDCC provides affordable mental health care to meet community needs while also strengthening the pipeline of trained, culturally responsive clinicians serving the region.

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