**Lesson 3: Supporting ME Health – Recognize, Reach Out, and Use Resources**

**Overview:** The lesson introduces the three R’s that support ME (mental and emotional) health: recognize, reach out, and use resources. Students will practice recognizing feelings and identifying resources that can support ME health.

National Health Education Standards

**Standard 1:** Students comprehend functional health knowledge to enhance health.

**Standard 3:** Students demonstrate health literacy by accessing valid and reliable health information, products, and services to enhance health.

**Standard 4:** Students demonstrate effective interpersonal communication skills to enhance health.

**Healthy Behavior Outcome (HBO):**

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| --- | --- |
| **MEH HBO 6** | Get help for troublesome thoughts, feelings, or actions for oneself and others. |

**Lesson Objectives –** Students will be able to:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Objective** | **Assessments** |
| Describe how to recognize, reach out, and identify resources to support mental and emotional health. | Attachment 3.1 – Recognize, Reach Out, Use Resources |
| Recognize everyday feelings, overwhelming feelings, and urgent signs of a concern about mental and emotional health. | Attachment 3.1 – Recognize, Reach Out, Use Resources |
| Identify and describe the role of trusted adults, resources, and professionals who can support ME health. | Attachment 3.2 – Resources That Support ME Health |
| Apply the “recognize, reach out, and use resources” model to support mental and emotional health in a scenario. | Attachment 3.2 – Resources That Support ME Health |

Lesson Prerequisites or Assumptions:

* \*Remind students of the safe and supportive classroom climate as students may have a mental and emotional health concern or might share a mental health concern during the lesson. Reinforce the classroom norms and expectations to respect and treat others with dignity; reiterate the important role trusted adults play in supporting their health and well-being.
* \*Before the lesson, reach out to behavioral health professionals in your school to create awareness of the lessons and make them aware of the possibility students might be more likely to reach out for support for mental and emotional health. Educate parents and families about how they can support mental and emotional health.
* Behavioral HELPs Substance Use Prevention Lesson 9 – How Can I Help? provides another opportunity to introduce or reinforce the “recognize, reach out, and use resources” model to enhance healthy behaviors.
* This lesson aligns with the concept of “overwhelming and everyday” feelings from Erika’s Lighthouse (<https://www.erikaslighthouse.org/portal/>). We suggest using Erika’s Lighthouse to support your students as part of a whole school, whole community approach to providing a safe, supportive culture around mental health.

Introduction:

* Let’s check in to recognize how you are feeling. Complete the sentence based using a feeling that occurred today. I feel \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ because \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
* Today we’re going to review how to recognize, reach out, and use resources. Today’s lesson will focus on recognizing feelings and connecting to resources that can support your ME health.

Teaching Steps:

* This lesson is important because we can all support good mental health in ourselves and others by recognizing, reaching out, and using resources.
* Review classroom norms and expectations and remind students that they can connect with you or school staff to support their mental and emotional (ME) health.
* Emphasize that the goal of this lesson is not to diagnose mental health conditions. Students will learn to recognize or notice and then reach out to resources including a trusted adult or mental health resource.

Activity 1: Recognize, Reach Out, and Use Resources – Guided Notes

* There are times when we **recognize** that our health is not the best or when we recognize big feelings, overwhelming feelings, or urgent signs we need to reach out and use our resources to make healthy and safe choices.
* What should we do if we recognize feelings, thoughts, or actions that are not our best and might cause us to think and act in ways that are unhealthy or unsafe?
  + **Reach out** and seek help from a resource.
  + **Resources** include people like trusted adults, friends, and mental health professionals who can support ME health. **Resources** can also be tools and strategies. We can also take steps to support ME through activities or specific strategies. We call them “recharge” or “strengthen ME” activities.
* **Recognize**
  + Everyday feelings come and go and are a normal reaction to what happens in our daily lives.
  + **Big emotions** (Level 3) or feelings are when we have difficulty controlling or regulating the emotion. When we have small feelings (Level 1), we still feel in control of our thoughts and actions.
  + **Overwhelming feelings** hang around for a long time, change the way we feel and behave, and may stop us from doing what we enjoy.
  + **URGENT warning signs** are observable changes, behaviors, or statements that directly or indirectly signal an individual is contemplating suicide or violence toward others ([Wisconsin, Lesson 2](https://dpi.wi.gov/sites/default/files/imce/sspw/pdf/spcurriculumgrades7-12.pdf)). If you notice, see, hear, or recognize these **URGENT warning signs,** talk with a trusted adult right away, call 911, and seek immediate help from a mental health provider. Some examples of urgent warning signs:
    - Someone is threatening to hurt or kill themselves.
    - Someone is looking for ways to kill themselves, such as seeking access to pills, weapons, or other means.
    - Someone is talking or writing about death, dying, or suicide in a way that is not “typical” for them.
  + **Reach out** to a trusted adult or a mental health resource when you recognize feelings, threats, or actions in yourself or others that could hurt or injure someone. You should also reach out to a trusted adult if you need help or support for your everyday feelings or big emotions.
  + **Practice task (Attachment 3.1):** Recognize emotions, big emotions, overwhelming feelings, and urgent signs of a mental health concern.

Activity 2: Reach Out and Use Resources

* If you notice or recognize big emotions, overwhelming feelings, or urgent signs, reach out and use resources to support mental and emotional health.
* Why is it important to reach out? We want to think and act in ways that are healthy and safe. We can be helpful to ourselves and others by reaching out and using resources.
  + Asking for help and support for the problem from a trusted adult, health professional, or mental health resources.
  + Resources and tools:
    - Calm yourself and relax – take a breath or find a calming space.
    - Think and be positive – take on the challenge.
    - Distract – doodle, fidget, or color.
    - Move – stand up and move around.
* If you notice or recognize a signal about your own mental health, you can reach out to a trusted adult or resource by sharing what you noticed and ask for help and support. For example, “I noticed I’m feeling very anxious. Can I talk to you more about this?”
* If you notice a signal in a friend, family member, or another person, you could say something like, “I noticed you seem a little upset. Would you like to talk about it?”
* If you notice a signal in someone else but don’t feel comfortable talking to that person, reach out to a trusted adult to share your concern. “I’ve noticed something different in Jade, and I’m concerned. What should I do to help?”
  + The trusted adult can help by listening to your concern as well as reaching out to supports that could help that person.

Activity 3: Mental and Emotional Health Resources – Help for ME

* Another way to get help is by talking to someone you trust. Trusted adults can be found at home, at school, and in the community. This could be a parent, family member, teacher, school counselor, spiritual leader, or another trusted adult who:
  + Gives good advice when you want and ask for it.
  + Respects your need for privacy.
  + Does not judge, tease, or criticize when you talk freely about your feelings and emotions.
  + Helps you figure out what to do the next time a difficult situation comes up.
* Mental health resources:
  + Community resources – 988 and others (add your local resources)
  + Health professionals at your school and in the community including a school counselor, a school nurse, and your doctor.
  + Any person on this list can listen to your concerns and connect you with additional resources if needed.
* Let’s practice reaching out. These steps can be used to ask for help for yourself or someone else.
  + Cues to remember:
  + Share what you noticed in a caring and empathetic way.
  + Be nonjudgmental.
  + Ask to help.

Activity 4: Practice Situation

* Your friend Rae has been a little different since their parents’ divorce. They have been skipping basketball practice, not turning in homework assignments, and wearing long sleeves even when it is 90 degrees outside. You went up to check in, and they lashed out at you and yelled, “Mind your own business.”
  + What could you do?
    - Ignore it.
    - Reach out to Rae and show support. Tell a trusted adult.
    - Confront Rae and tell them to get it together.
  + What did you recognize?
  + List a resource that could help in this situation.

Closure:

* What can you do to support your mental health and the mental health of others?
  + Use the three R’s: recognize, reach out, and use resources
* What should you do if you recognize or notice something that makes you think you should speak to someone about how you are feeling or how someone is making you feel?
  + Reach out to a trusted adult.
* List an example of a resource that could help in this situation.

Attachment 3.1: Recognize, Reach Out, and Use Resources

Part I. Recognize

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Situation | Feeling | Type  (Circle) | It feels… | Brain |
| Heart is racing as you get ready to take a final exam. |  | Everyday |  | A purple and white sign with a brain and stairs  Description automatically generated |
| Overwhelming |
| Urgent |
| You haven’t been able to sleep all week and are feeling tired. |  | Everyday |  | A purple and white sign with a brain and stairs  Description automatically generated |
| Overwhelming |
| Urgent |
| You’re worried but can’t figure out why. |  | Everyday |  | A purple and white sign with a brain and stairs  Description automatically generated |
| Overwhelming |
| Urgent |
| You’re feeling very angry but don’t know why. |  | Everyday |  | A purple and white sign with a brain and stairs  Description automatically generated |
| Overwhelming |
| Urgent |

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_What should you do if you recognize or notice a reason to be concerned about ME health?

1. Ignore it.
2. Reach out to a trusted adult for help.
3. Wait and see.
4. Get over it and move on.

Attachment 3.2: Resources That Support ME Health

*Part I. Resources*

Develop a collection of resources that include trusted adults, mental health resources, and health professionals.

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| **Trusted Adults** | **Mental Health Resources** | **Health Professionals** |
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*Part II. Scenario Practice*

You have noticed your friend Rae has been acting a little different since their parents’ divorce. Rae has been skipping basketball practice, not turning in homework assignments, and wearing long sleeves even when it is 90 degrees outside to hide their arms and wrists. You went up to check in, and they lashed out at you and yelled, “Mind your own business.”

1. List two things you recognized about Rae or the situation.
2. \_\_\_\_\_\_What should you do?
3. Ignore it. It isn’t a big deal.
4. Reach out to Rae and show support. Tell a trusted adult.
5. Confront Rae and tell them to get it together.
6. List a resource you could reach out to in this situation.

A blue face with a sun on it

Description automatically generated