



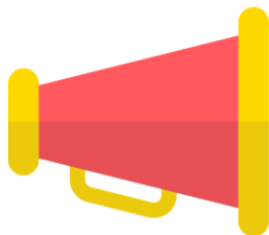
Erika's Lighthouse[®]

Teen Empowerment Club

1

Getting Started

Start a Club (Official & Affiliate) 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 in 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
- Role of Teen Empowerment Clubs
- Benefits of an Official Teen Empowerment Club & an Affiliate Club
- Awareness into Action Activities

2 Recruit Your Club Champions

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

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

- Next Steps
- Registration

4 Additional Resources

- **Erika's Lighthouse** Classroom Programs
- **Erika's Lighthouse** Family Handbook

"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."



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.

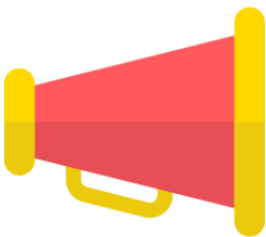
ROLE OF TEEN EMPOWERMENT CLUBS

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 and educators start a Teen Empowerment Club in their school, lead Awareness into Action Activities, 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 for students to become leaders in their school to help:



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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 AN OFFICIAL TEEN EMPOWERMENT CLUB & AFFILIATE 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 and Affiliate 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 and empathic school culture.

Benefit to Your School

Your school will benefit from an Official Teen Empowerment Club by:

- Raising awareness of depression and mental health challenges and supporting good mental health.
- Educating teachers/staff, 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 inclusive school culture.

Erika's Lighthouse Teen Club Choices

- Erika's Lighthouse Official **Teen Empowerment Club**
- **Affiliate Club** (An already-existing school club that wants to use Erika's Lighthouse resources)

Benefits

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

- Monthly E-Newsletters about successful activities and more.
- Teen-focused training and webinars & support from staff.
- Over 50 Awareness into Action Activities.
- Customizable co-branded materials with national brand recognition, club name, & logo.
- The Collaboration Station, a discussion forum with our national network of clubs.
- Classroom programming for in-school depression education.
- T-shirt designs to create your own shirts
- Funds to support in-school Awareness into Action Activities and other club expenses:
 - \$50 reimbursement per Awareness into Action Activity* (up to \$250/year) or

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.

5% of all gross funds raised from hosting a local fundraiser.

- o \$6 reimbursement per t-shirt for new club members and advisors each year

*Clubs receive reimbursements after filling out the necessary forms

As an **Affiliate Club**, your club will have access to:

- Monthly E-Newsletters about successful activities and more.
- Teen-focused training and webinars & support from Erika's Lighthouse staff.
- Over 50 Awareness into Action Activities.

Official Teen Empowerment Club Requirements

- Register your club, Advisor/Sponsor and all student club members.
- Advisor/Sponsor needs to create a Resource Portal account.
- Lead at least one Awareness into Action Activity per quarter.
- Fill out the Awareness into Action Activity Report to report activities (and get reimbursed).
- All student club members must watch the Teen Training modules.
- Meet regularly (at least six-times a year) to appropriately plan activities.
- Use **Erika's Lighthouse** in the club name and any materials created.
- Honor the fact-based, positive, hopeful and inclusive tone of **Erika's Lighthouse**.
- Share your custom initiatives, activities and materials with us to share with others.

Official Teen Empowerment Clubs are strongly encouraged to host an **Erika's Lighthouse** community awareness and fundraising event – all funds raised will be used to support the Erika's Lighthouse mission. Teen Clubs receive 5% of total raised to support club activities. 5% of revenue may be used for direct event expenses.

Affiliate Club Expectations

As an Affiliate Club, your club is expected to:

- Contact Nathalia Harris, Teen Club Coordinator (nathalia@erikaslighthouse.org) prior to using any materials.
- Register your Affiliate Club and Advisor/Sponsor.
- Honor the fact-based, positive, hopeful and inclusive tone of **Erika's Lighthouse**.
- Share your custom initiatives, activities and materials with us to share with others.

AWARENESS INTO ACTION ACTIVITIES

Erika's Lighthouse has created over 50 Awareness into Action Activities (AAAs) for teens to reduce stigma, raise awareness, promote positivity and educate their peers on where to find help. The goal of these activities is to convey that depression is real, common and treatable. All our materials are available online through our Resource Portal. Here are a few examples:

ADVOCACY EFFORTS

Educate Peers and Teens: [PDF](#) | [Canva](#)

Educate Parents and Caregivers: [PDF](#) | [Canva](#)

Advocate for Depression Education: [PDF](#)

MINDFUL MOMENTS

How Full Is Your Cup? [PDF](#)

POSITIVITY PROMOTERS

Take A Compliment Poster: [PDF](#) | [Canva](#)

Apps For Good Mental Health: [PDF](#) | [Canva](#)

Positivity Catcher: [PDF](#) | [Canva](#)

Wall of Inspiration: [PDF](#) | [Canva](#)

Send Some Encourage-Mint: [PDF](#) | [Canva](#)

Test Week Goodie Bags: [PDF](#) | [Canva](#)

Welcome Back Care Packages: [PDF](#) | [Canva](#)

Thanksgiving Gratitude Postcards (November): [PDF](#) | [Canva](#)

Holiday Card Activity (December): [PDF](#) | [Canva](#)

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 or students, 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 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?



"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

TALK TO CLASSMATES & STUDENTS

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

How to Recruit

When recruiting students to join the club, 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 (view ideas in the Erika's Lighthouse Resource Portal).
- What support you may need from them. Early on your fellow classmates or students can help:
 - Collect petition signatures.

- o Locate a Club Sponsor/Advisor.
- o Complete any paperwork your school may request to start a club.
- What role they can play once the club is started.

FIND A CLUB SPONSOR/ADVISOR

After you have recruited a few fellow classmates or students, 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 that individuals who are interested in being a Club Sponsor/Advisor:

- 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 positively influence others.
- Can work with school administrators to keep the club in good standing.

How to Recruit

Similar to how you spoke with your classmates or students, 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 Resource Portal).
- What support you may need from them, early on your sponsor can help:
 - o Collect petition signatures.
 - o Complete any paperwork your school may request to start a club.
 - o 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, that person, as well as you, should create an account on the Erika's Lighthouse Resource Portal.

Then you can move on to working with the school administration and registering your club with **Erika's Lighthouse**. All club sponsors and students MUST register.

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) CREATE A RESOURCE PORTAL ACCOUNT

If you haven't already, create an account on our FREE Resource Portal to look at all the available materials for Teen Empowerment Club resources and Awareness into Action Activities.

- 1) Go to www.ErikasLighthouse.org.
- 2) Click on "Resource Portal" at the top right of the page and fill out the necessary information
- 3) Review the materials.

You will 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 the school requires, compile the necessary information and submit it for your school's administration to review.

One requested item may be a club Mission Statement. For example, "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) REGISTER THE CLUB

All club sponsors and students MUST register using the Teen Club Registration Form.

(4) REVIEW THE MOBILIZE YOUR CLUB GUIDEBOOK

Review the Mobilize Your Club Guidebook to see how you can create a successful, engaging and impactful club for your school. This Guidebook is available on the Resource Portal.

(5) SCHEDULE YOUR ONBOARDING CALL

Once we, Erika's Lighthouse staff, have reviewed your registration on the Teen Empowerment Club Management Center, we will reach out to you and the school advisor(s) to schedule a 30-60-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

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 Empowerment 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/virtual support if requested (and based on ELH staff availability) and/or make periodic site visits.
- ELH will provide up to \$250 for an Official Erika's Lighthouse Teen Empowerment club per year in grant funding for the club at your school to be used toward club expenses, including snacks and activity materials, or you can choose to keep 5% of funds raised from a fundraiser.
- ELH will provide Teen Club activity ideas.
- ELH will provide reimbursement for Erika's Lighthouse Teen Club T-shirts for new members that register.

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.

4 Additional Resources

ERIKA'S LIGHTHOUSE CLASSROOM PROGRAMS

Erika's Lighthouse has three levels of classroom programs designed to provide evidence-informed, skills-based education within classrooms:

- **Level I: We All Have Mental Health**
- **Level II: Depression Awareness**
- **Level III: Depression Education & Suicide Awareness**

These free teen depression awareness programs are 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 Erika's Lighthouse [Resource Portal](#) – set up 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."

The [Erika's Lighthouse Family Handbook on Childhood & Teen Depression](#) is a great resource for Teen Empowerment Clubs to use and engage your surrounding community. It is available in English and Spanish for download on the Resource Portal.

Many parents don't know the signs of teen depression or where to turn for help. Understanding exactly what's going on with their 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. 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 and 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