



TOPIC

Advocacy

LEVEL

Sixth Grade

THEME

Be the Voice

LEARNING OUTCOMES

At the end of the lesson, the students are expected to:

- Understand the basics of mental health and why it matters
- Define stigma and recognize how it prevents people from getting help
- Identify ways to advocate for mental health and reduce stigma

MATERIALS

- Blank paper or journals
- Writing utensils
- Chart paper or whiteboard
- Markers
- Myth vs. Fact cards or prompts
- Paper and pencils for campaign planning
- Optional: small group planning template

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

- How can I help reduce the stigma around mental health?
- What can I do to create a culture where everyone feels safe, accepted, and supported?
- How can I advocate for mental health awareness in my school?

CHECK-IN / WELCOME (5 MINUTES)

Prompt: "Imagine you're having a tough day. Who do you talk to? What makes it hard to speak up sometimes?"

- Let students journal quietly for 2 to 3 minutes.

Debrief Together:

- What gets in the way of asking for help?
- Have you ever worried what people would think if you were struggling?

Introduce the concept of stigma: Put the word on the board and define it together.

- "Stigma is when people feel embarrassed, ashamed, or judged for something: like talking about their mental health or needing help."

GUIDED DISCUSSION / TOPIC INTRODUCTION (10 MINUTES)

Read statements aloud and have students show thumbs up (true) or thumbs down (false). Then briefly discuss the correct answer.

- "Only adults have mental health." (False - everyone has mental health)
- "You can't see mental health struggles the way you see a broken bone." (True)
- "Talking to someone about your feelings is weak." (False - it's actually a sign of strength)
- "Everyone has mental health." (True)
- "If you're struggling, it's better to stay quiet." (False - asking for help is the first step to feeling better)

Use this to show how stigma creates false beliefs, and how advocacy helps change them.

ACTIVITY: HOW CAN WE BE THE VOICE? (20 MINUTES)**Instructions:**

- Present this challenge: “Let’s say our school wants to be a place where no one feels alone, judged, or afraid to ask for help. What could we do to help make that happen?”
- On chart paper or a whiteboard, write: “Ways We Can Advocate for Mental Health & Aavidum Culture”
- Group brainstorm ideas such as:
 - Create posters with positive messages
 - Start a kindness challenge
 - Make morning announcements about mental health facts
 - Start a lunch buddy program
 - Design stickers or pins that say “You’re Not Alone” or “I’ve Got Your Back”
 - Share a “Mental Health Tip of the Week” in morning announcements
 - Create a quiet corner or calming space in the classroom
- Divide students into small groups. Challenge each group to design a mini campaign or project to reduce stigma and promote mental health awareness in your school.
- Give them structure:
 - Each group must:
 - Name their campaign
 - Explain how it promotes a culture of Aavidum
 - Choose one message or activity that reduces stigma
 - Decide who their audience is (students, teachers, everyone?)
- Groups can share their ideas with the class at the end.

Optional Extension:

- Turn the best campaign ideas into real action steps for your class, club, or school! This is a great lead-in to partnering with your school’s Aavidum Club.

WRAP-UP (5 MINUTES)

Ask students to finish this sentence: “One way I can advocate for mental health is _____.”

Affirmation:

“Your voice matters. You can help change your school by speaking up, showing kindness, and having people’s backs. That’s what Aavidum is all about.”