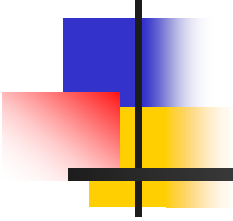


# Mental Health Issues: Get Your Skills, Confidence & Toolbox for Working with RYE Students



---

Dr. Rosanne Field

&

Terri Nicole Sawyer, LCSW

# Get Ready for the Adventure!





# How the Heck Can We Understand Mental Illness and What It Means to Exchange?

---

- Today we will look tough decisions like student selection when mental health issues may be present, mental health versus mental illness, a few specific disorder frequent to exchanges, and then give you tools for your toolbox!



# Quick Activity of Selection

---

- In this activity, read through the students and pick which student would be the best choice to represent your district.
- Let's look at the selections openly for a minute afterwards.



# Mental Illness vs Life

---

- 1. Duration
- 2. External Factors
- 3. Intensity



# Anxiety

---

- Anxiety-natural reaction to possible danger or threat
  - Anxiety keeps you alive
  - Physiological changes that prepare you for flight or fight



# Anxiety

---

- -our 4 brains

- -lizard

- -dog

- -primate

- -thinking

-anxiety happens at the lizard and dog level-  
we have to use the thinking level to control



# Anxiety

---

- -body CAN NOT differentiate emotional/physical/minor/major threat
- -symptoms are related to preparation for fight or flight
- -increased heart rate
- -increased breathing rate
- -sweating
- -digestion shuts down so “butterflies”, nausea
- -emotional tension, desire to avoid situation
- -panic-desperate urge to run away or fight-may feel like you are having a heart attack





# “Threats” that trigger anxiety

---

- **Confusion**-I don't understand what is going on, maybe it is dangerous=Anxiety
- **Unfamiliarity**-I don't know what this is, maybe it is dangerous= Anxiety



# “Threats” that trigger anxiety

---

- **Ambiguity**-What is happening, why are they doing this, is it good or bad=Anxiety
- Isolation-I am away from my group, I am alone; if something happens there is no one to help me- Anxiety



# “Threats” that trigger anxiety

---

- **The Unknown**-I don't know what is going to happen, it could be bad=Anxiety



# What is happening when you are anxious

---

- -your body is preparing to “defend” you against the threat
- -your body is reacting automatically and you need to have your thinking brain “kick in”



# What is happening when you are anxious

---

- -you have to counter the physical manifestations to convince your “automatic brain” you are safe
- -can physically trigger anxiety emotions by triggering the physical symptoms

# Strategies for reducing anxiety



---

- 1. Systematic Relaxation
- 2. Eat
- 3. Sit or lie down
- 4. Smile or laugh
- 5. Do a pleasurable activity



# Systematic Relaxation

---

- Tense all muscles, hold for count of 3, relax
- In breathe for 3 count, out breathe for 3
- Go through muscle groups from foot to head, with the slow in and out breath between each tense and relax



# Anxiety Disorder

---

- Impaired ability to manage demands
- Avoidance of activities
- OCD rituals
- Social avoidance
- Panic Attacks



# Sadness vs Depression



---

- Homesick
- Loneliness
- Unhappy

BUT

Intact Appetite, sleep

Able to laugh

Socializing improves mood



# Depression

---

- Sadness or emptiness/flat consistently present
- Belief that it will last/hopelessness
- Socializing does not improve mood
- Changes in appetite, sleep, hygiene, self care, ability to manage school work
- Loss of libido



# Depression

---

- Negative thoughts-this is hopeless, nothing is going right
- Negative self evaluation-I am stupid, I am useless
- Suicidal thoughts or self injurious behaviour to cope

# Substance Use vs Abuse



---

- Occasional
- No Meth, cocaine, heroin, amphetamines-all too addictive
- Only with others
- Not during the week
- Risks-marijuana and schizophrenia
  - Amotivational syndrome



# Substance Use vs Abuse

---

- Extacy-not addictive but risk of schizophrenia
- No withdrawal symptoms if not using for a week



# Diets vs eating disorder

---

- Range of foods eaten
- Eats with others
- Eats socially
- At least 1200 calories
- Not excessive exercise



# Eating Disorders

---

- Anorexia Nervosa
- Bulimia
- Binge Eating
- Orthorexia Nervosa

- 
- 
- Often not disclosed

## Indicators

Significantly Underweight

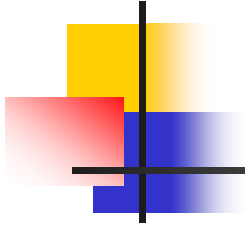
Thinning hair, Easily Bruises

Restricted Food types

Bathroom After meals

Frequent toothbrushing





- **ASK THE STUDENT IF YOU SUSPECT**
  - When directly asked individuals will often disclose and it is a relief to them to finally tell



# RED LIGHT, YELLOW LIGHT, and GREEN LIGHT

---

- We wanted to create a little guide to help you navigate the mental health issues that our RYE students may face.
- Please keep in mind that this is just a guide... nothing set into stone and ALWAYS get a professional's help with major decisions about your students, student selection and student interaction.

RED LIGHT --- Stop!  
Pay Attention!!!





# Red Light Mental Health Issues

---

- Bipolar I & II
- Schizophrenia
- Serious Suicide Attempts

# Yellow Light – Caution...

## Caution... Caution



# Yellow Light



---

- Depression-is it well treated? Is medication stable? Do they have cognitive behavioural strategies? Do they have a good support network and friends
- If they are doing well enough to have a good application, the depression is not going to interfere

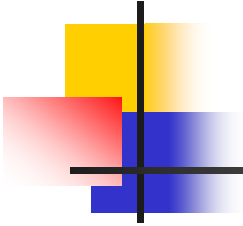


# Yellow Light

---

- Anxiety Disorder-is it a diagnosed disorder? How is it managed?
- If they are doing well enough to face the application process, it is probably a green

# Green Light – Let's Get This Exchange Started







# Green Light

---

- ADHD
- Anxiety
- Aspergers/High Functioning Autism
- Learning Disability



# You Survived Our Presentation and May Still Be Sane

---

- Q & A
- Contact Info
- Dr. Rosanne Field
- [rfield@hurontel.on.ca](mailto:rfield@hurontel.on.ca)
- Terri Nicole Sawyer, LCSW
- [terrnicole@msn.com](mailto:terrnicole@msn.com)
- THANKS!!!!