



# Supporting Young Minds

Resource Guide



# Resources

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## For Immediate Help

### **MHA Screening**

Online screening at [mhascreening.org](https://mhascreening.org) is one of the quickest and easiest ways to determine if you're experiencing symptoms of a mental health condition. Our screens are free, confidential, and scientifically validated.

### **988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline**

The Lifeline provides 24/7, free, and confidential support to people in distress – you don't need to be suicidal to reach out. Call 988 to be connected with a crisis counselor. Crisis counselors who speak Spanish are also available. You can also use the 988 textline if you prefer. You will complete a short survey letting the crisis counselor know a little about your situation. You will be connected with a trained crisis counselor in a crisis center who will answer the text, provide support, and share resources if needed.

### **Crisis Text Line**

If you prefer texting to talking on the phone, text "HOME" to 741-741 to be connected with a crisis counselor who will help you get through your big emotions.

### **Domestic Violence Hotline**

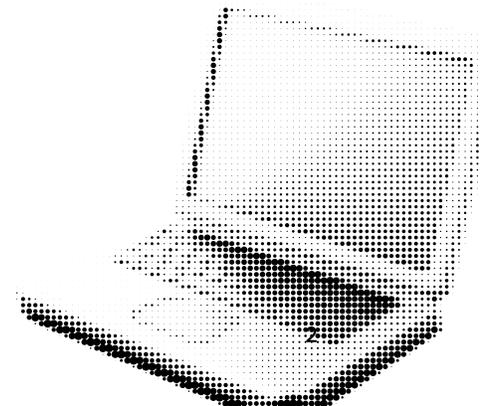
If you're experiencing domestic violence, looking for resources or information, or are questioning unhealthy aspects of your relationship, call 1-800-799-7233 or text "START" to 88788.

### **Childhelp National Child Abuse Hotline**

If you or a child you know is being hurt or doesn't feel safe at home, you can call or text 1-800-4-ACHILD (1-800-422-4453) or start an online chat at [childhelp.org](https://childhelp.org) to reach a crisis counselor. They can help you figure out next steps to work through what is happening and stay safe.

### **Teen Line**

Teen Line provides support, resources, and hope to young people through a hotline of professionally trained teen counselors, and outreach programs that destigmatize and normalize mental health. Call 800-852-8336 Nationwide (6 pm - 10 pm PST) or Text "TEEN" to 839863 (6 pm - 10 pm PST).



### **The Trevor Project**

The Trevor Project is the leading national organization providing crisis intervention and suicide prevention services to lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and questioning youth. Trained counselors are available 24/7 to youth in crisis, feeling suicidal, or in need of a safe and judgment-free person to talk to. Call 1-866- 488-7386, text "START" to 678-678, or start an online chat at [thetrevorproject.org/get-help](https://thetrevorproject.org/get-help).

### **Trans Lifeline**

Dial 877-565-8860 for US and 877-330-6366 for Canada. Trans Lifeline's Hotline is a peer support service run by trans people, for trans and questioning callers.

### **StrongHearts Native Helpline**

Call 1-844-762-8483. The StrongHearts Native Helpline is a confidential and anonymous culturally appropriate domestic violence and dating violence helpline for Native Americans, available every day from 7 am - 10 pm CT.

### **The Partnership for Drug-Free Kids Helpline**

Call 1-855-378-4373 if you are having difficulty accessing support for your family, or a loved one struggling with addiction faces care or treatment challenges, the Partnership for Drug-free Kids' specialists can guide you. Support is available in English and Spanish, from 9 am - midnight ET week days and noon - 5 pm ET on weekends.

### **Caregiver Help Desk**

Contact Caregiver Action Network's Care Support Team by dialing 855-227-3640. Staffed by caregiving experts, the Help Desk helps you find the right information you need to help you navigate your complex caregiving challenges. Caregiving experts are available 8 am - 7 pm ET.

### **The National Center for Missing & Exploited Children (NCMEC)**

NCMEC's CyberTipline is the nation's centralized reporting system for the online exploitation of children. The public and electronic service providers can make reports of suspected online enticement of children for sexual acts, child sexual molestation, child sexual abuse material, child sex tourism, child sex trafficking, unsolicited obscene materials sent to a child, misleading domain names, and misleading words or digital images on the internet. You can call 24 hours a day, 7 days a week 1-800-THE-LOST (1-800-843-5678) or visit [report.cybertip.org](https://report.cybertip.org).

### **Your Life, Your Voice Hotline**

The Boys Town National Hotline is open 24 hours a day, 365 days a year to support teens and caregivers with a variety of mental health topics such as anxiety, suicidal ideation, and relationships. The hotline is staffed by trained Boys Town counselors and is accredited by the American Association of Suicidology (AAS). Spanish-speaking counselors and translation services for more than 100 languages also are available. The speech- and hearing-impaired can contact this service at [hotline@boystown.org](mailto:hotline@boystown.org). To learn more about how to get help from BoysTown, visit [yourlifeyourvoice.org/Pages/ways-to-get-help.aspx](https://yourlifeyourvoice.org/Pages/ways-to-get-help.aspx).

### **MHA's Peer Bridger Program**

MHA launched a program providing texting support for people with mental health and addiction needs. The program is free for those living in the United States. The text line operates from 10 am to midnight 12 am ET, Monday through Friday (excluding holidays). If you're interested in trying our texting line, you can text "hello" to 571-487-7456. If you'd like, you can also share your "name" (real or made up) and what's on your mind. There's no right or wrong way to start. Learn more at [screening.mhanational.org/were-here-to-help-text-for-addiction-support](https://screening.mhanational.org/were-here-to-help-text-for-addiction-support).

## MHA Resources

### Affiliate Network

Mental Health America affiliates provide public education, information and referral, support groups, rehabilitation services as well as socialization and housing services to those confronting mental health problems and their loved ones. Many also provide family advocate services to parents of children with serious emotional disturbances, mentorship or peer support for adults recovering from mental health conditions, and professional education to those working in the mental health field. They serve as local leaders in the support and development of consumer-run initiatives and primary prevention programs, including those in schools. To find the affiliate nearest you, search at [arc.mhanational.org/find-affiliate](https://arc.mhanational.org/find-affiliate).

### Screening in Schools

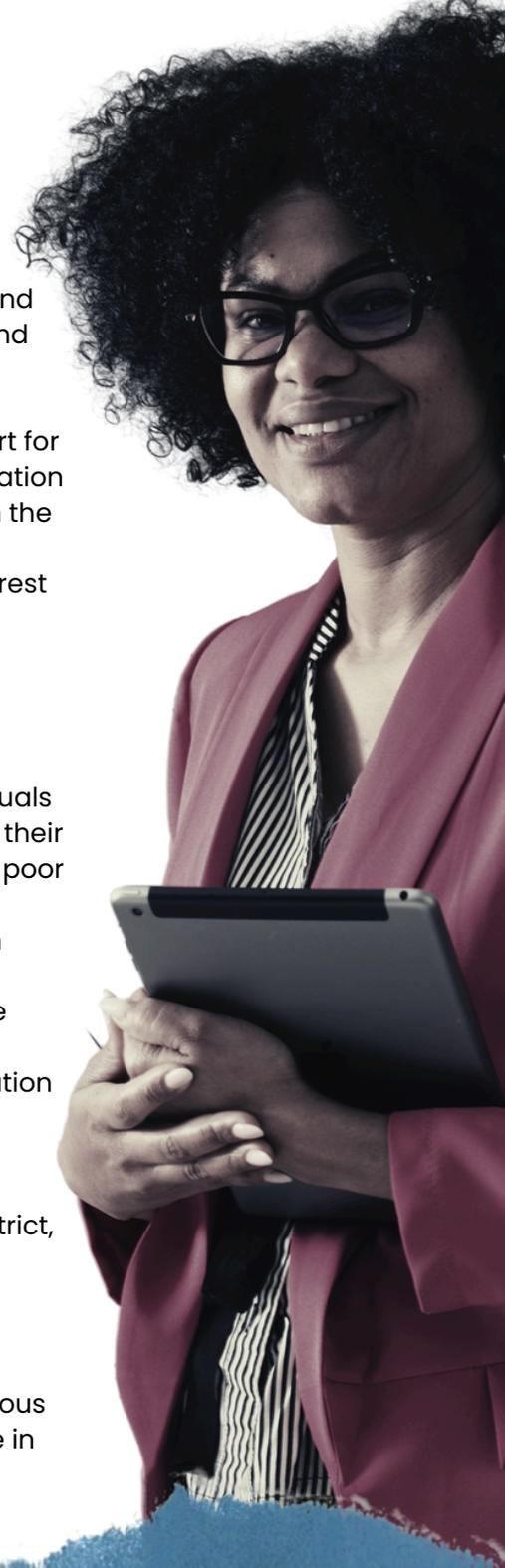
Providing mental health screenings in schools is one of the best ways to catch mental health problems when and where they are likely to arise. Fifty percent of individuals who struggle with a mental health condition will show symptoms during their adolescent years. This period is when individuals are most vulnerable to poor outcomes, but also where intervention has the best chance for building resiliency and change. Mental health screenings can be implemented in schools through:

- sharing resources with students on school posters or handouts at the health office
- providing screenings and education in health and/or physical education classes
- an extensive mental health screening and education protocol

MHA Screening is a free program designed to support schools in any district, across various levels of investment. Learn how to get started at [screening.mhanational.org/screening-tools](https://screening.mhanational.org/screening-tools).

### Youth Mental Health Toolkits

An archive of youth-focused campaign toolkits (like this one) from previous years can be found on [MHA's website](#). Some materials are also available in Spanish.



[mhanational.org](https://mhanational.org)

Contact us  
[info@mhanational.org](mailto:info@mhanational.org)

Instagram, Facebook, Threads  
[@mentalhealthamerica](https://www.instagram.com/mentalhealthamerica)

X/Twitter  
[@mentalhealtham](https://twitter.com/mentalhealtham)

## MHA's Young Leaders Initiatives

Mental Health America's youth programs empower aspiring and established young advocates to ignite their communities and build a mentally healthy future for all. Through leadership development, policy, and research, we're cultivating the next generation of mental health leaders. Young people power all of our programs, where individuals, initiatives, and knowledge converge to transform youth mental health. We provide young leaders with the tools they need to drive change in their communities. Our programs help young people expand their reach, grow their skills, and get connected to the greater ecosystem of mental health advocacy. Learn more about MHA young leaders at [mhanational.org/young-leaders](https://mhanational.org/young-leaders).

### Reports:

- [Trailblazing The Future Of Youth Peer Support](#)
- [Challenging, Sustaining, And Evolving: An Anthology On Youth Mental Health Advocacy \(And Hope\)](#)
- [Peer Support In College Mental Health Initiatives: Learning From The Peer Support Movement](#)
- [Youth And Young Adult Peer Support: Expanding Community-Driven Mental Health Resources](#)
- [Building Power To Build A Mentally Healthy World: Supporting And Advancing Youth Leadership](#)
- [Young People's Mental Health In 2020: Hope, Advocacy, And Action For The Future](#)

### Additional MHA Youth & Peer Support Resources:

- [Growing up in recovery: 3 peer programs that fill support gaps for young people](#)
- [How colleges can learn from the peer support movement](#)
- [5 ideas for building youth-centered mental health programs](#)
- [Friends & Family Information & Support](#)
- [How do I ask my friends and family for help?](#)
- [How can connecting with others help my mental health?](#)
- [How can I help someone who is self-harming?](#)
- [Who can I talk to about my mental health?](#)
- [Mental health support groups](#)



## MHA Partners & Trusted Organizations

**AAKOMA Project** builds the consciousness of youth of color and their caregivers on the recognition and importance of mental health, empowers youth and their families to seek help and manage mental health, and influences systems and services to receive and address the needs of youth of color and their families. Learn more at [aakomaproject.org](https://aakomaproject.org).

**The Alliance for a Healthier Generation** works with schools, youth-serving organizations, businesses, communities, and families to promote health equity environments that support whole child health. These programs and initiatives offer a number of resources, webinars, and learning opportunities for people who have a passion for supporting happy and healthy children.

Caregivers and Families can learn more about creating home environments where everyone can thrive at [healthiergeneration.org/campaigns/kohls-healthy-at-home](https://healthiergeneration.org/campaigns/kohls-healthy-at-home).

Schools and other youth-serving organizations can learn more about social/emotional learning, food access, family engagement and more at [healthiergeneration.org/app/resources](https://healthiergeneration.org/app/resources).

**The Cook Center for Human Connection** brings together the best organizations, programs, and products to prevent suicide, provide mental health support, and enhance human connections essential for people to thrive. The Cook Center has created My Life is Worth Living, an educational animated series that includes five powerful stories told over 20 episodes. In each episode, relatable teen characters wrestle with challenges that are all too familiar for many viewers and discover strategies to cope when it feels like their own thoughts are against them. Learn more at [mylifeisworthliving.org](https://mylifeisworthliving.org).

The Cook Center has also created Parent Guidance, a free resource that helps parents find answers to help their child(ren). Its content is led by therapists who provide trusted and specialized courses, professional support, and a safe community of parents helping each other. It includes a free “ask a therapist” feature. Learn more at: [parentguidance.org](https://parentguidance.org).

**Human Rights Campaign (HRC)** Foundation’s Welcoming Schools is the most comprehensive bias-based bullying prevention program in the nation to provide LGBTQ+ and gender-inclusive professional development training, lesson plans, booklists and resources specifically designed for educators and youth-serving professionals. The program uses an intersectional, anti-racist lens dedicated to actionable policies and practices. It uplifts school communities with tools to embrace family diversity, create LGBTQ+ and gender inclusive schools, prevent bias-based bullying and support transgender and non-binary students. Learn more at [welcomingschools.org](https://welcomingschools.org).

**imi** is a series of guides designed with and for LGBTQ+ teens to help explore and affirm their identity. Guides are free, backed by science, and help teens learn practical methods to cope with sexual and gender minority stress in ways that are helpful, relevant, inclusive and joyful. Learn more at [imi.guide](https://imi.guide).

**The Kids Mental Health Foundation** is the leading organization promoting mental health for children in the United States. They are driven to create a world where mental health is a vital part of growing up, where children’s mental health is as important as their physical health, and where we teach grown-ups the skills to help kids face and manage life’s challenges through free resources. Learn more at [kidsmentalhealthfoundation.org](https://kidsmentalhealthfoundation.org).

**The National School Boards Association (NSBA)** is a federation of state associations and the U.S. territory of the Virgin Islands that represent locally elected school board officials, serving approximately 51 million public school students. Working with and through state association members, NSBA advocates for equity and excellence in public education through school board leadership. Learn more at [nsba.org](https://nsba.org).

**The National Parent Teacher Association** offers a “Parent Toolkit” and other resources to help you and your child prepare for the academic, social and emotional milestones children may experience. Learn more at [pta.org/home/family-resources](https://pta.org/home/family-resources).

**TrevorSpace** is an affirming international community for LGBTQ young people ages 13-24. TrevorSpace helps young people explore their identities, get advice, find support, and make friends in a moderated community intentionally designed for them. Learn more at [trevorspace.org](https://trevorspace.org).

**Project Heal** works to break down systemic, health care, and financial barriers to eating disorder healing. Project Heal’s goal is to change the system and, in the meantime, provide lifesaving support to people with eating disorders who the system fails. Learn more at [theprojectheal.org](https://theprojectheal.org).

**Q Chat Space** provides live, chat-based discussion groups for LGBTQ+ and questioning teens ages 13 to 19. It is not a forum, and there is no video or audio. Everyone is chatting during the same pre-scheduled time. Q Chat Space chats are facilitated by experienced staff and volunteers from youth programs at LGBTQ+ centers across the U.S. Q Chat Space facilitators are not mental health professionals. Learn more at [qchatspace.org](https://qchatspace.org).

**Teen Talk App** is a free, safe, and anonymous space where teens can freely speak to their peers about everyday issues and their overall mental health. Teen Advisors are trained to support their peers through a wide range of experiences, including anxiety, depression, relationships, family issues, school, and more. Teen Advisors are supervised by licensed mental health professionals. Learn more at [teentalkapp.org](https://teentalkapp.org).

**The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)** through its Division of Adolescent and School Health (DASH), has identified six school-based strategies and associated approaches that can help prevent mental health problems and promote the positive behavioral and mental health of students. *Promoting Mental Health and Well-Being in Schools: An Action Guide for School and District Leaders* can be accessed at [cdc.gov/healthyyouth/mental-health-action-guide/index.html](https://cdc.gov/healthyyouth/mental-health-action-guide/index.html).

**Well Beings** provides a *Well Beings Educator Toolkit*, a comprehensive, curated collection of resources for use by educators, administrators, school support staff, counselors, social workers, and first responders who work directly with, and for young people. Learn more here: [wellbeings.org/education](https://wellbeings.org/education).

**WithAll** aims to serve millions of people with simple, accessible resources that work to reduce the risk of eating disorders through upstream prevention and help people break through practical barriers in pursuing recovery. Learn more at [withall.org](https://withall.org).

# E-Learning

MHA has webinars available to help boost knowledge for those who support young minds.

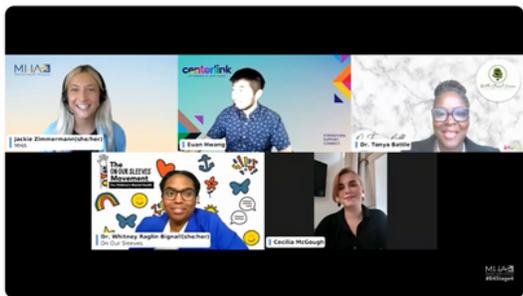
## For Parents



How Do I Prioritize My Mental Health While Parenting?



I Don't Know How to Help My Child Find Balance



Safe Spaces: How Digital Environments Can Serve Youth



I Don't Know How to Support Youth Living in a Digital World

See a complete list of MHA webinars and sign up to be notified upcoming e-learning opportunities at [mhanational.org/mha-webinars](https://mhanational.org/mha-webinars).

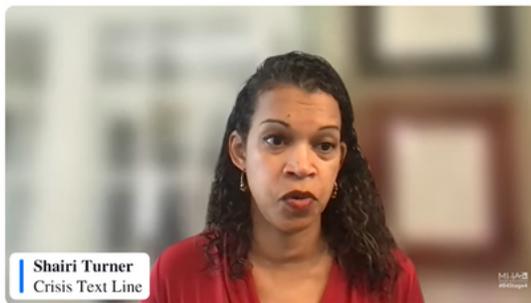
## For School Personnel



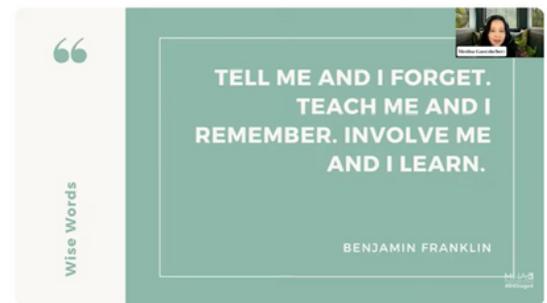
[Building a Framework for Developing a Comprehensive School-Based Mental Healthy Program](#)



[Unspoken Truths: Being a Young Person in Advocacy Spaces](#)



[Reducing the Risk of Youth Suicide: A Discussion on Education, Prevention, and Early Intervention](#)



[Back to School: Building Social-Emotional Learning Opportunities](#)

## Additional Youth-Focused Webinars

- [Becoming Kids' Role Model for Positive Food Relationship and Healthy Body Image](#)
- [Engaging Youth in Safe Online Spaces to Address Mental Health Concerns](#)
- [Exploring the Need for Cultural Consideration in Youth Crisis Care](#)
- ["Follow Me and Like My Beautiful Selfies": Social Media Use and Adolescent Mental Health](#)
- [I Don't Know How to Navigate My Child's Use of Technology](#)
- [Meeting the Mental Health Needs of Youth Before Crisis: Utilizing Warmlines](#)
- [Meeting Youth Where They Are: Prevention Programming to Support Mental Health](#)
- [Mental Health Disabilities on Campus: Student-Driven Priorities for Change](#)
- [My Child is Suicidal, and I Don't Know How to Help](#)
- [Productivity Paradox: The Impact of Success Narratives on Gen Z](#)
- [Sharing and Building Power with Youth Mental Health Leaders](#)
- [Supporting LGBTQ+ Youth in Our Communities](#)
- [Supporting Young Adults with Serious Mental Health Conditions in Post-Secondary Education](#)
- [The Distorted Mirror: Technology's Impact on Youth Body Image](#)
- [The Youth Mental Health Imperative: Expanding Early Access to Mental Health Support for Our Young People and Families](#)
- [Understanding, Connecting, & Helping Youth Mental Health Through Screening](#)
- [Where I Feel Safe: What Makes an Environment Affirming](#)
- [Wired Differently: Neurodivergence in the Digital Age](#)
- [Youth in Crisis: Supporting Youth Through School and Clinic-Based Mental Health Programs](#)

# Youth Book List

**These titles address mental health, emotions, and related topics. Read them at home, in school, or in book clubs.**

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## Pre-School & Elementary:

- **“Aaron Slater, Illustrator,”** By Andrea Beaty, illustrated by David Roberts
  - Dyslexia & coping
- **“A Bird Will Soar,”** By Alison Green Myers
  - Anxiety, worry, & family stress
- **“A Boy and a Bear: The Children’s Relaxation Book,”** By Lori Lite
  - Wellness & relaxation
- **“A Case of the Zaps,”** By Alex Boniello and April Lavalley, illustrated by James Kwan
  - Anxiety & worry
- **“Beautifully Me,”** By Nabela Noor, illustrated by Nabi H. Ali
  - Body image
- **“Cory Stories: A Kid’s Book About Living With ADHD,”** By Jeanne Kraus, illustrated by Whitney Martin
  - ADHD
- **“Dark Cloud,”** By Anna Lazowski, illustrated by Penny Neville-Lee
  - Anxiety, worry, & sadness
- **“David and the Worry Beast: Helping Children Cope with Anxiety,”** By Anne Marie Guanci
  - Anxiety & worry
- **“Don’t Feed the WorryBug,”** Written and illustrated by Andi Green
  - Anxiety & worry
- **“Ellie on the Mat,”** By Danielle Marie Price, illustrated by Nana Gonzales
  - Coping, mindfulness, & yoga
- **“Grow Happy,”** By Jon Lasser
  - Feelings & resilience
- **“How Big Are Your Worries Little Bear?,”** By Jayneen Sanders, illustrated by Stephanie Fizer Coleman
  - Anxiety & worry
- **“I Am Okay to Feel,”** By Kamaro Brown
  - Feelings & emotions
- **“Red: A Crayon’s Story,”** By Michael Hall
  - Self-discovery & resilience
- **“It’s OK: Being Kind to Yourself When Things Feel Hard,”** By Wendy O’Leary
  - Emotions, self-compassion, & affirmations
- **“The Bad Seed,”** By Jory John
  - Feelings & resilience
- **“The Calm Workbook: A Kid’s Activity Book for Relaxation and Mindfulness,”** By Imogen Harrison
  - Relaxation & mindfulness
- **“The Light She Feels Inside,”** By Gwendolyn Wallace
  - Feelings, community, & culture
- **“The Sour Grape,”** By Jory John
  - Feelings & resilience
- **“The Sun Is So Quiet,”** By Nikki Giovanni, illustrated by Ashley Bryan
  - Poems, nature, & inspiration
- **“The Way I Feel,”** By Janan Cain
  - Feelings & resilience
- **“Why Do I Feel Like This?,”** By Shinsuke Yoshitake
  - Feelings & resilience



## Middle/Intermediate:

- **“Before the Ever After,”** By Jacqueline Woodson
  - Coping & family
- **“Being You: The Body Image Book for Boys,”** By Charlotte Markey and Daniel Hart and Douglas Zacher
  - Body image & self-esteem
- **“Finding Perfect,”** By Elly Swartz
  - OCD
- **“Fish in a Tree,”** By Lynda Mullaly Hun
  - Self-acceptance, dyslexia, coping
- **“Good Different,”** By Meg Eden Kuyatt
  - Neurodivergence, emotions, & coping
- **“Inside Out and Back Again,”** By Thanhha Lai
  - Immigration, grief & coping
- **“Iveliz Explains it All,”** By Andrea Arango
  - Starting middle school, anxiety & depression
- **“OCDaniel,”** By Wesley King
  - OCD
- **“Quiet Girl In A Noisy World: An Introvert’s Story,”** By Debbie Tung
  - Self-acceptance & coping
- **“Stuff That’s Loud a Teen’s Guide to Unspiraling When OCD Gets Noisy,”** By Ben Sedley
  - OCD
- **“This Book Is a Safe Space: Cute Doodles and Therapy Strategies to Support Self-Love and Wellbeing,”** By Amy Tran
  - Coping & self-love
- **“The Science of Breakable Things,”** By Tae Keller
  - Depression, resilience, & coping
- **“You Are Enough! Your Guide to Body Image and Eating Disorder Recovery,”** By Jen Petro-Roy
  - Eating disorders & body image

## High School:

- **“Ab(solutely) Normal: Short Stories That Smash Mental Health Stereotypes,”** By Nora Shalaway and Rocky Callen (Editors)
  - Mental health conditions & healing
- **“Challenger Deep,”** By Neal Shusterman
  - Mental health conditions
- **“Darius the Great Is Not Okay,”** By Adib Khorram
  - Depression
- **“[Don’t] Call Me Crazy,”** By Kelly Jensen
  - Mental health conditions, stigma, & myths
- **“Hearts Unbroken,”** By Cynthia Leitich Smith
  - Social challenges, bullying, & race
- **“Hold Still,”** By Nina LaCour
  - Suicide, depression, & grief
- **“Home Home,”** By Lisa Allen-Agostini
  - Immigration, depression, coping
- **“How It Feels to Float,”** By Helena Fox
  - Grief, inter-generational mental illness, & loss
- **“It’s Not OK To Feel Blue (And Other Lies),”** By Scarlett Curtis
  - Mental health conditions, stigma, & myths
- **“Killing the Wittigo: Indigenous Culture-Based Approaches to Waking Up, Taking Action, and Doing the Work of Healing,”** By Suzanne Methot
  - Intergenerational trauma & Indigenous healing
- **“Restrict: A Poetic Narrative,”** By SolRivera
  - Eating disorders
- **“The Racial Trauma Handbook for Teens: CBT Skills to Heal from the Personal and Intergenerational Trauma of Racism,”** By Támara Hill
  - Intergenerational trauma, racism, & coping
- **“Turtles All the Way Down,”** By John Green
  - OCD, mental health conditions, & coping
- **“Where to Start,”** By Mental Health America
  - Mental health conditions & coping

