



# Empowering Young Minds



## Teacher's Guide (for Grades 4-6)

### CLASS ACTIVITIES

LOOK TO YOUTHSPEAK FOR SELF-CARE STRATEGIES, RESOURCES, INFO AND MUCH MORE!

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# Introduction

## PURPOSE

At YouthSpeak, our vision is to inspire and empower youth to live resilient and meaningful lives. Our mission is to assist youth facing challenges through leadership training and empowering them by sharing personal stories in order to promote mental health, well-being, empathy, and hope in assemblies and workshops. We aim to make sure no child or youth feels alone, and those who are struggling with mental health or challenges are connected to available support tools to improve their overall well-being.

The purpose of this teacher guide is to provide valuable and easy-to-follow awareness-building activities. This teacher's guide is a resource that teachers can use in their classrooms with their students. The activities in this teacher guide are for the Intermediate and senior divisions but may be modified for your unique classroom.

## HOW TO USE

This teacher guide has numerous activities that are designed to help students build resilience during difficult times and how to cope. They can be used in the classroom to help students understand and explore important topics such as confidence and empathy skills from a young age. Each activity has an estimated time frame and a material list at the top of the page with specific steps on how to run the activity underneath. There are also virtual alternatives for each activity so you can use these activities in your online teaching as well. Teachers do not need to follow every step for each activity and can revise the steps to suit their unique classroom.

## SAFE SPACE

Please remind students that the classroom is a safe space and encourage them to have open discussions about coping strategies and mental wellness. Discussing these topics can bring up strong thoughts and feelings, and it is important to let them know that if students are experiencing any difficult feelings and need help, that the teachers, administration, and other caring adults are always there to listen and support them

# 1. Healthy Body, Healthy Mind

## ORGANIZATION

GRADE: 4 to 6

TIME: 20-25 minutes

MATERIALS: Blackboard / whiteboard / chart paper / markers / poster board

DELIVERY: This activity can be completed both in class, and virtually over google meets.

## OBJECTIVE

To help students set personal goals for physical and emotional health. After this activity, students will incorporate what they have learned about nutrition, exercise, media and understand how these different factors affect our health.

## INSTRUCTIONS

1. Pose the question: "What does it mean to be healthy?" Record student responses on a white board at the front of the class.

Prompts:

- A. How can having an unhealthy lifestyle (eating poorly, inactivity, lack of sleep, etc.) affect you?
- B. What does it mean to have a healthy diet?
- C. What are some foods that are seen as healthy? Why do you think so?

2. Break the students into 3 groups. Each group will be given a poster board or large piece of chart paper. One group will create a list of all the different examples of exercise they can think of. Another group will create a t-chart of healthy foods and unhealthy foods, and the remaining group will create a t-chart with one column having unhealthy foods and the other column having healthy alternatives.

3. Groups will present their poster and charts to the class. Groups will then post their posters throughout the classroom or hallway. The teacher should explain to students that this is valuable information that can be used as a good resource to them and others in their school community.

## MODIFIED VIRTUAL CLASSROOM INSTRUCTIONS

1. Pose the question on zoom or google meets: "What does it mean to be healthy?" As students reply on video or in the chat, the responses should be recorded by the teacher on a padlet or google document that is being shared for the entire class to see.

Prompts:

- A. How can having an unhealthy lifestyle (eating poorly, inactivity, lack of sleep, etc.) affect you?
  - B. What does it mean when someone says that you should eat healthy foods or have a healthy diet?
  - C. What are some foods that are considered to be healthy? Why is that so?
2. Divide the students up into 3 breakout rooms. Each group will be instructed to collaborate on a google document. One group will create a list of all the different examples of exercise they can think of. Another group will create a t-chart of healthy foods and unhealthy foods, the remaining group will create a t-chart with one column having unhealthy foods and the other column having healthy alternatives.
3. Groups will present their poster and charts to the class via zoom or google meets. Groups will then post their posters in their online classroom. Explain to students that this is valuable information that can be used as a good resource to them and others in their school community.

# 2. Body Image and the Media

## ORGANIZATION

GRADE: 4 to 6

TIME: 20–25 minutes

MATERIALS: Blackboard / whiteboard / handout /

DELIVERY: This activity can be completed both in class, and virtually over google meets.

## OBJECTIVE

To educate students on the power that the media can have on their bodies and body image. In this activity, students will acquire tools to resist media messages that negatively portray body image and self esteem. Students will become familiar with the different forms of media and create personal goals to help reduce the negative impact of the media.

## INSTRUCTIONS

1. Assign students to groups and have them brainstorm about what the word “media” means to them. Students should list all the different types of media they engage with.

Prompts:

- A. Do you watch TV?
- B. Do you go on social media?
- C. Do you browse the web?
- D. Do you play video games?
- E. What do you like or dislike about the different forms of media?

2. Students will fill out a handout or chart. The handout can be found below. It has a t-chart with columns that state the type of Media, what they ARE and are NOT doing while engaging with that media, and how this type of media impacts their body image.

Type of Media	What are you doing?	What are you NOT doing?	How does this type of media impact your body image?

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3. Choose one student to help you model a role-play conversation. The conversation will involve somebody talking to a student about the dangers of media and the other person will be the student. Use arguments that focus on physical health as well as body image.
4. Break students into partners and try similar role-plays on their own. Once they have role-played one way, have them switch roles.
5. Conduct a follow-up discussion. This discussion will be about what students have learned and what they may consider doing differently in the real world.
6. Students will create a personal goal. The goal will be around reducing the negative impact of the media and steps to ensure they reach their goal.

## MODIFIED VIRTUAL CLASSROOM INSTRUCTIONS

1. Assign students to breakout rooms over zoom. In their breakout rooms students will brainstorm about what the word “media” means to them. Students should list all the different types of media they engage with. They will record their answers on a group google document.

Prompts:

- F. Do you watch TV?
- G. Do you go on social media?
- H. Do you browse the web?
- I. Do you play video games?
- J. What do you like or dislike about the different forms of media?

2. Students will fill out a handout or chart. The handout should be made available on google documents prior. It has a t-chart with columns that state the type of Media, what they ARE and are NOT doing while engaging with that media and address how this type of media impacts their body image.

Type of Media	What ARE you doing?	What are you NOT doing?	How does this type of media impact your body image?

3. Choose one student to help you model a role-play conversation. This can take place over zoom or google meets with the class observing. The conversation will involve somebody talking to a student about the dangers of media and the other person will be the student. Use arguments that focus on physical health as well as body image.
4. Break students into partners and assign them to breakout rooms. Students will try similar role-plays on their own. Once they have role-played one way, have them switch roles.
5. Conduct a follow-up discussion via zoom or google meets. This discussion will be about what students have learned and what they may consider doing differently in the real world. Students may respond on camera or in the chat box.
6. Students will create a personal goal. The goal will be around reducing the negative impact of the media and steps to ensure they reach their goal.

# 3. Growing Self Confidence

## ORGANIZATION

GRADE: 4 to 6

TIME: 20–25 minutes

MATERIALS: Blackboard / whiteboard / paper /

DELIVERY: This activity can be completed both in class, and virtually over google meets.

## OBJECTIVE

To help students build up their confidence and self esteem. By the end of this activity, students will be able to come up with strategies and tools to cope with situations where they have previously lacked confidence. This exercise will help students take control of their development and give them ownership over their own well-being.

## INSTRUCTIONS

1. Students will be asked to recall a situation where they felt confident. They will write responses to these questions in their notebooks.
  - What is the situation?
  - How did you feel?
  - What did you say to yourself?
  - Did you have any feelings or sensations in your body?
  - What did you do as a result?
2. Students will be asked to recall a situation where they lacked confidence. Students will complete the same 5 questions.
3. Lastly, students will answer these questions
  - What is a positive statement I can say to myself during this situation to be reminded of my power?
  - What could I do that will help me feel different?
  - What could I do differently next time?
  - What actions could empower me?
4. Students may share their answers with the class and come up with a variety of different strategies to feel confident in difficult situations.

## MODIFIED VIRTUAL CLASSROOM INSTRUCTIONS

1. Students will share a situation where they felt confident. This can be through discussion over zoom or google meets or in the chat. They will then record responses to these questions in their notebooks or online documents.
  - What is the situation?
  - How do you feel?
  - What do you say to yourself?
  - Do you have any feelings or sensations in your body?
  - What do you do as a result?
2. Students will think of another time where they lacked confidence. Students will complete the same 5 questions.
3. Lastly, students will answer these questions
  - What could I say to myself during this situation that will help make me more confident?
  - What could I do that will help me feel different?
  - What could I do differently next time?
  - What actions could empower me?
4. Students may share their answers with the class over zoom and google meets. If students do not feel comfortable they could post in the chat. As a class, come up with a variety of different strategies to feel confident in difficult situations.

# 4. Goal Setting

## ORGANIZATION

GRADE: 4 to 6

TIME: 20–25 minutes

MATERIALS: Blackboard / whiteboard / T-Chart

DELIVERY: This activity can be completed both in class, and virtually over google meets.

## OBJECTIVE

To help students set meaningful goals connected with their personal values. By the end of this activity, students will recognize their ability to meet the goals they set for themselves. This will build a solid foundation of self-esteem and increase their confidence and self-worth.

## INSTRUCTIONS

1. The teacher will ask the class to list specific things they would like to accomplish in their life? Students should try to make these goals as specific as possible. Students will be given the handout below and record their answers in the first column.
2. In the second column, students will be asked to dig deeper. The second column will ask students WHY they want to accomplish this? Why is it important to you? This will give students internal motivation and reasoning behind their goals.
3. The last column will be used as a ranking system for their goals. Students will assign a number to each personal goal. 0 will mean the goal is not important to them and 10 will mean the goal is very meaningful.

The chart is seen below.

What are some things I want to accomplish in my life?	Why do I want to accomplish this? Why is it important?	How meaningful is this to me? (Please rank on a scale of 0 to 10)

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4. By the end of this assignment students will have a list of personal goals and the internal meanings behind each one. This activity is a stepping stone towards confidence, motivation and self-worth.

## MODIFIED VIRTUAL CLASSROOM INSTRUCTIONS

1. The teacher will ask the class to list specific things they would like to accomplish in their life? Students should try to make these goals as specific as possible. Students will be instructed to fill out the handout below. The handout should be available in an online class format such as a google document. Students will record their answers in the first column.
2. In the second column, students will be asked to dig deeper. The second column will ask students why they want to accomplish this? Why is it important to you? This will give students internal motivation and reasoning behind their goals.
3. The last column will be used as a ranking system for their goals. Students will assign a number to each personal goal. 0 will mean the goal is not important to them and 10 will mean the goal is very meaningful.

The chart is seen below.

What are some things I want to accomplish in my life?	Why do I want to accomplish this? Why is it important?	How meaningful is this to me? (Please rank on a scale of 0 to 10)

4. By the end of this assignment students will have a list of personal goals and the internal meanings behind each one. This activity is a stepping stone towards confidence, motivation and self-worth.

# 5. Learning from Failure

## ORGANIZATION

GRADE: 4 to 6

TIME: 20–25 minutes

MATERIALS: Blackboard / whiteboard / t-chart /

DELIVERY: This activity can be completed both in class, and virtually over google meets.

## OBJECTIVE

To help students accept their failures and use these experiences as a positive tool for self-growth. By the end of this activity, students will be able to recognize that disappointment is part of life and can be a stepping stone towards greater success.

## INSTRUCTIONS

1. Students will be asked to recall a situation that negatively impacted their self-esteem. (Example: failure, being let down, etc.) The student will record their response in the left hand column of the t-chart found below.
2. Students will record their initial feelings and thoughts in the middle column. (Examples: angry, feeling worthless, not good enough, sad, disappointed etc.)
3. The third column will be an objective description of the situation that is fact-based.
4. The last column will state What can I learn from this? This will help students view these situations as stepping stones and learning experiences.

What is a situation that impacted your self-esteem?	How did you feel? Did you have any judgments?	What really happened? (Objective description)	What can I learn from this?

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5. This activity is used as a way for students to look past initial emotion and not view failures as good or bad but rather a learning experience. A lot of factors go into failure, it is important to learn and not let failure impact your self-worth.

## MODIFIED VIRTUAL CLASSROOM INSTRUCTIONS

1. Students will be asked to recall a situation that negatively impacted their self-esteem. (Example: failure, being let down, etc.) The student will record their response in the left hand column of the t-chart found below. This chart will be available for editing on google documents.
2. Students will record their initial feelings and thoughts in the middle column. (Examples: angry, feeling worthless, not good enough, sad, disappointed etc.)
3. The third column will be an objective description of the situation that is fact-based.
4. The last column will state “What can I learn from this?” This will help students view these situations as stepping stones and learning experiences.

What is a situation that impacted your self-esteem?	How did you feel? Did you have any judgments?	What really happened? (Objective description)

5. This activity is used as a way for students to look past initial emotion and not view failures as good or bad but rather a learning experience. A lot of factors go into failure, it is important to learn and not let failure impact your self-worth.

# Booklists to Check Out

11 Children's Books About Bullying, Teasing & Empathy

<https://www.familyeducation.com/life/dealing-bullies/lets-get-along-11-childrens-books-about-bullying-teasing-empathy>

As Seen on CTV: Kids' Books That Address Mental Health & Wellness

<https://vikkivansickle.com/2020/01/22/as-seen-on-ctv-kids-books-that-address-mental-health-wellness/>

19 Must-Read Books to Help Kids Understand Their Emotional and Mental Health

<https://thriveglobal.com/stories/19-must-read-books-to-help-kids-understand-their-emotional-and-mental-health/>

44 Children's Books About Mental Health: Best books for helping kids understand emotional and learning challenges

<https://childmind.org/article/best-childrens-books-about-mental-health/>

11 Enlightening and Empathetic YA Novels About Mental Illness

<https://www.readbrightly.com/enlightening-empathetic-ya-novels-about-mental-illness/>

12 Kid-Approved Middle Grade Books That Tackle Mental Health

<https://www.readbrightly.com/kid-approved-middle-grade-books-mental-health/>

# Resources

- Kids Help Phone: Text- 686868 (24/7 support)  
<https://kidshelpphone.ca/>
- Find trusted, culturally competent therapists that know our feelings and can help navigate being a strong, black woman.  
<https://therapyforblackgirls.com/>
- Black Youth Helpline: a Black youth specific service, positioned and resourced to promote access to professional, culturally appropriate support for youth, families and schools.  
<https://blackyouth.ca/> +1416-285-9944 / +1833-294-8650
- Naseeha is a 12pm-12am confidential & anonymous helpline for Muslim youth to discuss mental health & wellness struggles.  
Text: 1-866-627-3342 Phone: 1-866-627-3342
- Youth Line offers confidential and non-judgmental peer support through our telephone, text and chat services.  
<https://www.youthline.ca/> +1647-694-4275
- Hope For Wellness is a 24/7 helpline for indigenous peoples and the chat is online at their website, phone and chat counseling is available in English and French. On request, phone counseling is also available in: Cree, Ojibway, and Inuktitut.  
Phone: 1-855-242-3310 [www.hopeforwellness.ca](http://www.hopeforwellness.ca)
- If you or someone you know is in crisis or requires immediate support, please contact 310-COPE at 1-855-310-COPE (2673) or visit your nearest emergency department.
- Autistic Self-Advocacy Network (ASAN): to empower autistic people across the world to take control of their own lives through public policy advocacy, the development of autistic cultural activities, and leadership training for autistic self-advocates. <https://autisticadvocacy.org/>

## **Apps for Students:**

- Calm: This app teaches activities to help you sleep, breathe and relax.
- Headspace: Options customized for three age groups—under 5, 6–8, and 9–12. Plus, parents can use the adult version to practice breathing alongside their child.
- HelloMind: Young worriers can significantly benefit from HelloMind, an app which helps change negative thought patterns.
- Smiling Mind: It is designed to help youth through the stresses, and challenges of daily life. It offers programs for a variety of age groups, including 7–9, 10–12, 13–15, 16–18 and adults.
- MindShift: Scientifically proven strategies based on Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) to help you learn to relax and be mindful, develop more effective ways of thinking, and use active steps to take charge of your anxiety.

# Want to Get Involved and Help Empower Other Youth and Inspire Change?

*Here are some ways you can support:*

- Join an event committee
- Attend our events
- Join our Board of Directors
- Follow us on social media



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- Donate to Canada Helps
  - You can click the "Donate" Button on the [www.youthspeak.ca](http://www.youthspeak.ca) homepage
  - OR this link will take you straight to the donation page  
[https://www.canadahelps.org/en/charities/youthspeak-performance-charity-organization/?utm\\_expid=.Z0WUQV4rT9mKtKTxtGPdnw.0&utm\\_referrer=https%3A%2F%2Fyouthspeak.ca%2F](https://www.canadahelps.org/en/charities/youthspeak-performance-charity-organization/?utm_expid=.Z0WUQV4rT9mKtKTxtGPdnw.0&utm_referrer=https%3A%2F%2Fyouthspeak.ca%2F)
- Share your special skills with our team of youth to help build their leadership skills
- Perform administrative tasks that are important behind the scenes work

[www.youthspeak.ca](http://www.youthspeak.ca)

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