



Mental Health Awareness Week

It's OK to Not Be OK



Grades 5-8

IT'S OK TO SAY SOMETHING

Time: 15 minutes

Materials: Poster paper or butcher block paper, markers

Directions:

This activity is a discussion about how to start a conversation about mental health with a friend or classmate. You will then use some of their conversation-starting ideas to create a student-made list on the poster paper.

Ask **“What are some signs that a classmate may be struggling with their mental health?”**

Answers may include poor hygiene, withdrawing, not eating, dark and depressive talk on social media, missing school, quitting activities they once enjoyed, etc.

Now ask, **“How could you let them know you are worried and want to help? What might you say?”** Students can use ideas generated in Thursday’s lesson, “Getting Help.”

“What could you do if they don’t want to talk?” Discuss as a class.

Using your poster paper, write “It’s OK to not be OK” in the middle. Then, you will ask the following question to the class, but instead of letting them discuss it, have each student write something on the poster.

“Let’s say that YOU are the one who is struggling with your mental health. What would you want to hear from your friends or classmates? What might get you to talk?”

Each student can add something to the poster, using different colors of markers, and you’ll be left with a great reminder of how to start that important conversation.

