



Level II:

Depression Awareness

Lesson 1: Signs & Symptoms of Depression

A Lesson Designed for Grades 5-9

Erika's Lighthouse is a not-for-profit depression and mental health education organization that educates upper elementary, middle school and high school communities about teen depression, eliminates the stigma associated with mental health issues and empowers teens to take charge of their mental health. For more information and other programs and resources, go to www.erikaslighthouse.org.

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This program was written for educators, professionals and other adults working with adolescents to educate them regarding the issues surrounding depression. While Erika's Lighthouse consults with clinical, therapeutic, legal, and child development experts, nothing in this program should be construed as specific or general medical or psychological advice. Erika's Lighthouse assumes no responsibility for any actions taken as a result of the material or information contained in the program. Every child's and family's situation is unique, and Erika's Lighthouse urges children, adolescents, parents, and educators to seek and find competent professional advice appropriate for specific individuals and actions.

Welcome to Level II: Depression Awareness

Lesson 1: Signs & Symptoms of Depression

A Lesson Plan for Grades 5-9

Maintaining good mental health is among the most challenging issues affecting today's youth, and the stressors young people face can be intense. Depression is an important—and often a required—topic for schools to address with their students. At Erika's Lighthouse, we have a strong track record of creating mental health and depression education classroom programs that are teen-centered, effective, impactful and hopeful.

This program was inspired by a young person named Erika.

Erika was a bright light who, sadly, lost her battle with depression in 2004 at age 14. Erika's Lighthouse was founded in her honor and is dedicated to helping other young people learn about depression and overcome the stigma surrounding mental health disorders. Level II: Depression Awareness was designed to be taught in classrooms for grades 5-9, led either by a teacher and/or a school mental health professional. The lessons provide opportunities for students and staff to engage in open and safe conversations about depression and good mental health.

Lesson 1 of the program consists of an engaging and interactive lesson designed to be taught to provide students with the following learning objectives:

Students will:

- Define that depression is a mood disorder
- Describe the signs & symptoms, risk factors, and resources for depression
- Identify a reliable and trusted adult at school

National Health Education Standards Alignment:

- Standard #3: Access valid and reliable resources to support health and well-being of self and others
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CLASS NORMS/GROUP AGREEMENTS

If this program is being offered as part of an existing health education program, you will probably already have established norms or group agreements. If this is the case, this is a good time to review existing group norms with your students and refine them in preparation for this curriculum.

This curriculum addresses sensitive topics. In order for students to feel safe and be fully engaged in the lessons, it is important to establish group norms and/or agreements. Group norms are ways that groups of people can work together in a thoughtful, respectful, safe and productive way. If you have already established group norms, be sure that each of the following guidelines have been addressed.

If you have not developed group norms, here are some guidelines you may find useful in helping students come up with them:

- Everyone should be involved in creating the group norms.
- Use guiding questions to help students identify the norms that will achieve a safe and caring classroom:
 - How can we be sure that people will be able to safely share private information and feelings?
 - How can we be sure that everyone has a chance to freely share and that they are heard?
 - How can we be sure that people are not forced to say or do something that makes them feel uncomfortable or unsafe?

Some examples of group norms that are brainstormed may include:

- Listen to others' perspectives
- Maintain confidentiality
- Participate
- Right to pass
- Respect differences

HOW TO ANSWER DIFFICULT QUESTIONS PROTOCOL

Sometimes when covering sensitive content such as emotions, social influences, and personal topics, questions may arise that are difficult to answer. Sometimes, the question may relate to personal values that are not universally shared. Or the question might have more than one answer depending on a person's values, beliefs, and personal history.

It may be helpful to follow this protocol when responding to difficult questions:

1. ***Affirm that the student's question is legitimate.*** Restate it for clarification and acknowledge that others might also wonder about this. "Thanks for asking that. I am sure other people would like to know about..."
2. ***Identify if there is a belief/value that is inherent in the question.*** Point out anything about the question that might be opinion-related. It is important to express the range of opinions without identifying that any single opinion is the right one. "Some people might believe...while others believe..."
3. ***Answer the factual part of the question.*** "Here is what is known to be true..."

4. **Refer to a trusted adult.** "This would be a great question to ask your (aunt, dad, caregiver, etc.)"
 5. **Check back.** "Did I answer your question?"
 6. **Leave the door open.** "If you have any other related questions, I hope you will feel free to ask."
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SENSITIVE & TRAUMA-INFORMED

Any time a sensitive topic is addressed in the classroom, it is important to ensure that all students are protected from potential trauma, particularly those who may have had adverse childhood experiences (ACEs). Social, emotional and mental health education may deal with issues of interpersonal relationships, suicide and substance use.

The teacher's capacity to listen non-judgmentally, with empathy, and to demonstrate a comfortable attitude in dealing with students' beliefs and feelings associated with mental health and emotions is crucial to the curriculum's successful implementation. Students come to the classroom with many different values, cultural and religious beliefs, and ideas about these topics. Teachers should keep in mind that because their students come from many backgrounds and traditions, some may have difficulty sharing ideas and discussing these issues with their peers.

When a student has experienced trauma of some sort in their life, it may have an impact on their ability to thrive and be healthy. These resources will provide guidelines and suggestions for helping to avoid further trauma to students affected by ACEs.

<https://www.weareteachers.com/10-things-about-childhood-trauma-every-teacher-needs-to-know/>
<https://www.weareteachers.com/video-every-teacher-needs-know-childhood-trauma/>

Teachers can go a long way towards helping a child who has depression by noting what they see, consulting with the school's health staff, and treating the child with respect and sensitivity.

But it is important to note that teachers are not responsible for either diagnosing or treating a child who has depression. Only a trained mental health professional can do that.

TEACHING THIS PROGRAM

Erika's Lighthouse wants educators to be successful when teaching this program. Here are a few suggestions to ensure that.

1. Review all of the materials before teaching: it is suggested that each teacher reviews all parts and the accompanying materials before teaching.
 2. While teaching the program, take notes on how the lesson went in different classes. Take notes on how you might adapt the lesson in the future. If you have a suggestion for an edit or adaptation, feel free to share with Erika's Lighthouse staff.
 3. If you have student work samples that stand out from any worksheets, please share with Erika's Lighthouse!
 4. If any of the content leads to a high level of distress or emotional discomfort for you or students, please reach out to a mental health clinician.
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988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline
(Text or Call 988 or Chat 988lifeline.org)

PLEASE CONTACT US AT ANY TIME AT
info@erikaslighthouse.org

Level II: Depression Awareness - Lesson 1

A Lesson for Grades 5-9

OBJECTIVE

To raise awareness of depression and reduce negative attitudes of depression and its treatment.

Students will:

- Define that depression is a mood disorder
- Describe the signs & symptoms, risk factors, and resources for depression
- Identify a reliable and trusted adult at school

OVERVIEW

In Lesson 1, students will learn that depression is a common and serious mood disorder and how to recognize the warning signs. They will learn what a trusted adult is and how to access one, if in need.

The lesson concludes with a bookmark handout for each student summarizing the lesson and where to find help. Finally, each student should receive a self-referral card, providing an opportunity for students to reach out for help confidentially.

TEACHER PREPARATION

Review all of the Level II: Lesson 1 program materials.

- Read the facilitator guide script
- Review the slide deck
- Watch the Level II Lesson 1 video
- Look through student vignettes
 - Determine if your students will select two vignettes ([YouTube](#) or [Vimeo](#)) to watch or if you will select for the class.
 - Consideration: If the Level II: Depression Awareness program is being taught to more than one grade, you might want to consider selecting the two Student Stories for your students to watch. This way they can watch different stories next year.
- Determine how to share the pretest link with students (QR Code or Hyperlink, both available on the slideshow). There is a separate post-test for when the program is complete.
 - Pre-test: <http://elhms.info>
 - Post-test: <http://elhmspост.info>

Make copies of the [Student Workbook](#), [Student Bookmark](#) and [Self-Referral Card](#) for each student. These resources are also available in Spanish on the Resource Portal.

- There are two options for the student bookmarks:
 - Ahead of time, fill out the contact information for the school mental health professional (i.e School Counselor or School Social Worker) on the bookmark template (available through Canva on the Resource Portal)
 - Have students fill out their own bookmarks.
- Coordinate a process for collecting Self-Referral Cards and student referrals with the school mental health staff.
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SCRIPT

Slides 1: Title Slide

"Today we are going to watch a video and talk about depression and mental health.

Before we begin the lesson, each of you will take a quick pre-test to determine what you already know. Use the QR code or link on the slide or in your Student Workbook to start your pre-test."

Slides 2: Objectives of Lesson

"Today you're going to learn that depression is a mood disorder. You'll learn the signs and symptoms, risk factors and resources for depression. You'll be able to identify a reliable trusted adult."

Slides 3: Overview of Erika's Lighthouse

"This program was inspired by a young person named Erika. Erika was a bright light who sadly lost her battle with depression in 2004, at age 14. Erika's Lighthouse was founded in her honor and is dedicated to helping other young people learn about depression and overcome the stigma surrounding mental health disorders.

If anything shared today prompts a feeling that you need to talk to someone, make sure to go to a trusted adult or visit the mental health worker's office here at school which is located _____. Please feel free to ask questions at any time."

Slide 4: The Video

"Now we will watch a 3-minute video. As you watch the video, you can take notes and begin answering the questions in your Student Workbook. Be prepared to participate by sharing what you have learned."

Slide 5: Discussion Questions

As a whole group, ask and discuss the following questions & have students answer in their Student Workbook:

1. Depression is a common and serious mood disorder that can happen to anyone. It is not your fault if you have it and you are not alone. How common is depression in teens?
Answer: 15-20% of young people will experience depression before they reach adulthood. This is about 5 students in a class of 25
2. Depression is not like a rash on your skin. Can you tell by someone's appearance that they have depression?
Answer: No, You can not tell by someone's appearance if they are depressed because depression occurs on the inside and among all ages, genders, races and cultures.
3. Depression is marked by a chemical imbalance in the brain that impacts mood, thoughts, and behaviors. Sometimes genetics can play a role in whether or not someone gets depression. If there is a history of depression in your family, does it mean you will develop it?
Answer: No. If there is a family predisposition for depression it means that you are at higher risk but it does not mean that you will definitely

inherit depression. It is always smart to know your family's mental health history. Don't be afraid to ask.

4. Sometimes stress in the environment can trigger depression. Does this mean anyone who experiences stress will be diagnosed with depression?

Answer: No, not everyone who experiences stress will get depression. Everyone experiences stress differently. Some people can tolerate stress well and others are more sensitive to stressful events. However, continual stress is not good for anyone's mental health. If you are experiencing intense or continual stress, try to do things that usually help you feel better. If that does not work, tell a trusted adult.

5. Depression is serious. Is depression a risk factor for suicide?

Answer: Yes, depression is the number one risk factor to suicide. While depression is common, suicide is rare. Suicide can happen if someone's depression is intense, not identified or they are not receiving the proper support.

6. Depression is more than a feeling of sadness. In order to have a diagnosis of depression you need at least five symptoms present most every day for at least two weeks. However, it is possible to have moments of enjoyment with depression. What are the signs and symptoms of depression?

Answer: Yes, depression is the number one risk factor to suicide. While depression is common, suicide is rare. Suicide can happen if someone's depression is intense, not identified or they are not receiving the proper support.

Slide 6: Break into Small Groups

(Optional: You can simply stay as a large group or students can individually choose videos)

"We're going to break up into small groups and watch two short videos. In your Student Workbook, there are descriptions and QR codes for each of the student stories. Select which two stories your group would like to watch and then, while you watch, write down in your workbook the signs and symptoms that the students in the videos experienced."

Lindsey is a first-generation student from Illinois whose depression started at six years old. She says her depression felt like "little tornadoes in my head". Lindsey loves to read, is a dedicated student and is very involved in clubs at school.	Henry is from Knoxville, Tennessee. He loves to write, play sports and hang out with his friends. Henry describes feeling anxious, worried often and "never really feeling happy".
Jasmine is an African American student who moved from a small town to a big city. Her move and experiencing community violence contributed to her depression. She is passionate about church and her family.	Catharine is from Ohio and is a sports enthusiast; she loves ice skating and tennis. Catharine felt that she needed to be "perfect" at everything: sports, school, friends. She was first diagnosed with anxiety, but then her symptoms of depression began.
Alan loves his band and his girlfriend. His depression began during his parents' divorce. He describes his depression as a "big, sinking feeling" in his chest.	Mason is an Asian-American student who experienced anxiety and perfectionism. He loves his family, friends and sports. His dad also experienced depression and is very supportive of Mason.
Edgar recently moved from Mexico City to the United States. He left behind his friends and many of his family members. Edgar loves soccer and music.	Callie is from Chicago. She loves to run track and hang out with her friends. Struggles with her peers impacted her experience with depression and she felt very isolated during this time.

Slide 7: Signs & Symptoms Discussion Questions

While students are in their small groups, ask and discuss the following questions. Have students answer in their Student Workbook:

1. Student Story #1: What were the signs & symptoms of the first student you watched?
2. Student Story #2: What were the signs & symptoms of the second student you watched?
3. Did you notice any similarities or differences between the students' experiences?

Slide 8: Symptoms

"As we just discussed, there are various signs and symptoms of depression. Some of the students in the videos described feeling sad or irritable, a change in their sleep pattern, their appetite and general hygiene. As you see on the slide, these are symptoms of someone who is experiencing depression. It's important to note that to be diagnosed with depression by a doctor or mental health professional, a person has to have at least 5 symptoms present for most of the time for at least 2 weeks."

Slide 9: Trusted Adult

"It's important for you to know that if you aren't feeling well or if you're concerned about yourself or a friend, you should tell someone.

When I say the words "trusted adult", what characteristics or traits come to mind?"

(You might need to share 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.)

When a person or source is **valid**, it means it offers correct information and can be trusted. When a person or source is **reliable**, it means it can be accessed easily and consistently.

Slide 10: Bookmark

"I'm going to hand out some bookmarks for you. On one side you'll see the signs and symptoms of depression and on the other side, you will find tips for taking care of your mental health. I want to ensure you know who you can talk to at school. Write down where in school you can go should you have concerns about yourself or a friend (teacher, counselor's office, school social worker's office, etc.) and answer the two questions in your Student Workbook."

- Describe how you know that the trusted adult you put on your bookmark is valid and reliable.
- How can you access/find a trusted adult?

Slide 11: 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline

"Remember, if anything shared today prompted a feeling that you need to talk to someone, make sure to go to a trusted adult, talk to your counselor, or visit the social worker's office here at school, which is located _____. You can also call or text 988 to speak or text with someone at the suicide and crisis lifeline if you are ever concerned about yourself or a friend."

Slide 12: Self-Referral Cards

"Today we learned about depression and talked about how important it is to talk to a Trusted Adult if you are worried about yourself or a friend. And practicing good mental health includes knowing what kind of strategies work best for you.

I am now going to hand out the self-referral cards. On the card it gives you three options. 1. to talk to a mental health professional here at school in the next 24 hours 2. Talk to a mental health professional here at school within a week 3. That you do not need to talk to a mental health professional. Each of you should select one of these options, fold it in half and hand it back to me.

For additional resources and support materials, check out the Optional Program Additions and School Policy & Staff Development sections of our Resource Portal.



Level II: Depression Awareness

Lesson 2: Help-Seeking A Lesson Designed for Grades 5-9

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Level II: Depression Awareness - Lesson 2

A Lesson for Grades 5-9

OBJECTIVE

To identify a reliable and trusted adult and seek help if needed.

Students will:

- Define what stigma is
- Learn that depression is treatable
- Demonstrate how to reach out for help for themselves or a friend
- Effectively communicate to a friend in need that I care and can share who to talk to (Reliable trusted adult at school)

OVERVIEW

In this lesson, students will learn what stigma is, how to access help and how to help a friend.

The remainder of this lesson will include two role-plays which reinforce to students how to ask for help and how to intervene with a friend.

TEACHER PREPARATION

Review all of the Level II: Lesson 2 program materials.

- Read the facilitator guide script
- Review the slide deck
- Watch the Level II Lesson 2 video: Help Seeking
- Look through student vignettes
 - Determine if your students will select which two student vignettes to watch or if you will select for the class
 - Consideration: If the Level II: Depression Awareness program is being taught to more than one grade at a school, you might want to consider selecting the two Student Stories for your students to watch. This way they can watch different stories next year.

Hang Chart Paper around the room with markers at each station

Make copies of the Student Workbook

SCRIPT

Slides 1: Title Slide

"Today we are going to talk about depression and mental health. We will do some activities and watch a video.

If anything shared today prompts a feeling that you need to talk to someone, make sure to go to a trusted adult or visit the mental health worker's office here at school which is located _____. Please feel free to ask questions at any time."

Slides 2: Objectives of Lesson

"Today you're going to learn how stigma prevents people from seeking help. You'll learn that depression is treatable. You're going to demonstrate how to reach out for help for yourself or a friend and learn how to effectively communicate if you're concerned about yourself or a friend."

Slides 3: Stigma Activity

"We're going to do a quick activity. I'm going to read some statements aloud. If you agree, stand up (or raise your hand) and stay seated if you disagree.

- I like math.
- I enjoy music.
- I participate in a sport or club
- I believe good mental health is for everyone
- I know someone who struggles with depression

Now imagine you've just been diagnosed with asthma. Stand up if you would feel comfortable sharing that information with someone other than a close friend or family member.

Have a seat. Now imagine you have just been diagnosed with depression. Stand up if you would feel comfortable sharing that information with someone other than a close friend or family member.

Many of us believe that everyone deserves good mental health. And even know people who struggle with depression. However, if faced with depression ourselves, many of us would not feel comfortable sharing that with others.

Why would someone be more comfortable talking about asthma than depression?

(Students' expected answers: asthma is a real illness, depression is not. People may judge you. Depression feels more personal.)

The truth is that though depression and asthma seem different, they are more similar than different. For instance, they are both common illnesses. They both can be the result of family genetics. They can both be managed with lifestyle changes and treated with medication. The major difference between asthma and depression is stigma. We are much more educated about physical illness than mental illnesses, such as depression, which makes them easier to talk about.

Today, we will continue to increase your knowledge and comfort level on the topic of depression because it is a common and treatable illness with nothing to be ashamed of. Understanding stigma is important because it is a main reason why people do not seek help."

Slide 4: Stigma

"Although depression is incredibly common, 80% of people with depression do not seek treatment. Why?

Depression is an illness that carries a stigma. Stigma is a mark of shame associated with a particular circumstance, quality or person."

Slide 5: The Video

"Now we will watch a 4-minute video that talks about seeking help for yourself or a friend.

Slide 6: Break into Small Groups

(Optional: You can also simply stay as a large group or students individually choose videos)

"We're going to break up into small groups and watch two short videos. Each group will get to choose which two student stories they want to watch. In your Student Workbook, there are descriptions and QR codes for each of the student stories.

Lindsey is a first-generation student from Illinois whose depression started at six years old. She says her depression felt like "little tornadoes in my head". Lindsey loves to read, is a dedicated student and is very involved in clubs at school.	Henry is from Knoxville, Tennessee. He loves to write, play sports and hang out with his friends. Henry describes feeling anxious, worried often and "never really feeling happy".
Jasmine is an African American student who moved from a small town to a big city. Her move and experiencing community violence contributed to her depression. She is passionate about church and her family.	Catharine is from Ohio and is a sports enthusiast; she loves ice skating and tennis. Catharine felt that she needed to be "perfect" at everything: sports, school, friends. She was first diagnosed with anxiety, but then her symptoms of depression began.
Alan loves his band and his girlfriend. His depression began during his parents' divorce. He describes his depression as a "big, sinking feeling" in his chest.	Mason is an Asian-American student who experienced anxiety and perfectionism. He loves his family, friends and sports. His dad also experienced depression and is very supportive of Mason.
Edgar recently moved from Mexico City to the United States. He left behind his friends and many of his family members. Edgar loves soccer and music.	Callie is from Chicago. She loves to run track and hang out with her friends. Struggles with her peers impacted her experience with depression and she felt very isolated during this time.

Select which two stories you'd like to watch and, while you watch, answer the following questions in your Student Workbook:

- Who did the students in the vignettes go to for help?
- Where could you find help in your school or community?

Slide 7: Group Activity

"With your group, go to a station with chart paper. On the paper, list as many trusted adults and resources you know about in your school and community."

(Give groups 5 minutes to make their lists. Then have the groups share.)

"As you can see, there are a variety of valid, reliable, dependable adults and resources in our school and community that can help someone in need."

Slide 8: Signs & Symptoms of Depression

"As a reminder from the last lesson, depression has specific signs and symptoms. It might be feeling sad or irritable, a change in sleep pattern, appetite and general hygiene. What everyone needs to know about depression is that it is not someone's fault, a sign of weakness, or a character flaw. It is a very common and treatable illness. And a person with depression deserves to feel better."

Slide 9: Talk to a Trusted Adult

So, we have been talking about the importance of telling someone if you think you have depression. But, how do you do that? Asking for help can be challenging. You might feel nervous because you're unsure of how to start the conversation or because you're afraid of what the other person will think of you.

However, asking for help for something like depression is the first step to getting better and, believe it or not, many of us have already had success with similar conversations in the past. Think about a time when you have been sick with the flu and had to ask for help. Usually, it involves talking to a parent about your symptoms, stating what you have already tried to do to feel better, how long the symptoms have been going on and asking for medicine or to see a doctor. Asking for help for depression is really no different. Using these same ideas, we can be effective in getting others to understand what we need in order to move on to a healthy, happy and productive life - something we all deserve.

If you are worried about yourself, first explain to a trusted adult the changes you feel, what you have tried to do to make it better and what they can do to help you find a mental health professional.

Slides 10: Let's Role Play (Parent and Teen)

"Here's a conversation between a teen and a parent that will give you a better idea of what it might sound like to ask for help for yourself. (Teacher reads the role of "Parent" and the student can read the role of the teen.)"

Role Play 1

Teen	Hey, can we talk?
Parent	Sure. What's going on?
Teen	Lately, I haven't been feeling like myself. I feel sad and angry all the time. I'm constantly tired and I can't focus in school.
Parent	I've gone through periods like this when I was your age. Hang in there and I'm sure things will get better with time.
Teen	Well, usually when I'm down I feel better when I go for a run or talk to someone. This time I can't seem to shake it. It's been like this for weeks now. I even took a depression test online and it reported that I should see a doctor to get checked out.
Parent	Really?
Teen	Yeah, I think I need to talk to someone. Can you help me set up an appointment with a doctor?
Parent	Sure, I think that's a great idea.

"When asking for help from an adult, some may not understand depression or know what to do. The good news is that there are many other helpful adults out there. It may just take talking to a few to find the right one."

Slides 11: Let's Role Play between a Teen and a Friend

"But, what if it's a friend you are concerned about? Friends often see changes in friends before parents and other adults do, so it is important to know how to handle a situation with a friend who may be experiencing depression.

The best approach is to communicate to your friend the changes you have noticed, that you care for them and ask how you can help them take action towards talking to a trusted adult.

Let's do a role play of this exchange between two friends to better understand what this kind of conversation may sound like." (Teacher can read the part of Sam and have a student read the friend role, or two students can volunteer to read each role).

Slide 12: Let's Role Play between a Teen and a Friend

Sam	Hey, can we talk? Over the past few weeks, I've noticed that you've been hanging back a lot - not calling or texting me much anymore and skipping out on me and our friends. Recently, you've even missed quite a few play practices. In general, you seem down. This isn't like you. What's going on?
Friend	I'm sorry. I've been feeling weird lately.

Sam	I can tell something's different. I'm worried and care about you.
Friend	You don't have to worry. I'm sure I'll snap out of it eventually.
Sam	You deserve to feel better now and who knows, it could be something as serious as depression. Have you told an adult yet?
Friend	No.
Sam	An adult should know so they can help you find a professional to check it out. Who do you feel comfortable talking to?
Friend	I guess, Mr. Clark.
Sam	I think he's a great choice. Would you like me to come with you? It might make you feel more comfortable.
Friend	Uh sure. Yeah, I'd like that.

Slide 13: When to Notify an Adult

"Keep in mind that each situation with a friend is different and may require a slightly different approach and different action steps. You'll see in your Student Workbook some important points to remember.

If a friend tells you that they are thinking of suicide or hurting themselves, an adult must be notified immediately. A friend may ask you to keep this information a secret, but when it comes to matters of safety, keeping a secret can cost a life."

Slide 14: Be a Good Friend

"One word of caution. It is important to take care of yourself and understand there are limits to the kind of support a friend can provide to a friend with depression. Often, a person can take on too much responsibility for helping a friend and this can begin to cause stress and bring that person down. Remember, a friend's job is to listen, show compassion and help a friend to find professional help."

Slide 15: 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline

"Remember, if anything shared today prompted a feeling that you need to talk to someone, make sure to go to a trusted adult, talk to your counselor, or visit the social worker's office here at school, which is located _____. You can also call or text 988 to speak or text with someone at the suicide and crisis lifeline if you are ever concerned about yourself or a friend."

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



Level II:

Depression Awareness

Lesson 3: Coping Strategies

A Lesson Designed for Grades 5-9

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Level II: Depression Awareness - Lesson 3

A Lesson for Grades 5-9

OBJECTIVE

To increase student engagement and communication in activities that promote good mental health.

Students will:

- Demonstrate how to help myself or others when experiencing depression
- Discuss what we can all do to support good mental health
- Demonstrate the ability to use interpersonal communication skills to support health and well-being of self and others

OVERVIEW

In Lesson 3, students will learn about stress and factors that can improve mental health.

The lesson will give students the opportunity to practice their communication skills and content knowledge around supporting a friend in a series of scenarios. This lesson will also provide time to discuss good mental health strategies.

TEACHER PREPARATION

Review all of the Level II: Lesson 3 program materials.

- Read the facilitator guide script
- Review the slide deck
- Watch the Level II Lesson 3 video: [Level II - Coping Strategies](#)
- Look through student vignettes
 - Determine if your students will select two student vignettes ([YouTube](#) or [Vimeo](#)) to watch or if you will select for the class
 - Consideration: If the Level II: Depression Awareness program is being taught to more than one grade at a school, you might want to consider selecting the two Student Stories for your students to watch. This way they can watch different stories next year.

Make copies of the Student Workbook

SCRIPT

Slide 1: Title Slide

"Today we are going to talk about depression and mental health. We will watch a video and talk about why it's important to take care of your mental health and how to support yourself and/or a friend.

If anything shared today prompts a feeling that you need to talk to someone, make sure to go to a trusted adult or visit the mental health worker's office here at school which is located _____. Please feel free to ask questions at any time."

Slides 2: Objectives of Lesson

"Today you're going to learn and demonstrate how to help yourself or a friend when experiencing depression, discuss what we can do to support our mental health, and practice communication skills to support health and well-being of self and others."

Slide 3: How to Talk to Trusted Adult

"In the last lesson we discussed what a trusted adult's role is and listed some examples from our school and in the community. Asking for help can be tough. Remember, if you are worried about yourself or a friend, please reach out to a trusted adult. Tell them what changes you feel, what you have tried to do to make it better and what they can do to help you take action towards getting professional help."

Slide 4: Helping a Friend

"I want you all to imagine that a friend comes to you and shares that they haven't been sleeping, they have no appetite and don't have much energy. They are feeling down. What might you say to them? You may remember we talked about this in the last lesson. Take a look at your Student Workbook for reminders on what to say when you're reaching out for help for yourself and when you're helping a friend. Who would like to share what you could say to your friend?"

When helping yourself, say:

- What you **feel**.
- What you have **tried** to do to feel better.
- How someone can **help** you find a mental health professional.

When helping a friend, say:

- What you **notice** in the friend.
- That you **care** about them.
- How you can **help** them tell a trusted adult.

Slide 5: Scenario Activity

"Now let's put some of this into action. You're going to be working in groups or pairs for the Scenario Activity. As a group or pair, choose one of the four scenarios in your Student Workbook and answer the questions related to your scenario. If you have extra time, choose another scenario. Each scenario has the same two questions:

If you were _____, what action would need to be taken first?

If you were _____, how could you use the language from the lesson to help yourself?

Scenario 1: Catharine Catharine is managing her anxiety, but now she's not sleeping or eating well. She has no interest in participating in the activities she used to love and feels like all she wants to do is cry. She feels mad and frustrated at the world and doesn't understand why she feels this way. She is close with her older sister and her school counselor.	Scenario 2: Henry Henry feels anxious often and worries about a lot of things. He often feels like he's in a dark room alone and the room is closing in. His brother and dad both experienced depression, so he knows that depression is in his genetics. He doesn't feel like being active, which he knows is a big change for him. He feels like he is pretending to be happy. He is close with his school counselor.
Scenario 3: Lindsey Lindsey finds it difficult to get out of bed, doesn't want to brush her hair or teeth, and has difficulty eating. She feels like she has "little tornadoes" in her head. Her parents are from Vietnam, and she feels like they won't understand what she is feeling. She feels close to a teacher at her school.	Scenario 4: Edgar Edgar just doesn't feel himself lately. He can't really explain why, just that he doesn't feel right. He just moved away from his family and he misses them. He doesn't have the same level of energy or interest in hanging out with his friends. He's very close to his mom and grandma.

In 10 minutes, the class will come together to discuss the exercise. Be prepared to share your scenario and response with the class."

Slide 6: The Video

"Now we will watch a 3-minute video on coping strategies. We'll discuss and go through the Discussion Guide questions in your Student Workbook after the video."

Slide 7: Discussion Question #1

"What are four ways to practice good mental health?

Answer: Nutrition, Sleep, Exercise, Coping strategies, and more

Slide 8: Discussion Question #2

"Mental health is balance, the ability to manage stress and achieve one's potential. Is it possible to be free of mental illness, and yet, not mentally healthy? Why or why not?"

Answer: Yes, mental health is much more than the absence of mental illness. Mental Health is balance, the ability to manage stress and achieve one's potential through a lifestyle of good nutrition, sleep, exercise and practicing healthy coping skills.

Slide 9: Discussion Question #3

"Stress is normal, but too much stress increases the risk for health issues, like depression. What is stress? What are some things that can cause stress?"

Answer: Stress is the body's natural reaction to a situation that is worrisome or threatening, and results in a feeling of being hypervigilant or on-edge. The body releases a chemical called cortisol to activate the "fight, flight or freeze response" needed in a threatening or high pressure situation. Stress can be helpful in motivating us to work effectively to solve a problem. However, too much stress can have a negative impact on our mind and body and even trigger depressive symptoms. What is considered too much will look different from person to person. Many things can cause stress and those things differ from person to person. For some people it could be the pressure of school, trying to fit in or the break-up of a relationship. For others, it may include being bullied, having family trouble or experiencing a serious trauma. Stress is a certainty for all of us from time to time. Therefore, we all need to practice daily mental health habits to manage it.

Slide 10: Discussion Question #4

"How do you know you are stressed-how do you experience it in your body? Why is it important to be aware of your own personal stress indicators?"

Answer: Accelerated heart rate, shortness of breath, excessive sweating, headaches, chest pain, dry mouth, sleep problems, change in eating, lack of concentration, irritability, tension or jitters. The sooner you realize you are under stress, the sooner you can make changes and find coping strategies to make you feel better.

Slide 11: Student Stories - Coping Strategies

(Optional: You can also simply stay as a large group or students individually choose videos)

"We're going to break up into small groups and watch two short videos. Each group will get to choose which two student stories they want to watch. In your Student Workbook, there are descriptions and QR codes for each of the student stories.

Lindsey is a first-generation student from Illinois whose depression started at six years old. She says her depression felt like "little tornadoes in my head". Lindsey loves to read, is a dedicated student and is very involved in clubs at school.	Henry is from Knoxville, Tennessee. He loves to write, play sports and hang out with his friends. Henry describes feeling anxious, worried often and "never really feeling happy".
Jasmine is an African American student who moved from a small town to a big city. Her move and experiencing community violence contributed to her depression. She is passionate about church and her family.	Catharine is from Ohio and is a sports enthusiast; she loves ice skating and tennis. Catharine felt that she needed to be "perfect" at everything: sports, school, friends. She was first diagnosed with anxiety, but then her symptoms of depression began.

Alan loves his band and his girlfriend. His depression began during his parents' divorce. He describes his depression as a "big, sinking feeling" in his chest.	Mason is an Asian-American student who experienced anxiety and perfectionism. He loves his family, friends and sports. His dad also experienced depression and is very supportive of Mason.
Edgar recently moved from Mexico City to the United States. He left behind his friends and many of his family members. Edgar loves soccer and music.	Callie is from Chicago. She loves to run track and hang out with her friends. Struggles with her peers impacted her experience with depression and she felt very isolated during this time.

Select which two stories you'd like to watch and while you watch, write down in your workbook what coping strategies the students used. We'll discuss it as a group."

When you listened to the student's stories, what coping strategies did they use? How did they take care of their mental health?"

Answers: Being active, Eating well, Getting enough sleep, Writing, Reading, Listening to music, Going out with friends

Slide 12: 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline

"Remember, if anything shared today prompted a feeling that you need to talk to someone, make sure to go to a trusted adult, talk to your counselor, or visit the social worker's office here at school, which is located _____. You can also call or text 988 to speak or text with someone at the suicide and crisis lifeline if you are ever concerned about yourself or a friend."

Slide 13: Post-Test QR Code/Link

"Since we are at the end of the program, each of you will now take a quick post-test. Use the QR code or link on the slide to start your post-test."

<http://elhmspost.info>

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



Level II: Depression Awareness

Lesson 4

A Lesson Designed for Grades 5-9

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Level II: Depression Awareness - Lesson 4

A Lesson for Grades 5-9

TEACHER PREPARATION

Review all of the Level II: Lesson 4 facilitator guide script & make copies of the Student Workbook

SCRIPT

“We can’t always control whether or not we will experience depression. As we have learned, sometimes it can be passed genetically. However, there are things we can do outside of treatment to make depression symptoms manageable and they are the same things all of us can do to help reduce stress and promote good mental health.

Many of the decisions we make every day about what we eat, how much we sleep, how active we are and the ways in which we manage our lives can make an enormous impact on the way we feel emotionally.”

STUDENT MENTAL HEALTH ASSESSMENT

Ask the students to take a few minutes to complete the Student Mental Health Assessment in their Student Workbook. Once they are finished, share the point value for each answer. Ask them to add up the total for each category. Explain that a lower score shows healthier mental health choices. Higher scores in a category means there’s room for improvement.

Sleep	1. On average, I get 8 hours or more sleep per night.	T[0] F[1]
	2. I have trouble falling asleep or staying asleep more days than not.	T[0] F[1]
	3. Most days, I wake up feeling rested and energized.	T[0] F[1]
Exercise	4. I engage in at least 2½ hours a week of physical activity.	T[0] F[1]
	5. I spend more than two hours a day watching TV, playing video games or looking at my phone.	T[0] F[1]
	6. I walk or ride a bike most places.	T[0] F[1]
Nutrition	7. I eat a fruit or vegetable at nearly every meal.	T[0] F[1]
	8. I eat fried food, fast food or food packed in bags/boxes more days than not.	T[0] F[1]
	9. I eat three meals a day almost every day.	T[0] F[1]
Coping Skills	10. When I’m stressed, I know what I can do to manage it.	T[0] F[1]
	11. When I have a problem, I usually ignore it and hope it goes away.	T[0] F[1]
	12. If I had a problem too big to manage on my own, I have an adult in my life who I can go to.	T[0] F[1]

STUDENT MENTAL HEALTH ACTIVITY CHECKLIST

Ask students to fill out this Checklist and explain that it is for their own self-reflection. It will not be turned in. Encourage students to consider choosing an activity from the same category as their highest score from their Student Mental Health Assessment.

<p>Sleep</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Go to bed with relaxing music (download the app Calm). <input type="checkbox"/> Take a hot shower or bath before bed. <input type="checkbox"/> Read a relaxing book or magazine before bed instead of watching TV, playing video games, or looking at your phone. <input type="checkbox"/> Have a cup of caffeine-free herbal tea instead of a sugary drink before bed. <input type="checkbox"/> Schedule between 8-10 hours of sleep per night (download the app sleepbot). <input type="checkbox"/> Keep your bed a "Sleep only" zone. Complete homework, watch TV, play video games, in other areas of the house. <input type="checkbox"/> Other 	<p>Exercise</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Wake up 15 min early and engage in a series of stretches or yoga poses (download the app iYoga). <input type="checkbox"/> If you live close enough, begin walking, jogging, or biking to and from school each day (download the app Map My Run). <input type="checkbox"/> During your favorite TV show, do jumping jacks or jump rope during commercial breaks. <input type="checkbox"/> While waiting for dinner, shoot baskets, kick a soccer ball, or play catch with someone. <input type="checkbox"/> Put on music or a TV music program and dance for 15 minutes. <input type="checkbox"/> Build in a 5-10 minute break for every hour of homework/study time and do a series of push-ups, crunches, or squats. <input type="checkbox"/> Other
<p>Coping</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Write down one thing you are grateful for each day. <input type="checkbox"/> Engage in a mindfulness exercise (download the app Smiling Mind). <input type="checkbox"/> Spend time with a positive & enjoyable person. <input type="checkbox"/> Start using a day planner (download the app Evernote). <input type="checkbox"/> Do something kind for someone who needs it. Help a grandparent with a chore, give a genuine compliment to someone having a bad day, etc. <input type="checkbox"/> Do what you love - journal, listen to music, jog, read, draw, watch a movie, cook, or bake, etc. <input type="checkbox"/> Other 	<p>Nutrition</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Drink water instead of sugary drinks (download the app Waterlogged). <input type="checkbox"/> Journal everything you eat in a day (download the app fooducate). <input type="checkbox"/> Have fresh snacks instead of snacks in bags or boxes. <input type="checkbox"/> Eat breakfast in the morning. <input type="checkbox"/> Try to limit my fried foods. <input type="checkbox"/> Eat at least one fruit or vegetable at every meal <input type="checkbox"/> Other

MENTAL HEALTH JOURNAL

"Over the next seven days, you will try something that might help lower your stress and improve your mental health. You can choose a new activity to try each day or do the same activity over several days. A helpful tip is to pick an activity in the category with the highest score on the Student Mental Health Assessment. Each day, engage in the activity of your choice and respond to the questions in the Mental Health Journal. Make sure to answer the Wrap-Up Question after your seven days, "

MENTAL HEALTH PARTNER

Students can choose someone in class to be their Mental Health Partner. Explain to students that each day in class they will spend a few minutes and report to their Mental Health Partner about their experience with the previous day's activity. Their Mental Health Partner will initial next to that day's journal entry indicating that they have completed the activity.

CLOSURE

Explain how students might maintain their health plan/journaling. Teachers may assess students on completion of a plan and day-to-day maintenance rather than assessing student behaviors.

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