

We All Have Mental Health

A Mental Health Education Program for Grades 4-6

Lesson 3: Help-Seeking

Objective: To learn how to help yourself or a friend who is struggling

Overview: In lesson 3, students will explore their capacity to access emotional help for themselves or a friend in need. Students will practice communication strategies that promote help-seeking behaviors.

National Health Education Standards

NHES 3 - Accessing Valid Sources of Information

NHES 7 - Self Management

Learning Objectives:

Students will...

- Identify characteristics of trusted adults
- Respond with help seeking behaviors to situations involving overwhelming feelings

Teacher Preparation:

Review

Video

Previous student work and exit tickets

Materials

Slides

Trusted Adult Worksheet (1 per student)

What would you say/do Worksheet (1 per student)

Exit ticket (1 per student)

Log in for HeadSpace/Smiling Mind

Projection setup with audio

Evaluation

Share the link or QR code (available at the end of this guide and also on the slideshow for Lesson 3) so that your students can complete a post-test on the program to show what they have learned. Individual student information will not be identified and data collected can be given to schools and districts upon request.

Slides 1-2: Intro & Feeling Thermometer

Teacher says: “Now that we know about and understand everyday feelings and overwhelming feelings, and how they connect to good mental health, we are going to talk about where you can find valid and reliable information about mental health, where you can find help and support and how you can ask for help for yourself or a friend.”

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Teacher says: Keep in mind, if anything shared today prompts a feeling that you need to talk to someone, trust that feeling. Make sure you go to a trusted adult at home or in school. In school you can contact/go to _____. Please feel free to also ask questions anytime through today's lesson/workshop, also. You can certainly come talk to me after this lesson/workshop, too.

Review/check in on coping strategies/Coping Diary assignments. Have students share what they learned/notice/wonder about using coping skills.

Invite students to share their current feeling: Thermometer / Mood Meter slide

Slide 3: Video

Teacher says: "Remember the video we watched during the first lesson/workshop. These are the things that you noticed and wondered about mental health from the first time you watched.

Reference student responses from lesson 1 to facilitate discussion. "We are going to rewatch the video now. This time, be on the lookout for who Sasha and/or Andre went to for help with their feelings and how they got that help."

Rewatch video. Direct students to jot down who and how Sasha & Andre got help.

Slides 4-6: Trusted Adult

Teacher introduces/reinforces the idea of a trusted adult by defining the term (an adult who is reliable, dependable, and trustworthy and who can help you) and engage students in identifying potential titles of trusted adults at home, school, and in the community, using the adults from the video as a starting point. *In the video, Sasha and Andre connected with a parent, school administrator, counselor.* Expected additional responses from students: *parents, teachers, social workers, counselors, religious leaders, coaches, grandparents, aunts/uncles, doctor, mental health professional etc.*

Note: It is OK for everyone to have different adults they might turn to. For some students it may be a teacher in the school, and for other students it may be a coach or friend's parent. Also, while it is good to note that mental health professionals are a good source, these young students wouldn't necessarily have access to those professionals without a parent or guardian first.

Students complete the Trusted Adult worksheet.

Teacher says "We all have people in our lives who can support us. If you are concerned about your own mental health or a friend's mental health, talk to a Trusted Adult - someone who is reliable, dependable, and trustworthy. What does "reliable" look like? *They do what they say they'll do, they are available/around when you need them (and when you don't).* What does "dependable" look like? *You can count on them, they listen to you.* What does trustworthy look like? *You can count on the person, they keep information confidential, they act the same in different situations.*

When you need a trusted adult, you can talk to them in person, call them, or even email/text them (*note: suggest texting/email only if students have access to these forms of communication*) to tell them

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that you're worried. There are even people whose job it is to help people with their mental health -- these are mental health professionals, like counselors, social workers, psychologists."

Additional Note: Add "Mental Health Professional" and "trusted adult" to the list of terms/definitions started in Lesson 1.

Slide 7

Students complete the "What would you do or say" activity in partnerships and then share their ideas.

If students need prompting to get started, consider offering these ideas:

- "I noticed you're not acting like you usually do. Are you ok?"
- Invite them to play with me/us at recess
- Do you want me to go talk to the teacher with you?

-You've been having trouble sleeping at night because you're worried about a lot of things.

-Your friend's pet died last week and they seem very sad.

-Your friend used to work hard and be interested in school, but they're not so interested anymore.

-You get angry at tiny things that used to not bother you.

-A kid in your class has been grumpy for (what seems like) no reason for a couple of weeks.

-Your friend tells you that s/he has an overwhelming feeling of sadness and frustration and they ask you for help.

Teachers should validate student responses, especially highlighting instances where students identify "asking for help" as an action. Then provide the following instruction.

Slides 8-9

Teacher says "Asking for help can be challenging, but is important in each of these situations. What are some feelings that you might have when you ask for help?" *Expected responses: nervous, scared, excited, powerful, worried* "You might feel nervous because you're not sure how to start the conversation or because you're afraid of what the other person will think of you. Asking for help when you are not feeling well or a friend isn't feeling well is the first step to getting better and is a healthy thing to do.

"Think about a time when you were feeling physically sick (i.e. stomach bug, sore throat, fever, ear infection) and had to ask for help. What did you tell your trusted adult? *Expected response or prompt for how your body was feeling, what you've already tried to do to feel better, and maybe even what the adult might do to help you feel better.* Asking for help when you are having overwhelming feelings is not any different.

Students return to their partnerships to revise their answers on the scenario worksheets based on the direct instruction. Provide ample time to revise and discuss revisions.

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Slide 10: Role Play

Invite students to plan and perform a **roleplay** of one of the situations from the “What would you do/say” activity and a 4th/5th grader’s healthy response to it. Students can add in any additional characters that they need to make the story come to life and be realistic.

Debrief: **Teacher says:** “How did it feel to ask for help? How did it feel to listen to a friend?”

Teacher says: “It’s important to take care of yourself and understand some of the limits to the support you can give your friends. Sometimes a person can take on too much responsibility for helping a friend, trying to fix them themselves. This can cause stress and bring that helpful person down. Remember, a friend’s job is to listen, show that you care, and help your friend get to the adults and additional help that they need when they need it. I encourage you to ask a caregiver, teacher, or other trusted adult if you are worried about your friend (or yourself).

Slides 11-14

“Sometimes people find it easier to ask Siri or Google or YouTube for help and more information. Sometimes this information is ok, but it is unreliable. Anyone can post anything on the internet. If you can’t get information from a trusted adult for some reason, kidshealth.org is a great website -- we used this during the last lesson/workshop. Why do you think this is a good website to use?

Expected responses: up to date, written/reviewed by health experts, easy to access and understand.

Remember: talking to a trusted adult is the first and most important step to getting help though. In our school, we have _____ available.

Slides 15-16

The concept of stigma may have already come up; be sure to address it here even if it hasn’t.

Teacher says “Sometimes asking for help is hard. Stigma can get in the way of asking for help for ourselves or others. What is stigma? *Stigma is when we are afraid people will judge or think negatively about us.* Which character was afraid of being judged? Andre. He was hesitant to talk to his friend and an adult about how he was feeling. When this happens it is usually because of the stigma attached to asking for help. It is important for all of us to feel safe to ask for help. Being brave and honest, especially about overwhelming feelings and other mental health topics, helps to remove stigma around mental health.

Slide 17: Community/classwide meditation

Teacher should note that breathing / meditation exercises are purely invitational and students should not be required to participate. Remind students that this activity is exploratory in nature and intended to be helpful and peaceful. Therefore if something doesn’t feel right, students should trust that feeling.

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Slides 18-19

Teacher says “If you are struggling with overwhelming feelings, there is hope and there is help. You should speak to a trusted adult. If anything shared today prompted a feeling that you need to talk to someone, trust that feeling. Make sure that you go to a trusted adult. In our school, you can reach out to _____. Please feel free to reach out to me after this lesson, too.

Three word summary: Invite students to create a 3 word advice statement / summary of today's lesson and share out. (i.e. *ask for help, you can help, trusted adults rule, rely on others*)

Slide 20: Exit Ticket: Self-Referral Card

During our next class you'll have the opportunity to show what you know about mental health in a creative, helpful and healthy way!

Lesson Assessment

- Exit Ticket: Self-Referral Card

Lesson 3 Exit Ticket:

Name: _____

Teacher: _____

After learning about mental health,

- ☐ I would like to talk to a mental health worker very soon.
- ☐ I would like to talk to a mental health worker sometime this week.
- ☐ I do not need to talk to a mental health worker now, but if/when I do, I will reach out to _____ (write name)

- Review of student work

Post-Test

Please have your students complete an evaluation survey after completing the three lessons. You may share this link with them or the QR code (also provided in the slideshow).

Post-test link: <http://elhuepost.info/>



*Personal/Identifying information will NOT be collected**

For additional resources and support materials, check out the Additional Program Options and School Policy & Staff Development sections of our [Resource Portal](#).