Grade 8

Identity-Affirming Approach to Teaching and Learning

As you plan to engage in these lessons and activities, consider students' varied strengths, needs, identities and experiences. Consider if there is anything you would add or adapt to affirm the identities of students. These learning activities provide a starting place but use your professional judgement and collaboration with students and/or parents/caregivers to differentiate as needed.

Core Lessons
Ministry of Education Health & Physical Education Modules
Learning Activites
Consolidation of Learning

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Get to Know Each Other: Start building a learning community with activities focused on identity-affirming relationships and caring connections.	**Change Perspectives:** Help students consider stigma related to mental health and mental illness and how they can decrease it by changing their thoughts, words, and actions. Reframing the words we say to ourselves is also an important mental health strategy.		**Discover Skills and Connections:** This set of curated activities and resources supports students to be aware of their own needs and preferences, to self-advocate, and to build their help-seeking behaviours. As students try new strategies, remember to leave space for their ideas as well as their varied strengths, needs, and identities.				**Share Support:** Teach students how to notice when friends may be in need of help and the steps students can take to support them while also caring for their own mental health.	**Review and Reflect:** Take a moment to pause and help students reflect on what they have learned about mental health and themselves.	**Celebrate and Anticipate:** Help students prepare for transition by celebrating the current school year (including all they are grateful for, love, and value), preparing for summer, and looking forward to the next grade.
The First 10 Days (and Beyond)	**Virtual Field Trip** Thought Changing Lesson plan	**Module 8.1** Mental Health and Stigma	**Virtual Field Trip** Muscle Relaxation Lesson Plan	**Module 8.2** Supporting Our Mental Health – Managing Stress	**Virtual Field Trip** Visualization Lesson Plan	**Start Well**	**Module 8.3** How to Help a Friend – Seeking Support for Others While Caring for Ourselves	**Key Learnings and Reflection Questions** Review and Reflect	Celebration and Transition Tip Sheet
Grab and Go Activities: I in Image	Thought Changing Exercises	**Walking in your shoes** Everyday Mental Health or Faith and Wellness							
Conversation Starters Ice Breakers (cyan cards 20-25; slides 43-54)	**Realistic Thinking and Feeling** from Identification and Management of Emotions section of Everyday Mental Health or Faith and Wellness	**Kindness wall** Everyday Mental Health or Faith and Wellness	**Self-advocacy cards** in Everyday Mental Health or Faith and Wellness Muscle Relaxation Exercises Conversation Starters Handling Stress (green cards 16-19; slides 35-42) Forest Visualization				Conversation Starters Helping a Friend (purple cards 6-10; slides 15-24)		
Creating collaborative classroom norms from Healthy Relationship Skills/Being Respectful section of Everyday Mental Health or Faith and Wellness		Social Emotional Learning Posters - Focus: Four Finger Affirmations Four Finger Affirmations accessible version	Social Emotional Learning Posters - Focus: Tense and Relax Tense and Relax accessible version - Focus: Calm Place Calm Place accessible version				Self-Love Practices for Black Youth		

- Provides parent/caregiver connections and suggestions to continue the conversation

- Contains press and play videos

School Mental Health Ontario Wayfinder

Your grade by grade guide to teach about mental health