

# WHAT EDUCATORS SHOULD KNOW ABOUT MENTAL HEALTH

## Understand What Contributes To Mental Wellness

- ◆ Promote the healthy social and emotional development of all children and youth
- ◆ Recognize when young people are at risk for or are experiencing mental health problems
- ◆ Identify how to intervene early and appropriately when there are problems

## What Educators Should Look For In Student Behavior

*Consult with a school counselor, nurse, or administrator and the student's parents if you observe one or more of the following behaviors:*

- ◆ Feeling very sad or withdrawn for more than two weeks
- ◆ Seriously trying to harm oneself, or making plans to do so
- ◆ Sudden overwhelming fear for no reason, sometimes with a racing heart or fast breathing
- ◆ Involvement in many fights or desire to badly hurt others
- ◆ Not eating, throwing up, or using laxatives to make oneself lose weight
- ◆ Intense worries or fears that get in the way of daily activities
- ◆ Extreme difficulty concentrating or staying still that puts the student in physical danger or causes problems in the classroom
- ◆ Repeated use of drugs or alcohol
- ◆ Severe mood swings that cause problems in relationships
- ◆ Drastic changes in the student's behavior or personality

## What Educators Can Do In Classrooms And Schools

*You can support the mental health of all students in your classroom and school, not just individual students who may exhibit behavioral issues. Consider the following actions:*

- ◆ Educate staff, parents and students on symptoms of and help for mental health problems
- ◆ Promote social and emotional competency and build resilience
- ◆ Help ensure a positive, safe school environment
- ◆ Teach and reinforce positive behaviors and decision-making
- ◆ Encourage helping others
- ◆ Encourage good physical health
- ◆ Help ensure access to school-based mental health supports

## **Learn More About Ways To Support Your Students And Their Families**

- <https://www.mentalhealth.gov/talk/educators/index.html> - Mental Health.gov
- [www.nimh.nih.gov](http://www.nimh.nih.gov) - National Institute of Mental Health
- An excellent source for packaged mental health training programs is through the National Center for School Mental Health at the University of Maryland - <http://csmh.umaryland.edu/>
- A Framework for Safe and Successful Schools, developed by the American School Counselor Association, the National Association of School Psychologists, the School Social Work Association of America, the National Association of School Resource Officers, the National Association of Elementary School Principals and the National Association of Secondary School Principals. - <https://www.nasponline.org/resources-and-publications/resources/school-safety-and-crisis/a-framework-for-safe-and-successful-schools>

## **Suicide Prevention Center of New York (SPCNY)**

- SPCNY's What Every Teacher Needs to Know Brochure - <http://www.preventsuicideny.org/>

## **Trauma Informed Care**

- Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACES) 101 - <https://www.samhsa.gov/capt/practicing-effective-prevention/prevention-behavioral-health/adverse-childhood-experiences>
- Child Trauma Toolkit for Educators - [http://www.nctsn.org/sites/default/files/assets/pdfs/Child\\_Trauma\\_Toolkit\\_Final.pdf](http://www.nctsn.org/sites/default/files/assets/pdfs/Child_Trauma_Toolkit_Final.pdf)
- Child Trauma Toolkit for Educators (Spanish version) [http://nctsn.org/sites/default/files/SP\\_Child\\_Trauma\\_Toolkit\\_111009\\_FINAL.pdf](http://nctsn.org/sites/default/files/SP_Child_Trauma_Toolkit_111009_FINAL.pdf)
- Trauma and Learning Policy Initiative's guidance - <https://traumasensitiveschools.org/about-tlpi/> on Helping Traumatized Children Learn- <https://traumasensitiveschools.org>

## **National Center for Child Traumatic Stress**

- A Checklist for School Personnel to Evaluate and Implement the Mental Health Component of Your School Crisis and Emergency Plan - [http://www.nctsn.org/sites/default/files/assets/pdfs/Challenger%20Newsletter%20Checklist-final-sw\\_rvsd.pdf](http://www.nctsn.org/sites/default/files/assets/pdfs/Challenger%20Newsletter%20Checklist-final-sw_rvsd.pdf)
- Resources for School Personnel - <http://www.nctsn.org/resources/audiences/school-personnel>
- School Resource List- [http://www.nctsn.org/sites/default/files/assets/pdfs/school\\_resource\\_list\\_final.pdf](http://www.nctsn.org/sites/default/files/assets/pdfs/school_resource_list_final.pdf)