



District Student Services

May 2021

Mental Health Awareness

National Suicide Helpline
1-800-273-8255
 If you or someone you know
 is in crisis, seek help
 immediately.

Mental health includes our emotional, psychological, and social well-being. It affects how we think, feel, and act. It also determines how we handle stress, relate to others, and make choices. Mental health is important at every stage of life, from childhood and adolescence through adulthood.

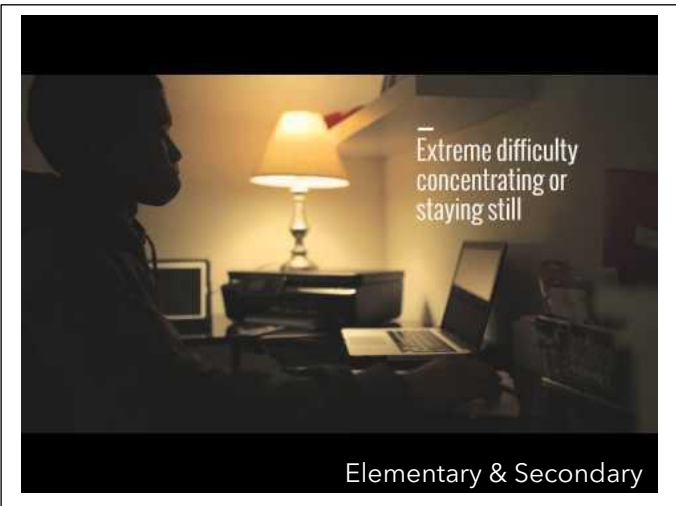
Millions of people are affected by mental illness each year that may include mental health problems, thinking, mood, and behaviors. Mental health treatment may include therapy, medication, self-care and have made recovery a reality for most people experiencing illness.

(Mentalhealth.gov, 2021)



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| 50% of all lifetime mental illnesses begins by age 14 | 17% of youth experience a mental health disorder within ages 6 - 17 | 70% of youth in the juvenile justice system have a diagnosable mental health condition | Suicide is the 2nd leading cause of death for people ages 10-34 | 60% of youth with depression do not receive any mental health treatment | 78% of all people who die by suicide are male |
|---|---|--|---|---|---|

(Mental Health America & NAMI, 2021)



Possible Symptoms of a Mental Health Concern

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| Excessive worrying or fear | Extreme mood changes |
| Changes in school performance | Thinking about suicide |
| Prolonged or strong feelings of irritability or anger | Avoiding friends and social activities |
| Difficulties understanding or relating to other people | Changes in sleeping habits/frequent nightmares |
| Changes in eating habits such as increased hunger or lack of appetite | Difficulty perceiving reality (delusions or hallucinations) |
| Inability to perceive changes in one's own feelings | Misuse of alcohol or drugs |
| Confused thinking or problems concentrating and learning | Multiple physical ailments without obvious causes (headaches, stomach aches, vague and ongoing pains) |

(NAMI, 2021)

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| Coping Skills Toolbox | What is it? A coping toolbox is a place for you to keep things that calm you down in periods of distress. If you have everything gathered in one place, it is easier to remember to use your coping skills, rather than negative behaviors. | Self-Soothing Comforting yourself through your five senses 1. Something to touch 2. Something to hear 3. Something to see 4. Something to taste 5. Something to smell | |
| | Distraction Taking your mind off the problem for a while. Puzzles, books, artwork, crafts, knitting, crocheting, sewing, crossword puzzles, Sudoku, music, movies, etc. | Opposite Action 1. Affirmations and Inspiration (look at a drawing, motivational statements, images, etc.). 2. Something funny or Cheering (funny movies, tv, books, etc.). 3. | Emotional Awareness Tools for identifying and expressing your feelings A list or chart of emotions, a journal, writing supplies, drawing/art supplies |
| | Mindfulness Tools for centering and grounding yourself in the present moment Meditation, relaxation, recordings, grounding objects, yoga mat, breathing exercises, etc. | Crisis Plan Contact information of supports and resources for when coping skills are not enough. Family, friends, therapist, crisis hotline 1-800-273-8255 or 911 | Put it all Together! Once you have gathered all your items, put them together in a box or other container. Decorate it and put it in a place you will remember and use it. |

Click the Coping Skills Toolbox to explore more resources and school highlights.

Resources for the Prevention of Child Abuse

| Resource | Description | Grade Level | Educator | Family |
|--|---|-------------|----------|--------|
| 7-Ways to Infuse Your Curriculum with Hope | Edutopia - Young people dealing with the effects of the pandemic can be encouraged through lessons that inspire resilience. | PK+ | X | |
| Are We Facing a Mental Health Crisis for Boys? | Edutopia - Emphasizing stoicism, toughness, and competition can leave boys without the emotional tools they need to thrive. | PK+ | X | X |
| In Schools, Finding Hope at a Hopeless Time | Edutopia - Research shows that hope is a measurable, learnable skill - and to feel hopeful, students and teachers must work at it. | PK+ | X | |
| 2021 - The State of Mental Health in America | MHA is committed to promoting mental health as a critical part of overall wellness. This report is a collection of data across all 50 states and the District of Columbia that seeks to answer several mental health related questions. | 8+ | X | X |
| Mental Health America - Parent Test | A questionnaire can be used to see if your child is having emotional, attentional, or behavioral difficulties. | PK+ | | X |
| Mental Health America - Youth Test | A questionnaire for youth to complete to see if they are having emotional, attentional, or behavioral difficulties. | PK+ | | X |
| The Importance of Mental Health Awareness in Schools | Hey, Teach! - an article about mental health awareness within all classrooms. | PK+ | X | |

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