

# Clarifying Standard

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- 7.MEH.3.2 - Implement strategies to seek help from an adult for self-destructive thoughts or behaviors

Description of Self-Destructive Behaviors:

Examples of Self Destructive Behaviors:

Healthy Ways To Handle  
Stress:

Information on How and From Whom to Get Help:

# What is *Self-destructive behavior*?

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- *An indication that a young person is deeply sad, feels he or she is not supported by others, or feels disconnected from family, friends, or school.*
- *The behaviors may be reckless and involve risk-taking activities, which may include placing oneself in dangerous situations or failing to protect oneself.*
  - *Examples of self-destructive behaviors include*
    - *substance abuse, drug addiction, eating disorders, self-mutilation, anger management issues, and suicide.*
    - *The young person may engage in cutting, taking dares, moodiness, and withdrawing from family and friends.*
- *Self-destructive behaviors may be deliberate, impulsive, or develop into a habit.*

- *Self-destructive behaviors are **very serious and affect millions of people.***
- *And the number of young people who participate in these acts of self-harm is growing:*
  - *About two million people in the U.S. are self-injurers and approximately one per cent of the population has inflicted physical injury upon themselves at some time in their life.*
- *This is a mechanism they use as a way to cope with an overwhelming situation or feeling.*
- *It occurs as a **result of not having learned how to identify difficult feelings or express stress in a healthy way.***
- *If a student notices these changes in him/herself, help should be sought.*

- *Most teenagers respond to stressful events in their lives by doing something relaxing, trying positive and self-reliant problem solving, or seeking friendship and support from others.*
- *Common examples include*
  - *listening to music, trying to make their own decisions, daydreaming, trying to figure out solutions, keeping up friendships, watching TV, and being close to people they care about.*
- *These behaviors are appropriate for adolescents who are trying to become independent, take responsibility for themselves, and draw on friends and family for support.*

# Very Important to Understand

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- *Friends can give support and extend kindness and understanding, but an ADULT is certainly needed to intervene.*
- *Adults who are considered trustworthy and credible include parents, guardians, teachers, coaches, school nurses, guidance counselors and youth leaders.*
- *Youth learn quickly to whom they can go for help.*
- *Adults cannot keep self-destructive intent a secret.*
- *If a student has thoughts of suicide, that must be reported.*
- *The more clearly and directly a student expresses the need for assistance, the better.*

## Remember CLUES – Five Action Steps to Help a Troubled Person

**C**

***Connect.*** Make contact. Reach out, talk to him or her. Notice the pain.

**L**

***Listen.*** Take the time and really pay attention. You don't have to have all the answers. Just listen.

**U**

***Understand.*** Nod, pay attention, let him or her know you appreciate what he or she is going through.

**E**

***Express Concern.*** Say that you care, you are worried, and you want to be helpful.

**S**

***Seek Help.*** Say you want to go with him or her to talk to a third person, preferably an adult with experience and the ability to help. Don't agree to be secretive. Enlarge the circle of support.

# Video Discovery Education (17:32)

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## ● Real Life Teens: Self-Destruction

### ● Section Titles

- What is self destruction?
- What leads to self-destruction?
- Expressing negative feelings in a positive manner
- Alternatives to self destruction
- How to know if your friend needs help
- Where to turn to help
- Conclusion: Self Destruction

# Review:

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- Distribute copies of What Would You Do? (Appendix 2)
- List who you would talk to for each situation.
- All of these are examples of self-destructive thoughts or behaviors.
- How many included seeking adult assistance.

## What Would You Do?

Read the following situations and write whom you would likely seek out to help a friend facing these behaviors:

Sleeps through class and doesn't seem to care about appearance.

Who:

Goes to rest room every day after eating large amounts of junk food and has lost a lot of weight.

Who:

Seems to be angry and in a bad mood all the time.

Who:

Has started drinking alcohol.

Who:

Tells you that he/she wants to "end it all."

Who:

When dressing out you notice bruises and cuts in various stages of healing on arm.

Who:

Cries easily for no apparent reason.

Who:

Has recently quit attending all extracurricular activities and prefers to be alone.

Who:

## Guided Practice:

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- Show PowerPoint Slide #5 Clues to Help a Friend.
- Divide class into groups of five and assign each group a clue.
- Groups will create a scenario in which someone is using the clue to help a friend engaging in a self-destructive behavior.

# 5 Clues to Help a Friend

1. Connect \_ notice his or her pain and reach out
2. Listen \_ take time to pay attention
3. Understand \_ show that you care
4. Express Concern \_ say you want to be helpful
5. Seek Help \_ enlist an adult



## Closure:

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- *It is important to remember that you cannot be responsible for another person's actions when they are stressed, depressed, or suicidal. Whether they are crying out for help or suffering silently in despair, only they can help themselves. What you can do is be the most caring and responsible friend possible during the hard times. This means listening to their concerns, supporting them, and helping them get skilled help from a trusted and capable adult friend. Each of you should know who to contact and where to get help.*