



# Understanding Mental Wellness



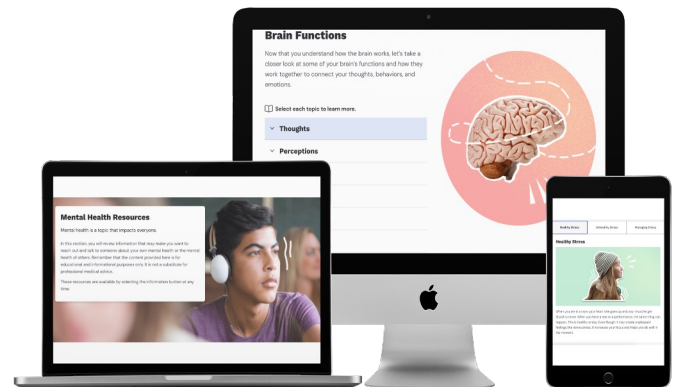
FREE DIGITAL LESSONS

## Take Steps to Build Your Students' Mental Wellness

The National Association of School Psychologists states, "According to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (2021), one in five children and adolescents experience a mental health problem during their school years." Schools provide an ideal context for prevention, intervention, and positive development for students in the mental health space which can allow discussions around feelings and emotions become more natural for our nation's youth.<sup>1</sup>

The *Understanding Mental Wellness* curriculum is a digital program that teaches students the importance of paying attention to their mental health and the ways in which they can implement coping strategies to manage their own challenging thoughts, emotions, and behaviors.

[Source<sup>1</sup>](#)



**Grade Level:** 8 - 10

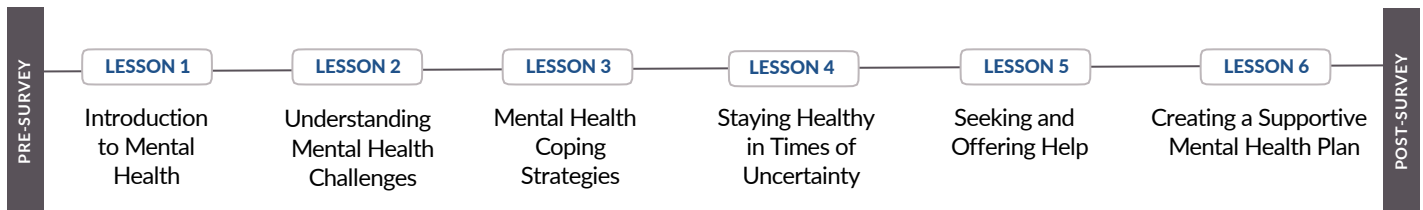
**Total Lessons:** 6 digital lessons; 10-15 minutes each

**Curriculum Fit:** Health or Advisory

**Standards Alignment:** National Health Education Standards (NHES); State Academic Health Standards

### THE LEARNING EXPERIENCE

- EVERFI's self-guided, interactive lessons help students develop simple, actionable strategies.
- Real-world scenarios prime students for long-term behavioral change using problem-solving and self-reflection activities.
- Detailed score reports and offline extension activities help teachers maximize their impact across all students.



EACH LESSON HAS A PRE- AND POST-ASSESSMENT WITH REAL-TIME SCORE REPORTING

“Going through this EVERFI course and understanding causes of stress and mental illnesses made me more aware of my situation. I realized that I didn’t have a balance and through this course, I was able to reduce stress by stabilizing my schedule, which almost immediately improved my overall well-being. If fear and anxiety had gotten in the way, I never would be able to do what I do currently.”

— Alisha, High School student in New York

## LESSON SCOPE AND SEQUENCE

### 1. Introduction to Mental Health

Define mental health, List behaviors and factors that maintain and contribute to positive mental health, Define stress and explain how it interacts with mental health, List behaviors and factors that threaten mental health.

**Activity:** What is stress?

### 2. Understanding Mental Health Challenges

Identify warning signs of a mental health condition, Explain how the functions of the brain affect the emotional, intellectual, and behavioral actions of a person, Explain how trauma impacts mental and physical health.

**Activity:** What does mental health mean to you?

### 3. Mental Health Coping Strategies

Identify emotional, intellectual, physical and social factors that can support or impact mental health, Explain how coping strategies can impact mental health, Identify how self-talk can impact mental health.

**Activity:** Practice coping strategies

### 4. Staying Healthy in Times of Uncertainty

Understand the ways that uncertainty and change impact mental health, Explain the ways that your environment and sudden life changes are connected to mental health, Examine the ways that basic needs are connected to mental health needs and overall health.

**Activity:** Developing Resilience

### 5. Seeking and Offering Help

Identify observable and non-observable warning signs of a mental health challenges, Identify how stigma prevents people from seeking support for mental health issues, List ways to combat the stigma of mental health issues, Understand consequences of not seeking help for mental health issues.

**Activity:** Reducing stigma

### 6. Creating a Supportive Mental Health Plan

Understand signs of mental health distress, Understand available resources for support, Apply coping strategies like reframing negative self-talk, Evaluate ways to respond to others experiencing a mental health challenge

**Activity:** Create a mental health action plan

## LESSON ACTIVITIES:


### Lesson 1

**Reflecting on Stress**

Some stress can be helpful to growing, learning or taking important actions but too much stress could harm our physical and emotional health.

Can you think of any situations when stress was good for your body and mind?

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### Lesson 2

**Reflecting on Health Problems**

Our bodies and minds have lots of ways of telling us when there is a problem.

Think about some times recently when you were not feeling well physically. How did you know something was wrong?

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### Lesson 3

**Self-Talk**


Although we may experience different thoughts about ourselves, they may not always be accurate.

When you speak to yourself with kindness, it can create a positive cycle, but when your self-talk is unkind, it creates a negative cycle.

Both types of self-talk are natural. If your self-talk is positive, it can help you practice self-compassion. If your self-talk is negative, you can reframe those thoughts to break the cycle.

Let's review different kinds of negative self-talk and how to reframe those thoughts.

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### Lesson 4


**Why Is Uncertainty Challenging?**

Times of uncertainty present challenges to your mental health. When things feel unpredictable or out of control, your brain may experience feelings of stress.

Just like there are coping strategies for other mental health challenges, there are also strategies you can use in times of uncertainty.

Let's find out what you already know.

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