Breaking the Ice: Talking to Students about Mental Health

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Topics

• Mental Health, Mental Illness, Psychological Distress.
  • Definitions
  • Theoretical Model of Stress
  • The numbers

• What is Mental Health First Aid?
  • Basic Concepts
  • Talking to students

• Resources
What is Mental Health and Mental Illness?

• **Mental Health:** Mental health includes our emotional, psychological, and social well-being. It affects how we think, feel, and act. It also helps determine how we handle stress, relate to others, and make healthy choices. Mental health is important at every stage of life, from childhood and adolescence through adulthood.

• **Mental Illness:** Mental illnesses are conditions that affect a person’s thinking, feeling, mood or behavior, such as depression, anxiety, bipolar disorder, or schizophrenia. Such conditions may be occasional or long-lasting (chronic) and affect someone’s ability to relate to others and function each day.

https://www.cdc.gov/mentalhealth/learn/index.htm
Stress and Distress

• Psychological Distress: a set of painful mental and physical symptoms that are associated with normal fluctuations of mood in most people. In some cases, however, psychological distress may indicate the beginning of major depressive disorder, anxiety disorder, schizophrenia, somatization disorder, or a variety of other clinical conditions. It is thought to be what is assessed by many putative self-report measures of depression and anxiety.

https://dictionary.apa.org/psychological-distress

• Stressors: a class of characteristics, situations, episodes, or behaviors that are related to psychological or physical strain and that are somehow social in nature

Dormann, Christian; Zapf, Dieter (January 2004). doi:10.1037/1076-8998.9.1.61
## How bad is it?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2019</th>
<th>2020</th>
<th>2021</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Depression</strong></td>
<td>4.7%</td>
<td>36.4%</td>
<td>42.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Anxiety</strong></td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>31.4%</td>
<td>36.9%</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Suicide</strong></td>
<td>47,511</td>
<td>44,834</td>
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1. [https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/fastats/mental-health.htm](https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/fastats/mental-health.htm)
2. [https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/70/wr/mm7013e2.htm#F1_down](https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/70/wr/mm7013e2.htm#F1_down)
Signs and symptoms

- Withdrawing from family and friends
- Absenteeism or “presenteeism”
- Odd or erratic behavior
- Declining personal hygiene
- Cuts or bruises in various stages of healing
- Increasing sadness
- Hopelessness or despair

- Increasing worry
- Anger or rage
- Increasing self-blame or self-criticism
- Distorted body image
- Thoughts racing or mind going blank
Mental Health First Aid is help for a person experiencing a mental health challenge, mental disorder, or mental health crisis. The first aid is given until appropriate professional help is received or the crisis resolves.

https://www.mentalhealthfirstaid.org/
ALGEE

- **A**: Assess risk of suicide or harm, and assist.
- **L**: Listen nonjudgmentally.
- **E**: Encourage appropriate professional help.
- **G**: Give reassurance and information.
- **E**: Encourage self-help and other support strategies.
Assess and Approach

• Something seems to be bothering you. Do you want to talk about it?
• You seem distracted. What is on your mind?
• I am concerned about you.
• How long have you been feeling like this?
• Have you spoken to anyone about this before?
• It is hard for me to understand exactly what you are going through, but I can see that it’s distressing for you.
Listen Non-Judgmentally

• IT’S NOT ABOUT YOU!!!!!
• Avoid giving advice
• Use active listening skills
• Pay attention to their verbal and nonverbal cues
Give Reassurance and Support

- **Reassurance** is a statement, comment, or action that helps remove a person’s fears.
  - Breakups can be tough, it's natural for you to be hurt and upset
  - You are not alone
  - I'm here for you if you want to talk. There are also people who are trained to help you work through these feelings

Recovery from Distress and Mental Health Challenges is possible!
Encourage Professional Help

- Referrals
  - Campus Counseling Center
  - Health Services Center
  - Family physician
  - Off Campus Resources
Encourage Self-Help

• Coping Strategies

• Social Support (Non-professional referrals)
  • Friends & Family
  • Religious Leaders
  • Trusted Mentors
Referral Information

- Ohio Mental Health Resources Guides
  https://u.osu.edu/cphp/ohio-mental-health-resource-guides/

- Ohio Dept of Mental Health and Addiction Services
  https://mha.ohio.gov/

- Mental Health America of Ohio
  www.mhaohio.org

Jamma International Coronavirus Anxiety Workbook
Training

Mental Health First Aid:
• https://mhaohio.org/get-help/mhfa/

QPR- Suicide intervention Training:
• https://qprinstitute.com/individual-training
• https://www.kent.edu/mhsu/qpr-training

Trauma 101
• https://trauma101.com/

Contact your Campus Human Resources and Training Dept.