



PROGRAM SUPPORT NOTES

Mental Health: The Basics

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For Teachers

Introduction

This program aims to examine the mental health issues relevant to young people. It aims to inform youth of the possible triggers of mental illness and the support networks they can connect with. It educates teenagers on how they can promote good mental health personally, while at the same time reducing the stigma associated with mental health and help to change negative attitudes and perspectives of mental health

This contemporary program is presented using animation and teenage interviews, while Dr. Brian Graetz from Beyond Blue shares his knowledge on the topic.

Timeline

- 00:00:00 Mental health - an introduction
- 00:04:19 Factors affecting mental health
- 00:08:18 Dealing with mental health issues
- 00:13:42 Changing perspectives on mental health
- 00:18:21 Credits
- 00:18:53 End program

Related Titles

Cyberbullying: Identify, Understand, Prevent
Girls and Bullying: Identify, Understand, Prevent
Anxiety Disorders
Dark Days – Shedding Light on Depression

Recommended Resources

www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au
www.headspace.org.au
www.kidshelp.com.au
www.reachout.com
www.teachers.reachoutpro.com.au

Student Worksheet

Initiate Prior Learning

1. As a class, discuss 'What is mental health'?

2. In small groups, brainstorm all the things a teenager could do to maintain good mental health.

3. Define these key terms and words using a dictionary or the internet:

a) Mental health

b) symptom

c) depression

d) anxiety

e) eating disorders

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f) stress

g) schizophrenia

h) endorphins

i) serotonin

j) Stigma

4. How would you feel if you were suddenly excluded from your social group? What would you do to improve how you were feeling?

Active Viewing Guide

1. How common is mental illness among teenagers?

2. Was the above statistic what you expected? Why/why not?

3. Write a list of common mental illnesses.

4. What are some of the gender differences in mental health?

5. What environmental factors can affect mental health?

6. Where can you seek help?

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7. Do you know of anywhere in your local community that helps teenagers with their mental health issues? List some.

8. What are some unhealthy ways to deal with mental health?

9. Dr Brian Graez suggests ways to deal with mental health. Name some.

10.a) What are endorphins?

b) What do they do?

11. Stigma behind mental health is a problem because

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12.a) Identify examples given in this program on how to reduce the stigma of mental illness.

b) What solutions do you suggest for reducing the stigma of mental illness?

Extension Activities

1. Arrange a guest speaker such as a school nurse, local GP or counsellor to talk to the class about mental health.
2. Find an organisation that helps youth deal with mental health issues. Find out what they do and how they go about it.
3. Conduct a simple survey of students in your school about their views on mental health. Create 5 – 10 True or False statements such as “Mental health is a lifelong condition” and “People with mental health issues are usually dangerous”. Share your results with the class.
4. In small groups, research a mental illness (e.g. anxiety, depression) and design a PowerPoint presentation which shows what it is, what the symptoms are and how to manage it.
5. Research to find out different nutrients which can help our mental health. Plan a positive mental health weekly menu using foods that are high in these nutrients.
6. As a class, debate a topic related to the program such as “Due to its role in bullying, all social media should be banned at school”.

Suggested Student Responses

Active Viewing Guide

1. How common is mental illness among teenagers?
1 in 5 will develop a mental illness at some stage.
2. Was the above statistic what you expected? Why/why not?
Answers will vary.
3. Write a list of common mental illnesses.
Depression, stress, anxiety, phobias, eating disorders, obsessive compulsive disorders, bipolar, post traumatic stress disorder, schizophrenia.
4. What are some of the gender differences in mental health?
Females are more likely to suffer from body image issues, males are more likely to suffer from schizophrenia.
5. What environmental factors can affect mental health?
Diet, exercise, family member or friend dying, bullying, lack of sleep, drugs.
6. Where can you seek help?
Doctor, Counsellor, psychologist, discussing issues with family member or friends.
7. Do you know of anywhere in your local community that helps teenagers with their mental health issues? Name some.
Answers will vary.
8. What are some unhealthy ways to deal with mental health?
Use of alcohol, drugs, isolating ourselves, self harm, violence.
9. Dr Brian Graez suggests ways to deal with mental health. List some.
Talking about it or looking on the internet.
10. a) What are endorphins?
Endorphins are 'feel good' hormones.

b) What do they do?
They help to release stress and muscle tension.
11. Stigma behind mental health is a problem because
People are less likely to seek help.
12. a) Identify examples given in this program on how to reduce the stigma of mental illness.
Share stories, show acceptance and understanding; know what it's like to be in someone else's shoes.

b) What solutions do you suggest for reducing the stigma of mental illness?
Answers will vary.