

PERSONAL POWER

LESSON 1: WHAT IS HEALTH?



GRADE 8 • MENTAL HEALTH • LESSON 1 USING ASK, CARE, TELL

Directions: Read each situation. Use Ask, Care, Tell to determine how to respond to each situation.

Scenario 1: Walking to class your friend trips and falls on the sidewalk. He grabs his leg and sits up. What were the signs that made you feel concerned?

Ask _____

He tells you that he is bleeding and has a bad cut on his leg.

Care _____

Tell _____

Scenario 2: Walking to class your friend trips and falls on the sidewalk. He sits up and hangs his head down. He stares at the ground and slowly shakes his head. What were the signs that made you feel concerned?

Ask _____

He tells you that this is the last straw. He says, "I just feel so overwhelmed. I can't take this anymore!"

Care _____

Tell _____

Scenario 3: Your friend is spending the weekend with you because her parents are out of town. After school you go home, make a snack and get ready to go watch a movie. Your friend isn't eating. She is sitting slumped forward with her arm across her stomach. What were the signs that made you feel concerned?

Ask _____

She tells you that her stomach started hurting this morning. She thought it would feel better, but it feels worse now.

Care _____

Tell _____

Scenario 4: Your friend is spending the weekend with you because her parents are out of town. After school you go home, make a snack and get ready to go watch a movie. Your friend isn't eating. She has tears in her eyes and you see that her hands are shaking. What were the signs that made you feel concerned?

Ask _____

She tells you that her stomach started hurting this morning. She has been really worried about her parents' trip. She has gets anxious when she is away from home.

Care _____

Tell _____

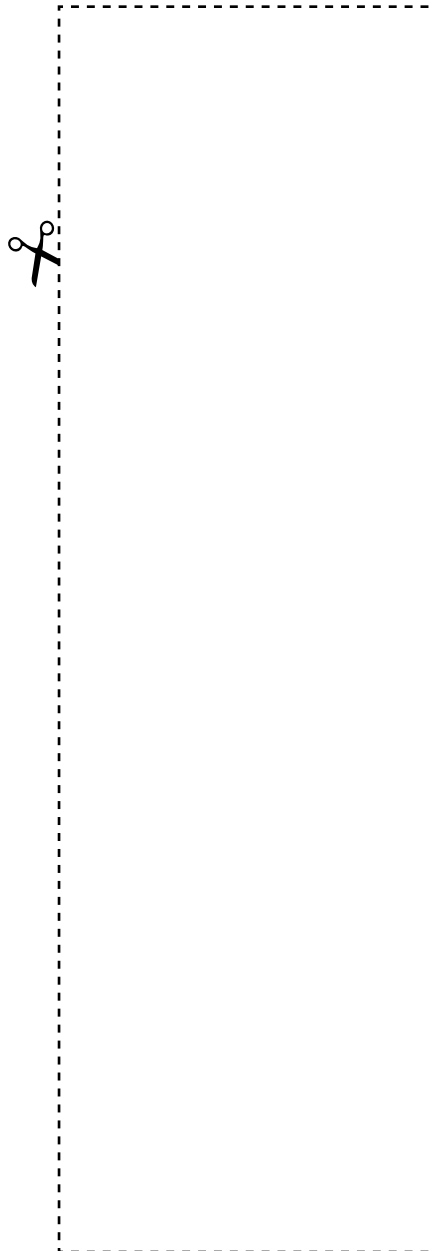
PERSONAL POWER

LESSON 2: WHAT IS MENTAL ILLNESS?



GRADE 8 • MENTAL HEALTH • LESSON 2 BOOKMARKING CHANGE

Directions: Think of a slogan or hashtag with a message to increase awareness of mental health or to decrease the stigma of mental illness. Illustrate this message on the bookmark below.



GRADE 8 • MENTAL HEALTH • LESSON 3
MENTAL ILLNESS DEFINITIONS

Anxiety Disorder: Feeling extremely afraid, worried, or uneasy about a situation or thing. The feelings are so intense that it interferes with daily activities.

Bipolar Disorder: A mood or emotional disorder that causes extreme mood swings from an extremely happy or good mood (mania) to extremely sad, overwhelmed, or low mood (depression). This is far more extreme than the usual ups and downs of teenage life.

Conduct Disorder: Behaviors that are extremely destructive toward other people, animals, and property, including failure to follow basic rules and comply with requests of others. Running away or skipping school may be the result of a conduct disorder.

Depression: Overwhelming feelings and emotions that include sadness and irritability for an extended period (usually 2 weeks or longer). Daily activities such as eating, sleeping, and going to school can be impacted by depression.

Eating Disorder: Distorted body image that results in dangerous, abnormal or extreme eating behaviors, including insufficient intake of food (anorexia nervosa), excessive eating (binge eating disorder), or purging after eating (bulimia) that results in improper nutrition.

Schizophrenia: A serious mental illness resulting from a disconnection between thoughts, emotions, and behaviors that causes withdrawal from reality and relationships. Losing touch with reality resulting in delusions and living in a fantasy world. Difficulty thinking, speaking, or interacting with others in an organized way.

Suicide: Suicide is not a mental illness, however, it may result from mental illness. According to the National Institute of Mental Health, suicide is the second leading cause of death in youth age 10 – 24. Suicide is defined as self-inflicted behavior with the intent to die. Suicidal ideation or ideology is thinking about, planning for, or considering suicide.

This is not a comprehensive list. This list includes mental illnesses most common with students in middle and high school. This information is to provide background information, not to determine a diagnosis of a mental illness.


GRADE 8 • MENTAL HEALTH • LESSON 3
FIND THE FACTS


Suicide is the tenth leading cause of death overall in the United States. More than 47,000 die from suicide each year.	Suicide is the tenth leading cause of death overall in the United States. More than 47,000 die from suicide each year.
Suicide is the second leading cause of death among individuals between the ages of 10 and 34.	Suicide is the second leading cause of death among individuals between the ages of 10 and 34.
Adolescent suicide is a growing problem in the United States.	Adolescent suicide is a growing problem in the United States.
1 in 62 people has lost someone in their life to suicide.	1 in 62 people has lost someone in their life to suicide.
1 in 5 adults and youth live with a mental health condition	1 in 5 adults and youth live with a mental health condition
Females attempt suicide more frequently than males (3:1); males complete suicide more frequently than females (4:1).	Females attempt suicide more frequently than males (3:1); males complete suicide more frequently than females (4:1).
Suicidal threats or thoughts a self-harm must always be taken seriously.	Suicidal threats or thoughts a self-harm must always be taken seriously.
Over 90% of suicidal adolescents give clues to others prior to their attempt.	Over 90% of suicidal adolescents give clues to others prior to their attempt.



Each day there are approximately 12 youth suicides.	Each day there are approximately 12 youth suicides.
A person under the age of 25 dies by suicide every 2 hours and 11 minutes.	A person under the age of 25 dies by suicide every 2 hours and 11 minutes.
Socially isolated youth are generally found to be at greater risk of suicide.	Socially isolated youth are generally found to be at greater risk of suicide.
Suicide is preventable. Most suicidal individuals really want to live; however, they are unable to realize alternatives to their situation.	Suicide is preventable. Most suicidal individuals really want to live; however, they are unable to realize alternatives to their situation.
Always seek help from a trusted adult or helping professional if you or someone you know is thinking about suicide.	Always seek help from a trusted adult or helping professional if you or someone you know is thinking about suicide.
Many people may think about suicide at one time in their lives. However, they never attempt suicide because they realize that the current problems are temporary and death is permanent.	Many people may think about suicide at one time in their lives. However, they never attempt suicide because they realize that the current problems are temporary and death is permanent.
The National Suicide Prevention Hotline is 1-800-273-8255.	The National Suicide Prevention Hotline is 1-800-273-8255.



GRADE 8 • MENTAL HEALTH • LESSON 3












WARNING SIGNS – WHEN TO BE CONCERNED

- When someone loses a friend or family member to suicide.
- When someone is having a really difficult time dealing with a loss from death, divorce, a broken friendship, a move, or other forms of loss.
- When someone makes helpless or hopeless statements such as, “I don’t want to live,” “I don’t see a way out of this,” “I will never feel better.”
- When someone is saying goodbye with comments, notes, or stories.
- When someone starts giving away their most prized possessions.
- When someone stops doing the things they used to enjoy.
- When someone is always thinking about and talking about death.
- When someone has big changes in personality, appearance, attitude, and behavior.

	Do you need to get help?	Who can help?
Your friend gives you a note that says: I can’t take this anymore.	Yes No	
Your friend has become very quiet, sad, and stops playing the games he always enjoyed.	Yes No	
Your friend gives you her favorite bracelet. She tells you that she will not be needing it anymore.	Yes No	
Your friend tells you he got two of the same headphones for his birthday. He offers to give you one.	Yes No	
One of your neighbors dies by suicide. You notice her daughter is having a very difficult time.	Yes No	
You are shooting hoops with a friend. When he misses a shot, he stomps his foot and sighs. You pass him the ball and he tries again.	Yes No	
You see a social media post of someone from your school that reads: My days have become so dark, I won’t ever see the light again.	Yes No	

**GRADE 8 • MENTAL HEALTH • LESSON 4**
ALERT - ALERT – IT'S TIME TO GET HELP

Directions: Read each statement. If any of these statements describe something you or someone you know is experiencing, it is a red flag that you need to seek help from a trusted adult.

-  1. Feeling very sad or down for more than 2 weeks (crying frequently, feeling tired, not wanting to do anything).
-  2. Suddenly feeling very scared or afraid for no reason, sometimes with a racing heart or fast breathing.
-  3. Not eating, throwing up, losing a lot of weight.
-  4. Extreme mood swings that cause problems in relationships with friends and family.
-  5. Drastic changes in behavior, personality or sleeping habits (difficulty falling or staying asleep, sleeping too much or too little, acting differently, not feeling like yourself).
-  6. Extreme difficulty paying attention, sitting still, and finishing schoolwork, resulting in low grades.
-  7. Feeling extremely worried and fearful, causing inability to complete daily activities like hanging out with friends or going to school.
-  8. No longer being interested in the activities and things someone used to like.
-  9. Trying to harm or kill oneself or making plans to do so.
-  10. Behavior that is out-of-control or dangerous that can cause harm to self or others.
-  11. Using and abusing drugs or alcohol.

GRADE 8 • MENTAL HEALTH • LESSON 4
RESOURCES FOR TEENS**National Suicide Hotline:****1-800-SUICIDE (784-2433)**

Toll-free, 24-hour, confidential hotlines that connect you to a trained counselor at the nearest suicide crisis center.

National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI):**800-950-6264 or text NAMI to 741741**

Toll-free, confidential hotline operating Monday – Friday, 10:00 am – 6:00 pm (EST). Trained volunteers provide information, referrals, and support to anyone with questions about mental illness.

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline:**1-800-273-TALK (8255)**

Toll-free, 24-hour, confidential hotlines that connect you to a trained counselor at the nearest suicide crisis center.

Project Safe Place: 1-888-290-7233

Project Safe Place provides access to immediate help and supportive resources for young people in crisis through a network of qualified agencies, businesses, and trained volunteers.

SAMHSA - Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration:**1-300-622-HELP (4357)**

SAMHSA's National Helpline is a free, confidential, 24/7, 365-day-a-year treatment referral and information service in English and Spanish for individuals and families facing mental and/or substance use disorders.

The Jason Foundation: 1-800-274-TALK (8255) or text JASON to 741741

The Jason Foundation provides information, educational programs, and resources to help in the fight against the “silent epidemic” of youth suicide. The Jason Foundation directs those in crisis to the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline phone numbers. Learn more at <http://jasonfoundation.com/>

The Trevor Project: 866-4-U-TREVOR

The Trevor Project operates the only nationwide, around-the-clock crisis and suicide prevention helpline for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and questioning (LGBTQ) youth. The Trevor Helpline is available as a resource to parents, family members and friends of young people as well. Visit www.TheTrevorProject.org for more information and resources for young people, including “Dear Trevor,” an online Q&A forum for non-time sensitive questions.

TeenScreen.org: 866-833-6727

The TeenScreen National Center for Mental Health Checkups at Columbia University is a non-profit privately funded public health initiative working to increase youth access to regular mental health checkups and the early identification of mental illness. TeenScreen Schools and Communities is the National Center's flagship program, offering mental health checkups to youth through more than 500 local sites in 43 U.S. states. Visit TeenScreen.org to read facts/figures about teenage mental health, and to learn more about the National Center's programs and initiatives.

**GRADE 8 • MENTAL HEALTH • LESSON 4**
WHERE TO GO FOR HELP

Directions: List the names and contact information for the people or agencies that you can go to for help.

You want to get help for a friend when you are at school. Who can help?

You are feeling upset. Who can help you if you are not at school?

Where can you get help if you are concerned about suicide?

Your friend tells you he can't face going to school, everything seems overwhelming. Who can help?

You want more information on shattering the stigma of seeking mental health treatment. Where can you get this information?

You are concerned that a friend may have an eating disorder. Where can you get more information? Who can help?

You suspect your friend has been using drugs, his behavior and mood have changed. What can you do?

Your friend is talking about running away from home. Who can help?

For the past several weeks your friend seems upset and won't tell you why. How can you help? Who can you go to for help?

Where can you get more information on suicide prevention?

PERSONAL POWER

LESSON 4: SEEKING HELP



GRADE 8 • MENTAL HEALTH • LESSON 4 JOURNAL

"I think it is really important to take the stigma away from mental health. My brain and my heart are really important to me. I don't know why I wouldn't seek help to have those things be as healthy as my teeth. Don't I go to the dentist? So why wouldn't I go to a mental health specialist?"

—Kerry Washington, actress

Seeking help for any physical or mental health concern is important. Compare and contrast the differences between helping someone with a physical health need versus a mental health need.

PERSONAL POWER



GRADE 8 • MENTAL HEALTH • LESSON 5 MANAGING STRESS

Get relaxed: relaxation exercises, breathing exercises, visualization, and mindfulness activities

Get creative: explore drawing, writing or music

Get moving: try yoga, exercise, dance, or walking

Get outside: try an outdoor activity in nature

Get with friends: spend time with friends

Get help: reach out to a friend, trusted adult, or helping professional, and ask for help

PERSONAL POWER

LESSON 5: WELLBEING



GRADE 8 • MENTAL HEALTH • LESSON 5 THE PLUS AND MINUS OF WELLBEING

Directions: You make choices every day. Some choices will enhance your physical and mental wellbeing, while others may decrease your wellbeing. Read each choice and choose the "+" sign if it increases wellbeing. Choose the "-" sign if it decreases wellbeing. Review the list and consider if your choices are increasing or decreasing your wellbeing.

Getting plenty of sleep	+	-
Keeping your emotions to yourself	+	-
Exercising	+	-
Watching a funny video	+	-
Never saying no	+	-
Smoking or vaping	+	-
Playing a video game with a friend	+	-
Using drugs or alcohol	+	-
Withdrawing or avoiding being with friends or family	+	-
Asking for help	+	-
Setting goals	+	-
Not eating or only eating junk food	+	-
Journaling	+	-
Listening to music	+	-
Staying awake all night to play video games	+	-

PERSONAL POWER

LESSON 5: WELLBEING



GRADE 8 • MENTAL HEALTH • LESSON 5 EMOJI STATE OF MIND

Directions: For each block of time, draw the emoji that best describes your state of mind. After one week, review the pattern of emoji's. Determine if there are any areas of concern. If so, seek help from a trusted adult.

	Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat
Early morning							
Late morning							
Early afternoon							
Late afternoon							
Early evening							
Late evening							



Happy



Sad



Anxious



Angry



Worried



Disappointed



Overwhelmed



Sleepy



Calm



Irritable



Silly



Confused



Afraid



Loved



Alcohol or drug use



Not eating



Not asking for help



Self harm



Smoking or vaping



Suicidal thoughts

PERSONAL POWER

LESSON 5: WELLBEING



GRADE 8 • MENTAL HEALTH • LESSON 5 JOURNAL

"Mental health is so important. People don't pay enough mind to it because we have things to do. We have schedules, we have pressure to fit in, places to be, Instagram Stories, trying to keep up. People don't pay attention to what's happening inside."

– Ariana Grande, singer

Consider the quote by Ariana Grande. She points out that everyone faces challenges, pressures, and stressors. Reflect on your Emoji State of Mind chart. Consider the activities or times of day that are more stressful. How can you manage and reduce stress in those areas? Can you manage this stress alone, or do you need to seek help? If help is needed, who can you go to for help?

**GRADE 8 • MENTAL HEALTH • LESSON 6**
THE STAGES OF ADDICTION

- 1. TRYING** – When a person tries or experiments with a drug for the first time. This experimentation may be due to pressure from friends and/or trying to fit in. It may be due to curiosity about what it is like to use the drug or to be rebellious. Most people can stop using the drug on their own at this stage. However, if the drug is being used in response to a problem or to “feel better,” help is needed to resolve the underlying reason for using the drug.



- 2. USING** – When a person continues to regularly use the drug because of how it makes them feel. The use of the drug is part of daily life. The use of the drug is predictable (every weekend or when hanging out with friends) or under specific circumstances (when feeling sad, stressed, worried, or lonely). The drug interacts with the brain. The changes in the brain can last hours, days, weeks, or even months before returning to normal.



- 3. MISUSING** – When a person continues to use the drug, despite harm it is causing. Tolerance can develop with misuse, requiring more and more of the drug to get the same effect. The person may begin to show changes in behavior and engage in risky behaviors or activities. A person may begin using the drug at times that are inappropriate - such as before or at school. The drug misuse can lead to failure to take responsibility for obligations with family, friends, school, or work. Tolerance is a sign of misuse and a red flag of addiction.



- 4. ABUSING** – When the person must continue using the drug because they have a mental and/or physical dependence on that drug. Without the drug, withdrawal causes the person to feel anxious, sick, or to have a physical reaction. The person believes that the drug is needed to feel normal, and they use the drug at times that are not appropriate. At this stage, a substance abuse treatment program may be needed to stop using the drug.



- 5. ADDICTION** – When the person is unable to stop using the drug. The need for the drug is so overwhelming it can cause serious problems, including health problems, money problems, and relationship problems. The person often denies that they have a problem with drugs. The need for the drug may motivate the person to do whatever is needed to get more of the drug, putting them at risk for dangerous behavior. Addiction requires the help of a professional addiction treatment program.

PERSONAL POWER

LESSON 6: HEALTHY LIFESTYLE CHOICES



GRADE 8 • MENTAL HEALTH • LESSON 6 SHUFFLE THE CONSEQUENCES



Vaping for the first time	Drinking a beer out of curiosity for what it tastes like and how it makes you feel	Smoking because all of my friends are smoking	Trying marijuana to see if it makes me feel better	Trying drugs to see if it makes me feel better
Getting high every weekend with my friends	Getting high when I am worried	Vaping daily before school	Drinking at parties on the weekend	Needing help because I'm using drugs and I like how it makes me feel
Forgetting to finish my schoolwork because I was high	Getting in fights with my friends because they think I drink too much	Going to dangerous places to buy drugs	Needing more and more drugs to get the same high	Needing help because I built up a tolerance which can be a warning sign of addiction
Using drugs because I get sick without them	Using drugs because I need them	I think I need drugs to feel normal and to function	I don't hang out with my old friends because they think I have a problem, but they're wrong	Help may be needed from a substance abuse treatment program
I don't have a problem with drugs	My family keeps telling me I need help - I don't care what they think	I will do whatever it takes to get more drugs	I stole money from my friend to buy drugs	Help is needed from a professional addiction treatment program

PERSONAL POWER

LESSON 6: HEALTHY LIFESTYLE CHOICES



GRADE 8 • MENTAL HEALTH • LESSON 6 JOURNAL

Consider your Path to the Future poem. Use your answers to create a story about your healthy lifestyle choices and the positive consequences they have on your life.