EDC Education Development Center

Mental Health for All

EDC's digital and scalable mental health education and skills training package for youth

Our Vision

EDC designed *Mental Health for All* to help de-stigmatize seeking mental health care and to deliver scalable, effective mental health education and skills interventions for youth that, when practiced, can help them thrive. Mental health education offers a deeper approach than psychosocial support, yet it is less specialized and resource intensive than mental health treatment. *Mental Health for All* represents a new category of intervention that makes evidence-based psychological approaches from cognitive behavioral therapy, acceptance and commitment therapy, and dialectical behavior therapy foundations accessible to large numbers of youth worldwide.

EDC believes these practices can be re-packaged for specific audiences and contexts and taught to teachers, paraprofessionals, trainers, and other supportive adults for teaching directly to youth. Building a toolkit of evidence-based practices to increase young people's capacity to meet life's challenges is part of our global responsibility—especially in contexts where trauma and stress exposure is the norm, and access to professional mental health services is limited.

EDC developed *Mental Health for All* by adapting and contextualizing evidence-based psychological treatments into a skills-based mental health curriculum. The curriculum is designed to be delivered in groups by non-clinicians with minimal training. Consistent with a rights-based approach, *Mental Health for All* centers on the belief that young people are capable of learning effective self-help approaches that will enable them to maintain good mental health and help prevent mental health disorders from forming or worsening.

Mental Health for All incorporates multiple evidence-based practices that are proven to yield the following results:

Reduce mental health symptoms

Increase emotion regulation skills and coping abilities

Improve overall resilience

The *Mental Health for All* Package: Clinical Approaches Adapted for Lay Administration

Mental Health for All is composed of a core set of seven modules and five optional modules, designed to be administered sequentially by non-clinicians in both in-school and out-of-school community-based settings. The core curriculum can be administered in 16 hours, and the full curriculum can be delivered in about 24 hours. The curriculum can be delivered as a stand-alone curriculum or as an integrated component of broader programming.

Mental Health for All Core package:
16 hours instructional time

Developing Emotional Awareness
- Primary & Secondary Emotions
- Building Emotional Awareness
- Foundations of Regulating Emotion

Building Blocks of Mental Health
- Thoughts, Feelings, and Behaviors Are Connected!
- Skill Building: Increasing Flexible Thinking
- Consequences Matter
- Healthy vs. Unhealthy Coping Strategies

Learning to Manage Depressed Feelings
- What Is Depression?
- Just Get Moving
- Skill Building: Manage Your Thinking!
- Learn to Focus on the Present Moment
- Skill Building: Mindfulness

Learning to Manage Anxious Feelings
- What Is Anxiety?
- Learning to Relax
- Skill Building: Progressive Muscle Relaxation
- Face Your Fears
- Skill Building: Manage Your Thoughts, Again!

Coping with Adversity
- Understanding Struggle and Challenge
- Learning to Accept Things that We Cannot Change
- Difference between Pain and Suffering
- Understanding and Recognizing Warning Signs

Controlling My Anger
- Healthy Ways to Express Anger
- Cycle of Anger
- Skill Building: Cognitive Flexibility
- Recognizing and Responding to Anger Triggers and Warning Signs
- Uncontrolled Anger Hurts Relationships

Putting It All Together
- Integrating All That I Have Learned
- Skill Building: Developing My Mental Health Wellness Plan

Optional Modules:
1.5-2 hours instructional time per module

Remaining Resilient After Trauma
- The Brain's Response to Traumatic Events
- Healing from a Traumatic Event
- Skill-Building: Self-Help Techniques That Can Help Us Heal

Learning to Manage Emotions Without Alcohol and Drugs
- Understanding Unhealthy Behaviors
- What Is Addiction? The Brain, Emotions, and Substances
- Skill Building: Taking Control of My Environment to Build Healthy Coping Strategies

Understanding and Learning Alternatives to Violence
- Definitions and Types of Violence
- Using Violence Is a Choice
- Mental Health Effects of Violence
- Healing from Violent Experiences

Preventing and Healing from Emotional Crises
- Signs of Suicide Risk and/or Other Crises
- What to Do if I Am Having Thoughts of Ending My Life
- How to Support Someone Else
- Skill Building: Developing a Safety Plan

Sleeping Better
- Sleep Hygiene: the ABCS of Getting Good Sleep
- The Two Rules for Improving Sleep
- Skill Building: Sleep Diary Exercise

Delivery Mechanisms

Drawing from EDC's extensive experience developing and implementing education and youth training programs, *Mental Health for All* was designed to be delivered in low-resource and low-literacy environments. It can be administered completely by radio or tablet by facilitators with limited training, blending pre-recorded content with rich participatory activities. In medium- or high-resource environments, some or all elements of the program can be used to reinforce learning and skills development in a blended learning format using multi-modal instruction.

One Product, Three Platforms for Three Environments

Audio

Interactive Audio Instruction (Radio or Tablet)

Use: Settings with low literacy, no reliable Internet, or no formal education spaces

Audio + Video

Facilitator App with Interactive Audio Instruction (IAI) + Animated Video Stories

Use: Settings with low literacy or no reliable Internet, with traditional classroom roll-out

AV + Touchscreens

Facilitator App: IAI + Animated Stories

Participant App: Practice Activities + Social Media Engagement

Use: High-resource settings where youth access cell phones + social media

LEARNING THROUGH STORYTELLING

The *Mental Health for All* curriculum is framed around the story of a family of characters to demonstrate real-life struggles with mental health issues and to model the skills that lead to healing and recovery. These are accomplished using reality-based portrayals of individuals practicing mental health skills in relatable day-to-day scenarios with examples of individuals accessing support to increase their mental health.

Building a toolkit of evidence-based practices to increase young people's capacity to meet life's challenges is part of our global responsibility.

USAID/Integrated Child And Youth Development Activity, Uganda

Innovation in Mental Health Education and Support

Mental Health for All brings numerous innovations to the field of mental health care and support, offering the following notable benefits and potential for impact.

Ability to Scale

- Administration not dependent on mental health clinicians
- Innovative digital approach (can even be administered by radio)
- Focus on universal skill development vs diagnosis and/or symptom focus

Ensures Fidelity of Implementation

- Fully audio guided and not dependent on educator's or facilitator's abilities
- Underwent external review by mental health experts

Focus on Behavior Change

- Focus on self-help and skills learning
- Multi-method instruction to reinforce key learning

Measuring Outcomes

Mental Health for All is designed to measure specific outcomes on youth mental health resulting from the intervention. Our monitoring and evaluation approach utilizes the following evidence-based outcome measurement tools:

- Hopkins System Checklist-25: Checklist of mental health symptoms
- Connor-Davidson Resilience Scale: Global resilience rating
- Mental Health Behaviors Checklist: Newly developed behavior change-focused measure

EDC is embarking on a multi-country piloting process for *Mental Health for All* in 2024. Our planned activities for piloting the curriculum include:

- Pilot the high-resource package with in- and out-of-school youth in the Philippines (May–July 2024)
- Pilot the low-resource package with in- and out-of-school youth in a low-resource setting (October–December 2024)
- Conduct process and outcome evaluation of intervention pilot (May–December 2024)

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

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Education Development Center (EDC) is a global nonprofit that advances lasting solutions to improve education, promote health, and expand economic opportunity. Since 1958, we have been a leader in designing, implementing, and evaluating powerful and innovative programs in more than 80 countries around the world.

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