



**High School Mental Health & Suicide Prevention Curriculum
Lesson Plans**

Unit: Mental Health & Suicide Prevention

Lesson: Aavidum Module 1

****This lesson is designed to be co-taught by a School Counselor and another teacher in the building****

Standards:

Health and PE

10.1.9.A: Analyze factors that impact growth and development between adolescence and adulthood.

10.1.9.D: Analyze prevention and intervention strategies in relation to adolescent and adult drug use.

10.1.12.A: Evaluate factors that impact growth and development during adulthood and late adulthood.

10.1.12.D: Evaluate issues relating to the use/non-use of drugs.

10.1.12.E: Identify and analyze factors that influence the prevention and control of health problems.

11.2.9.A: Solve dilemmas using a practical reasoning approach

11.4.9.A: Analyze physical, intellectual and social/emotional development in relation to theories of child development.

11.4.9.B: Evaluate health and safety hazards relating to children at each stage of child development.

11.4.9.D: Analyze the roles, responsibilities and opportunity for family involvement in schools.

11.4.12.B: Analyze current issues in health and safety affecting children at each stage of child development.

Family Consumer Sciences

11.2.9.A:

Solve dilemmas using a practical reasoning approach

- Identify situation
- Identify reliable information
- List choices and examine the consequences of each
- Develop a plan of action
- Draw conclusions
- Reflect on decisions

ASCA (American School Counseling Association)

Personal/Social Domain:

PS:A1.5: Identify and express feelings

PS:C1.7: apply effective problem-solving and decision-making skills to make safe and healthy choices

Materials: projector, speakers, computer, printed copies of Aavidum Student Workbook, large sheets of paper

Objective(s) / Goal(s) (As a result of this lesson/unit students will...):

- Recognize a positive characteristic in themselves and their peers
- To understand specific the nature of depression in teens
- To know that some events in a teen's life may trigger depression
- To understand that mental illnesses are true, medical illnesses and should be given appropriate attention

Essential Question(s):

1. How do mental illnesses compare to physical illnesses?
2. What are some harmful or unhealthy ways teens cope with mental health issues?
3. What resources are available for teens who may be dealing with mental health issues?

Planned Learning Activities:

1. Introduction:

a.) Healthy Handful **Workbook page 2; Slide 2**

- Students trace their hands and write one positive quality about themselves on the hand (focus on the positive and encourage them to use a characteristic or personality trait)
- Ask students to say their name and “high five” themselves by stating their positive attribute (some students literally pass a high five around the room by reading their attribute and then high fiving the student next to them, who then reads his/her attribute, making sure every student gets high-fived).

Review the essential questions for today’s lesson on **Slide 3**: Tell students by the end of this lesson, they will be able to answer all of the questions.

2. Activity: Physical vs. Mental **Workbook page 3; Slides 4 & 5**

- Go through each scenario on the chart on Workbook page 3 beginning with “runny nose and cough” and moving to the Mental Health column before moving down to the next pairing. Ask students to write how they would handle each situation. Emphasize that they should write what they would actually do, not what they think they *should* do.
- When the chart is completed, ask students if they noticed a difference in the way they handled the situations in the physical health column vs. the mental health column.
- Class discussion: Are either of these more important? (Answer: Both are medical illnesses and need to be taken seriously. Both can be fatal if left untreated.) Why was it easier to get help or know what to do for the scenarios in the physical health column? (Answer: We don’t talk about mental health as much. There is still a stigma associated with mental health issues.)

3. Activity: Top Five List **Workbook page 4; Slides 6 - 8**

- a. Students work in groups to complete the top five causes of death in teens list found on **Workbook: page 4**. Students should use prior knowledge to complete their lists.
 - i. *Optional activity*: After students write their lists, allow them to search online to confirm or change their responses for accuracy.
- b. Instructors will go over the correct list of the Top Five Causes of Death in Teens (**Slide 7-8**). Instructors will talk about using quality sources such as the Center for Disease Control website which is based on research vs. a random website that

students may have used to find information.

- c. Instructor led discussion: Were you surprised? Why or why not? Looking at the top causes of death for youth (**Slide 7-8**), which forms of death are most preventable? Which forms allow a friend to intervene a make a difference? (Answer: suicide is preventable and friends can make a difference by speaking up and telling an adult when they are concerned.)
- d. Instructors emphasize that although suicide is a leading cause of death among teens, it is should not be considered a common response to life's stressors.

Assessment Evidence:

- Activities throughout lesson check for understanding

Closure activity/Wrap-up:

Ending on a positive note-

- Revisit healthy handfals
- High-tech option: survey monkey or Google survey (student can submit their answers electronically)
 - Check in Activity: **Workbook page 8; Slide 20**
 - 3 main ideas from today's lesson
 - 2 ways to cope with stress
 - 1 question or comment about mental health, depression, or Aavidum
- Low-tech: ticket out the door (on note card or on **Workbook page 8**) with same questions

Unit: Mental Health & Suicide Prevention

Lesson: Aavidum Module 2

****This lesson is designed to be co-taught by a School Counselor and another teacher in the building****

Standards:

Health and PE

10.1.9.A: Analyze factors that impact growth and development between adolescence and adulthood.

10.1.9.D: Analyze prevention and intervention strategies in relation to adolescent and adult drug use.

10.1.12.A: Evaluate factors that impact growth and development during adulthood and late adulthood.

10.1.12.D: Evaluate issues relating to the use/non-use of drugs.

10.1.12.E: Identify and analyze factors that influence the prevention and control of health problems.

11.2.9.A: Solve dilemmas using a practical reasoning approach

Family Consumer Sciences

11.2.9.A:

Solve dilemmas using a practical reasoning approach

- Identify situation
- Identify reliable information
- List choices and examine the consequences of each
- Develop a plan of action
- Draw conclusions
- Reflect on decisions

11.2.12.A: Justify solutions developed by using practical reasoning skills.

11.2.9.H: Justify the significance of interpersonal communication skills in the practical reasoning method of decision-making.

ASCA (American School Counseling Association)

Personal/Social Domain

PS:B1.3: Identify alternative solutions to a problem

PS:B1.4: develop effective coping skills for dealing with problems

PS:B1.5: demonstrate when, where and how to seek help for solving problems and making decisions

PS:B1.6: know how to apply conflict-resolution skills

PS:C1.5: differentiate between situations requiring peer support and situations requiring adult professional help

PS:C1.7: apply effective problem-solving and decision-making skills to make safe and healthy choices

PS:C1.10: learn techniques for managing stress and conflict

PS:C1.11: learn coping skills for managing life events

Materials: Projector, speakers, computers (for students to look up top 5 causes of death), student Aavidum handbook

Objective(s) / Goal(s) (As a result of this lesson/unit students will...):

- To recognize the signs of depression
- To better understand depression and suicide
- To identify stressors and triggers in your own life
- To identify coping strategies

Essential Question(s):

1. What are the warning signs of depression?
2. When should you reach out for help for you or a friend?
3. What are some resources you can reach out to when you or a friend needs help?

Planned Learning Activities:

1. Introduction: Respond to questions from previous class (whether you used Ticket Out the Door activity or not **Slide 20**) that will NOT be addressed in this lesson.

2. Instructor facilitated discussion and contributions from entire class:

a.) Mental Health Quiz **Workbook page 4, Slide 9**

- Option 1: Place students in groups and assign a question for each group. Ideally, students will answer their group's question on chart paper placed around the room. Students should use only prior knowledge to answer their groups' assigned question.
- Option 2: Place students in groups and have them complete all six questions in their workbooks. Students should use only prior knowledge to answer the questions.
- Option 3: Students can complete the worksheet individually within their workbooks.

Questions

- What is depression (Answer: Slide 11)
- What are some ways people can cope with depression? (Answer: Slide 12)
- Where can people go for help? (Answer: Slide 13)
- How can people manage stress? (Answer: Slide 14)
- How might you know if someone is thinking about suicide? (Answer: Slide 15)
- Who is most affected by mental illness? (Answer: Slide 16)

3. Checking Mental Health Quiz. All questions are addressed. **Slides 11-16**

- *Options 1 or 2:* Each group will read their answer to their assigned question or one of the assigned questions if they completed the whole worksheet.
- Play the **Mental Health Quiz: Responses** video (**Slide 10**) and instruct students to add missing information and/or correct the answers in their workbooks.
- Optional: The instructors can go over the correct information from the PowerPoint slides as well (**Slides 11-16**)
- Instructors and students have an open dialogue about the misconceptions that currently exist surrounding mental illness and mental health in regards to the questions addressed and students' misconceptions.

4. VIDEO: Show Stressors video **Slide 17**

- Last frame of the video shows a blank paper- symbolic to the students blank space in his/her workbook (**Workbook page 6**)

5. Stressors Activity **Workbook page 6, Slide 18**

- What does stress look like?
- Students are asked to write a current trigger/stressor on a sticky note or in the blank space in their workbook (**Workbook page 6**). After they have finished writing, they are asked to categorize their stressors as things they “can control” vs. something they “cannot control”
- *Optional activity*: Write “can control” and “cannot control” on the board and invite students to put their stressors on the board.
 - Tell students if they are not comfortable putting their sticky on the board to hand it to one of the counselors in the room
 - **Counselors**: it is helpful to stand next to the board where students are sticking the items to identify any students that might be in need of help
 - *Optional activity*: Have students use pre-written stressors for this activity that are not their personal stressors.
- Highlight a few identified stressors and the perceived category
 - For example, homework, relationships, sports, family, etc.
- Instructor led discussion: things you can control vs. cannot control (Although some stressors are beyond our control, we can still control how we respond to these things. Sometimes it is helpful to recognize what is beyond our control. We can choose positive coping strategies over negative ones. We can choose to ask for help when we need it.)

Conclusion: HELP IS ON THE WAY! In the next module, we will be learning about all of the people who are here and in place to HELP you.

6. Slide: Warning Signs of Depression **Workbook page 7; Slides 19-21**

- Tell students to look over the list of the physical changes, emotional pain, difficult moods, changes in thought patterns, changes in energy levels, and biological changes that are associated with depression. In a moment, they will view a video of a student’s day and will check the boxes next to any symptoms they see. **Slide 20**
- VIDEO: Show **Signs of Depression** video **Slide 19**
- Students engage in reflection and assessment of Bailey, the student featured in the video using the lists on **Workbook page 7**.
- Discussion **Slide 21**
 - What do you notice about this person’s behavior that make you think he/she may be struggling? (Answer: Depression can look different from person to person, but Bailey is definitely showing some of the common signs of depression including an inability to concentrate, changes in

- sleeping, loss of interest in activities, and social withdrawal)
- What is the difference between depression and a tough day? (Answer: The more symptoms and the more intense and long-lasting the symptoms are, the more reason for concern. We all experience tough days, but symptoms of depression typically persist for a period of at least two weeks. If you're unsure what someone is going through, it's always better to speak up and ask for help!)
 - What can you do if you notice these symptoms in yourself? (Answer: Therapy, medication, improving sleep, improving nutrition, being active, engaging in your community, socializing, etc.)
 - How can you help someone else who is struggling with depression? (Answer: be present, be a good listener, invite the person to do activities, help guide him/her to an adult who can help, etc.)

Assessment Evidence: student journals/workbooks (develop rubric for assigning points and determining student learning & understanding)

Closure activity/wrap-up

High-tech option: survey monkey or Google survey (student can submit their answers electronically)

Check in Activity: ***Workbook page 8; Slide 20***

- 3 main ideas from today's lesson
- 2 ways to cope with stress
- 1 question or comment about mental health, depression, or Aavidum

Low-tech: ticket out the door (on note card or on **Workbook page 8**) with same questions

Unit: Mental Health & Suicide Prevention

Lesson: Aavidum Module 3

****This lesson is designed to be co-taught by a School Counselor and another teacher in the building****

Standards:

Health and PE

10.1.12.E: Identify and analyze factors that influence the prevention and control of health problems.

11.2.9.A: Solve dilemmas using a practical reasoning approach

11.4.9.C: Evaluate various environments to determine if they provide the characteristics of a proper learning environment.

11.4.9.D: Analyze the roles, responsibilities and opportunity for family involvement in schools.

Family Consumer Sciences

11.2.9.A:

Solve dilemmas using a practical reasoning approach

- Identify situation
- Identify reliable information
- List choices and examine the consequences of each
- Develop a plan of action
- Draw conclusions
- Reflect on decisions

ASCA (American School Counseling Association)

Personal/Social Domain

PS:A1.5: Identify and express feelings

PS:B1.4: develop effective coping skills for dealing with problems

PS:C1.5: differentiate between situations requiring peer support and situations requiring

adult professional help

PS:C1.7: apply effective problem-solving and decision-making skills to make safe and healthy choices

PS:C1.10: learn techniques for managing stress and conflict

PS:C1.11: learn coping skills for managing life events

Materials: projector, speakers, computer, printed copies of Aavidum Student Workbook

Objective(s) / Goal(s) (As a result of this lesson/unit students will...):

- Understanding basic needs for sound mental health
 - sleep, water, exercise, nutrition, humor/laughter, social connections, relaxation/de-stressing, sunlight
- Understand resilience
- Understand and identify coping skills and strategies
- Seeking support among peers vs. needing professional help
- Personal action plans
- Action plans for others

Essential Question(s):

1. What are some things you can do to take care of your mental health?
2. Who are some people in your life that you can trust and depend on if you needed help?

Planned Learning Activities:

1. Activity: Positive Mental Health **Workbook page 9; Slide 23**
 - What can people do to take care of their mental health?
 - What kind of activities can they do?
 - Emphasize to students that EVERYONE has mental health. Just like we do things like exercise and eat healthy to take care our physical health, we also need to do things to take care of our mental health. Some examples of taking care of our mental health are listed below:
 - Forming positive social relationships
 - Being connected to one's community
 - Keeping active
 - Getting good sleep
 - Doing something creative
 - Asking for help when needed
 - Taking medication as prescribed, if necessary

2. Activity: Circle of Trust **Workbook page 10; Slide 24**

- Students will identify their support network (and qualities about those individuals) by drawing their own circle of trust (encourage them to be creative and draw it however
- Who is in your inner circle? List those people and up to 3 qualities that you like or appreciate about that individual. Encourage students to include at least one adult.
- Discussion: What makes someone trustworthy to us?

Assessment Evidence: student journals/workbooks (develop rubric for assigning points and determining student learning & understanding)

Unit: Mental Health & Suicide Prevention

Lesson: Aavidum Module 4

****This lesson is designed to be co-taught by a School Counselor and another teacher in the building****

Standards:

Health and PE

10.1.9.D: Analyze prevention and intervention strategies in relation to adolescent and adult drug use.

10.1.12.D: Evaluate issues relating to the use/non-use of drugs.

10.1.12.E: Identify and analyze factors that influence the prevention and control of health problems.

11.2.9.A: Solve dilemmas using a practical reasoning approach

11.4.12.B: Analyze current issues in health and safety affecting children at each stage of child development.

Family Consumer Sciences

11.2.9.A:

Solve dilemmas using a practical reasoning approach

- Identify situation
- Identify reliable information
- List choices and examine the consequences of each
- Develop a plan of action
- Draw conclusions
- Reflect on decisions

11.2.12.A: Justify solutions developed by using practical reasoning skills.

11.2.9.H: Justify the significance of interpersonal communication skills in the practical reasoning method of decision-making.

ASCA (American School Counseling Association)

Personal/Social Domain

PS:B1.3: Identify alternative solutions to a problem

PS:B1.4: develop effective coping skills for dealing with problems

PS:B1.5: demonstrate when, where and how to seek help for solving problems and making decisions

PS:B1.6: know how to apply conflict-resolution skills

PS:C1.5: differentiate between situations requiring peer support and situations requiring adult professional help

PS:C1.7: apply effective problem-solving and decision-making skills to make safe and healthy choices

PS:C1.10: learn techniques for managing stress and conflict

PS:C1.11: learn coping skills for managing life events

Materials: projector, speakers, computer, printed copies of Aevium Student Workbook

Objective(s) / Goal(s) (As a result of this lesson/unit students will...):

- To know the resources that exist to help students who are suffering from depression and to understand that depression can be treated
- To understand the importance of seeking a trusted adult for support
- To know what to do if you encounter emotional difficulties

Essential Question(s):

1. When should you reach out for help for you or a friend?
2. What is your role when helping a friend?
3. What are some resources you can reach out to when you or a friend needs help?

Planned Learning Activities:

1. Optional Opening Activity **Slide 25**
 - VIDEO “Depression PSA” (1 minute) **Slide 25**
 - Instructor led discussion and contributions from the entire class
 - Ask: What percentage of people do you think indicate some warning sign of mental illness before they die by suicide? (Answer Between 50 percent and 75 percent of people who attempt suicide talk about their suicidal thoughts, feelings and plans before the act, according to the American Foundation for Suicide

Prevention (AFSP).

- What does that statistic mean to us? (Answer: we can recognize warning signs in others and help!)

2. Group activity: Scenarios **Workbook pages 11- 12; Slides 26-27**

- Option 1: Ask students to form small groups and assign a specific scenario to each group (scenarios 1-4). Students should discuss their assigned scenario with their group members and record their answer in their **Workbook pages 11 – 12**. Then show the class each scenario and ask the group to share the responses. Ask for feedback from the rest of the class before showing Dr. Wintersteen’s feedback.
- Option 2: Show each scenario to the entire class and work in small groups to answer the questions on **Workbook pages 11-12**. Have a class discussion and then show Dr. Wintersteen’s feedback.
- Discussion: Review the scenarios with the class.
- Emphasize the importance of contacting a trusted adult.
- Emphasize that students (in general) should not be making judgment calls on whether or not it is a “real threat” – the number one priority is the safety and well-being of others. They are not professionals and should not take on this responsibility. They must tell an adult.
- **FOR GRADES 6-8: Skip scenario 2 and only do scenarios 1, 3, and 4.**

2. Discussion: Identifying supports- **Workbook page 13; Slide 28 -29. it is recommended to customize Slide 29 to your specific school (include the names of specific people to go to or a local crisis number if possible)**

- Show the Resources Video **Slide 28**
- Review the different resources available.
 - National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 1-800-273-TALK (8255)
 - Crisis Text Line: 741-741
 - Information about your school’s Counseling Department and SAP Team
 - Your county’s crisis intervention
 - You can access county specific resources from PAYSPI’s interactive resource map: <https://www.preventsuicidepa.org/task-force-county-init/>
 - This is not a complete list - include as many school supports as you can and be specific to your community!

Assessment Evidence: student journals/workbooks (develop rubric for assigning points and determining student learning & understanding)

Unit: Mental Health & Suicide Prevention

Lesson: Aavidum Module 5

****This lesson is designed to be co-taught by a School Counselor and another teacher in the building****

Standards:

Health and PE

11.2.9.A: Solve dilemmas using a practical reasoning approach

Family Consumer Sciences

11.2.9.A:

Solve dilemmas using a practical reasoning approach

- Identify situation
- Identify reliable information
- List choices and examine the consequences of each
- Develop a plan of action
- Draw conclusions
- Reflect on decisions

11.2.12.A: Justify solutions developed by using practical reasoning skills.

ASCA (American School Counseling Association)

Personal/Social Domain

PS:B1.3: Identify alternative solutions to a problem

PS:B1.4: develop effective coping skills for dealing with problems

PS:C1.7: apply effective problem-solving and decision-making skills to make safe and healthy choices

PS:C1.10: learn techniques for managing stress and conflict

PS:C1.11: learn coping skills for managing life events

Materials: projector, speakers, computer, printed copies of Aavidum Student Workbook

Objective(s) / Goal(s) (As a result of this lesson/unit students will...):

- Identify a plan for helping a friend
- Learn additional ways to combat stigma and get involved in prevention efforts

Essential Question(s):

1. What can you do help a friend who is struggling?
2. How can you get more involved in raising awareness and preventing suicide?

Planned Learning Activities:

1. Show Aavidum Effect video and talk to students about how to get involved in Aavidum's mission. **Slide 30**
 - Students can connect with Aavidum on social media to learn more about mental health and suicide prevention and get involved.
2. Hand activity **Workbook page 14, Slide 31**
 - Students trace their hands again and write what it looks like to "have someone's back" on **Workbook page 14**
 - Use **Slide 31** to provide examples and ask students to share their responses with the class.
 - **GRADES 6-8:** Have students cut out hands and display them in the classroom or in a hallways to show that students have one another's backs.

Assessment Evidence: student journals/workbooks (develop rubric for assigning points and determining student learning & understanding)

Closure activity/wrap-up:

Challenge students to become a part of the Aavidum movement by spreading the word to at least one person that day.

Notes:

1. Managing mental health: Be sure to articulate **when it's appropriate for friends to help vs. when you need to call in the adults/professionals. Students are not counselors and should not take on responsibility for a friend's well-being - they must tell an adult.**
2. **Alert the counseling department regarding when the Aavidum lessons are being introduced** (i.e. based on one student's response to an activity, a counselor was able to meet with that student outside of class and it resulted in a disclosure of significant mental health issues. We were able to make a report to CYA and connect the family with social services to get them the support they needed).



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