MENTAL HEALTH: YOURS, MINE AND OURS

Discussion Questions: Starting a Conversation at School

These questions are meant as discussion starters following viewing of the video “Mental Health: Yours, Mine and Ours” that can be found at z.umn.edu/cmhpbh. This is not meant as a comprehensive list; rather, it provides a variety of starter questions that facilitators may choose from and, as appropriate, add in additional questions specific to the field in which they work.

EARLY CHILDHOOD AND K-12 QUESTIONS

1. Have your thoughts about mental health and mental illness changed from watching the video? If so, how?
2. What are your thoughts on approaching children's mental health as a public health issue?
3. What does optimal mental health look like for you?
4. How can your own personal mental health influence your work with children? What can you do to ensure that there are no negative influences?
5. What is the role of early learning programs and K-12 schools in promoting optimal mental health? How might they do this?
6. What, if any, initiatives have been taken at your school to promote the mental health of students and staff? What are their strengths and how can you continue to improve them?
7. How can school-wide initiatives like Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) be implemented in a way that they not only work to promote students' positive behaviors but also actively promote optimal mental health for students and staff?
8. In what ways can you help reduce the stigma of mental illness amongst students and staff at the school you work at?
9. How do you, personally, promote the mental health of the students you work with? What impact, if any, do you think this may have on their academic achievement?
10. What are the challenges in promoting optimal mental health, especially when there may be varying levels of mental health and mental illness in your classroom? How can you go about overcoming these challenges?
11. Do you think teachers would benefit from getting more trainings about mental illness or mental well-being to better understand their students? Why or why not?