



Erika's Lighthouse[®]

Teen Empowerment Club

1

Getting Started

Start A Club Guidebook



RAISE AWARENESS

Recognize the signs of adolescent depression. It's only a problem if it's ignored.



BREAK STIGMA

Through campaigns, fundraisers and awareness initiatives, teens eliminate the shame and blame of depression, making it easier to get help.



SPREAD EMPATHY

No one should be outcast because of adolescent depression.

WELCOME

Thank you for expressing an interest in starting an **Erika's Lighthouse** Teen Empowerment Club. We are excited for the opportunity to help you shift your school culture to be more positive, inclusive and empathic on issues surrounding mental health.



This guidebook was developed to help students, teachers, counselors, social workers and others interested starting an Erika's Lighthouse Teen Empowerment Club in their school understand the steps needed for success.

1 Understanding Erika's Lighthouse and Teen Empowerment Clubs

- About **Erika's Lighthouse**
- **Erika's Lighthouse** Classroom Programs
- **Erika's Lighthouse** Parent Handbook
- About Depression & Mental Health
- Role of Teen Empowerment Clubs
- Benefits of **Erika's Lighthouse** Partnership
- Depression and Mental Health Awareness Campaigns

2 Recruit Your Club Champions

- Talk to the School Activities Coordinator
- Talk to Classmates
- Find a Club Advisor/Sponsors

3 Cross Your 't's and Dot Your 'i's

- Next Steps
- Teen Empowerment Club Agreement

"The first thing that really helped me was empowering myself. I got involved in an organization that talked about mental health and taught people what mental health was.

It gave me a tangible way to fight back at something [depression] that was so intangible. Getting involved in things that matter to you, where you can see yourself making a difference in some way, really helped me a lot."

Mac, Former Teen Empowerment Club Member



1 Understanding Erika's Lighthouse and Teen Empowerment Clubs



ABOUT ERIKA'S LIGHTHOUSE

MISSION

Erika's Lighthouse is a not-for-profit organization dedicated to educating and raising awareness about adolescent depression, encouraging good mental health, and breaking down the stigma surrounding mental health issues.

VISION

To make sure no young person feels alone in their depression. To become the leading provider of teen depression awareness programs and resources in middle school and high school communities.

VALUES

We Believe In:

The Power of Programs with Impact

We are committed to de-stigmatizing depression and providing hope for young people who have it. Our innovative, evidence-informed classroom programs do more than raise awareness; they provide a structured model for youth to thrive and survive. Making a meaningful difference in the lives of teens with depression defines all we do and who we are.

The Power of Positivity

We believe in the power of positivity – it permeates our culture through our mission statement and how we engage with students, teachers, and administrators. Positivity, knowledge, and compassion create empowerment, and empowerment drives change and hope.

The Power to Change the World

We know that empowered teens can change cultures, even deeply rooted ones. Through education, modeling, and positivity, our programs provide proven foundations for teens to create a thriving culture of compassion, support, and hope.

The Power of Programs that Spread

We are determined to make every community a beacon of hope, which is why all of our activities – from programs to engagements – are designed to be easily replicated and customizable for schools across the country, and the world.

The Power of Trust and Integrity

We deeply believe in what we do, and we believe in others. In all we do, we operate with integrity, trust, respect, and authenticity. We are resourceful, we are good stewards of the gifts we are given, and we always hold ourselves accountable. What we do truly matters.

ERIKA'S LIGHTHOUSE CLASSROOM PROGRAMS

Erika's Lighthouse has two key classroom programs designed to provide evidence-informed education within classrooms:

- **The Erika's Lighthouse Program: Depression Awareness for Middle School Students**
- **The Erika's Lighthouse Program: Depression and Suicide Awareness for High School Students**

Free teen depression awareness programs designed to create discussion in your classrooms. Comprehensive enough to use immediately. Flexible enough to fit every school.

Every school is different. Our videos, lesson plans, and questions allow educators to adapt materials according to the needs of their school so that we can forge a healthy environment for students to talk to educators, and to each other.



READY TO GO MATERIALS

Our videos and lessons are completely turnkey: they're ready for you to use as soon as you [set up an account](#). Opening up begins immediately.



FLEXIBLE AND FREE

Some schools only have a day to discuss mental health. Some schools don't benefit from small group work. Our material is adaptable to all situations. We want it to work for you.



SCHOOL SUPPORT

All-inclusive support, at no cost. We work with you on best practices, how to adapt the materials, and how to raise awareness while raising hope.

All education materials are available on the ErikasLighthouse.org Resource Portal – setup a free account today to access all resources and materials. Your club can help bring programs into your school's classrooms or enhance the education already being provided.



"The program is comprehensive in that it provides a thorough and scientific understanding of depression, explores and clears away the negative stigma associated with mental illness, provides guidance on how to seek help for oneself and a friend, and addresses the importance of adopting and maintaining healthy coping mechanisms to combat everyday stressors. Students share with me that they are grateful for the education, practical tools, and permission to discuss mental health issues in a way that is authentic, hopeful, and empowering."

Nancy Watson, LCSW, CAD, Social Worker, Lake Forest Country Day School

ERIKA'S LIGHTHOUSE PARENT HANDBOOK

The Erika's Lighthouse Parent Handbook on Childhood & Teen Depression is a great resource for Teen Empowerment Clubs to use and engage your surrounding community.

Many parents don't know the signs of teen depression or where to turn for help. Understanding exactly what's going on with your child, finding the right treatment, dealing with the schools, negotiating insurance issues – all are challenges that parents face when their child is suffering from depression.



The handbook is designed to help – with practical ideas written in an easy to read style, we are here to help you.

This is a parent-to-parent guide and contains ideas that we have found helpful – ideas that we hope will be of some help to you as you deal with this difficult time in your family's life.

A Practical Guide

The first section of the parent handbook includes suggestions on what to do and how to do it. It includes practical information about:

- How to find out whether your child has depression
- How to find the right help
- How to get treatment
- How to talk to your child
- How to talk to your family
- How to manage the school day
- How to deal with insurance issues



A Primer

The second section of the parent handbook includes the things you might want to know about depression, mental health care professionals and potential treatments. It is the textbook-like section of the handbook, to be read when you want more information about the details of the illness and the kinds of help available.

Mental Health and Happiness

The third section of the parent handbook looks at strategies for achieving good mental health and happiness. It includes information about:

- Exercise
- Nutrition
- Sleep
- Practicing gratitude
- Being mindful

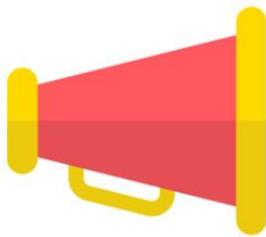
ROLE OF TEEN EMPOWERMENT CLUBS

Teen Empowerment Clubs are designed to create a more positive, inclusive and empathic school culture surrounding mental health. Dialogue is the best way to reduce the stigma of adolescent depression. Student-powered awareness is the most effective way to encourage communication.

When students talk, other students listen. When teens highlight the importance of learning about adolescent depression, it shows their peers that there is nothing to be ashamed of. It demonstrates that those suffering from depression don't have to hide. They can talk, they can get help, and they can live.

That's what awareness does. When it comes from other teens, it is our most powerful tool. We're proud to help students start a Teen Empowerment Club in their school, run awareness campaigns, and use their voice to *Get Depression Out of Dark*.

Teen Empowerment Clubs are an important pillar to creating lasting cultural changes in school communities. These are opportunities to become leaders in your school to help:



RAISE AWARENESS

Recognize the signs of adolescent depression. It's only a problem if it's ignored.



BREAK STIGMA

Through campaigns, fundraisers and awareness initiatives, teens eliminate the shame and blame of depression, making it easier to get help.



SPREAD EMPATHY

No one should be outcast because of adolescent depression.



"Getting involved with Erika's Lighthouse was an amazing way for me and other teenagers to understand that depression was not something to be ashamed of, but rather a topic we must further discuss. Everyone deserves good mental health, and organizations like this one are giving hope to those who need it. I will always be grateful for being a part of this organization that continues to impact many teenagers."
Edgar, Former Teen Empowerment Club Member, Rolling Meadows High School

BENEFITS OF BEING AN ERIKA'S LIGHTHOUSE TEEN EMPOWERMENT CLUB

Erika's Lighthouse is dedicated to educating and raising awareness about adolescent depression, encouraging good mental health, and breaking down the stigma surrounding mental health issues. Teen Empowerment Clubs are an important piece of that journey. ***We believe teens can change the world.***

We are here to ensure your activities are powerful and generate awareness, dialogue and reduce stigma – all while creating a more positive, inclusive and empathic school culture.

Benefit to Your School

Your school will benefit from a Teen Empowerment Club by:

- Raising awareness of depression and mental health challenges and supporting good mental health.
- Educating educators, parents and students about depression and mental health.
- Reducing stigma surrounding mental health and encouraging those experiencing challenges to seek help.
- Increasing the ability to have engaging and supportive dialogue surrounding mental health.
- Developing peer leadership for a more positive, inclusive, and empathetic school culture.

Benefits to Your Club

As a formal **Erika's Lighthouse** Teen Empowerment Club, your club will have access to:

- Monthly E-Newsletters about depression, successful campaigns and more just for teens.
- Four (4) teen-focused Teen Empowerment Club webinars for club members.
- Access to Depression Awareness Campaign materials.
- Customizable branded marketing materials.
- **Erika's Lighthouse** national brand recognition, name, logo and support from **Erika's Lighthouse** staff.
- Ability to work in tandem with in-school depression education.
- One t-shirt for every club member.
- Funds to support in-school Depression Awareness Campaigns and other club expenses:
 - \$250/year club grant from **Erika's Lighthouse**, or
 - 5% of all gross funds raised from hosting a local fundraiser.

KNOW THE FACTS

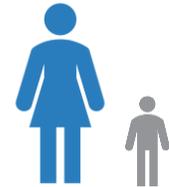


1 in 5

youth experience depression by adulthood.



Only **30%** of teens are receiving treatment for depression.



Among teens, females are

2x more likely to experience depression than males.



2 in 3

teens with severe depression also experience an additional mood disorder.



1 in 5

youth experience a mental health disorder in a year.

Club Expectations

As a formal **Erika's Lighthouse** Teen Empowerment Club, your club is expected to:

- Organize at least three awareness campaigns or initiatives per year.
- Meet regularly (at least six-times a year) to appropriately plan activities.
- Honor the fact-based, positive, hopeful and inclusive tone of **Erika's Lighthouse**.
- Share your custom initiatives, campaigns and materials with us to share with others.

Teen Empowerment Clubs are strongly encouraged to host an **Erika's Lighthouse** community awareness and fundraising event – your club keeps 5% of all funds raised for local activities!

DEPRESSION & MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS CAMPAIGNS

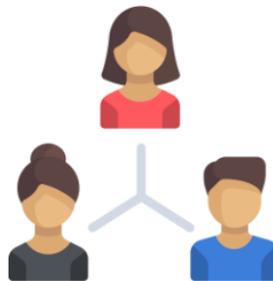
Dialogue is the best way to reduce the stigma of adolescent depression. Student-powered awareness is the most effective way to encourage communication.

Erika's Lighthouse has created, and continues to create, dynamic and engaging awareness campaign materials for students and Teen Empowerment Clubs to utilize. The goal of awareness campaign materials is to convey that depression is real, common and serious.



DEPRESSION IS REAL

It isn't a phase. You aren't just being moody. Teen depression is a real disorder and should be treated like any other medical condition.



DEPRESSION IS COMMON

You aren't alone. Nearly 20% of young people will be impacted by depression before adulthood. It shouldn't be stigmatized, and no one should feel isolated.



DEPRESSION IS SERIOUS

While depression is common, it also can be very serious. Teens should know that they can, and should, get help for it.

All our materials are available online through our Resource Portal. Here are a few samples:

FALL ACTIVITIES	WINTER ACTIVITIES	SPRING ACTIVITIES
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Yellow Ribbon Week• Mental Health Awareness Week• Pumpkin Patch• Ghost Lollipops• Ghostbuster Poster• Thanksgiving Gratitude Jars or Journals• Thanksgiving Gratitude Postcards	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 10 Ways to Relieve Stress During Finals Week• Finals week Encourage-mint Notes• Finals week goodie bags• Heart to Heart Conversations• Holiday Card activity• Holiday Luminary Activity• New Year Mini Vision Board• We Heart Good Mental Health Handout	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 10 Ways to Relieve Stress During Finals Week• End of Year Thank You Card• St. Patrick's Day Pot of Gold Scavenger Hunt• Shamrock Wall of Gratitude• Shamrock Lucky Day Handout

2 Recruit Your Club Champions

Recruiting your Teen Empowerment Club Champions will be vital for your club's success. You'll need to speak with peers, teachers, social workers, counselors and the administration to secure support prior to launch. You don't need to host a kickoff just yet – but gather 3-4 classmates, 1-2 adult sponsors/advisors and clear the club with your school administration.



TALK TO THE SCHOOL ACTIVITIES DIRECTOR

Your first stop should be to the office of your school activities director and ask what you need to do to start a club. This person could be a school counselor, social worker, vice principal or someone else. Your school's main office should be able to direct you.

What to Ask

When learning how you get started, be sure to ask:

- What are the requirements for a teen club?
 - Likely items are:
 - A Mission Statement.
 - Proof that students will join (you may need to pass around a petition).
 - A club sponsor/advisor (a school employee that will work with you).
- Is there a formal application I need to complete?
- What challenges can I expect to run into?

TALK TO CLASSMATES

Once you understand how you'll need to work with the school, it is important to recruit peers to help get going. Having 3-4 classmates join you in getting started will make the process much smoother – and more likely to succeed.

How to Recruit

When recruiting peers, it will be important to share:

- Your vision for the Teen Empowerment Club.
- Why starting a Teen Empowerment Club is important.
- Examples of potential activities (print out ideas from the Erika's Lighthouse Resource Portal).
- What support you may need from them. Early on your fellow classmates can help:
 - Collect petition signatures.
 - Locate a Club Sponsor/Advisor.
 - Complete any paperwork your school may request to start a club.
- What role they can play once the club is started.



"School was an incredibly supportive environment. I found love and peace and comfort in my teachers and coaches. I felt that I was in a safe haven within the walls of my high school, and I am incredibly grateful for that."
Callie, Erika's Lighthouse Program Recipient

FIND A CLUB SPONSOR/ADVISOR

After you have recruited a few fellow classmates, start searching for a club sponsor/advisor that will champion the **Erika's Lighthouse** Teen Empowerment Club with the school administration, educators, social workers and other adult influencers. It may be helpful to identify 2 adults that can co-sponsor the club and provide additional support.

What to Look For

These individuals will be helpful as you work to create lasting cultural changes within your school community. Consider asking the teacher that delivers the **Erika's Lighthouse** classroom program at your school. Be sure they:

- Are school employees capable of sponsoring a club.
- Have the available time to offer support and guidance (roughly 5-10 hours/month).
- Are respected by peers and willing to positive influence others.
- Can support the club with school administrators.

How to Recruit

Similar to how you spoke with your classmates, use the same techniques to find a sponsor/advisor by sharing:

- Your vision for the Teen Empowerment Club.
- Why starting a Teen Empowerment Club is important.
- Examples of potential activities (print out ideas from the Erika's Lighthouse Resource Portal).
- What support you may need from them, early on your sponsor can help:
 - Collect petition signatures.
 - Complete any paperwork your school may request to start a club.
 - Speak with the school administration in support of the club.
- What role they can play once the club is started.

Once a sponsor/advisor has been identified, you can move on to working with the school administration and completing the Teen Empowerment Club Agreement with **Erika's Lighthouse**.

3 Cross Your 't's and Dot Your 'i's

You've completed the hard part of recruiting your school's champions for the Teen Empowerment Club. Now, you simply need to complete the final steps.

(1) REGISTER IN THE PORTAL

If you haven't already, join our FREE Resource Portal to look at all the available materials for Teen Empowerment Clubs and Depression Awareness Campaigns.

- 1) Go to www.ErikasLighthouse.org.
- 2) Click on "Resource Portal" at the top right of the page.
- 3) Register for a free account.
- 4) Review the materials.

You will now have access to all the materials currently available.

(2) CLEAR WITH YOUR SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION

As previously discussed, (see Talk to Your School's Activities Director) you should have been told the information you needed to be a recognized club at your school

At this stage you will want to complete any application, compile the necessary information and submit it for your school's administration to review.

One item may be a club Mission Statement: The Erika's Lighthouse Teen Empowerment Club will help educate the school community about teen depression, good mental health and help destigmatize depression through various activities throughout the year.

(3) COMPLETE THE ERIKA'S LIGHTHOUSE AGREEMENT

The Erika's Lighthouse Teen Empowerment Club Agreement is available below or at: <https://secure.qgiv.com/event/teenclubs/>

(4) REVIEW THE TEEN EMPOWERMENT CLUB MOBILIZE GUIDEBOOK

Review the Teen Empowerment Club Mobilize Guidebook to see how you can create a successful, engaging and impactful club for your school.

(5) SCHEDULE YOUR ONBOARDING CALL

Once we, Erika's Lighthouse staff, have reviewed your completed Teen Empowerment Club Agreement, we will reach out to you and the school advisor(s) to schedule a 60-minute onboarding call. During this call, we will review the Teen Empowerment Club:

- Benefits to the School
- Benefits to the Club & Club Members
- Expectations
- Mobilize Guidebook (available on the Portal)
- Next Steps
- Q & A

ERIKA'S LIGHTHOUSE TEEN EMPOWERMENT CLUB AGREEMENT

Return this form to Ilana Sherman at ilana@erikaslighthouse.org.

School Information

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Type: Middle School High School Other:

Student Leader(s) – Must include at least 1 contact.

Name: _____

Name: _____

Email: _____

Email: _____

Phone: _____

Phone: _____

Grade Level: _____

Grade Level: _____

Sponsor/Advisor(s) – Must include at least 1 contact.

Name: _____

Name: _____

Title: _____

Title: _____

Email: _____

Email: _____

Phone: _____

Phone: _____

Signature(s) – Must be signed by at least 1 student and 1 sponsor/advisor.

By signing, I agree to roles and responsibilities as detailed in the pages below.

Student Leader (1)

Date

Student Leader (2)

Date

Sponsor/Advisor (1)

Date

Sponsor Advisor (2)

Date

Erika's Lighthouse Representative

Date

Role and Responsibilities of Erika's Lighthouse (ELH) and Partner School Regarding Use of ELH Materials and Programs

Erika's Lighthouse: A Beacon of Hope for Adolescent Depression (ELH), an Illinois not-for-profit corporation provides your school the following information regarding the Erika's Lighthouse Teen Club at your school.

Roles and Responsibilities of ELH

- ELH will provide, at no cost, electronic format materials needed to implement the program. ELH is the creator and owner of the program materials and holds all necessary copyright and trademarks associated with the program materials. ELH hereby provides a one-time, limited use, fully paid up license to use its proprietary program materials and intellectual property in connection with the program.
- ELH has shared the program materials with a number of organizations and is free to modify, change, or withdraw them at its sole discretion. ELH will make a best effort to notify of any changes to the program materials. Any such changes will be made available to your school at no charge.
- While ELH consults with clinical, therapeutic, legal, and child development experts, nothing in the program materials or any training or presentation provided by ELH should be construed as specific or general medical or psychological advice. ELH urges your school staff to seek competent professional advice appropriate for specific individuals or situations should the need arise.
- ELH assumes no liability for any damages, claim, or actions arising from program use, presentation, or communication of the program materials.
- ELH staff will be available by phone, email, and for in-person meetings (based on ELH staff availability), to offer advice, guidance and support to assist your school in furtherance of the program.
- ELH will provide onsite support if requested (and based on ELH staff availability) and/or make periodic site visits.
- ELH will provide a \$250 grant for the Teen Club at your school to be used toward club expenses, including snacks and activity materials.
- ELH will provide Teen Club activity ideas.
- ELH will provide T-shirts for new members that register for e-newsletters.

Roles and Responsibilities of Your School

- Use and present the program materials as provided and guided by ELH with no modifications unless modifications have been approved by ELH in writing.
- Keep the program materials updated with any and all modifications provided from time to time by ELH.
- Advise ELH of any suggestions for improvements to the program materials or their presentation.
- Make no modifications or alterations to ELH's trademarks or logos contained in or used in connection with the program materials. See Attachment A.
- Strive to share and practice the ELH philosophy and tone. See Attachment B.
- Abide by ELH affiliate social media policies. See Attachment C.
- Not share program materials with any other entities - individuals, schools, organizations, etc. Refer any requests for program materials to ELH for appropriate action.
- Refer any inquiries regarding ELH or the program materials from the media, agencies, or others to ELH.
- Certify at least annually that all staff, volunteers, or others who use the program materials in your school have read, understand, and agree not to modify them.
- Provide quarterly updates on the program, including but not limited to the impact, date(s) of implementation and general feedback.
- Include both the trademarked Erika's Lighthouse logo and official website on any and all printed materials representing an Erika's Lighthouse Teen Empowerment Club (signs, brochures, handouts, wearable items, etc.).
- Hold at least 6 Teen Club meetings a year to be eligible for grant funds.
- Submit receipts to ELH for Teen Club grant reimbursement within 30 days of the purchase date.