Youth Health Literacy: A Toolkit
To Strengthen Health Literacy
Tessa Medina-Lucero, MPH & Patty O’Sullivan, PhD
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Letter of Introduction

Dear Youth Advocate:

Thank you for your interest in Youth Health Literacy and your partnership to implement the toolkit. Your participation is important to helping us create awareness and improve youth health literacy statewide. Here at the Office of School and Adolescent Health (OSAH) we firmly believe that the voice and partnership of young people is vitally important to improving health outcomes for our state’s young people. Empowering youth and creating opportunities for them to develop needed knowledge and skills is the goal of this Youth Health Literacy Toolkit.

What you will find in this toolkit is a set of activities, along with guidance and instruction to implement them with youth in your school or community. The entire toolkit is dedicated to providing practical information on basic healthcare topics.

“Youth Health Literacy is the capacity of obtain, process and understand basic health information and services to make appropriate health decisions.” (CDC 1.09.04)

Health literacy strengthens and supports youth people’s ability to obtain, process, and understand basic health information and services needed to make informed and appropriate health decisions and treatment. Our goal with this toolkit is to empower youth, increase their basic skills and knowledge. The entire toolkit includes fun and meaningful youth engagement activities designed to create a common set of concepts and understanding. We are also very proud to acknowledge the efforts of youth who helped to create this toolkit. Their expertise and energy ensures the content will meet the needs of youth throughout the state.

We are grateful for your commitment to positive youth development and we applaud your interest and willingness to partner with us to improve health outcomes for New Mexico’s youth. We look forward to hearing about your success as you implement “Youth Health Literacy: A toolkit to strengthen health literacy.”
Overview of Youth Health Literacy Toolkit

The purpose of the “Youth Health Literacy: A toolkit to strengthen health literacy” is to provide fun and meaningful activities for youth about healthcare. The toolkit provides an opportunity to engage with youth in discussions that will help improve their understanding and skills necessary to support self-care and well-being. The toolkit draws from a variety of sources and focuses on the following Five Concepts:

1. Creating a safe space to discuss health topics
2. Identifying and understanding the Six Key Areas of Health
3. Understanding what to do before, during and after a doctor’s appointment
4. Understanding youth confidentiality and minor rights
5. Understanding the HEADSSS Model (spell out HEADSSS) as a way to organize information shared and received during a doctor appointment
6. Promoting self-care tips

The toolkit emphasizes the importance of health and its link to academic success and acknowledges that “healthy youth are prepared and better learners.” The toolkit also focuses on activities that allow youth practice skills. The toolkit reinforces information through fun activities designed to encourage meaningful conversation and learning. Each activity included in this toolkit includes instructions on how to administer the activity, materials needed and suggested time needed to get through each exercise. In addition, the toolkit includes surveys to obtain feedback from participants. We highly encourage reviewing feedback regularly and using the findings to strengthen the overall implementation.

Thank you once again for your willingness to make a contribution to creating greater awareness and skills in health literacy. Your efforts will undoubtedly have a lasting impact in improving health outcomes for youth in your schools and community!
Before you begin:
Administer the PRE-Survey – Page 16

Mail PRE-Surveys to:

Tessa Medina-Lucero, MPH
NM Department of Health / Office of School & Adolescent Health
300 San Mateo Blvd NE Suite 902
Albuquerque, NM 87108
Steps for Strengthening Youth Health Literacy (YHL)

Agreements

**Purpose:** Create a safe environment for being together.

**Materials:** A large Post-It with the 3 Key Agreements

**Time:** 5 Minutes or less

**Instructions:** Ask if they know what each of the 3 keys stand for. A sample is of what KIP, KIR and KIH could mean is given after each key. If time permits, they can develop more agreements around the attitudes and behaviors they want during their time together. These 3 are easy “keys” to remember for desired attitudes and behaviors.

- **KIP** Keep It Positive – No put downs or making fun of others.
- **KIR** Keep It Real – Be honest and say what you mean.
- **KIH** Keep it Here (Confidentiality)  Everything that is shared stays inside the workshop.

Name Tags

**Purpose:** Knowing participants by name and one of their strengths. This is another way for creating safety and friendship.

**Materials:** Name tags, thin magic markers and a talking stick.

**Time:** 5 to 8 minutes depending on the size of the group.

**Instructions:** Draw a large rectangle on poster/easel paper, to demonstrate how to do the nametags. Invite one of the students to print their name in the bottom part of the name tag and to write one of his/her strengths, skills or talents above it. If someone is having a difficult time finding a strength, ask if anyone knows a positive quality about him/her. When they finish, have them wear their tags. Use talking stick for having them stand to introduce themselves one at a time beginning with I am _____. For example: I am Creative Patty.
Ice Breaker: That’s Me!

**Purpose:** To create a safe and belonging place for teens and to let them see that they are not alone.

**Materials:** None

**Time:** 5 minutes

Using the questions below, ask students to stand up and say “That’s Me” if the question relates to them. This activity is an easy way for youth to see and appreciate similarities and differences others.

**Questions for the Activity (Facilitator can design her/his own questions)**

- Anyone who prefers day to night.
- Anyone who has never flown.
- Anyone who is a person of color.
- Anyone who knows how to reach their doctor.
- Anyone who is the youngest in the family.
- Anyone who sometimes feels lonely.
- Anyone who has a caring adult in their life.
- Anyone who has had someone close to them pass away
- Anyone who has made their own doctor’s appointment.
- Anyone who knows what to do in an emergency.
- Anyone who is an adolescent (age 10-24)

After everyone is standing, ask them what they learned through doing this activity.

6 Areas of Health Activity

**Purpose:** Provide basic information about the 6 areas of health. The 6 Areas of Health Youth was developed by New Mexico youth that cover the areas of health they feel are important as they relate to their lives.

**Materials:** Easel Post it Paper with areas of health, magic markers

**Time:** 15 - minutes.

**Instructions:** As a preliminary to the activity, ask the following question: **What does the word health mean to you?**

- Acknowledge their answers and reframe or clarify any answers as need be.
- The World Health Organization defines health as “a state of complete physical, mental and social wellbeing and not merely the absence of disease.”
- Or you might hear about being healthy in mind, body and spirit.
Activity: Divide group into 6 and provide one area of health on post-it paper for each team. Invite them to discuss what it looks like to be healthy in given area and to print their responses on the post-it. See samples of youth responses. Allow 3 to 5-minutes for this part. Afterwards have them form a circle (chairs) to share their findings and post on wall. If anyone else has something they want to add, ask them to add it to the list. Proceed with each group in the same way.

**Physical/Body** is about staying in shape and eating right. Being mindful of portion control and eating from the 5 food groups, reducing screen time and exercise a minimum of 30 minutes a day. It’s about respecting your body and avoiding the foods, drinks and drugs that endanger wellbeing.

**Mental: Thoughts/Emotions** is about how you think about yourself and your perceptions of how others think of you. It’s important to believe in yourself and recognize that you are worthy of great things. It’s being able to see the positive side of things even in difficult times; these are opportunities to reflect on lessons learned and remind ourselves it is a strong person who asks for help.

**Educational/Learning** is about studying and learning in school and out of school and seeing everything as a teachable moment. We are human and will make mistakes. The goal is to learn from our mistakes and not repeat them.
Spiritual/Soul is believing in something greater than yourself and the importance of helping others. It’s embracing where you come from (your ancestry) and keeping healthy traditions. Recognizing you have a purpose and being able to listen to yourself, your conscience that tells you right from wrong. Taking time to refill your soul and enjoying inner peace through meditation or prayer is taking care of your spiritual health.

Social/Relational is building healthy and strong connections with people around you like your peers, family, caring adults at school and in your community. It’s about showing others respect through your words and actions… not judging or stereotyping them.

Financial/Money is about how you manage your money. How many of you have heard of the “Almighty Credit Card?” Some people think it’s just magic money until they get the bill and find out about interest rates. Money management is vital and can save you a lot of stress. It’s understanding money cannot buy happiness. Did you know that most people enjoy and value things more when they work for them? Financial health is showing generosity and helping others when you can.
Before the Health Drum Activity, give each participant the handouts for the 6 Areas and of Health and the Health Drum (Pages 17-18).

**Health Drum-Personal Goal Activity**

**Purpose:** Personal commitment to the one area of health they want to strengthen.

**Materials:** A poster board chart of the Health Drum, Mini-post-its and Handouts

**Time:** 10 minutes

**Instructions:** Using the handout, put a star * in one area you want to improve. Take a quiet moment to write a specific goal in that section. Record your goal on a mini-post-it note and place inside the health drum. Encourage youth to share their goals.

**HEADS Model**

**Purpose:** For youth to know what information is important in seeking medical attention and to be aware of how **Home**, **Education/Employment**, **Activities**, **Drugs**, and **Sexuality/Suicide/Safety** can affect health.

**Materials:** Handouts Page 19

**Time:** 5-8 minutes

**Instructions:** Facilitator will present the HEADS Model to let youth know that these are some of the questions that may be asked during a doctor’s visit. Adolescents gain knowledge of the areas that contribute to their health.
**Finger on the Pulse**

**Purpose:** To gain insights into what health issues they are most concerned about and prepare them for the instruction on “What You Should Know” Before during and after Doctor appointments.

**Materials:** 8 ½ by 11 paper cut in half and pens

**Time:** 10-12 minutes

**Instructions:**
Half of the class is given half of a sheet of paper with the question: “What are some of the reasons youth go to a doctor?”

***After their responses, make sure these areas are covered:

Cold, flu, allergies, yearly checkup, depression, cutting, eating issues such as anorexia, bulimia and obesity.

The other half of the class is given a half sheet of paper with the question: “Why do you think they don’t go to the doctor?”

***After their responses, make sure these areas are covered:

Scared, don’t want to know, afraid it is worse than it is, afraid of parents reaction, afraid of being judged and shamed.

**A Minute to Lit It Activity**

**Purpose:** A review of what to know and do before, during and after an appointment.

**Materials:** Easel paper, scotch tape, markers, and health literacy cards for the Minute to Lit It Activity.

**Time:** 10 minutes

**Instructions**: Before the workshop you will need to print the health literacy cards Handouts Page 23 to 28. There are 3 per page, so these will need to be cut and a complete set of cards will be given to each team. Have 3 post-it papers one labeled Before, one with During and with After. Divide the literacy cards among the participants. While students are seated with their team, invite them (one at a time) to read what is on their card and ask, “Where does it belong?” Facilitator will explain that sometimes the literacy card info can pertain to more than one timeline. Participant tapes his/her card on the post-it timeline.
Before

- Be Able to Make Your Own Appointments
  - Know what number to call, whether or not they accept your insurance, how much you might have to pay, and where the office is located. Doctor’s Offices are used to answering these questions, so they will be glad to help you.

- Know What Kind of Insurance You Have and How to Use It.
  - Are you covered under your parents? What is your plan and policy number? Do you have an insurance card? If you don’t have insurance, will they see you anyway? Do they charge based on your ability to pay?–These are questions to ask your parent/guardian or the clinic.

- Know Where to Go, and for What Kind of Care.
  - Should you visit a Primary Care clinic, Urgent Care, the ER, or a Specialist? Usually, a Primary Care Physician will refer you to a Specialist if needed. This website has very helpful info when deciding where to go: [http://www.aurorahshealthcare.org/find-a-location/urgent-care-vs-emergency-care](http://www.aurorahshealthcare.org/find-a-location/urgent-care-vs-emergency-care)

- Find Info About Free Clinics, Health Centers, and Workshops.
  - There are many resources offered in most communities including free classes/workshops, information sessions, and health care opportunities. Check with your local health department, high school, or college for some of these opportunities.

- Know Basic Medical Lingo.
  - It is extremely important to be able to understand what your Doctor is telling you. For this purpose, you must be able to understand basic medical lingo. The internet is a great source for looking up words you may not understand. For example, [http://www.dummies.com/how-to/content/decoding-medical-lingo.html](http://www.dummies.com/how-to/content/decoding-medical-lingo.html) has a large list of medical terms put into everyday language. Also, do not be afraid to ask your physician to explain what he/she is saying.

- Know Immunization Records and Time Frames.
  - It is important to stay up to date on your vaccinations. You can request this info from your family physician, or have your parent/guardian retrieve it for you. Most Doctors you visit will require this information. Also, you need to know when to go in for necessary shots.

- Know About Personal Checkups (male/female/specialist).
  - After graduation you will need to see Primary Care Physicians, Dermatologists, Dentists, Gynecologists, etc. It is good to understand how often you need to see each physician and schedule those appointments accordingly.

- Know How to Fill Out Medical/Dental Forms.
  - If you have never done so, the amount of information may seem overwhelming! Look up examples online and ask a parent/guardian’s help so that you understand how to fill out these essential forms, or ask your clinic staff to help.

- Know Medical History of Yourself and Your Family.
  - These are often questions on the forms mentioned in #6. They are also something that Doctor’s need to know in order to give you care that may be specific for your medical history. If you don’t know and can’t find out your history just be sure to let the clinic know that.

- Confidentiality
  - Understand your rights and responsibilities. Confidentiality means your information will not be shared with others. Find out what is confidential and what is not, as well as, your rights as a minor (under 18).
During

- Be Willing and Able to Ask Your Doctor Questions.
  - Doctors are in the profession of helping people! They want you to feel better and be healthy. Don’t be afraid to ask questions. If necessary, write questions down for your appointment. Remember to write the answers.
- Use the “Teach-Back” Method.
  - Before you leave a Physician’s office, make sure you can repeat your diagnosis, treatment, and anything else you have learned back to your Physician to ensure that you have the correct information.
- Confidentiality
  - Understand your rights and responsibilities. Confidentiality means your information will not be shared with others. Find out what is confidential and what is not, as well as, your rights as a minor (under 18).

After

- Know Who to Contact with Further Questions.
  - Do you have the number to the Physician’s office? Can you call with further questions? Do you need a follow-up appointment? When? Your doctor can help you maintain wellness, not just treat sickness. Make sure you talk to him/her about how to eat right, exercise, get enough sleep, and anything else you need to do take care of your body and mind!
- Know How to Navigate Media Literacy.
  - It is wise to trust “.org”, “.edu”, and “.gov” websites more than “.com” sites. Be aware of when the page was created- some information may be out of date. Check the sources that the author used for reliability or further research.
- Know How to Fill/Refill a Prescription.
  - Ask your physician about your options for prescriptions. Learn the amount you are supposed to take and how often from your physician before you leave the office. Also, be sure to discuss any questions you may have with the pharmacist- they are there to provide answers!
Confidentiality

**Purpose:** To inform adolescents (ages 10 - 24) of their rights as a minor.
**Material:** Handouts Page 21
**Time:** 15 minutes
**Instruction:** The facilitator will use this time to go over the pertinent information on confidentiality. Begin by asking, “What is confidentiality?” “Do you know what your rights are?” Take time to highlight abuse since this is one of the biggest taboos that rarely gets addressed. The youth we have worked with often request more help and information on abuse. “What is abuse?” What kinds of abuse are you aware of?” “Do you know what to do if you or someone you love is being abused?” “Do you have a safe adult you can trust?”

18 Self-Care Tips

**Purpose:** To encourage youth to take better care of themselves and provide examples of good health.
**Materials:** 18 Self-Care Tips Handouts Page 28
**Time:** 10 minutes
**Instructions:** Invite youth to consider the suggestions given in the 18 tips and to choose one they will adopt as a positive health practice.

After 18 Self-Care Tips, give YHL POST-Survey Handouts Page 30

Please mail POST-Surveys to:

Tessa Medina-Lucero, MPH  
NM Department of Health / Office of School & Adolescent Health  
300 San Mateo Blvd NE Suite 902  
Albuquerque, NM 87108
Handouts
YHL PRE-Survey

Please allow 5 minutes for this brief survey.

Initials____ Age ____ M ____ F____ School __________________________ Date: __________

Please put X in the box that most closely corresponds to the way you feel at this time.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statements</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I know how to make my own Doctor's appointments.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I know what kind of insurance I have and how to use it.</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>I know my rights around confidentiality.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>I know how to accurately describe my health concerns and issues to my doctor.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I know the side-effects of the medications I take.</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# The 6 Areas of Health

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Social/Relational</th>
<th>Spiritual/Soul</th>
<th>Physical/Body</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Build Healthy &amp; Strong Social Ties With:</td>
<td>Remember You Have A Purpose</td>
<td>Eat Healthy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peers/Friends/Family/Elders</td>
<td>Belief in Something Greater Than Yourself Help Others</td>
<td>The original - Eat the Way nature intended:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School &amp; Community Members</td>
<td>Take Time to Refill Your Soul i.e. Meditation or prayer</td>
<td>Exercise at least 30 Minutes/Day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Caring Adults</td>
<td>Embrace Where You Come From</td>
<td>Reduce Video &amp; TV Time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respect Others</td>
<td>Healthy Cultural Traditions</td>
<td>Respect Your Body</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Intuition</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Educational/Learning</th>
<th>Financial/$$$</th>
<th>Mental/Thoughts/Emotions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Learn From Others’ Mistakes</td>
<td>Learn How To Manage Money</td>
<td>Always See The Positive Side of Things</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educate Yourself on How To Accomplish Your Dreams/Wishes</td>
<td>Remember Money Does Not Buy Happiness</td>
<td>Believe In Yourself, You Can Do It</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Higher Education College or Trade School</td>
<td>Working for What You Have Makes It More Enjoyable</td>
<td>There Is No Shame In Asking For Help</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>View Everything As A Teachable Moment</td>
<td>Generosity &amp; Appreciation</td>
<td>Humor - Take Time To Laugh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Remember You Are Worthy!!!</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*All of these areas are closely intertwined.*
The greatest wealth is health.

Educational/Learning

Mental/Thoughts Emotions

Physical/Body

Social/Relational

Financial/$$$

Create Balance in All These Areas

Good friends are good for your health.

He, who has health, has hope; and he who has hope has everything.

The greatest wealth is health.

Happiness is more a state of health than of wealth.

Virgil

Irwin Sarason

Frank Tyger
**HEADS Model**

At the beginning of your appointment, you may want your provider to explain privacy policies. During your appointment, your provider will ask questions about your health so that s/he can give you information to stay healthy.

You can play an active part by using this checklist to keep track of the information your doctor goes over in case something is left out that you want to talk about.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>HOME</th>
<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>□ Home Life &amp; Who You Live With</td>
<td>□ Safety in Home/ Neighborhood</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ Relationships with Parents &amp; Sibling</td>
<td>□ Home Alone Frequently</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ 8 Hours of Sleep</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ Unwelcomed or Uncared for in Home</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EDUCATION &amp; EMPLOYMENT</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>□ Feelings about School</td>
<td>□ School Attendance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ Grades in School</td>
<td>□ Friends at School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ Academic &amp; Future Goals</td>
<td>□ Work</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACTIVITIES</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>□ What You Do During Free Time or for Fun</td>
<td>□ Friends</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ Activities, Hobbies, or Volunteerism</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ Meals with family/friends</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ Hours in Front of TV/Computer Screen</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ Amount of Physical Activity</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ Time Outdoors: Sunscreen Use</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DRUGS</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>□ Friends/Family Smoke, Drink, or Use Drugs</td>
<td>□ Tobacco Usage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ Marijuana Usage</td>
<td>□ Alcohol Usage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ Other Drugs</td>
<td>□ Quitting or Reducing Drug Usage</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
SEXUALITY

- Puberty & Physical Development
- Dating & Relationships
- Sexually Transmitted Infections & HIV/AIDS
- Attraction to Guys, Girls, or Both
- Forced Sexual Activity
- Females: Menstrual Cycle

SUICIDE & SELF IMAGE (DEPRESSION)

- General Feelings about Life Outlook
- Satisfaction with Body Height & Weight
- Suicidal Thoughts or Actions

SAFETY

- Seat Belt Use
- Riding with an Intoxicated Driver
- Helmet/Protective Gear Use
- Driving/Driver’s Education

Be sure to tell your doctor about any vision, hearing, or dental concerns
Confidentiality

Understanding Your Rights & Responsibilities

Confidentiality means your information will not be shared with others.

Treatment of Minors involves different variables in terms of confidentiality. The American Medical Association states, “Physicians who treat minors have an official duty to promote autonomy of minor patients by involving them in the medical decision-making process to a degree commensurate with their abilities.”

In New Mexico, if you are 13 years and older, you can consent to sexual health treatments and procedures such as: pregnancy exams, birth control, HIV & AIDS tests, emergency contraception, abortion*, STD tests and prenatal care. Abortion, HIV/AIDS and STD testing may be confidential. If your visit is covered by insurance, remember that health insurance companies-billing may reveal diagnosis.

For minors 0-13 years old:
These services most likely will not be confidential. Providers generally have policies assuming that a sexually active child under 13 is being abused or neglected.

ABUSE is never confidential!

In New Mexico, your healthcare provider will have to make a report to the state if you are being abused physically or sexually or you are going to hurt yourself or someone else.

Your healthcare provider may have a policy that requires a report to the state if:
• You are under 13 and are sexually active.
• You have sex with someone who is four years older than you are.
• You are having sex with someone in a position of authority, like someone who works at your school.

No one has the right to make you or to pressure you into sexual activities.
In New Mexico, healthcare providers (e.g. Primary doctors, nurses, counselors) must make a report to the state if:

- You are being abused physically or sexually
- You are going to hurt yourself or someone else

Anyone can consent for mental health services without parent permission.

However, if you are under the age of 14, you must have parental consent for therapy that lasts more than two weeks. A youth **fourteen years of age or older** has the right to consent to and receive individual psychotherapy, group psychotherapy, guidance, counseling or other forms of verbal therapy (this does not include psychotropic medication). A child **under the age of fourteen years** may consent to initial assessment and early intervention services, limited to verbal therapy, not to exceed a two-week period. After the initial period, parental consent is required. §32A-6-14 NMSA 1978 ... Mental Health (including substance abuse) [Revised February, 2007]

In some cases, a provider will make a report if:

- You are under age 13 and sexually active
- You are under age 16 and are having sex with someone 4 years or more older than you (called statutory rape)
- You are having sex with someone in a position of authority, (teacher or coach)
A Minute to Lit It Activity

**Be Able to Make Your Own Appointments**
Know what number to call, whether or not they accept your insurance, how much you might have to pay, and where the office is located. Doctor’s Offices are used to answering these questions, so they will be glad to help you.

**Know What Kind of Insurance You Have and How to Use It**
Are you covered under your parents? What is your plan and policy number?
Do you have an insurance card? If you don’t have insurance, will they see you anyway?
Do they charge based on your ability to pay?
These are questions to ask your parent/guardian or the clinic.

**Confidentiality**
Knowing and understanding your rights and responsibilities and that your information will not be shared with others.
Certain conditions may be shared if you are under 13 years of age.
Know Where to Go, and for What Kind of Care

Should you visit a Primary Care clinic, Urgent Care, the ER or a Specialist?

Find Info About Free Clinics, Health Centers, and Workshops

There are many resources offered in most communities including free classes/workshops, information sessions, and health care opportunities. Check with your local health department, high school, or college for some opportunities.

Know Basic Medical Lingo

It is extremely important to be able to understand what your Doctor is telling you. For this purpose, you must be able to understand basic medical lingo. The internet is a great source for looking up words you may not understand.

Know Immunization Records and Time Frames

It is important to stay up to date on your vaccinations. You can request this info from your family physician, or have your parent/guardian retrieve it for you. Most Doctors you visit will require this information. Also, you need to know when to go in for necessary shots.
**Know About Personal Checkups (male/female/specialist)**

After graduation you will need to see Primary Care Physicians, Dermatologists, Dentists, Gynecologists, etc. It is good to understand how often you need to see each physician and schedule those appointments accordingly.

**Know How to Fill Out Medical/Dental Forms**

If you have never done so, the amount of information may seem overwhelming! Look up examples online and ask a parent/guardian’s help so that you understand how to fill out these essential forms, or ask your clinic staff to help.

**Know Medical History of Yourself and Your Family**

These are often questions on the forms in Physicians’ offices and include information that Doctors need to know in order to give you care that may be specific for your medical history. If you don’t know and can’t find out your history, be sure to let the clinic know that.
Be Willing and Able to Ask Your Doctor Questions

Doctors may seem intimidating, but they are in the profession of helping people! They want you to feel better and be healthy. Don’t be afraid to ask questions. If necessary, write questions down on paper so that on appointment day you have a list of questions for your Physician. Remember to write down the answers as well!

Use the “Teach-Back” Method

Before you leave a Physician’s office, make sure you can repeat your diagnosis, treatment, and anything else you have learned back to your Physician to ensure that you fully understand.

Know Who to Contact with Further Questions

Do you have the number to the Physician’s office? Can you call with further questions?

Do you need a follow-up appointment? When?

Know How to Prevent Illness

Your doctor can help you maintain wellness, not just treat sickness. Make sure you talk to him/her about how to eat right, exercise, get enough sleep, and anything else you need to do take care of your body and mind!
**Know How to Navigate Media Literacy**

It is wise to trust “.org”, “.edu”, and “.gov” websites more than “.com” sites. Be aware of when the page was created- some information may be out of date. Check the sources that the author used for reliability or further research.

**Know How to Fill/Refill a Prescription**

Ask your physician about your options for prescriptions. Learn the amount you are supposed to take and how often from your physician before you leave the office. Be sure to discuss any questions you may have with the pharmacist.

They are there to provide answers!
18 Self-Care Tips

1. Stop Over-Thinking. Life is an unfolding, a discovering, a journey, an adventure. Sometimes over-thinking it all can get you in trouble. You miss out on the journey you're actually on when you're stuck only in your head. Take it all in with grace and grace will lead you in the right direction.

2. Accept What Is. Stop Pushing. Sometimes you have to accept things as they are. Things you can't change. Things you can't help but feeling. Give yourself a break. Stop trying to wade upstream at high tide. Wait it out. Take a breather and go where the current takes you. You can't control everything so sometimes you have to trust that the current of life will take you where you need to be.

3. Be Still. We live in such a rushed, over-stimulated, over-gadgetized society. Find somewhere beautiful – a park, the woods, and your kitchen – and just sit there, still. Absorb the sound of the wind through the trees, the light and the shadows, the peace, and just appreciate the stillness. It’s calming. Make time for stillness regularly.

4. Stop Comparing Yourself to Others. Comparing yourself to others with envy robs you of appreciation for the sacred place your life is in at any given moment. Everyone has had their own long journey and you don’t know what that journey has been like for them. See where they’ve struggled, what mistakes they’ve made. Let it lead you to take actions that advance your goals.

5. Cherish Your Friends. Surround yourself with true friends. Friends who’ve seen you at your worst, and love you even more for it. Friends you can be sick and miserable around and yet all they seem to do is make you laugh. Those friends are priceless.

6. Know Your Strengths. Our weaknesses are always shouting out for our attention. Try instead to focus on your strengths. You have so many. Focus on them and use them daily. List them out so you never forget what they are. Build your life around them.

7. Eat as Many Greens as Possible. Greens, greens and more greens. Fruit too. The more you eat them, the more your taste buds change and you realize just how delicious food from the earth truly is.

8. Exercise Regularly. Regular exercise can transform your life. You will see the difference in how you think, how much you get done, and how much energy you have. One hour of exercise equals four extra hours of productivity. Make time for exercise, it will give time back to you and more energy.

9. Don’t Let People Walk All Over You. Being nice and being a doormat are two very different things. Being a doormat robs you of your voice and leaves you resentful. Be strong in who you are, don’t let people walk all over you.

10. Forgive Yourself. Forgive Others. Forgiveness is one of our most powerful allies. Forgive the people in your life who harmed you and forgive yourself for your own mistakes and you will liberate yourself from pain, anger, resentment and negativity. Anger, grudges and resentment hurt no one more than the person holding them.
11. Stay Away from Negative People. What more needs to be said? People can be mean and nasty. Don’t hang out with those people. You can choose who you keep in your life, choose wisely.

12. Don’t Be a Negative Person. Have you ever had a friend who loved to talk badly about everyone around him/her? And did you find yourself joining in because it’s what he/she wanted to talk about. Did you feel crummy afterwards? Don’t get drawn into negativity. It brings down your vibration. People who have nothing but negative things to say about everyone are unhappy with themselves. Always remember who you are and who you want to be. Be nice to people, to everyone. Support people and their dreams. Love as you’d want to be loved. We can all be nicer and do better.

13. Don’t Live on Facebook. Facebook is great and it’s fun to be social. But reading through Facebook statuses too often can lead to “Facebook depression.” Facebook is like an advertising campaign for everyone’s life. It’s all shiny and sparkly and well-crafted to present the best. That’s all good but too much of it and you need to be reminded of Tip #4 above.

14. Allow Yourself to Feel Whatever You’re Feeling. Sometimes you’ll get down, really down. Sometimes you’ll get hurt. And you won’t want to leave the couch. It’s okay. Let yourself sulk, get it all out of your system. Don’t fight it. The sooner you get it all out the sooner you can move on. If it persists for longer than 2 weeks, seek help.


16. Embrace Your Imperfections. Your imperfections are your perfection. Embrace them. Let them reveal your individuality. Laugh at them if you need to. No one is perfect. Imperfections make things interesting. And behind every imperfection is strength.

17. Watch Less TV. Such a hard habit to break. Too much TV robs you of time and social interaction. Goals fly out the window. Motivation gets lost so does conversation. TV can be addictive and can lure you in, try to keep it in moderation.

18. Be of Service. Try to always find ways to be of service. To people, to animals, to the environment, whatever floats your boat. Find ways to give and keep giving. Ways that inspire you, that speak to you, that fill your heart. No matter where you are in life, there is always someone or something that could benefit from what you have to offer.

Just be you. You are enough. You are invaluable.

(Taken from Gentler Living Website: 25 Self-Care Tips for the Body & Soul)
## YHL POST-Survey

Please allow 5 minutes for this brief survey.

Initials: ____  Age: ____  M: ____  F: ____  School: __________________________ Date: __________

Please put X in the box that most closely corresponds to the way you feel at this time.

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<tr>
<th><strong>After today’s session:</strong></th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
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<tr>
<td>I will take more responsibility around my health care especially making my own Doctor appointments.</td>
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<td>I will get information on the kind of insurance I have and how to use it.</td>
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<td>I am better informed about my rights around confidentiality.</td>
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<td>I feel more comfortable with accurately describing my health concerns and issues to my doctor.</td>
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<td>I know it is important to ask what the side-effects of my medications are.</td>
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Your Voice is Important

The most valuable thing I gained from Youth Health Literacy was ____________________

I need to know more about ____________________________________________________

It is important for all teens to know ___________________________________________

One way I will better take care of myself is ______________________________________

Having more knowledge about my health is worth my time because:

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

YHL
POST-Survey