

Young Adult Speaker Program

Minding Your Mind's primary objective is to provide mental health education to adolescents, teens, and young adults, as well as parents, caregivers, teachers, and school administrators. Our goal is to break the silence, reduce the stigma and destructive behaviors often associated with mental health challenges, and move away from crisis-based response to prevention through education. The **Young Adult Speaker Program** breaks down stigma by building empathy and understanding through hearing narratives of individuals who have overcome a mental health crisis.

Learning Objectives

- Develop an understanding of the stigma associated with mental health challenges among adolescents.
- Identify risk and protective factors associated with mental health challenges discussed by our young adult speaker, who experienced a mental health crisis.
- Identify action steps to reduce the stigma associated with mental health challenges, for students to better support each other.

Why it Matters

Our educational programs provide information regarding signs and symptoms of mental health challenges and conditions, in addition to emphasizing that they are treatable and help is available. It is essential that the proper information be brought to the attention of school educators, counselors, students, and their parents and caregivers.

- One in five teens between the ages of 13 and 18 live with a mental health challenge.
- The age of onset of most mental health challenges is typically during adolescence, with 50% beginning by age 14 and 75% beginning by age 24.
- The delay between onset of symptoms and intervention is 8-10 years on average.
- Suicide is now the second leading cause of death of individuals between the ages of 10 and 24.
- Over 90% of people that die from suicide had an underlying mental illness at the time of their death.
- According to the World Health Organization, depression is the leading cause of disability worldwide.¹

How it is Effective

Our speakers, dynamic young adults who have overcome a mental health crisis, visit schools and community organizations to share their stories of recovery. The presentations occur during school assemblies, health classes, and workshops. Topics addressed in these presentations include: anxiety, depression, suicide ideation, disordered eating, addictive behavior, self-harm, substance use, and bullying.

Through our **Young Adult Speaker Program**, Minding Your Mind has reached hundreds of thousands of college, high school, and middle school students. Our speakers all have received training to ensure that their presentations are delivered in a professional and knowledgeable fashion. Inspiring sessions with our speakers provide students with a better understanding of the signs and symptoms of mental health challenges, emphasizing that they are treatable and that help is available.

In addition to our student presentations, our program includes an evening platform that provides an opportunity for parents, caregivers, teachers, and other school personnel to meet and listen to the same speaker that the students heard earlier in the day. To assist with questions of a more clinical nature, a mental health professional is present at the evening sessions.

Community Response

Minding Your Mind's **Young Adult Speaker Program** has received laudatory responses from schools and organizations throughout the U.S., and our speakers are routinely invited back to speak at the same school on multiple occasions. During the 2019-2020 school year, we are scheduled to complete over 1,500 presentations and reach our 1,000,000th individual.

Please visit www.mindingyourmind to view biographies for each of our speakers, program descriptions, and testimonials.