

# THE WNY YOUTH ALLIANCE FOR EDUCATION PRESENTS

# MENTAL HEALTH: LET'S MAKE IT A PRIORITY

13% of teens have experienced a major depressive episode in the past year. 7 in 10 U.S. teens said anxiety and depression is a major problem among people their age, and an additional 26% cited it as a minor problem.

3 in 10 teens said they felt tense or nervous about their day every day. The total number of teens who recently experienced depression increased 59% between 2007 and 2017.

## Burn out is Real & Many Students are Struggling or Suffering in Silence

Mental health isn't a quick fix. Burnout is a physical or mental collapse caused by overwork or stress. We can work to prevent burnout by diversifying classroom learning. Try things like Kahoot, interactive activities, or games in the classroom to keep things interesting and switch up the daily routine.

## BE FLEXIBLE

Be flexible with deadlines, and understand that students might not immediately understand all the material right away. If you know students are overloaded in one class, adjust deadlines when possible. Take the time to figure out if students are understanding. Give students times to talk to one another to get comfortable before beginning the lesson.

## CREATE SAFE SPACES TO DISCUSS MENTAL HEALTH

It is just as important to show you care about mental health in your actions as it is in your words. Tell your students that you think about and consider their mental health! Before starting the lesson, check in on students in casual ways. (Emoji check-ins, #1-5-How are you feeling today?)

Try your best to understand if students are struggling with the content or struggling with other personal or mental health issues.

Create physical spaces that allow students to have down time (puzzles, noise-canceling headphones, etc.) and let students freely utilize the space.

## CONFIDENTIALITY AND TRUST

Confidentiality is key! If a student trusts you with information, keep it confidential. Make sure you are open, welcoming, and create a safe learning environment. Have conversations outside your subject area to show students you care about them and their struggles outside of class. Make it clear to students when you are available to talk/provide a safe and private environment to have these conversations..

## QUOTES FROM YAE STUDENTS

"I have these issues and these are the things people do that are helpful to making things better."

"Mental health is just as, if not more important, than physical health. You cannot get physically healthy if you are not mentally healthy."

### REFERENCES:

Statistics from: [rb.gy/8hicwj](https://rb.gy/8hicwj)

Links to better help students with mental health problems:

<https://www.mentalhealthfirstaid.org/mental-health-resources/>

<https://www.teachforamerica.org/stories/mental-health-resources-for-educators>

Resources to help with your mental health: <https://sameherglobal.org/>

Visit our Website: [rb.gy/e5luyv](https://rb.gy/e5luyv) and Follow us on Instagram at [youth\\_alliance\\_for\\_education](https://www.instagram.com/youth_alliance_for_education)