

Mental Health Activities for Grades K-12 and Colleges

Activity Facilitation Overview

Thank you for choosing Each Mind Matter's Mental Health Activities for Grades K-12 and Colleges to use with your students. The provided activities are short and include discussion questions to help you guide the conversation as students explore issues around mental health, teaching them social-emotional intelligence while reducing stigma around mental health by introducing mental health challenges as a prevalent condition that may affect them or those they know including friends, family and loved ones.

The grade-specific activities may be customized to your students' needs. Before introducing an activity, we recommend reviewing the guidelines below to ensure the activity is successful.

- Review the activity and accompanying discussion guide in advance to ensure the topic and discussion is a good fit for your students. Some activities may be better suited to explore as students become more familiar with issues around mental health.
- Prior to implementing the activity, allow 15-30 minutes (as age-appropriate) for a discussion about the activity. Creating a safe, supportive and respectful atmosphere for students is critical to ensure they feel encouraged to participate in an open and positive dialogue. Sometimes, talking about mental health can bring up strong feelings for young people and it is important to monitor these feelings and address them as appropriate.
- **Provide crisis support information before and after your planned activity.** For elementary schools, this can include sending home a letter to parents to inform them of the subject matter and inviting them to visit EachMindMatters.org for more information. A template letter is provided if you would like to use it. For middle/junior schools, high schools, and colleges, provide students with resources in advance and after the discussion, including a direct link to EachMindMatters.org and the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline phone number, 1-800-799-4889.
- Share additional mental health awareness and education resources that may help facilitate the activity and make it more relatable to your specific students. This could include resources or materials from Each Mind Matters or our initiative programs such as: lime green ribbons, brochures, wristbands, pens, sunglasses, stickers, Walk in My Shoes shoelaces, etc. to help provide more context and allow them to see that mental health could affect anyone and everyone. Also check with your local school counselor or health center for additional materials.
- Each Activity Guide provides a link to purchase the resources required for the activity, whether that is a copy of the book or film to be discussed. Books and films can be



purchased from your local bookseller or online. Links for *Directing Change* films are provided with the activity and are available for your use at no cost.

- The Discussion/Activity Guide is provided to you to help facilitate the conversation. As the activity facilitator, you drive the conversation by choosing the questions and/or activities. You may use as many questions/activities as you would like and/or adapt them to make them more appropriate for your students.

We are here to help! If you have any questions, concerns or would like clarification on any of the activities, please contact an Each Mind Matters representative at info@eachmindmatters.org. Thank you!