



Mental Health Resources & Strategies



Welcome!

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Presenter

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Agenda

- 1) What is **mental health**?
- 2) How might I **monitor** my student's mental health?
- 3) How can I **support** my student's ongoing mental health?
- 4) What **resources** are available to me and my student?





What is mental health?



Mental Health

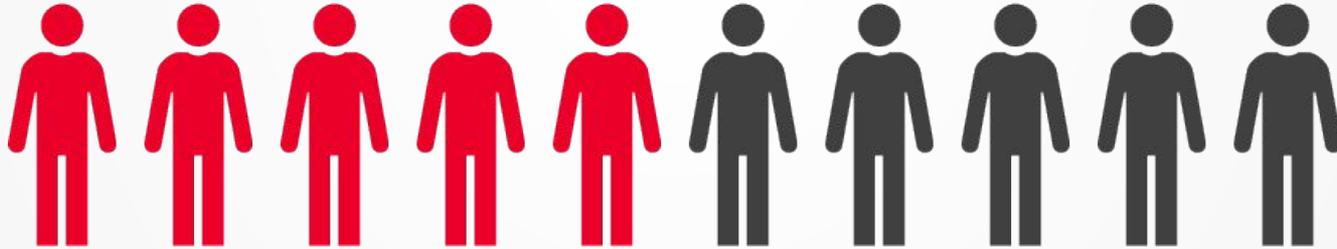
Is	Is Not
- Something everyone has	- Something negative
- A general state of well-being	- The same as mental illness
- On a continuum	- The same for everyone
- Ebbs and flows	- Static or fixed
- Important to make time for in an ongoing manner	- Something to think about only during challenging times
- Tied to physical health	- All in your head



Mental Illness - Statistics

50%

of all lifetime cases of mental illness begin by age 14 and 75% by age 24.



Mental Illness - Statistics

The 2nd leading cause of death in youth ages 10-24 is suicide.



Mental Illness - Statistics

1 in 5

children ages 13-18 have,
or will have, a **serious mental illness**.



Mental Illness - Statistics

87%

of American adults agreed that having a mental health disorder is nothing to be ashamed of.





**How might I monitor my student's
mental health?**



Mental Health Scale



Life feels unbearable. You no longer find pleasure in anything and your emotions may be intense and unpredictable, or you may feel nothing at all. There is nothing that brings you comfort. You may not longer feel a connection to family and/or friends. You may be a danger to yourself or others. **THIS IS A CRISIS. YOU WILL NOT ALWAYS FEEL THIS WAY. TALK TO A TRUSTED ADULT IMMEDIATELY.**



Day activities feel impossible to accomplish. You may feel little to no enjoyment for things you used to. You may hide your feelings, or you might use excuses to avoid school, family, friends, or activities you once enjoyed. You might just want to do nothing and be alone. **YOU WILL NOT ALWAYS FEEL THIS WAY. IT'S TIME TO TALK TO A TRUSTED ADULT.**



You are feeling overwhelmed. You might feel like normal daily life is starting to feel "heavy" or "hard:". You might struggle to do things such as take care of yourself, homework, chores, and activities. Being with friends and family is not as enjoyable as it once was.



Things are getting hard. You're managing, but are starting to get overwhelmed. You might easily get frustrated, angry, or sad.



Still feeling pretty good! Challenges at school, home, or work may bother you, but you are able to overcome them.



You feel great! You're enjoying time doing things you like to do. Challenges seem easy and manageable. No worries here!

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Talk to a trusted adult IMMEDIATELY.

If you have thoughts of self-harm call the National Suicide Hotline: 1-800-273-8255

Continue using self-care and self-compassion skills. Now is a good time to talk to a trusted adult about how you are feeling.

Use self-compassion and self-care skills to maintain your mental health.



Mental Health Scale - Application

Learning Coach	Student
<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Model self-rating and explain your rationale- Ask a MS or HS student to text you an emoji that matches the Mental Health Scale- Normalize that mental health changes day-to-day or week-to-week- Discuss steps you take to support your mental health- Avoid “congratulating” a student on one type of response over another- Show curiosity about how your student is feeling and what they need	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Consider having a student create the Mental Health Scale in their own hand- Put a new sticky note on the scale each day of the week to show how mental health changes day-to-day or week-to-week- Create a mood journal to track change over time and reflect on what, if anything, may have contributed to the changes- Ask the student to describe steps to support their mental health





**How can I support my student's
ongoing mental health?**



Everyday Practices - Overview

1. Gratitude
2. Active Listening
3. Mindful Breathing



1) Gratitude - Overview



Improves mental strength



Enhances self esteem



More social connection



Increases empathy



Reduces aggression



Improves sleep



Improves psychological health



Improves physical health



1) Gratitude - Technique

Gratitude Journal

- Take a few minutes every evening to **write down a few good things** about your day. The entries don't have to be major events—they *might be as simple as a good meal, talking to a friend, or getting through a difficult challenge.*



1) Gratitude - Technique

Family Gratitude Jar

- **Step 1:** Find a jar or box.
- **Step 2:** Decorate the jar however you wish.
- **Step 3:** This is the most important step, which will be repeated every day or every week.

Write down what you are grateful for on little slips of paper and **fill the jar**.

Over time, you will find that you have a jar full of **reasons to be thankful** for what you have and enjoy the life you are living. When you or your student are feeling down and need a quick pick-me-up, take a few notes out of the jar to read aloud to remind yourself of who and what is good in your life.



1) Gratitude - Technique

Dinner Chat

Before or during family dinner each night (or breakfast each morning!), each person at the table takes a turn sharing **one thing that they are grateful for**.



If anyone gets stuck or if the practice begins to feel stale, you might ask everyone to respond to the same prompt:

- *What is something that you can hear that you are grateful for? See? Taste? Smell? Touch?*
- *What is something blue that you are grateful for?*
- *Who is a friend who you are grateful for?*
- *Who is a teacher who you are grateful for?*
- *Who is a family member who you are grateful for?*
- *What is something in our home that you are grateful for?*



2) Active Listening- Overview

Active listening is a specific form of **communication** that lets another person know that you are “**with them,**” aware of what they are saying, **accepting** of their perspective, and **appreciative** of their situation.

Benefits of Active Listening



Builds Trust & Respect



Can help lower intense emotional reactions



Helps others feel seen, understood, and appreciated



Can resolve conflicts more swiftly



Models empathy



Boosts confidence



Opens lines of communication



2) Active Listening - Helpful Attitudes

The **real goal** of active listening is for the speaker to feel **heard** and have a **safe place** to vent and talk, and for the **relationship** between the speaker and listener to be **deepened**.

Helpful Attitudes for Active Listening

- **Accept the feelings and perceptions of your student.**
They are real for the student, even if you do not agree with them. Avoid the temptation to offer advice!
- **Show curiosity about what your student is feeling.**
Use your knowledge about your student to intuit what their feelings might be. Often, once a person is able to vent their feelings, the emotions lose their intensity and the person is able to move on.
- **Let the exchange go only as far as your student wants it to.**
Don't push them to continue to talk after they seem satisfied or want to stop.
- **Do not have some specific result in mind.**
Sometimes adults will say of an active listening exchange with their student, "It didn't work," meaning that no solution or the solution the adult had in mind was not achieved. Remember, the real goal!



2) Active Listening - Strategies

- **Non-Verbal**

- Make **eye contact**
- **Turn your body** to face the speaker
- **Nod** to show that you are “with them”
- **Lean forward**
- **Uncross your arms**
- **Avoid interrupting**

- **Paraphrase**

- In your own words, **repeat back the message** of what you heard the speaker say.

Student: “I did really bad on my science test. I wish that I could quit that class.”

Learning Coach: “It sounds like you want to be done with science because you failed the test.”



2) Active Listening - Strategies

- **Name the Feeling**

- Describe the feeling that may be underlying the message.

Student: “I get really nervous speaking up during my Live Sessions. I worry that I look stupid.”

Learning Coach: “You feel like others might be judging you when you try out an answer in Live Sessions.”

- **Clarify**

- Think about what is being said and ask questions to increase your understanding **AND** to help the speaker feel understood.

Student: “All of my friends get to keep their phones with them during the school day. You’re so unfair.”

Learning Coach: “I get the impression that you’re frustrated that in our home we put phones away during the school day. Am I understanding you?”



2) Active Listening - Resource

Active Listening - Sentence Starters

"That makes you feel..."	"It seems unfair that..."
"That could make a person feel..."	"You can't understand..."
"You wish..."	"You think the other person is feeling/ needing/trying to/expecting..."
"You would like to change..."	"The tension seems to be coming from..."
"It hurt you that ..."	"The solution you see is to..."
"You are looking forward to..."	"The confusion seems to be about..."
"The hard part about this is..."	"What this seems to mean to you is..."
"You didn't expect..."	"What you think might happen because of this is..."
"It bothers you that..."	"If things could be different, you'd feel..."
"You aren't sure..."	
"You're disappointed that . . ."	
"When you didn't get what you needed, then..."	

[Click here for this resource!](#)

This resource includes:

- Sentence Starters that promote Active Listening



2) Active Listening - Application

Think about how the student feels in this exchange?

Non-Example of Active Listening

S: I don't want to do school today. It's boring.

LC: What? Of course you do! You'll have your elective today, which you always like.

S: I don't always like it. The topic that we're working on doesn't make sense to me, so it's not even fun anymore.

LC: You don't really have a choice. Everyone has to do things that they don't like, and the same goes for you, too.

S: I don't want to do school today. It's boring.

Example of Active Listening

S: I don't want to do school today. It's boring.

LC: Ugh, it sounds like you're not looking forward to school today because it's uninteresting to you.

S: Yeah, I don't get what I'm supposed to be doing in my elective class, so I feel stupid.

LC: When you don't feel successful, it's difficult to work hard in your class.

S: Right, I need to ask my teacher for some help.



3) Mindful Breathing - Overview

Mindful breathing is simply paying attention to your breath.



Increases oxygen to the brain, lowering stress



Increases patience



Increases positive thinking



Allows one to focus on the moment, which is helpful in stressful situations



Reduces anxiety



Improves sleep



3) Mindful Breathing

Technique - Kindergarten through 3rd Grade

Cool The Pizza

- Model for your student to **breathe in** through their nose like they're **smelling** a piece of pizza for 3 counts.
- Then, tell them to **blow out** through their mouth like they're **cooling** the piece of hot pizza for 3 counts.

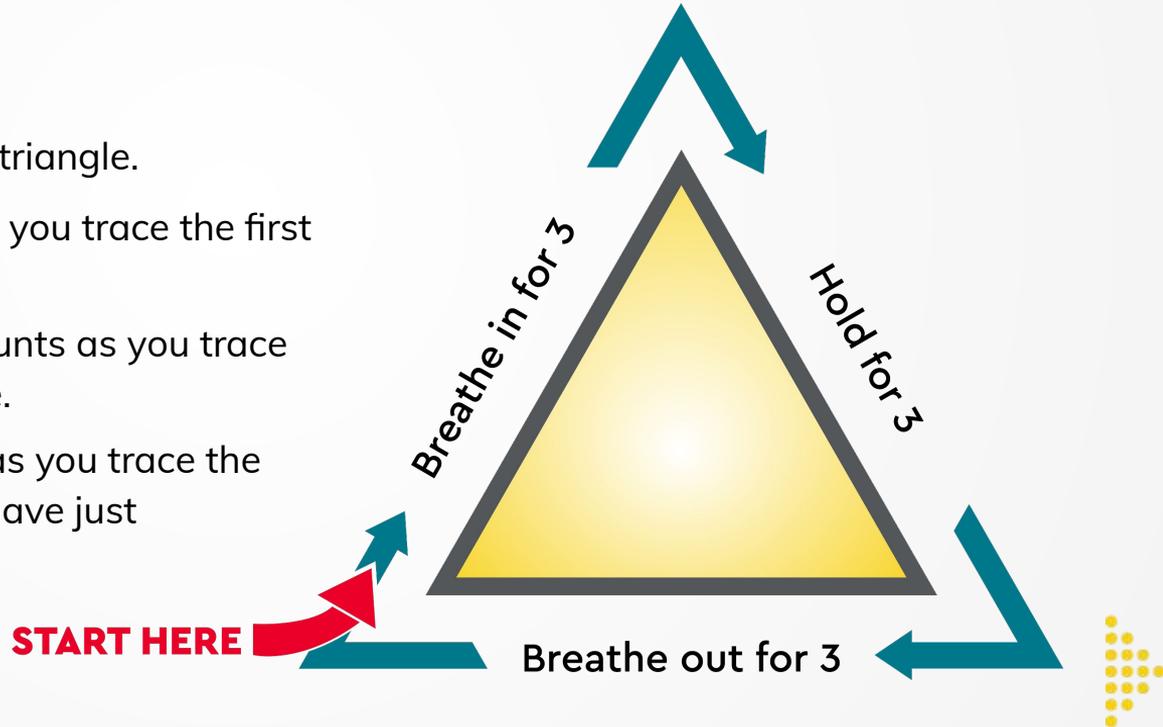


3) Mindful Breathing

Technique - 4th through 6th Grade

Triangle Breathing

1. Start at the bottom left of the triangle.
2. **Breathe in** for three counts as you trace the first side of the triangle.
3. **Hold your breath** for three counts as you trace the second side of the triangle.
4. **Breathe out** for three counts as you trace the final side of the triangle. You have just completed one deep breath.



3) Mindful Breathing

Technique - 7th grade through Adulthood

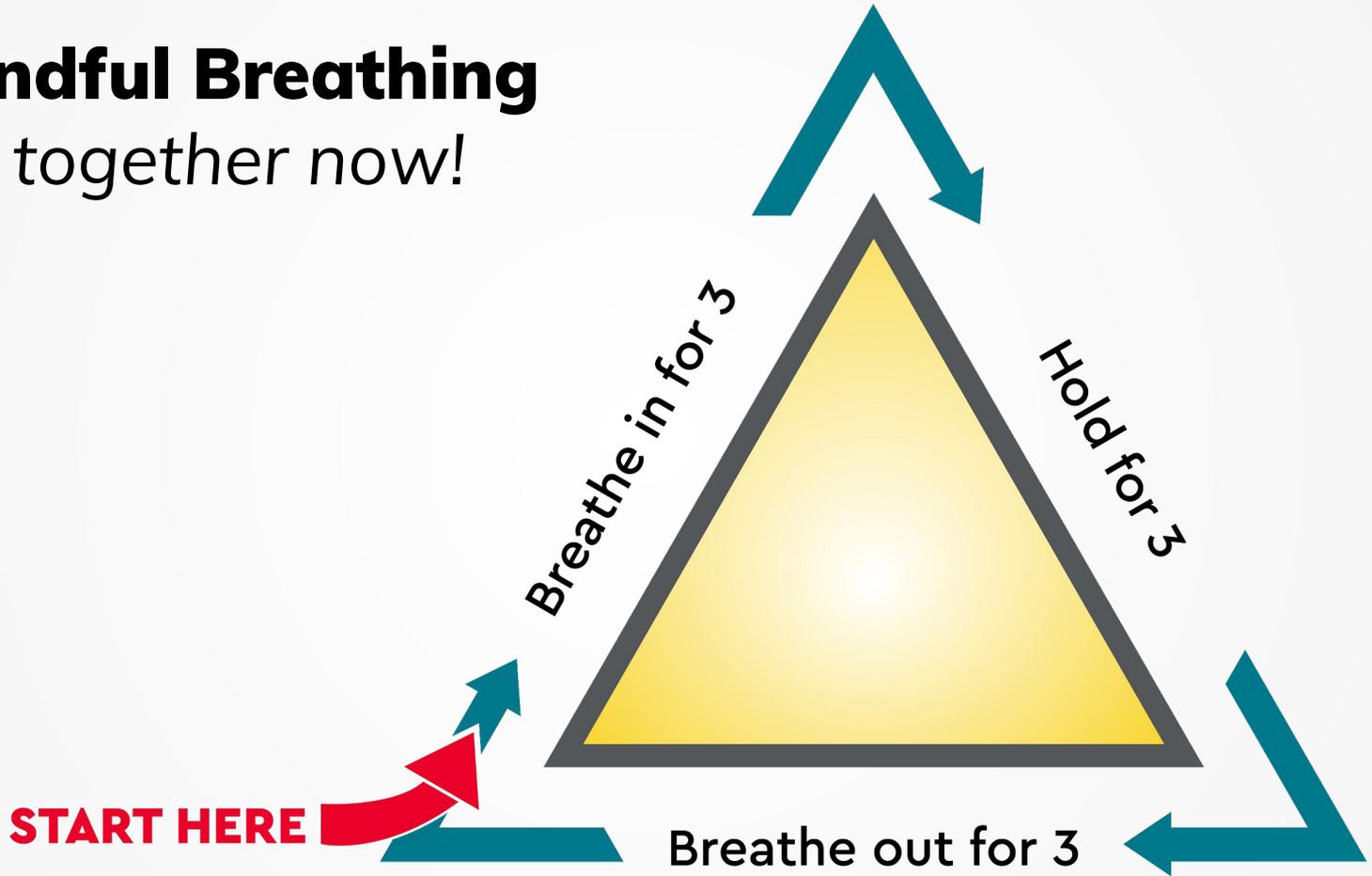
4-7-8 Breath

1. Exhale completely through your mouth, making a **whoosh sound**.
2. Close your mouth and inhale quietly through your nose to a mental **count of 4**.
3. Hold your breath for a **count of 7**.
4. Exhale completely through your mouth, making a whoosh sound to a **count of 8**.
5. This is one breath. Now inhale again and **repeat the cycle three more times** for a total of four breaths.



3) Mindful Breathing

All together now!





**What resources are available to
me and my student?**



Mental Health Scale



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Myths and Misconceptions about Suicide

Myth: Asking someone about suicide will make them more likely to consider and/or attempt suicide.

Fact: Asking about suicide opens up communication and can create a sense of connection, which in turn, reduces the likelihood of a person attempting suicide.

Myth: Young people talk about suicide to get attention.

Fact: Suicide is a serious topic and should be treated as though the person has the intent to die. By offering someone attention, you may save their life.

Myth: Once a person decides to die by suicide, there is no changing their mind.

Fact: Suicide can be prevented, and people can be helped.

Myth: Only certain types of people are suicidal.

Fact: People from all walks of life can be susceptible to suicide.

Myth: I would know if my student or someone else who I care for is considering suicide.

Fact: There are warning signs for suicide, and it is important that we are aware of them to get people help.



Suicide Warning Signs in Students

Direct Verbal Signs	Indirect Verbal Signs	Behavioral Signs
<p><i>“I’ve decided to kill myself.”</i></p> <p><i>“I wish I were dead.”</i></p> <p><i>“I’m going to end it all.”</i></p>	<p><i>“I’m so tired of it all.”</i></p> <p><i>“What’s the point of going on?”</i></p> <p><i>“Everyone would be better off without me.”</i></p>	<p>Giving away prized possessions.</p> <p>Relapsing into drug or alcohol use.</p> <p>Sudden changes in behavior.</p>



QPR - Resource

We all know CPR can save lives, and so can QPR...

Q	Question the person about suicide	Do they have thoughts, feelings, and plans? Don't be afraid to ask.
P	Persuade the person to get help	Listen carefully and say, "Come with me to get help."
R	Refer for help	Call a Community Health Resource.

[Click here for a printable card](#)

This resource includes:

- Details about the QPR strategy



QPR

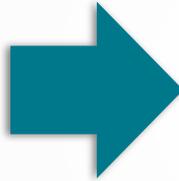
Application

Indirect Verbal Signs

“I’m so tired of it all.”

“What’s the point of going on?”

“Everyone would be better off without me.”

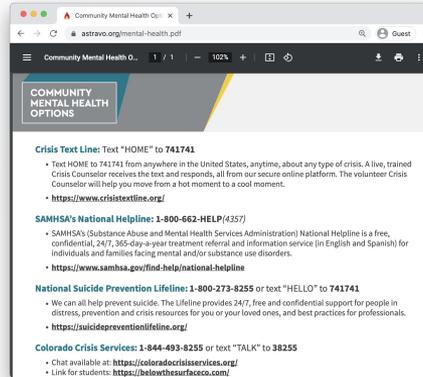


Active Listening Sentence Starters

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- “When you didn’t get what you needed, then...”
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- “You think the other person is feeling/ needing/ trying to/ expecting...”
- “The tension seems to be coming from...”
- “The solution you see is to...”
- “The confusion seems to be about...”
- “What this seems to mean to you is...”
- “What you think might happen because of this is...”
- “If things could be different, you’d feel...”



Community Mental Health Resources



Mental Health Resource

This resource includes:

- Contact information for emergency mental health organizations
- Contact information for ongoing mental health support





Going Forward



We're here for you!

Email:

help@myschool.org

Call:

Arizona	Colorado
602-641-8220	720-713-1916





Thank You!

