

Month at a Glance: March

Activity	Enduring Understanding	Vocabulary	Time Needed for Completion
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Help Is on the Way!	It is important to be able to identify both secure and unsafe choices that can affect your mental health.	secure, unsafe, anxiety	45 minutes
I Am Not Alone: Seeking the Help I Deserve	Knowing when to say when can help!	mental health, physical health, mental health workers, counseling	45 minutes
Say This, Not That!	Self-talk can be just as damaging or helpful as the words we receive from others.	positive self-talk, negative self-talk, motivational	45 minutes
It's Okay to Be You	Self-talk can be just as damaging or helpful as the words we receive from others.	self-talk, positive, negative	45 minutes
What would Ace Do?	Reflective opportunities.		5-30 minutes

March



Activity Plan

Title: Help is on the way!

Suggested Time: 45 minutes

Suggested Grade Level(s): 6th–8th

<p>Activity Objective:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scholars will learn that talking to others is a good way to learn to handle stressful situations more confidently. <p>Materials:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> sticky notes brain activity sheet pencil jar <p>Vocabulary:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> secure unsafe anxiety 	<p>Activity Overview: Scholars will identify common stressors. After engaging in this activity, they will understand that everyone may experience feelings of anxiety and uncertainty at some point in their lives. Knowing how to handle these feelings and who can help sometimes makes things better.</p>	
	<p>Bridge (Connect & Engage)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilitator: <i>Scholars, we hear people talk about being stressed a lot. What does it mean to be stressed? Allow scholars to share aloud. Tell them stress can look different for different people. Provide them with an age appropriate definition. Today I'd like for you to make a list on your brain sheet of the things that are currently causing you stress. It's perfectly fine if you are not stressed now. Feel free to also add those things you know have brought you stress at other times.</i>
	<p>Boost (Teach)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilitator: <i>I'm going to give you a sticky note and I want you to write the top three things (from your brain sheet) that bring you stress and place them in the jar on the table. If the students only wrote one stressor on their brain sheets, it is perfectly fine.</i> The facilitator should make a list of potential human resources available to help scholars with an explanation of their roles on the board. Examples: counselor, teacher, nurse, principal, minister, custodian, friends and family.
	<p>Build (Rehearse & Build for Transfer/Close)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The facilitator will take sticky notes out of the jar and read them. Scholars will provide feedback to the person about who they could use to help them work through their problems. Note any commonalities throughout the discussion so scholars will see that often we experience the same feelings. Talking to others is a good way to learn to handle stressful situations more confidently.

Differentiation Station

Suggestions for Remediation

Suggestions for Acceleration

Special Education & English Learner Scaffolds



Scholars can engage in peer talk with one another.

Scholars can:

- **Develop a list of positive affirmations.**
- **Create a pamphlet that contains information on who to contact for specific needs.**

Pictures and symbols of resources can be used as needed.

Google Translate can be used as needed.

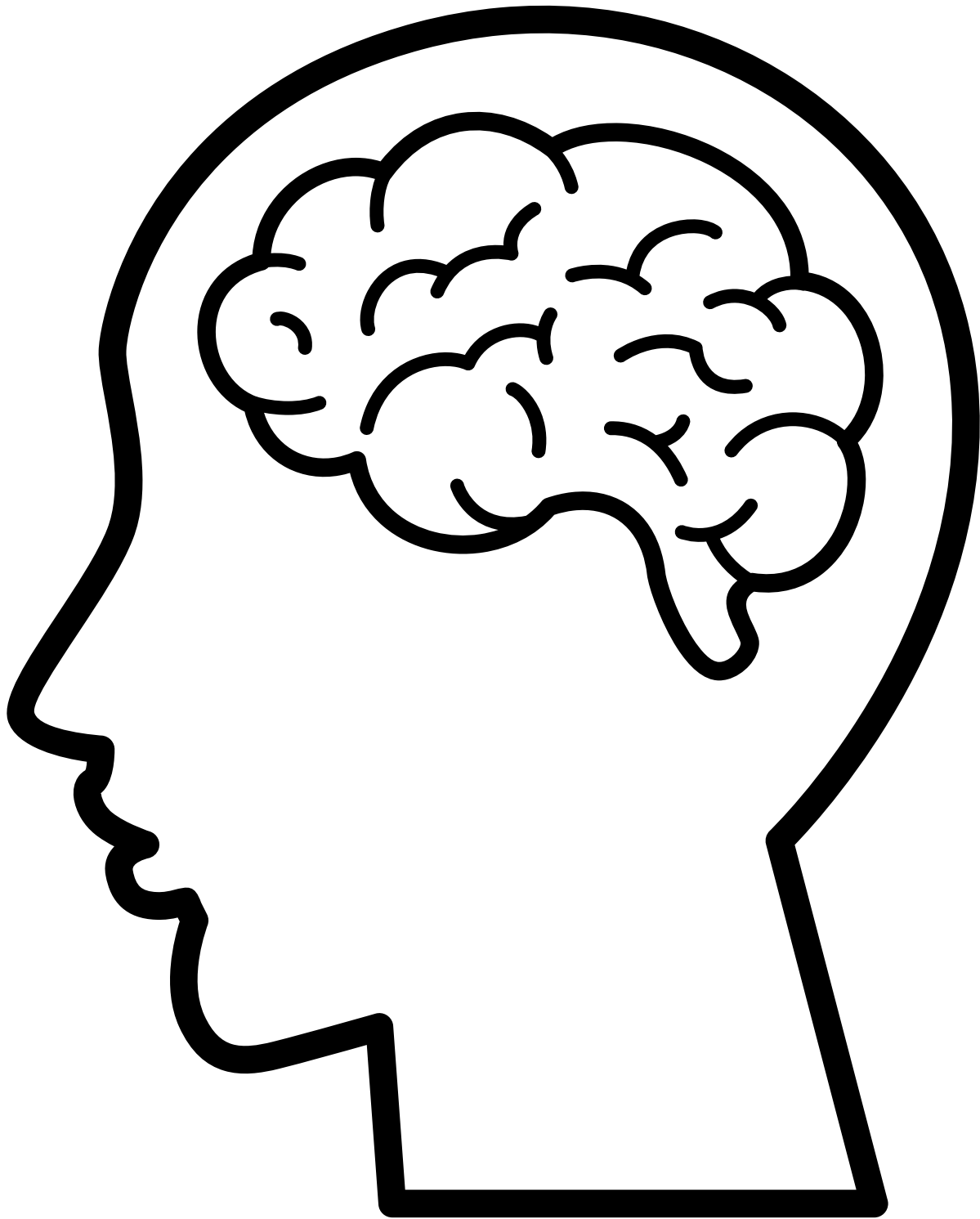
Activity Reflection:

In your journal, write about how it feels to know that there are resources available to help you work through tough issues. Based on what you heard today, who might you call on for assistance?

Supplemental Resources: Social Emotional Strategies



What's On Your Mind?



Activity Plan

Title: I Am Not Alone: Seeking the Help I Deserve

Suggested Time: 45 minutes

Suggested Grade Level(s): 6th–8th

<p>Activity Objective:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scholars will write a positive affirmation and say it daily for a month. <p>Materials:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> youtube videos flow chart journal <p>Vocabulary:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> mental health physical health mental health workers counseling 	<p>Activity Overview: Scholars will understand when and why they should seek help from a mental health resource worker. They will then examine video scenarios to help with understanding how and when to seek mental health counseling and guidance.</p>	
	<p>Bridge (Connect & Engage)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scholars will view and discuss the YouTube video "Teen Health: Mental Health Penn State PRO Wellness."
	<p>Boost (Teach)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> After the video, scholars will generate a list in their journals of common issues scholars their age deal with on a daily, weekly, and monthly basis. Facilitator: We watched a video on mental health and how it affects our lives. Think about the problems and issues you deal with on a daily, weekly, and monthly basis. As you list the issues, think about the emotions these situations might evoke in your life. Write those emotions beside each issue or problem. Please note that we experience situations in different ways and in varying degrees. We must remember to be respectful of each other's feelings, thoughts, and attitudes. Facilitator: I will divide you into groups of three and will number the groups consecutively. Each group will be responsible for one area (daily, weekly, monthly). Record your responses in your journal. You are going to examine a simple flow chart to use as a guide to help you determine if mental health assistance needs to be sought to help you deal with the daily, weekly, and monthly problems that you encounter.
	<p>Bridge (Connect & Engage)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilitator: We are going to examine a scenario. The scholar is experiencing physical and/or mental ailments. Using your journal notes and prior knowledge, you are going to determine which symptoms are physical health ailments vs. mental.



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invite the school counselor or social worker to speak to scholars about seeking help for mental and physical health issues.

Scholars can design a tshirt on mental health awareness, focus on a slogan encouraging all teens to seek the help they need.

Use PowerPoint slides identifying kids showing different emotions. Discuss when you need to ask for help to deal with your emotions.

Activity Reflection:

Scholars will answer the following questions in their journals.

- Think of a time when you have experienced some of the emotions and situations we discussed.
- Did you feel overwhelmed? How did you address the emotions you were experiencing?
- How will you address that situation in the future now that you know there is help available?

Supplemental Resources: N/A



Mental Health Flowchart

Start

Feeling overwhelmed, anxious, scared, exhausted, confused, lonely, sad, withdrawn, upset, emotionally unstable (crying, angry, sad, frustrated, defeated)? Please note this is just a small sample of some of the emotions you could be experiencing.

Talk to a parent/guardian, a trusted family adult or a teacher. If this does not help or if the adult you speak to suggests, speak with the school counselor or social worker.

Speak with the school counselor or social worker. They may suggest follow up visits, involving parents/guardians or outside mental health assistance.

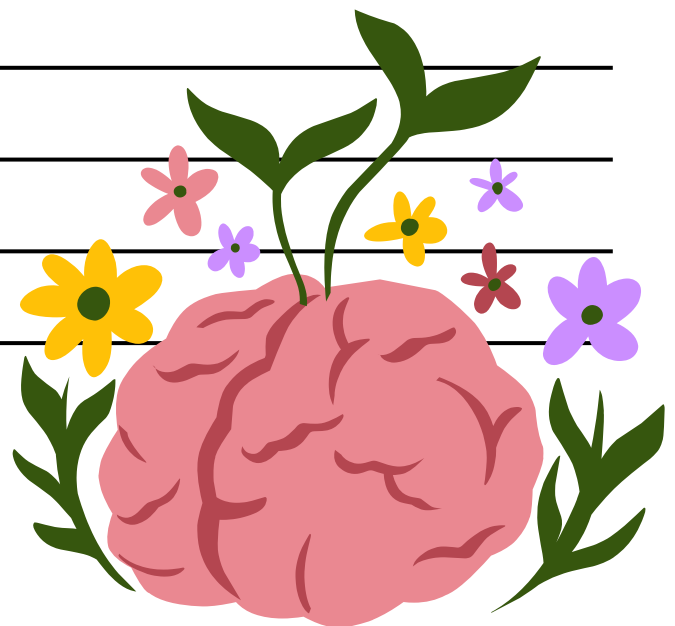
The mental health agency will provide you with the guidance needed as you work through your issues.



Scenario for Mental Health Resources

Joshua woke up Monday morning with a severe stomachache. He felt nauseous and overwhelmed about going to school. He had gym on Mondays, and he hated it! His teacher, Mr. Lombardo, insisted that he shower after gym class. Joshua is slightly overweight and selfconscious about his size. He has heard his classmates laughing at him and making negative comments. He once cried when Ben called him the Kool-Aid man. Joshua shared his anguish with Mr. Lombardo, but nothing changed and Joshua experienced a panic attack, heavy breathing, headaches, and nausea. Despite this, Joshua continued to tell his teacher when scholars made fun of him. He felt as if Mr. Lombardo was ignoring him. He now refuses to attend gym class and hides out on campus during class.

Are Joshua's symptoms physical, mental, or both? Explain.



Activity Plan

Title: Say This, Not That!

Suggested Time: Two 45-minute sessions

Suggested Grade Level(s): 6th–8th

<p>Activity Objective:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scholars will be able to distinguish between positive versus negative self-talk. <p>Materials:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> pencils self-esteem outline self-esteem profile sheet self-esteem inventory <p>Vocabulary:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> positive self-talk negative self-talk motivational 	<p>Activity Overview: Scholars will engage in a discussion that helps them to understand the impact of self-talk. They will then create positive self-talk posters.</p>	
	<p>Bridge (Connect & Engage)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilitator: <i>Self-talk can be both positive and negative. The goal is to have your self-talk be encouraging and reflect the positive characteristics and accomplishments of your daily life. What are some positive and negative thoughts you have about yourself? When you are having these thoughts, what words do you use to express them?</i> Allow scholars an opportunity to respond. Give each scholar two sticky notes and ask them to write two positive and two negative messages they tell themselves. The messages should center on personality, physical/mental attributes, character traits, etc. Designate a positive and negative wall. Allow scholars to place their sticky notes on the designated walls and discuss the scholars' responses. Allow scholars an opportunity to respond. Facilitator: <i>What feelings do your messages evoke? Do they stop or encourage you to do something? What differences do you notice about the positive vs. negative messages we tell ourselves? Which messages would be more beneficial and productive?</i>
	<p>Boost (Teach)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> After the discussion, scholars will use their positive messages to create a Positive Self Talk Motivational poster. Each scholar should have a minimum of five positive messages. Scholars will take the messages and design a motivational poster on an 8" × 10" sheet of paper. The facilitator will model what to do using two of their positive self-talk messages. The poster should be titled Scholar's name Positive Self Talk Boosters! Scholars will then share their posters. Encourage them to include drawings and/or images.

**Build (Rehearse
& Build for
Transfer/Close)**

- Scholars will play the “Positive, Negative, Neutral” game. Place a line of tape on the floor. Label one side positive, the opposite side negative, and the middle (on the line) neutral. The facilitator will call out self-talk messages and scholars will stand on the side of the line where they believe the messages will fit.
- **Example Messages:**
 - *I am not that smart.*
 - *I can't ever do anything the way I want to.*
 - *I am unique.*
 - *I am special.*
 - *I have pretty eyes.*
 - *I knew I could do it.*
 - *I am a good friend.*

Differentiation Station

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Special Education & English Learner Scaffolds



Use the book *I Like Myself* by Karen Beaumont to generate a discussion on positive self-talk and self-images.

Create a poem or rap depicting what negative vs. self-talk messages are amongst their peer group.

Scholars can work with a partner and use a **Word to Word** dictionary or Google Translate to share something positive about themselves.

Provide extended think time.

Activity Reflection:

Scholars will demonstrate positive self-talk by playing the game "Say This, Not That." Scholars will stand in a circle. The facilitator will start the game by tossing a ball and saying a negative message. The scholar who caught the ball will have to counter with a positive message.

Supplemental Resources:

Examples of Positive Self Talk—www.actionforhappiness.com



Sample Positive Self Talk Poster



Ms. C's Positive Self Talk Boosters

I am Special! I put the U in Unique!

I do what makes my soul smile!



I'm going to be ME, everyone else is taken!



Activity Plan

Title: It's Okay to Be You

Suggested Time: 45 minutes

Suggested Grade Level(s): 6th–8th

<p>Activity Objective:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scholars will be able to distinguish between positive and negative self-talk. <p>Materials:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> journals, pencils self-talk enrichment sheet <p>Vocabulary:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> self-talk positive negative 	<p>Activity Overview: Scholars will understand that positive self-talk makes a person feel good about themselves. Negative self-talk focuses on the bad and stops them from reaching their potential.</p>	
	<p>Bridge (Connect & Engage)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilitator: <i>Today we are going to talk about how positive vs. negative self-talk can affect how well we accomplish tasks. What you say to yourself and how you think about yourself can make a difference in various aspects of your life. I am going to give you a statement. Tell me how you feel about the statement. Do you think the statement is positive or negative?</i> The facilitator will read statements from the positive self-talk enrichment sheet.
	<p>Boost (Teach)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Have a class discussion on how the statements can affect the scholars' outcomes. Talk about the benefits of being positive.
	<p>Build (Rehearse & Build for Transfer/Close)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilitator: <i>In your journal, write about a time you were trying to accomplish something and it didn't work out the way you planned. What negative message would you say about the outcome of that situation? What positive messages could you say to counteract your negative messages? Example: I failed my history test last week, and I felt terrible about it. What would be a positive comeback for this statement?</i>

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Have scholars identify positive things in their lives.

Have scholars draw a picture or symbol that will help them when challenged.

Scholars can work independently or in small groups to create a positive vs. negative game.

Have scholars draw pictures and symbols that reflect positive thoughts.

Have scholars write words that make them feel happy in their native language and in English.

Google Translate can be used as needed.

Activity Reflection:

In your journal, tell Ace how you are going to overcome your next challenge by using positive self-talk.

Supplemental Resources: <https://shikahanuar.com/blog/self-esteem-activities>



Self-Talk Activity Sheet



I believe I can do anything

I can't seem to accomplish anything

I always do my best

I am a slacker

I am good at finding solutions

I can't ever seem to figure out my problems

I am a confident person; I learn from my mistakes

I always fail when I try new things

I love to help others solve problems

I hate to share my thoughts

I am smart

I feel dumb all the time

I have a great personality

I don't like to work with people



March—What Would Ace Do?



These are reflective open-ended questions for activity openers, closers, or check-ins throughout the month. The suggestion is to focus on one question and allow scholars to go as deep as possible with their responses.



How can positive thinking impact your life? Name some benefits.
How can positive thinking improve your performance? Think of a time when a friend or family member came to you because they did not do well. How would your response be different if this person came to you with this same concern today?
Think of a time when positive thinking might have changed the outcome of a situation.
Is there a such thing as too much positive thinking?