

# Mental health and wellness

## Month 5 Meeting 9

The weeks following winter break can be a high-stress time of year, so this is a good opportunity for team members to check in with themselves and their friends regarding their emotional and mental well-being. This activity uses a discussion of stigma to frame the way we talk about mental health. Students will fill out a resource map, identifying different people and places they can turn to when they need support.

**CYBER SWAT**

### Objectives

- Familiarize students with community and school resources available for mental health and suicide prevention.
- Identify warnings and risk factors of suicide.
- Define stigma and discuss the effects of stigma on help-seeking.
- Know how to report suicide threats on social media platforms.

### Materials

- Handout: Resource map
- Project planning guide

### Agenda

This week's team meeting plan covers some heavy content. Rather than suggested activities, this plan will introduce students to resources, key terms, and leave room for student-oriented discussion. SROs should consider the best way to facilitate a discussion with their team that addresses these sensitive issues in a safe and respectful manner. Be ready to jump in and make sure everyone feels safe at all times. Make sure to give team members who do not want to participate in this conversation the opportunity to leave or sit-out.

**Note: It is possible that some of your team members may have personal familiarity with suicide, whether they experience suicidal ideation themselves or know someone who died by suicide. Be prepared to offer them additional support and help them feel comfortable during and after this meeting.**

### Key Terms

**Stigma:** Stigmas are negative stereotypes attached to members of a group. Stigmatized people, often including those with mental health concerns, can face discrimination or ridicule in their personal and professional lives (National Alliance on Mental Illness).<sup>12</sup>

**Mental illness:** a condition that affects a person's thinking, feeling or mood. Such conditions may affect someone's ability to relate to others and function each day (National Alliance on Mental Illness).<sup>12</sup>

**Mental health:** a state of well-being in which the individual realizes his or her own abilities, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to his or her community (World Health Organization).<sup>13</sup>

## Handout – Resource Map

There are many signs that someone might be experiencing a mental health condition. Here are some of the top indicators, according to NAMI:

- Withdrawing from social life
- Appearing sad or more tired than usual for more than two weeks
- Self-harming actions
- Not eating or taking extreme measures to lose weight
- Extreme changes in behavior or personality
- Severe mood swings
- Difficulty concentrating

Using the handout, team members will identify friends, adults, professionals and online resources they can turn to if they notice that they may need help. Encourage them to use their phones/computers to search for online resources, like the crisis text line. This activity is personal, but if the group feels comfortable, they can share their resource network with each other.

Remind students that it is ok to ask for support and help. Emphasize that if anyone is in immediate danger, they should call 911 or go to an emergency room right away.

## Discussion Points

- Why is the way we talk about mental health important?
- How can students take action if someone they know is showing signs of suicidal ideation or if they need mental health support?
- Do team members know how to report self-harm content on social media platforms? Would they feel comfortable doing reporting friends or family? If time permits, go through the reporting process on a couple apps together.
- Why are some people hesitant to ask for help?
- How can the Cyber S.W.A.T. team help encourage more positive mental health discussions around the school?

## Projects

Continue the planning for Cyber Safety Awareness Week. By this week, you should have:

- Updates on member tasks.
- Rehearsed presentations.
- Assigned last minute details among group members.

## Additional Resources

- How to report suicidal content on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/help/contact/305410456169423>
- Reporting self-injury content on Instagram: <https://help.instagram.com/553490068054878>
- Snapchat Safety Center: <https://www.snap.com/en-US/safety/safety-center/>
- Internet Matters Guide to Reporting on Self-Harm: <https://www.internetmatters.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/Internet-Matters-Guide-to-reporting-self-harm-on-social-platftoms-2018-1.pdf>
- CDC- Suicide Among Youth: <https://www.cdc.gov/healthcommunication/toolstemplates/entertainmented/tips/SuicideYouth.html>