

2025 Supporting Young Minds



TURN
AWARENESS »
INTO ACTION

MIHA
Mental Health America

INTRODUCTION

Young people are growing up in a world that can feel chaotic and beyond their ability to improve. Adults can make a significant difference in the lives of young people by being their allies and cultivating environments that are not only supportive but empowering.

Mental Health America has packed its 2025 Supporting Young Minds guide with resources and tools to help young people combat feelings of helplessness and hopelessness, and to help adult allies nurture youth agency and advocacy. We encourage you to use these materials alongside our 2025 State of Mental Health in America report and accompanying Spotlight on Youth Mental Health Advocacy to be a catalyst for positive change in your communities.

Thank you for taking the time to educate yourself with these resources. Together, we can support the next generation of mental health leaders.

MHA's 2025 Supporting Young Minds resources include:

Communications Materials

- Key messages

Resource Guide

- Crisis, MHA, and partner resources
- E-learning resources

Materials for Young People

- Everything feels hopeless. What now?
- Worksheet: What to do when you feel numb or don't feel anything at all
- 10 Affirmations to remind you of your power

Materials for Adults

- How to support young people in making change... without taking over
- Creating the right conditions for youth advocacy and innovation
- Classroom activity: Mental health leadership
 - Smartboard backgrounds

Crisis Poster

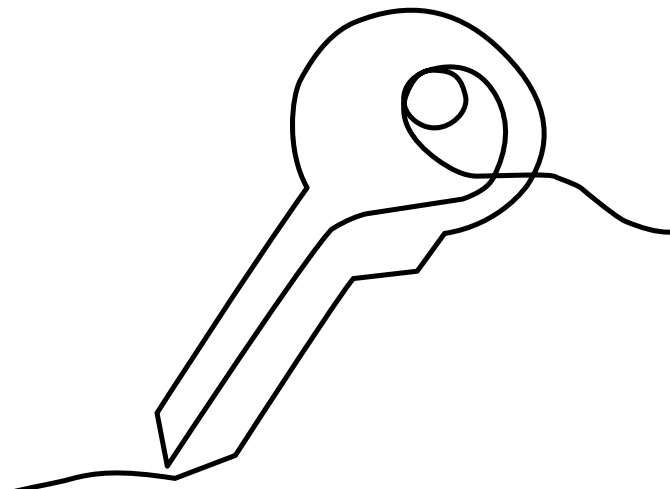
KEY MESSAGES

About the Supporting Young Minds guide

- Mental Health America (MHA) has developed the 2025 Supporting Young Minds guide to help youth recognize their feelings, build resilience, and use their voices to shape change in their schools and communities.
- The Supporting Young Minds guide includes youth-friendly worksheets, affirmation tools, information for adult allies, crisis resources, and activities designed for classrooms and community groups.

Early identification and action

- Recognizing and responding to feelings early – such as numbness, hopelessness, or being overwhelmed – helps prevent struggles from becoming crises.
- Teachers, coaches, and other school personnel are often the first to notice when a student is struggling. Their role in providing support is critical.
- MHAScreening.org is one of the fastest and easiest ways to check for mental health concerns. Youth and parents can take free, anonymous online screens to better understand symptoms and next steps.
- Knowing and addressing early signs of mental health conditions can increase the chances of recovery and positive outcomes.
- Starting a mental health journey doesn't have to be confusing. MHA's book "[Where to Start](#)" is a practical, jargon-free guide for both youth and adults to learn about mental health terms, symptoms, and self-care strategies.



Everyday leadership and youth empowerment

- Everyday leadership in mental health matters. When young people take actions like checking in on friends, standing up for themselves or others, and taking breaks for self-care, they model resilience and encourage peers to do the same.
- Adults can empower students by encouraging small steps: trying grounding exercises to reconnect to the present moment, identifying what matters most to them, or finding healthy coping strategies.
- Young people deserve to feel seen, heard, and valued.
- Creating spaces and relationships where young people feel safe, respected, and included strengthens their confidence and encourages long-term engagement in mental health leadership.
- Youth mental health programs greatly impact the outcomes of young people who are struggling, but far too often, youth voices are excluded from designing and implementing initiatives.
- Youth voices are central. Young people should not only participate but also co-design mental health programs, advocacy efforts, and school initiatives.
- Advocacy and empowerment thrive when adults act as “guides on the side,” offering tools and encouragement rather than taking over.

Supportive people and conditions

- Trust is built through consistency, listening without judgment, and following through on commitments.
- Adults should remember to support the whole person: youth are advocates, but also students, athletes, siblings, and caregivers. Balancing advocacy with well-being is essential.
- Schools and community programs can use MHA’s Supporting Young Minds guide to assess whether their environments support authentic youth leadership and advocacy.
- Small steps, supportive relationships, and shared power are the foundation of youth mental health.
- By combining early support with authentic youth empowerment, we can help young people not just survive, but thrive.