

Bust Stigma and Stereotype

Activity

Resource: Ideas for Action

Grade(s): 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12

What Is it All About?

Students examine the representation of mental illness in the media and work to rewrite negative representations, with the goal of reducing the stigma of mental illness.

Why Do It?

Learning the facts about mental illness is key to breaking down stigma and stereotypes and creating a welcoming and inclusive learning environment.

How Do We Do It?

Students work in small groups of 4–5 and think of examples of entertainment media in which people with mental illness are displayed in either in a positive or negative way.

Students record their information using a Mind Map, and explain for each example whether the portrayal is accurate or whether it contributes to stigma.

Students then recreate the media or create a print advertisement that rephrases the ideas in a way that reduces the stigma of mental illness.

Student leaders must ensure that content is appropriate. Be sure to consult a teacher and/or school mental health professional and have them vet content before it is shared.

What to avoid:

- Disturbing images
- Graphic content
- Incorrect information (for example: false statistics)
- Making light of self-harm or suicidal behaviour
- Scenes showing unhealthy coping mechanisms

What Else Do We Need?

- Paper
- Writing utensils

How Do We Get Creative?

Students create a vlog or blog sharing what they've learned regarding stigma and stereotypes in the media.

Invite a guest speaker into the class to educate on stigma and stereotype around mental illness.