

# BE KIND TO YOUR MIND

The beginning of a new school year is a great time to talk with students about the basics of mental health. Beginning and continuing conversations with young people about wellbeing shows that it's good to acknowledge feelings and seek help when they need it.

By being consistently open about the existence and importance of mental health, you lead by example. We hear a lot about physical health, keeping our bodies healthy and strong, but mental health is just as important. There are things we can do to "be kind to our minds."

As you share the "Be Kind to Your Mind" water bottles with your students, it is a great time to discuss mental health. Try incorporating these important messages into your morning meetings.



**Being mentally healthy does not mean being happy all of the time. You are human, which means it's normal – and healthy! – to have all sorts of feelings throughout the day. Try noticing and naming your feelings to help you understand them. You might say to yourself, "I feel happy," "I feel angry right now," or "I feel proud."**



**Mental health is about our feelings, our thinking, our emotions, and our moods.**

**Talking about these things is an important part of being mentally healthy. Find a trusted adult – or even a good friend – to share your feelings with.**



**The thoughts in our brains – the stuff we tell ourselves – have a big impact on our mental health.**

**Our thoughts can help or hurt us, depending on what we're thinking. Part of being "kind to your mind" is treating yourself as kindly as you would a friend.**



**Positive thoughts are really helpful.**

**Thoughts like "I am a good person," "It's OK that I'm not perfect," "we all make mistakes sometimes," and "I will focus on things I CAN control" make a big difference.**



**DID YOU KNOW?** About 1 in 7 kids ages 5 to 15 will experience at least one "severe mental disorder." That number climbs to 1 in 5 during the teen years (ages 13 - 18). (National Alliance on Mental Illness, NAMI)

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Welcome to a new school year! We're excited for the year ahead.

Everyone has a water bottle that says "Be Kind to Your Mind"...

but what does that mean?

The thoughts in our brains — the stuff we tell ourselves — have a big impact on our mental health. Our thoughts can help or hurt us, depending on what we're thinking. Positive thinking is one big way we can "be kind to our minds."



Here are some examples of positive thinking. Can you fill in your own?



Remember, being mentally healthy does not mean being happy all of the time. Being "kind to your mind" also means naming your feelings and sharing them with people you trust.