

# 7th GRADE: SELF-HARM & SUICIDE

## LESSON 1 OVERVIEW

# Health Includes Mental Health



**Lesson Time:**  
25 Minutes

### Materials Provided:

- Video: “[What Causes Anxiety and Depression](#)” - Inside Out Published by Mind Set (5:58 minutes)
- Handout: “Stress, Anxiety and Depression” (printed one per student)
- Parent Letter (shared electronically or printed one per student) [Download](#)
- Lesson Slides [Download](#)

### Materials Needed:

- Projector with Video/Audio Capability

### Objectives:

Students will be able to...

1. Understand the term mental health and how it applies to every person.
2. Explain the differences among stress, anxiety and depression.

### Educators:

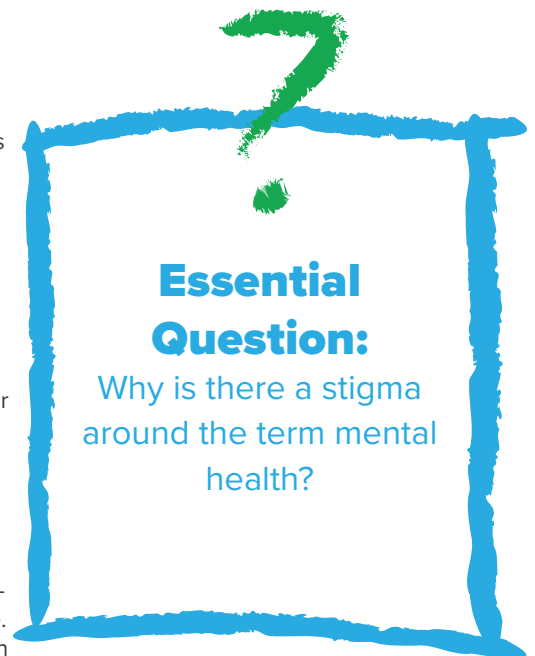
#### Did You Know?

According to the CDC in 2019, nearly 3,000 young people ages 13-18 died by suicide, making it the second leading cause of death among youth. As we await updated results from the CDC, we anticipate the following results: that new challenges such as the global pandemic, social isolation, and increased uncertainty have caused the number of suicide attempts to rise and possible age for those attempts to lower. In the last five years many needs assessments have identified mental health support as the number one need among young people. Meanwhile, there is a severe shortage of inpatient acute beds, mental health counselors, and outpatient services. There has been a shift that now identifies children ages 9 to 17 as the population with the greatest mental health needs. Life has always been and will continue to be full of unexpected challenges. Directly teaching students social and emotional competency can greatly impact their overall mental health. As educators, we can ensure a positive climate and safe environment to give students reassurance that they do have caring adults in their lives who possess the resources to support them.

#### Educator Prevention Tips:

As you teach this lesson, be aware that students in your class may have had a close encounter with suicide – by either a personal attempt or the loss of a loved one to suicide. We ask that you, too, learn from this lesson and become aware of the delicate approach needed when discussing vulnerable topics such as stress, mental health, and suicide.

Overall, help your students see the value of seeking help for themselves. Encourage them to self-advocate and to realize that speaking up shows strength, not weakness. This unit will often speak about the development of positive coping strategies and resiliency, and that will be the foundation of our approach to wellness. Pay attention to those who seem evasive or distressed during the lesson. This may be a clear sign that they need your support or a referral to the school counselor. Most importantly, listen to your inner voice and refer all concerns to a counselor.



# Health Includes Mental Health

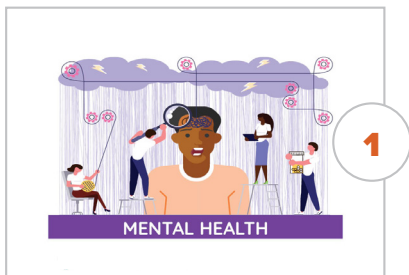
## Lesson Introduction: (1 minute)

If your friend told you that they had a physical condition that required them to see a doctor or to take medicine, how would you respond? *(Pause for responses.)* You would probably tell them that you hope they are soon feeling better.

But what if a friend told you that they had a mental condition that required them to see a doctor or to take medicine, how would you respond? *(Pause for responses.)* You might feel uncomfortable or not know what to say. That feeling of discomfort surrounding this topic is called a stigma (a mark of disgrace associated with a particular circumstance, quality, or person.) In this lesson, we will learn that mental health is crucial to our overall well-being and we will attempt to remove the stigma associated with talking about this issue.

## Core Lesson: (15 minutes)

### Slide/Handout

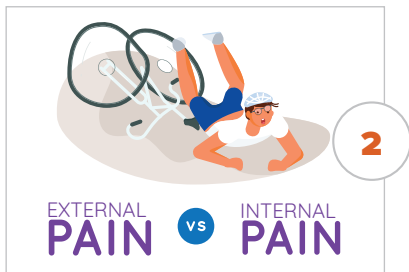


### Lesson Script/Talking Points

#### Slide 1

Let's be real... When you hear the term mental health, what comes to your mind?  
*(PAUSE FOR RESPONSES)*

- \*\* Crazy Person?
- \*\* "Psycho?"
- \*\* Someone being sent off to a hospital??



#### Slide 2

A few days ago, Phillip, the boy in the picture, was riding his bike on the sidewalk. He was approaching a corner and another biker came around the corner really fast taking up most of the sidewalk. This caused Phillip to swerve off the sidewalk and crash into a mounted bike rack 4 feet away.

Looking at this picture, what do you think happened next?

*(PAUSE FOR RESPONSES)*

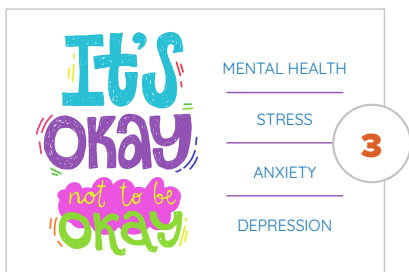
*(Pending responses...)* Well, many of you are right!

Phillip crashed into the bike rack, flipped over his bike getting his arm twisted in the bike rack. He broke his arm. From the shock and pain, Phillip sat frozen for a moment and then burst into tears. People rushed over to help him up and get him to the hospital.

Think about this.

Why don't we respond in the same supportive way when someone's pain is inside - when they are not bleeding or something is not visibly broken?

Why don't we respond the same way when their emotions, words, and even behaviors are showing us they are hurting?



#### Slide 3: It's Okay To Not Be Okay

Let's go over 4 key terms and then discuss.

# Core Lesson (cont)

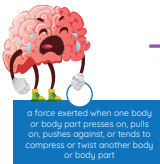
## Slide/Handout

### MENTAL HEALTH

1. Being sound mentally and emotionally
2. The absence of mental illness
3. Feeling comfortable about oneself
4. Positive feelings about others
5. The ability to meet the demands of daily life



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### STRESS

constraining force or influence: such as

a force exerted when one body or body part presses on, pulls on, pushes against, or tends to compress or twist another body or body part

a physical, chemical, or emotional factor that causes bodily or mental tension and may be a factor in disease causation

STRESS CAN ↑ ANXIETY AND → DEPRESSION

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### ANXIETY

apprehensive uneasiness or nervousness usually over an impending or anticipated state of being anxious

mentally distressing concern or interest

a strong desire sometimes mixed with doubt, fear, or uneasiness

7.1% of kids 3-17 years old or 4.4 million HAVE DIAGNOSED ANXIETY

6

### DEPRESSION

an act of depressing or a state of being depressed: such as

a state of feeling sad

a mood disorder marked especially by sadness, inactivity, difficulty in thinking and concentration, a significant increase or decrease in appetite and time spent sleeping, feelings of dejection and hopelessness, and sometimes suicidal tendencies

3.2% of kids 3-17 years old or 1.9 million HAVE DIAGNOSED DEPRESSION

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## Lesson Script/Talking Points

### Slide 4: Mental Health

**Mental Health** — The condition of being sound mentally and emotionally is characterized by the absence of mental illness and by adequate adjustment especially as reflected in feeling comfortable about oneself, positive feelings about others, and the ability to meet the demands of daily life.

### Slide 5: Stress

**Stress** – constraining force or influence: such as

**a:** a force exerted when one body or body part presses on, pulls on, pushes against, or tends to compress or twist another body or body part

**b:** a physical, chemical, or emotional factor that causes bodily or mental tension and may be a factor in disease causation

#### **Did you know?**

Stress can increase anxiety and lead to depression!

What are some of the things that cause you stress? (Allow for lengthy discussion to understand your students' major stressors)

### Slide 6: Anxiety

**Anxiety** –

**a:** apprehensive uneasiness or nervousness usually over an impending or anticipated ill: a state of being anxious

**b:** mentally distressing concern or interest

**c:** a strong desire sometimes mixed with doubt, fear, or uneasiness

#### **Did you know?**

7.1% of children aged 3-17 years (approximately 4.4 million) have diagnosed anxiety.

### Slide 7: Depression

**Depression** – an act of depressing or a state of being depressed: such as

**a:** a state of feeling sad

**b:** a mood disorder marked especially by sadness, inactivity, difficulty in thinking and concentration, a significant increase or decrease in appetite and time spent sleeping, feelings of dejection and hopelessness, and sometimes suicidal tendencies

#### **Did you know?**

3.2% of children aged 3-17 years (approximately 1.9 million) have diagnosed depression.

# Core Lesson (cont)

## Slide/Handout



## Lesson Script/Talking Points

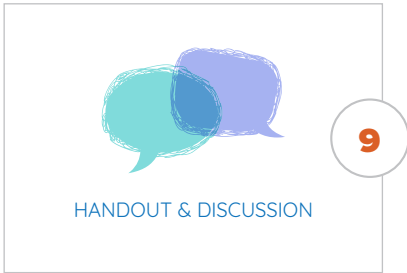
### Slide 8: Video

**What Causes Anxiety and Depression - Inside Out**  
**Published by Mind Set (5:58 minutes)**

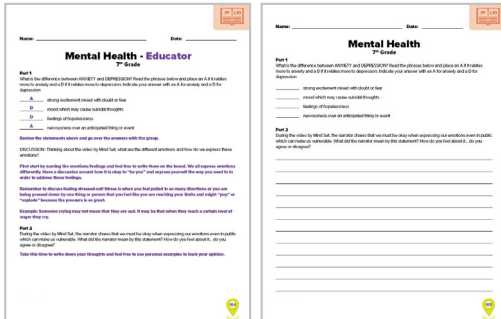
Video Link: [https://youtu.be/tNsTy-j\\_sQs](https://youtu.be/tNsTy-j_sQs)

Watch this video and we will discuss.

*Discuss with the class the many emotions we feel when we face stressful life events. We will add more when we do our handout.*



### Slide 9: Mental Health Handout & Discussion (7 minutes)



*Provide students with a copy of the handout. Allow a few minutes for the students to complete the handout. Discuss answers the students provided.*

## Closing: Essential Question (2 minutes)

**Why is there a stigma around the term mental health?** *(Allow for responses.)*

Today we discussed the stigma or “mark of disgrace” associated with mental health. But after learning that mental health is just as important as your physical health, I hope you realize that such a stigma is undeserved. We need to make taking care of our bodies AND minds a priority. Hopefully today you gained a little knowledge and perspective on the differences among stress, anxiety and depression. They are not synonymous but can be closely interconnected at times. We can all get stressed out! We can all get anxious and we can all have moments or periods of sadness! Remember that one of the primary ways to have good mental health is to balance emotions by expressing your emotions, making self care a priority, and responding to events in a healthy, non-destructive way! If you are ever worried, reach out to loved ones or our school counselor. Never be afraid to open up and advocate for yourself.

[Click Here to Provide Feedback on this Lesson](#)

# Core Lesson (cont)

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## References:

Merriam-Webster. (n.d.). America's most trusted dictionary. Merriam-Webster.  
<https://www.merriam-webster.com/>

Ghandour, R. M., Sherman, L. J., Vladutiu, C. J., Ali, M. M., Lynch, S. E., Bitsko, R. H., & Blumberg, S. J. (2019). Prevalence and treatment of depression, anxiety, and conduct problems in US children. *The Journal of Pediatrics*, 206.  
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Bitsko, R. H., Holbrook, J. R., Ghandour, R. M., Blumberg, S. J., Visser, S. N., Perou, R., & Walkup, J. T. (2018). Epidemiology and impact of health care provider–diagnosed anxiety and depression among US children. *Journal of Developmental & Behavioral Pediatrics*, 39(5), 395–403.  
<https://doi.org/10.1097/dbp.0000000000000571>

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# Mental Health - Educator

## 7<sup>th</sup> Grade

### Part 1

What is the difference between ANXIETY and DEPRESSION? Read the phrases below and place an A if it relates more to anxiety and a D if it relates more to depression. Indicate your answer with an A for anxiety and a D for depression

- A   strong excitement mixed with doubt or fear
- D   mood which may cause suicidal thoughts
- D   feelings of hopelessness
- A   nervousness over an anticipated thing or event

**Review the statements above and go over the answers with the group.**

DISCUSSION: Thinking about the video by Mind Set, what are the different emotions and how do we express these emotions?

**First start by naming the emotions/feelings and feel free to write them on the board. We all express emotions differently. Have a discussion around how it is okay to “be you” and express yourself the way you need to in order to address those feelings.**

**Remember to discuss feeling stressed out! Stress is when you feel pulled in so many directions or you are being pressed down by one thing or person that you feel like you are reaching your limits and might “pop” or “explode” because the pressure is so great.**

**Example: Someone crying may not mean that they are sad. It may be that when they reach a certain level of anger they cry.**

### Part 2

During the video by Mind Set, the narrator shares that we must be okay when expressing our emotions even in public which can make us vulnerable. What did the narrator mean by this statement? How do you feel about it... do you agree or disagree?

**Take this time to write down your thoughts and feel free to use personal examples to back your opinion.**

