STOP STIGMA

http://standtogether.againststigma.org
Stand Together

A Social Change, Peer-to-Peer Model to Stop Stigma by Promoting Positive Change in Schools

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Stand Together is an initiative that inspires and equips youth to take action against stigma associated with mental illness and substance use disorders.
Presentation Objectives

Participants will be able to:

• start a Stand Together chapter utilizing the Stand Together curricula;
• utilize evaluation tools to collect data to demonstrate its effectiveness;
• list at least three strategies for starting and funding an anti-stigma program.
Nationally:

1 in 4 students experience mental illness and substance use disorders → 25-44% of kids drop out of school → 2/3 of students don’t receive treatment
Anti-stigma research tells us

- Most anti-stigma efforts are short-term
- Initial changes are not sustained
Anti-stigma research tells us

- Countering myths is important
- Direct contact with a person who has lived experience is more effective in changing stigmatizing attitudes
Stand Together goals

• Increase education and awareness

• Promote inclusion between adolescents and their peers with behavioral health challenges

• Encourage adolescents to reach out to a trusted adult
Advisors

- One or two per school
- Volunteer, personal interest
- Positive relationship with students
- Orientation-2 hr.
- Select students (20)
Workshops

Day 1
- Education
- First-person narrative
- Cross the Line

Day 2
- Brainstorming
- Project planning
- Goal emphasis
Technical assistance

- Paperwork
- Support
- Site visits
- MHFA
Stand Together is a peer-to-peer initiative that inspires and equips youth to take action against stigma associated with mental illness and substance use disorders. Allegheny County’s Office of Behavioral Health is engaging area middle and high school students throughout Allegheny County by providing anti-stigma training and service learning experiences. Students work to ‘stand together’ to increase education and awareness, increase social inclusion, and encourage adolescents to talk to an adult if they are concerned about their own or another student’s mental health.

**More Info:**
- Hands-on—click here to find out more about WHY Stand Together is so important
- Summary—click here for a detailed summary of the program and it’s components

Check out the 2016-2017 school projects on our YouTube channel!

**Participating Schools:**
- Armes Middle School
- Carlynton High School
- Environmental Charter School
- Propel Readeck Hill High School
- Steel Valley High School
- Steel Valley Middle School

**Website**
- Fully functional
- Meets needs of students, advisors, trainers, and administrators
- Pledge

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Recent Blog Posts

- **Minority Mental Health Month-Guest blog by TA Montaja Simmons**
  - July 24, 2017
- **Propel HS: Black-Out Stigma**
  - July 6, 2017
- **PTSD Awareness Day 2017**
  - June 27, 2017

Technology

- Facebook
- Twitter
- Instagram
- BLOG
Three tiers:

- Increasing levels of commitment
- Students must consider:
  - reach
  - impact
  - budgets
  - facilitation
  - leadership
  - marketing
- Soft skills
Tiers 1 & 2

- Pre-designed toolkits
- Set budgets
- Focus on goals

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Tier 3: Student-Designed Projects

- Mini grant-writing process
- Focus on all 3 goals in at least 3 projects
- Up to $1000 funding

Stigma: a mark of disgrace or infamy; a mark of shame or discredit. An identifying mark or characteristic.

Kissing Stigma Goodbye
WMAHS Stand Together Team
West Mifflin Area High School

Suburb located right outside Pittsburgh, PA

- School population: 1,008
- Total minority enrollment: 35%
- Total economically disadvantaged: 45%
- Female 53% Male 47%
The Evolution of the Team

2013-2014: ST introduced to our school, freshmen only
  • Students defining the term mental illness/ stigma

2014-2015: Number of students doubled (opened to all grades)
  • More of student body educated by the team with stronger activities that openly talked about MI

2015-2016: Student body & staff recognizes team
  • Guidance counselors/teachers are recommending students to join
  • Student Assistance Program becomes heavily involved

2016-2017: Stand Together becomes an official club at the WMAHS
Our Culture

• Yearly applications from all applicants (new and veterans)
• Club president, vice president, video lead, media lead, art lead
• Workshops (Fall) Must be present for both workshops/all day
• Projects are developed by the students then reviewed with sponsor (students decide the dates, materials, cost)
• Monthly club meetings
• Monthly activity usually during lunch periods
• Yearly video and end of the year programs
Projects that reflect our goals:
Educate others & create awareness
Education
In the community
Our school environment
Mental Health Art Gallery
Social inclusion
Truth Booth

Sometimes I feel alone because I don't have many friends.

I have a hard time being nice to everyone.

I feel as if I'm not good enough for anything. People have standards and I feel as though no matter what I do, I'm not good enough.

I have ADHD/Bipolar. Sometimes I struggle with my emotions and feelings.

I've been anorexic since 4th grade.
Glow Dance
Meet & greet lunch sessions
Ask an adult
Teacher training
Student training
End of the year assembly

• Showcase your accomplishments
• Chance for student team to be recognized for hard work
• Chance to reinforce our message with the student body
• Recruitment
My philosophy

• Empower the students

• Teach them how to work together

• Remind them that everyone is affected by mental health conditions in some way

• Select students based on true interest/personal history

• Student Safety: Confidentiality
  Not forcing self disclosure

• Open lines of communication
Data

- Quantitative and Qualitative Data
- Wahl Survey

Let’s take a look at the data.
School Years 2013-14, 2014-15, 2015-16

Where Stand Together Demonstrates the Most Positive Impact — Improvement in Knowledge

**Legend:**
- FY 2013-4
- FY 2014-5
- FY 2015-6

**Conclusion:**
Stand Together increases student knowledge about mental illness. Stand Together students display increased knowledge about mental illness myths and facts as illustrated by these two questions.
School Years 2013-14, 2014-15, 2015-16
Where Stand Together Demonstrates the Most Positive Impact—Improvement in Attitude

Legend:
- Purple: FY 2013-4
- Teal: FY 2014-5
- Green: FY 2015-6

Conclusion:
Stand Together impacts student attitudes toward mental illness. Students’ attitudes toward people with mental illness improve during their participation in Stand Together as illustrated by these questions.

Survey statements demonstrating the most positive change in attitude:

- People with mental illness are hurt when others use slang words for their disorders.
- Mental illness is often shown in negative ways on TV and in movies.
- People with mental illness tend to be violent and dangerous.
- A person with a mental illness is able to be a good friend.
Conclusion:
Stand Together changes attitudes toward social inclusion. Over the course of their participation in Stand Together, students display an increased desire to engage with peers who have mental illnesses as indicated by these statements.
What do schools tell us?

- Stand Together has changed the culture in their school
- Students talk more openly about mental health challenges—it isn’t a taboo subject
- Students are reaching out for help
- Students thank Stand Together members
- Students are more aware of their language
Initiating strategies

- Student/family
- Teacher/mental health professional
- Mental Health teams
- Foundations
- Government/ Mental Health entities
Funding strategies

• Foundations
• MH programs
• Grants from state or local MH/D&A funding entities
• FUNdraising
• Corporate Sponsors
• School Budget
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