

## ***Mental Well-Being IPP***

Sponsored by Bristol-Meyers Squibb

MAY – National Health Month

NOV – Children’s Mental Health Month

To earn the Mental Well-Being IPP do the following:

2 activities from Skill Builders (\* requirement #1 is mandatory)

1 activity from Technology

1 activity from Service Projects

1 activity from Career Exploration

**AND** any two others.

### ***Skill Builders***

- 1\*. What is a mental illness or a mental disorder? Research 2 of the following: depression, anorexia, bulimia, alcoholism, Alzheimer’s, bipolar, drug abuse, manic depression, Multiple Personality Disorder, Obsessive Compulsive Disorder, schizophrenia, suicide, Tourette’s Syndrome, autism, Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD).

What is the most common mental illness in women? What percentage of the population will this illness affect?

2. Keep a journal for 2 weeks and record your moods and emotions. Note how you handled how you felt. Do you see a pattern? For example, did you go off by yourself or seek a friend to talk to? How else could you have handled how you felt?
3. With your troop, have the girls practice their listening skills. Discuss the qualities of a good listener: looks right at the person who is speaking, does not interrupt, waits and then asks questions, gives the speaker undivided attention, etc. Emphasize that a good listener is an active listener and really cares about what someone is saying.

Find a story to read about mental illness OR borrow the **BREAKING THE SILENCE** kit and do the activities enclosed. Contact Lisa Cheng at 732-921-9090 ext.154 to reserve.

4. Find out about a famous person who has suffered from a mental illness. How has this person combated the problems and stigma associated with their particular illness?
5. Talk about ways to reduce stress. Some ideas may include reading, exercising, time management, deep breathing, a favorite activity.  
**Choose 1 activity and do it for a week.**

6. Make a positive affirmation box. Decorate the box with stickers, gems, markers, etc. Write positive statements such as: **I AM BEAUTIFUL, I AM A GOOD FRIEND, I AM FRIEND**, etc. Cut out the statements and place them in the box. Every morning, open the positive affirmation box and read one statement. At the end of the week, see if this activity had a positive impact.

## Technology

1. Browse the web for information on mental illness and mental health. Share what you have learned with your troop.
2. Research the history of mental illness. What were common practices and treatments in the past? What chance did a person have of recovering from their illness 50 years ago? 100 years ago?
3. View a video/CD on mental illness. Some movies of interest: Sybil, One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest, Forrest Gump, Of Mice and Men, To Kill a Mockingbird, My Girl, Rain Man, Arthur, A Beautiful Mind, Breakfast at Tiffany's, I Am Sam, Mommie Dearest.
4. For three days, watch the evening news or read your local newspaper paying special attention to stories that might involve people who suffer or are coping with a mental illness. Does the underlying illness enhance or excuse their behavior or actions?

Where can a person who has been affected by a mental illness go for help? What services can these agencies provide for the patient as well as their families?

5. What is biofeedback? What different types of environments use biofeedback?

## Service Projects

1. Contact one of the agencies that help patients who suffer from a mental illness and ask what you can do for them. For example, distribute educational material, arrange for a speaker to visit your class, etc.
2. Introduce a younger troop to the concept of mental wellness. Emphasize the importance of taking care of emotional health by "having fun" or doing something nice for themselves, etc.
3. Check with your school guidance counselor to set up a confidential HOTLINE for students seeking help.
4. Find out the meaning of the word *stigma*. What happens when a stigma is attached to a person? Now, what types of stigmas can be attached to a person who suffers from a mental illness? Share what you have learned with a friend and how what you say might hurt people. For example, you're weird, you're crazy, and you're a psycho.

## Career Exploration

1. Contact your local agency and invite a guest speaker to talk about careers in the mental health awareness field.
2. Make a list of professionals whose jobs serve people with mental illness. Pick one and learn more about their field.
3. Interview 2 people to find out how they assist people with mental illness.