

It's Real: Teens and Mental Health

Tracy Rassley & Michael Barber

August 19, 2024



Mountain Plains (HHS Region 8)

MHTTC

Mental Health Technology Transfer Center Network
Funded by Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration

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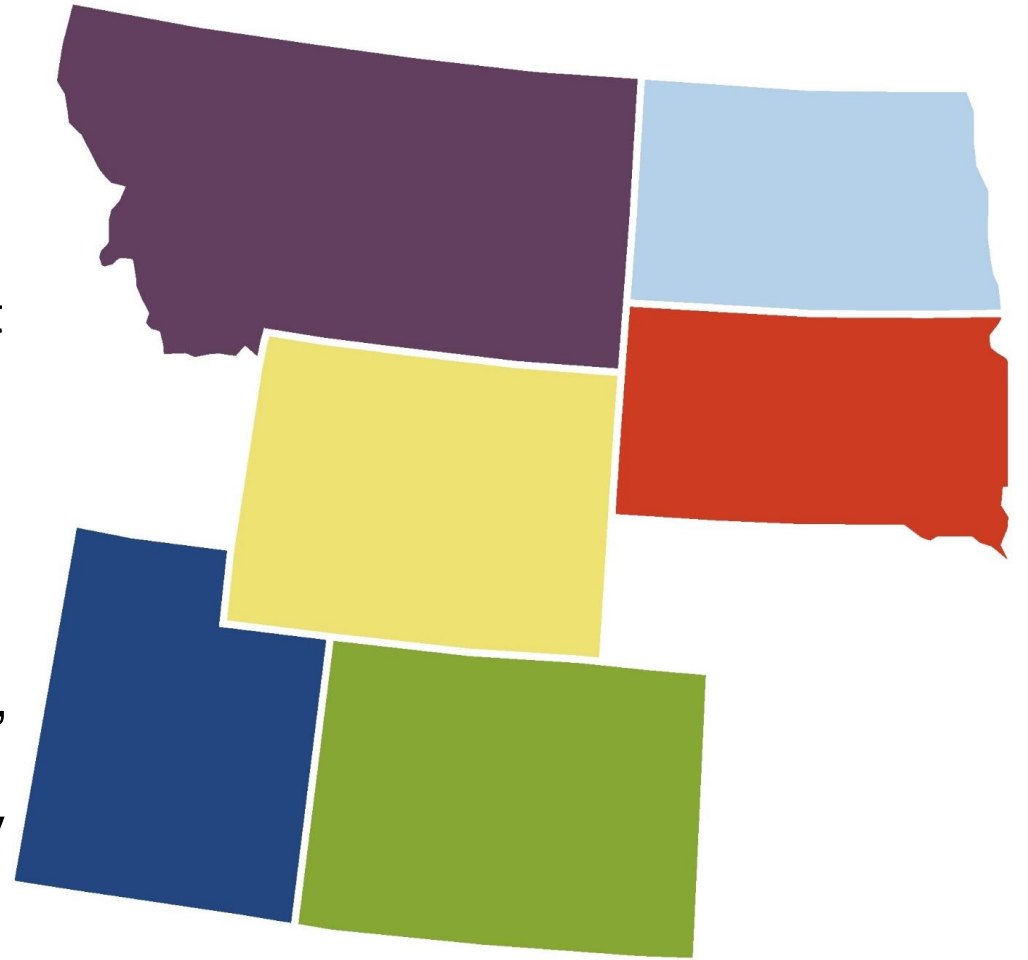
At the time of this presentation, Miriam Delphin-Rittmon served as SAMHSA Assistant Secretary. The opinions expressed herein are the views of Tracy Rassley & Michael Barber and do not reflect the official position of the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), or SAMHSA. No official support or endorsement of DHHS, SAMHSA, for the opinions described in this presentation is intended or should be inferred.

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The Mountain Plains Mental Health Technology Transfer Center

The Mountain Plains Mental Health Technology Transfer Center (Mountain Plains MHTTC) provides training and technical assistance to individuals who serve persons with mental health concerns throughout Region 8 (Colorado, Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota, Utah and Wyoming).

We belong to the Technology Transfer Center (TTC) Network, a national network of training and technical assistance centers serving the needs of mental health, substance use and prevention providers. The work of the TTC Network is under a cooperative agreement by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Service Administration (SAMHSA).



Land Acknowledgement Statement

Today, the University of North Dakota rests on the ancestral lands of the Pembina and Red Lake Bands of Ojibwe and the Dakota Oyate - presently existing as composite parts of the Red Lake, Turtle Mountain, White Earth Bands, and the Dakota Tribes of Minnesota and North Dakota. We acknowledge the people who resided here for generations and recognize that the spirit of the Ojibwe and Oyate people permeates this land. As a university community, we will continue to build upon our relations with the First Nations of the State of North Dakota - the Mandan, Hidatsa, and Arikara Nation, Sisseton-Wahpeton Oyate Nation, Spirit Lake Nation, Standing Rock Sioux Tribe, and Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa Indians.



The MHTTC Network uses affirming, respectful and recovery-oriented language in all activities. That language is:

**STRENGTHS-BASED
AND HOPEFUL**

**INCLUSIVE AND
ACCEPTING OF
DIVERSE CULTURES,
GENDERS,
PERSPECTIVES,
AND EXPERIENCES**

**HEALING-CENTERED AND
TRAUMA-RESPONSIVE**

**INVITING TO INDIVIDUALS
PARTICIPATING IN THEIR
OWN JOURNEYS**

**PERSON-FIRST AND
FREE OF LABELS**

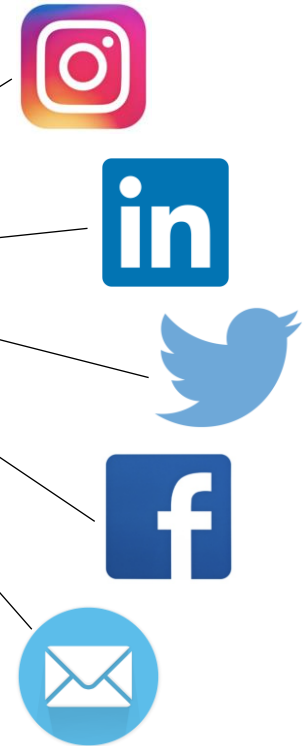
**NON-JUDGMENTAL AND
AVOIDING ASSUMPTIONS**

**RESPECTFUL, CLEAR
AND UNDERSTANDABLE**

**CONSISTENT WITH
OUR ACTIONS,
POLICIES, AND PRODUCTS**

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IT'S REAL: TEENS AND MENTAL HEALTH

Tracy Rassley
Programs Manager
Montana and Wyoming

Michael Barber
Area Director
Colorado

AGENDA

- What is the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention?
- It's Real: Teens and Mental Health
- It's Real: Middle School - presentation overview
- It's Real: College - overview
- Wrap-up/Q&A

Our Mission

**Save Lives and Bring Hope
to Those Affected by Suicide**



IT'S REAL: TEENS AND MENTAL HEALTH

Purpose (Middle School & High School):

- Provide youth with general mental health information and resources
- Define mental health
- Provide guidance on starting a conversation
- Explain the importance of self-care

IT'S REAL: TEENS AND MENTAL HEALTH

Audience:

- Middle School / High School Students
- Recommended max of 50 attendees to ensure a safe environment

IT'S REAL: TEENS AND MENTAL HEALTH

Learning Objectives:

- Understand the concept of mental health
- Be able to recognize the signs and symptoms of a mental health challenge in yourself and others
- How to start a conversation about mental health
- How to reach out for help for yourself or your friends
- Understand the importance of self-care
- Note available resources for mental health care

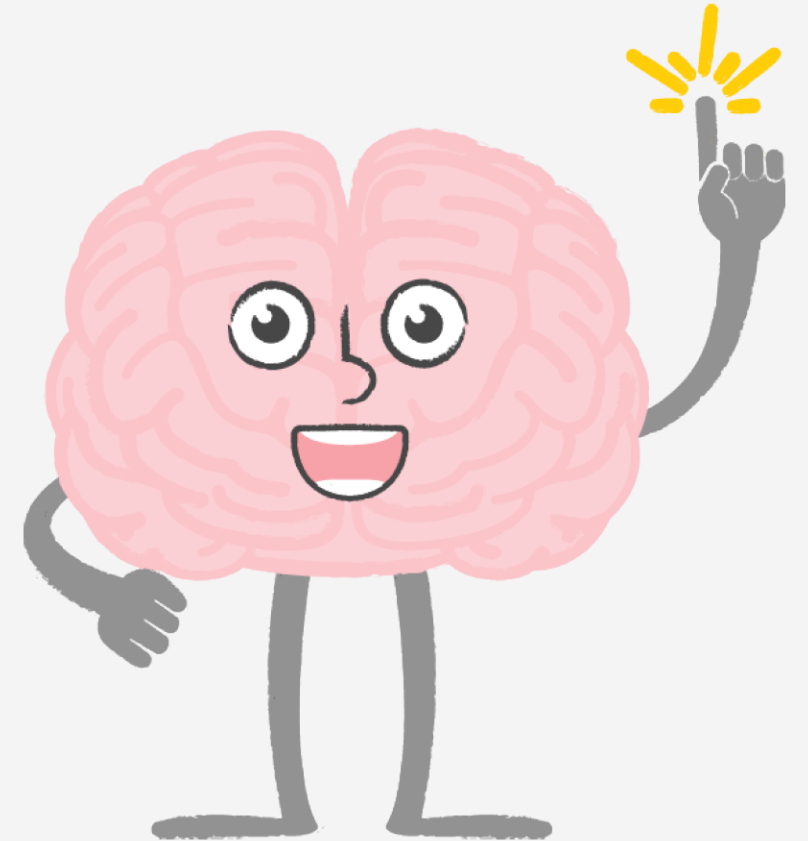
IT'S REAL: TEENS AND MENTAL HEALTH

for Middle School Students



Today We Will Learn

- What is Mental Health?
- Signs & Symptoms of Deteriorating Mental Health
- How to Start a Conversation About Mental Health
- How to Reach Out for Help
- Available Resources
- Importance of Self-Care



What is Mental Health?

afsp.org

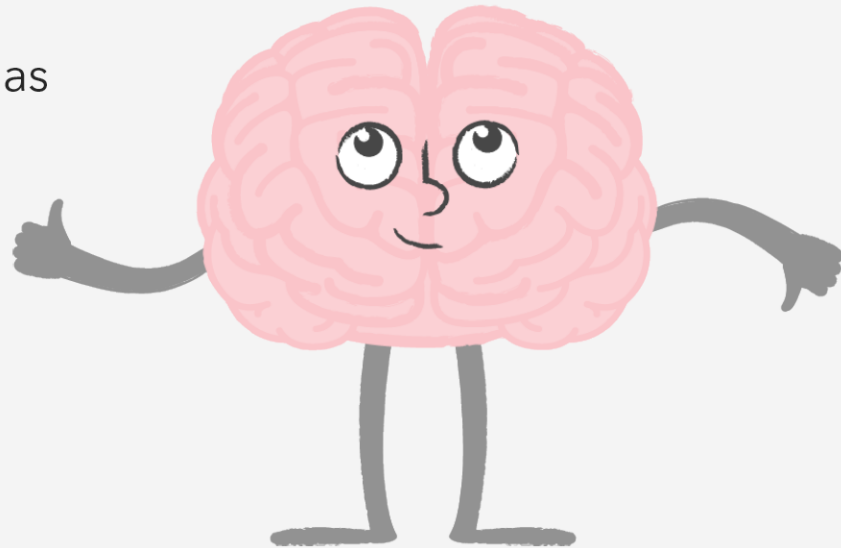


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What is Mental Health?

It is...

- Important
- Something everyone has
- Part of being human
- Something we need to look after
- Complex

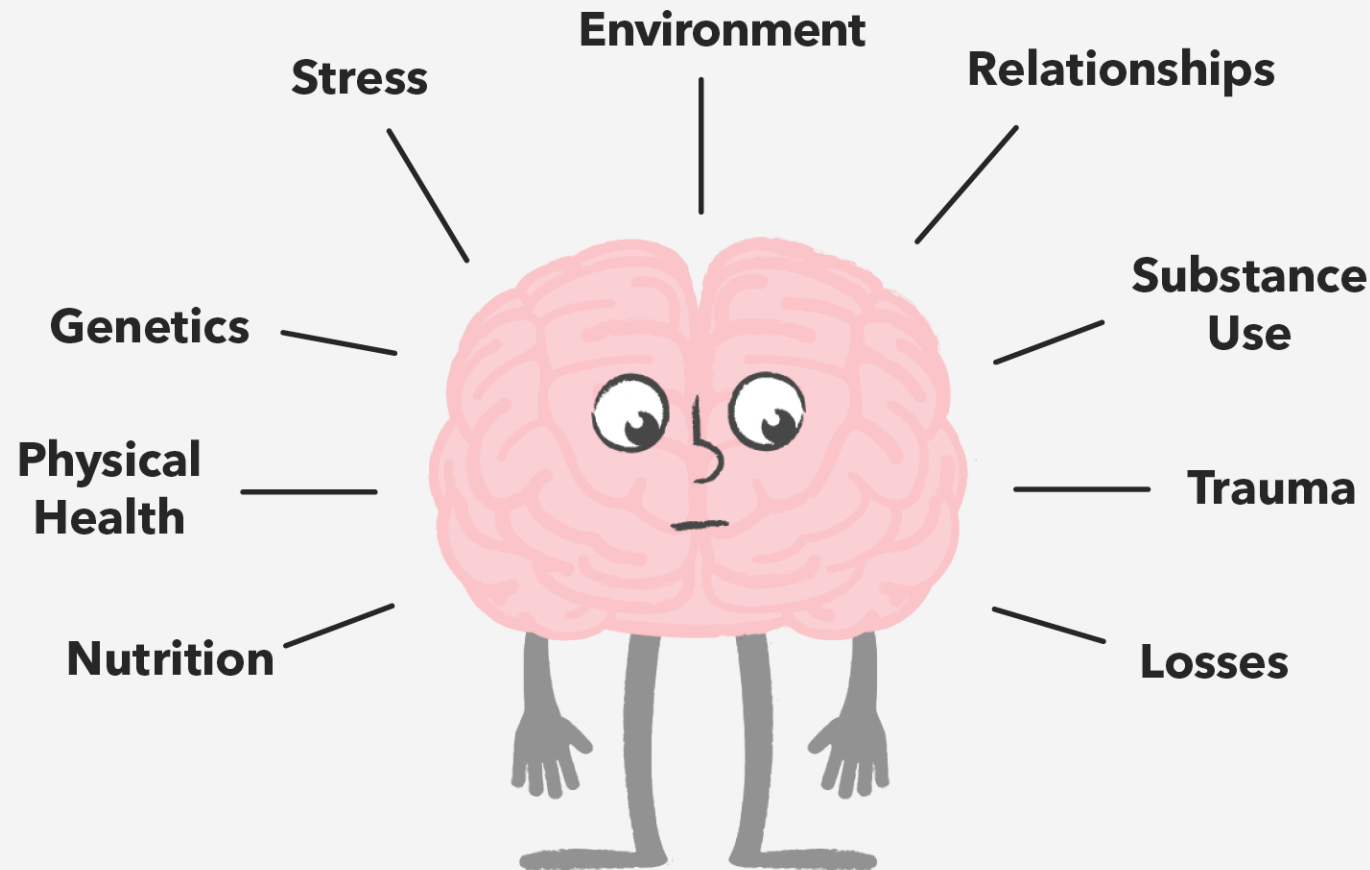


It isn't...

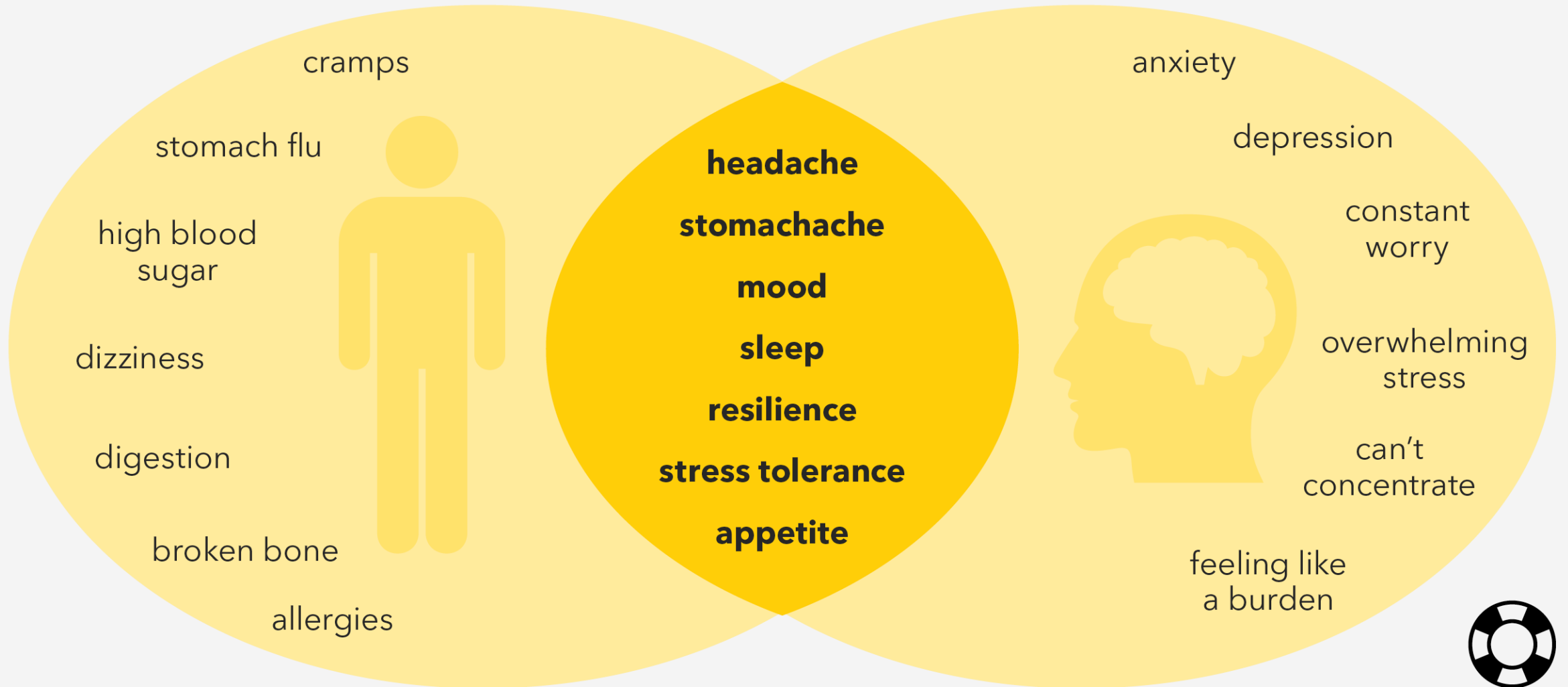
- A sign of weakness
- Something to be embarrassed about
- All in your head
- Always something negative
- Something to think about only when it feels broken
- Feeling good all the time
- Something you can snap out of



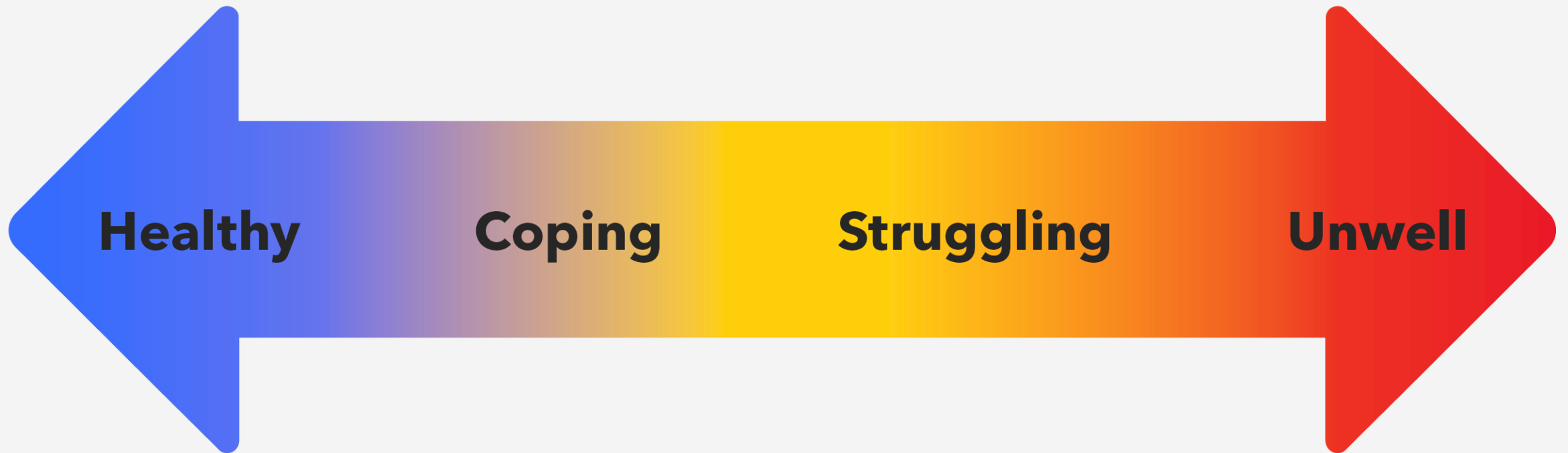
Many Factors Affect Mental Health

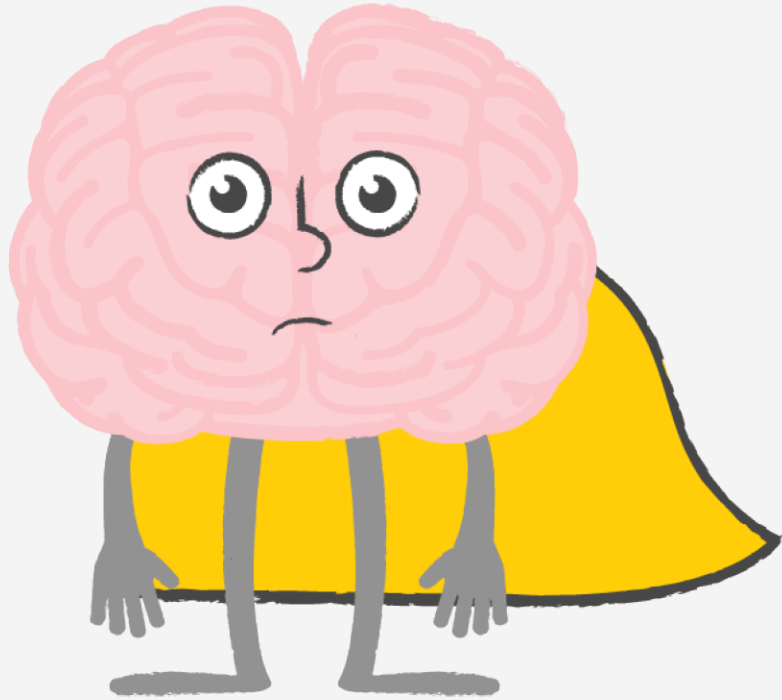


Connection Between Physical and Mental Health



Mental Health Lives on a Spectrum





**No One
Feels Super
All the Time**



Know the Signs

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Talk



**They've gotten
negative about life**



**They talk about
feeling hopeless**



Behavior



They're harming themselves



They're taking more risks than usual



They're not acting like themselves and are more irritable than usual



Mood



**Their mind
seems to be
somewhere else**



**They don't feel
like spending time
with others**



**They're so anxious
they can't relax**



Starting a Conversation about Mental Health

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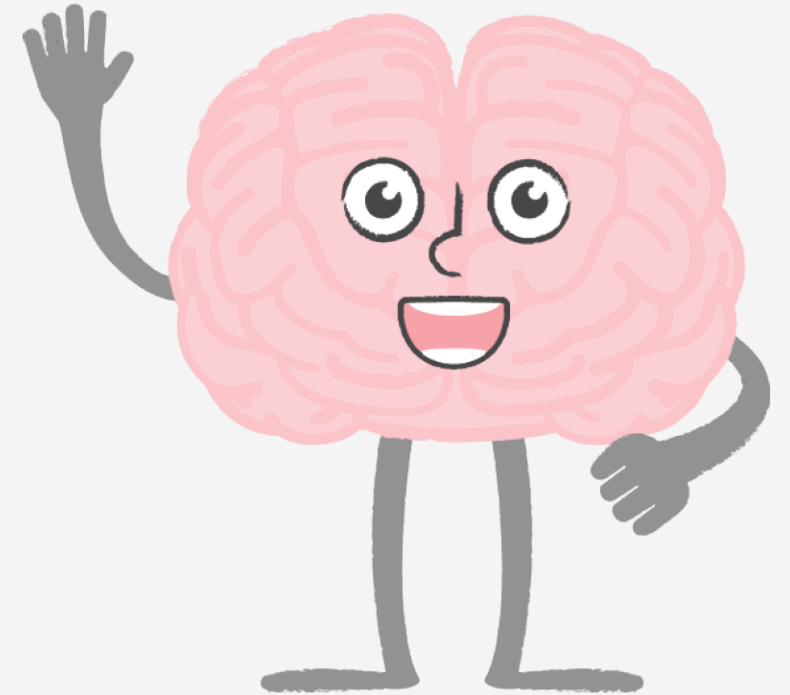


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5 Ways to Start a Conversation

Talking to a friend about mental health can be awkward, but it can really help.

1. Hey, we haven't talked in a while. How are you?
2. Are you OK? You don't seem like yourself lately.
3. Hey, you seem frustrated today. I'm here for you.
4. Seems like something's up. Do you wanna talk about what's going on?
5. I'm worried about you and would like to know what's up so I can help.



During the Conversation

Do...

- Listen without judgement
- Ask "how can I help?"
- Let them know you care
- Validate their feelings
- Listen with the intention to understand, not fix
- Be patient
- Keep in touch even if you get no response

Don't...

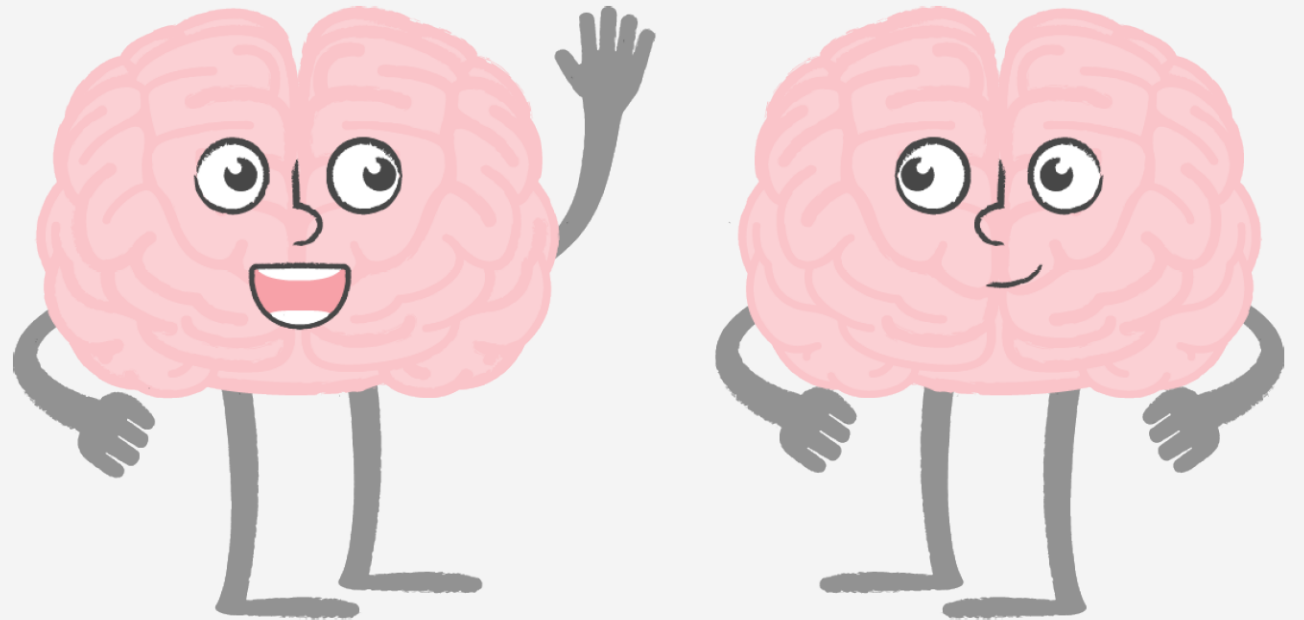
- Interrupt or speak over
- Tell them how they should feel
- Jump in with solutions
- Pressure them to speak
- Be scared to speak about feelings
- Be critical or blaming



After The Conversation

Where do I go from here?

- Encourage them to tell a trusted adult
- Don't give up on having conversations
- If you're worried about a friend and they aren't willing to tell an adult, find an adult you trust and ask for help

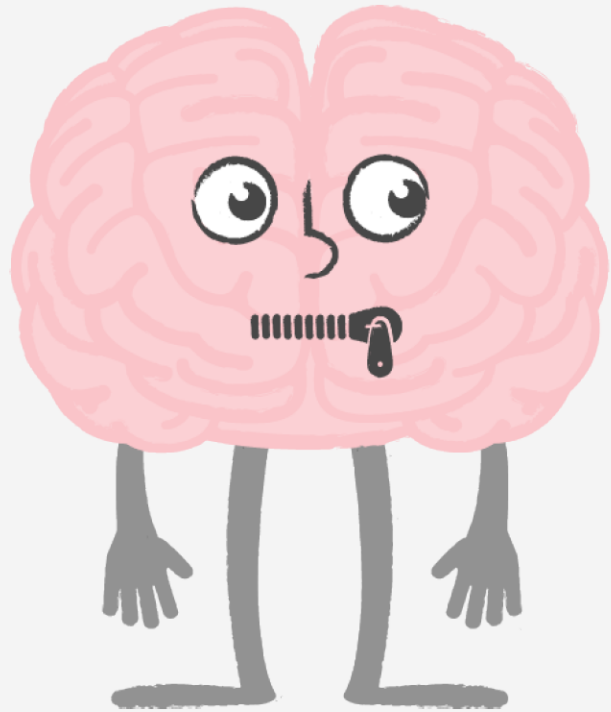


What if?

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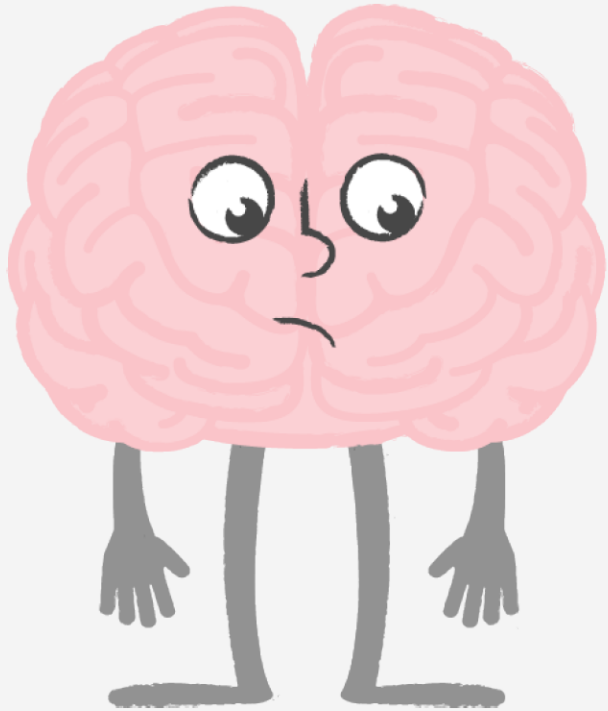


What if

My friend asks me not to tell anyone?

- Keeping secrets when you're concerned for a friend's mental health can be dangerous
- Don't make promises when your friend needs help



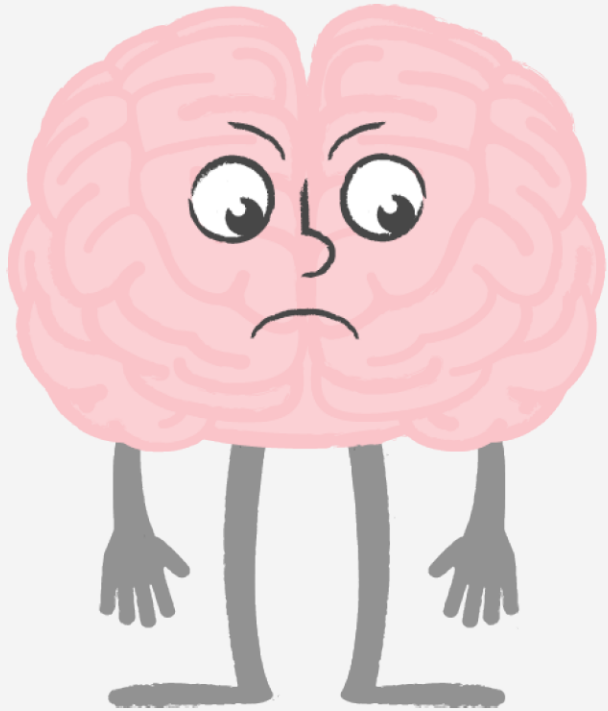


What if

My friend tells me they are being abused, experiencing trauma, or having suicidal thoughts?

- The best way you can help your friend is by telling a trusted adult



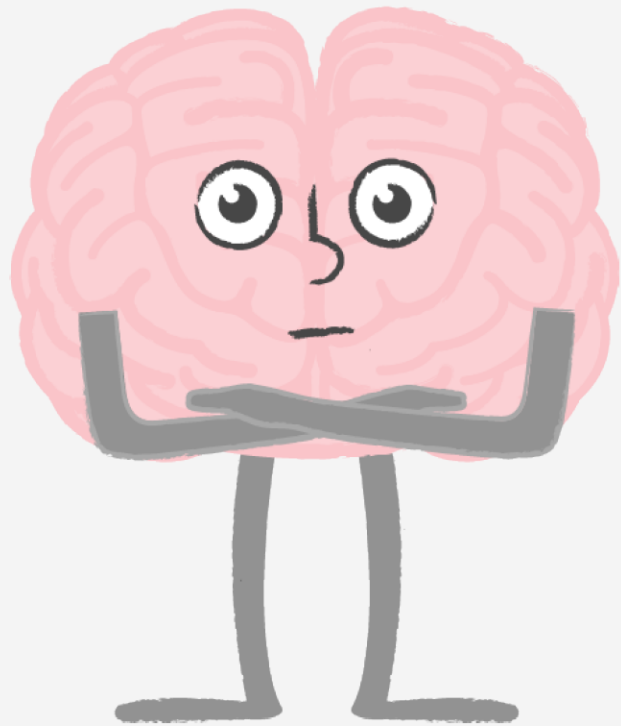


What if

My friend becomes angry with me or stops talking to me?

- Their safety is most important



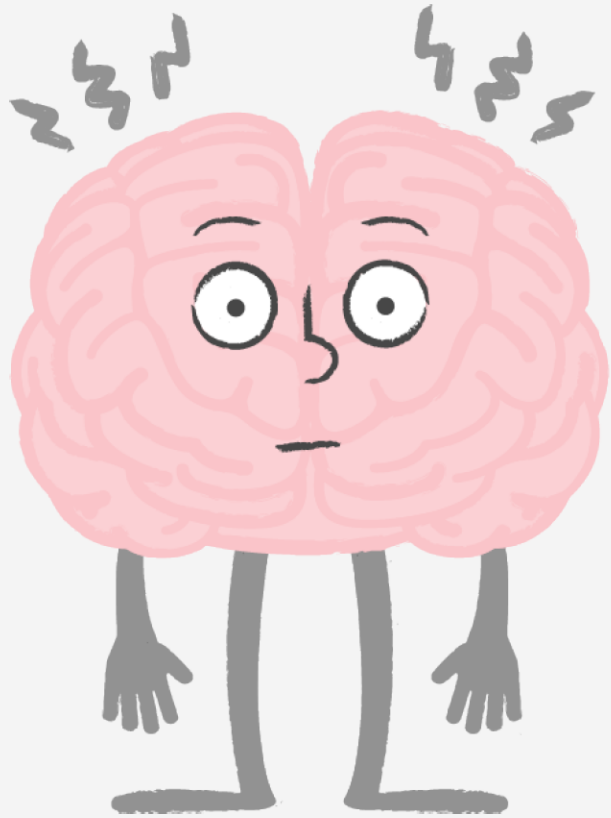


What if

My friend rejects my help?

- Continue to provide support
- Conversation doesn't always have to be how you extend a helping hand
- Encourage them to find someone they can talk to





What if

I start to feel overwhelmed?

- Take care of yourself
- Keep your day-to-day consistent
- Be honest about feeling overwhelmed
- Speak to a trusted adult



Getting Help

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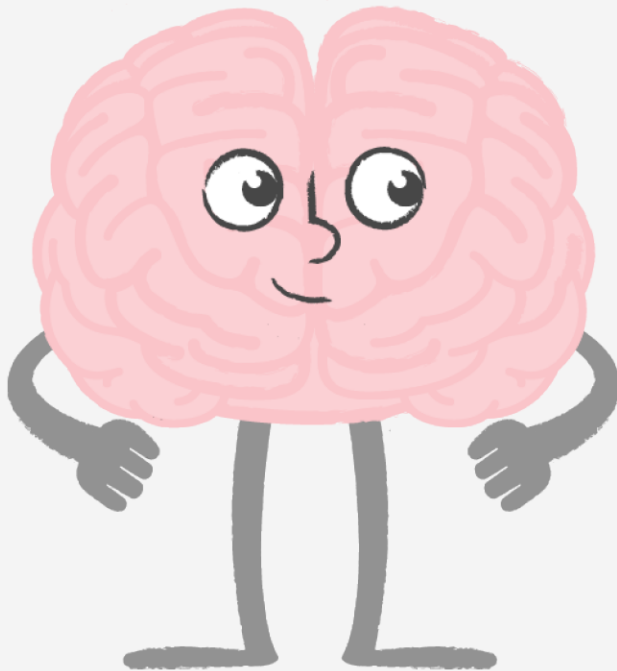
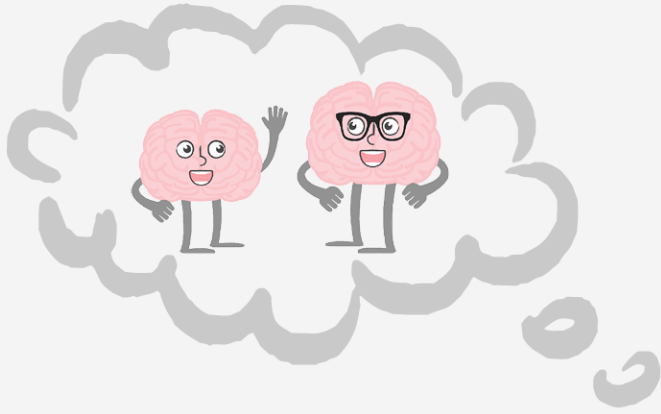


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Reach Out

Your concerns are valid and trusted adults in your life want you to come to them

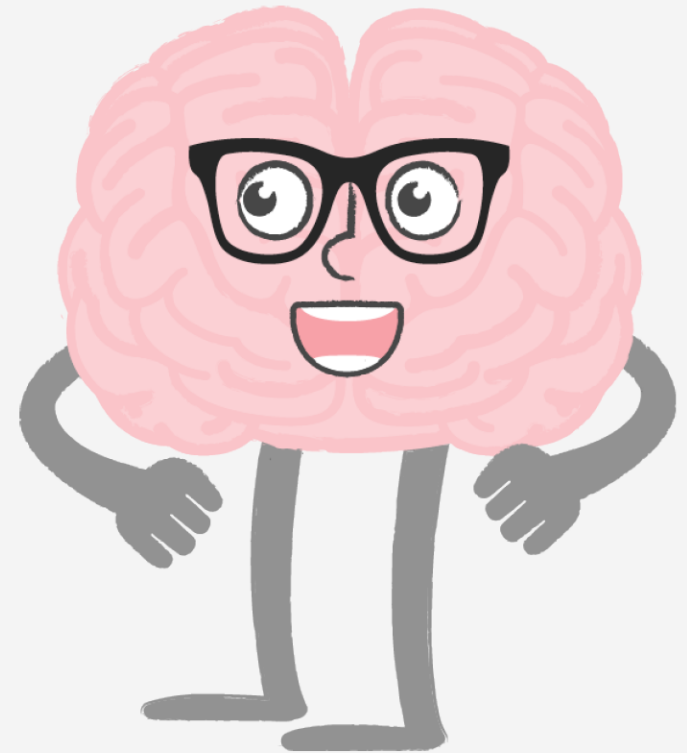
- Parent
- Teacher
- School Counselor
- Coach
- School Nurse
- Doctor
- Principal or Assistant Principal
- Other trusted adults (aunts, uncles, older siblings or cousins, etc.)



What Does Treatment Look Like?

Treatment can help get a person feeling better and back to their day-to-day activities.

- Starts with telling someone you trust
- May include a combination of therapy, medication, and self-care
- Treatment helps people feel better soon and can improve things in the long run
- Can be short-term or last longer



Self-Care

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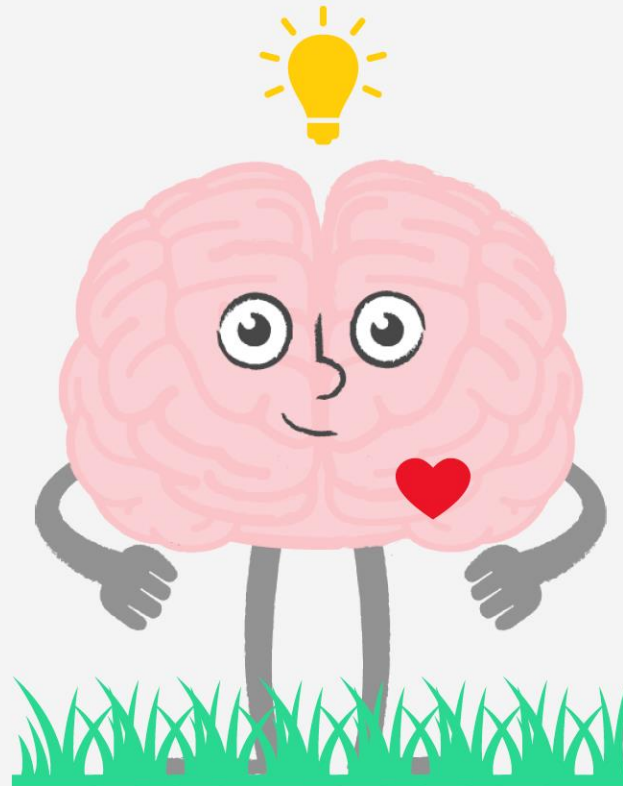
What is Self-Care?

Mind

- Set goals each day
- Journal
- Read a book
- Draw

Soul

- Ask for help
- "Feel good" social media
- Set boundaries



Body

- Dance
- Go for a walk
- Take a bath
- Do breathing exercises
- Go for a hike

Surroundings

- Decorate your favorite space
- Listen to music
- Watch your favorite movie



It's Okay to Ask for Help

- **Suicide & Crisis Lifeline**

988

Press 2 for Spanish

- **Crisis Text Line**

Text TALK to 741741 for English
Text AYUDA to 741741 for Spanish

Text with a trained counselor or
from the Crisis Text Line for
free, 24/7

- **The Trevor Project**

TrevorLifeline: Available 24/7
at 1-866-488-7386

TrevorText: Text START
to 678-678

TrevorChat: Via
thetrevorproject.org

- **RAINN**

National Sexual
Assault Hotline

Lifeline: Available 24/7
at 1-800-656-4673

Chat: Via **hotline.rainn.org**



Thank You!





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A young woman with glasses is smiling broadly, looking off to the side. She is wearing a maroon sweater. The background is a blurred outdoor setting with trees and other people, suggesting a college campus. The text is overlaid on the left side of the image.

IT'S REAL:

COLLEGE STUDENTS
AND MENTAL HEALTH

IT'S REAL: COLLEGE

Purpose:

- Recognize signs of depression in yourself and others
- Challenge stigma surrounding depression
- Demystify the treatment process
- 20 minute film & 40-60 minute guided discussion

IT'S REAL: COLLEGE

Audience:

- College-bound seniors
- College students
- Must be 16+
- Maximum recommended attendees is 50

IT'S REAL: COLLEGE

Learning Objectives:

- Illustrate how mental health conditions such as depression can interfere with a student's ability to enjoy college and be productive in their work
- Convey that depression and other mental health conditions are real illnesses that can be managed through specific treatments and interventions
- Encourage and promote help-seeking behavior among college students

Presenter Requirements:

- Attend a Training for Presenters with AFSP Staff (3 hours)
- Be an official volunteer with AFSP in Your State (register, brief conversation with AFSP Representative)
- Have Chapter approval to present & stay in communication with AFSP Chapter Staff
- Log presentation in AFSP Tracker

Please join us in the Fight to #StopSuicide!

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