



Mental Health Student Leadership Academy: Being a Trusted Peer



GOAL OF THIS TRAINING

For you to feel confident that you would help a friend who may be facing a mental health challenge or crisis by being a good listener and getting them to a trusted adult.



WHAT IS A TRUSTED PEER?

Someone who is a good listener, is trustworthy, dependable, and won't make someone feel silly for coming to them - someone you feel a connection with.





The role of a trusted peer is to:

- Listen, non-judgmentally
- Help the person get the support they deserve.



STIGMA

A mark of shame associated with a particular circumstance, quality, or person.

80%

**OF PEOPLE WITH DEPRESSION
DO NOT SEEK TREATMENT
BECAUSE OF STIGMA**





BREAKING DOWN STIGMA

- Educate yourself.
- Educate others.
- Talk about it.
- Advocate.
- Promote positivity.
- Remind others that they are not alone.



WHAT IS DEPRESSION?

A common and serious mood disorder that can happen to anyone.

It's more than just a feeling of sadness.

15–20%

of young people
will struggle with
a depressive episode
before adulthood.

90–98% of all youth
suicides involve a mental illness,
the most common being
depression.



SIGNS & SYMPTOMS OF DEPRESSION

Depressed mood, sadness or irritability *for 2 weeks or more

Loss of interest or pleasure in activities

Change in weight or appetite

Fatigue or loss of energy

Feelings of worthlessness or guilt

Trouble concentrating or making decisions

Thoughts of death or acts of self-harm



DEPRESSION IN TEENS

- Irritability
- Self defeating attitude
- Bizarre sleep patterns
- Substance use
- Risk taking
- Aggression
- Acting out
- Problems in school



WHAT IF YOU'RE WORRIED ABOUT A FRIEND?

Be a trusted peer by listening, showing you care, and helping them find help.

- *I've noticed changes in you.*
- *I care about you.*
- *How can I help you?*



WHO IS A TRUSTED ADULT?

Reliable - Dependable - Trustworthy



A CONVERSATION BETWEEN FRIENDS



SAM: Hey, can we talk? Over the past few weeks I've noticed you've been hanging back a lot - not texting much anymore and skipping out on me and our friends. Recently, you've even missed a bunch of practices. In general, you seem down. This isn't like you. What's going on?

FRIEND: Sorry, I've been feeling weird lately.

SAM: I can tell something is different. I'm worried about you. I care about you.

FRIEND: You don't have to worry. I'm sure I'll snap out of it eventually.

SAM: You deserve to feel better now, and who knows, it could be something serious like depression. Have you told an adult yet?

FRIEND: No

SAM: An adult should know so they can help you find a professional to check it out. Who do you feel comfortable talking to?

FRIEND: I guess, Mr. Clark

SAM: I think he's a great choice. Would you like me to come with you? It might make you more comfortable.

FRIEND: Uh, sure. Yeah, I'd like that.



LET'S REVIEW...

Did the trusted peer say and do the following?

- *I've noticed changes in you.*
- *I care about you.*
- *How can I help you?*

Be a trusted peer by listening, showing you care, and helping them find help.



HOW TO HAVE SUPPORTIVE CONVERSATIONS WITH YOUR FRIENDS

Listen more, talk less

Listen non judgmentally

Make eye contact

Reassure your friend but
don't make promises or keep
secrets

Ask direct questions

Use empathy



HOW TO...



L
I
S
T
E
N

Try to be in the right frame of mind. Separate your own feelings on the subject when you are listening. Enable the person to talk freely. Don't label what you hear as good, bad, right or wrong.



R
E
A
S
S
U
R
E

Reassure your friend that you're there to listen & support them.



E
M
P
A
T
H
Y

Try and put yourself in their shoes. Empathetic responses can help a person feel that their emotions are validated and that they are seen, heard and supported:

- "I'm so sorry you're going through this."
- "This must be so hard for you."
- "You must feel really frustrated with all of this."



If you feel like your friend is at risk of immediate harm, you need to act right away. Don't keep it a secret. Walk them down to an adult or immediately tell an adult.



REMEMBER: You're not responsible for other people's actions.



**If your friend is
hurting themselves
or talking suicide...
tell an adult
IMMEDIATELY.**





If you or a friend need immediate support, talk to an adult or dial 911.

Suicide & Crisis Lifeline:
(call, text or chat)

988

Crisis Text Line:
Text "Listen" to 741741



WHAT WOULD YOU SAY & DO?

- Your friend's pet died last week and they seem really sad about it.
- Your friend used to care about their work in school, but they don't seem interested in school anymore.
- A kid in your class has been grumpy for what seems like, no reason, for a couple of weeks.
- Your friend tells you that they're having overwhelming feelings of sadness and frustration and they ask you for help.





- Mental health is balance: the ability to manage stress, deal with our emotions and achieve one's potential.
- Take care of yourself. Understand your limits.
- Everyone deserves good mental health.





Erika's Lighthouse

A Beacon of Hope for Adolescent Depression®

ErikasLighthouse.org

Thank you!



ErikasLH



erikas.lighthouse



Erikas_LH



Erika's Lighthouse®

Copyright © 2020. All rights reserved.