



**Every student deserves
good mental health.**

We're a nonprofit on a mission to
provide free mental health programs
for any school, anywhere.



Facilitator's Guide

Erika's Lighthouse is a not-for-profit depression and mental health education organization that educates upper elementary, middle school and high school communities about teen depression, eliminates the stigma associated with mental health issues and empowers teens to take charge of their mental health. For more information and other programs and resources, go to www.erikaslighthouse.org.

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This program was written for educators, professionals and other adults working with adolescents to educate them regarding the issues surrounding depression. While Erika's Lighthouse consults with clinical, therapeutic, legal, and child development experts, nothing in this program should be construed as specific or general medical or psychological advice. Erika's Lighthouse assumes no responsibility for any actions taken as a result of the material or information contained in the program. Every child's and family's situation is unique, and Erika's Lighthouse urges children, adolescents, parents, and educators to seek and find competent professional advice appropriate for specific individuals and actions.

Welcome to Erika's Lighthouse Staff Training

Stand Up Sit Down Activity—Begin the staff training with this activity designed to be an icebreaker, revealing the depth of stigma surrounding depression and mental health. You can also have participants raise hands or take another inclusive approach.

[Activity](#)

Slide 2: Introduction Script

“Let me give you a bit of information about Erika's Lighthouse - Erika's Lighthouse is a National non-profit organization that started in 2004 after the loss of Erika, a 14-year old 8th grader who died from her depression.

Erika's Lighthouse is mission-based, focused on mental health literacy, depression awareness, stigma reduction and empowering young people to take charge of their mental health. By using a teen voice, Erika's Lighthouse is normalizing discussions around mental health and creating a common vocabulary for a topic that wasn't discussed back when Erika died. Erika's Lighthouse provides all of its evidence-informed programs at no cost and focuses on bringing these messages to elementary, middle and high schools.”

Slide 3: Core Message

“Erika's Lighthouse wants all young people to know that they deserve good mental health.”

Slide 4: Three Parts of the Staff Training:

“Part 1 of today's staff training will cover the current statistics around youth mental health, signs and symptoms of depression and suicide and the importance of depression education. Part 2 will cover helping a student and how to have a conversation with a student if you are concerned about their well-being. Part 3 of this training will cover how and what to do in the event of a crisis.”

Slide 5: Erika's Lighthouse Programs

“When reviewing the multi-tiered systems of support (MTSS) framework, Erika's Lighthouse falls in the tier-1 category. Erika's Lighthouse wants all students to be educated on the signs & symptoms, help-seeking, and coping strategies. Erika's Lighthouse programs are prevention-focused and promote early identification. Erika's Lighthouse programs take an upstream approach to suicide prevention: Depression Education is suicide prevention. Erika's Lighthouse takes this approach because depression continues to be the most common mental health disorder among teens and the rates are rising. Lastly, when schools provide classroom education, family engagement, student-led empowerment clubs and staff training, they are working to build an inclusive school culture around mental health. If

you are interested in learning more about the no-cost, tier-1 programs at Erika's Lighthouse, please scan the QR code to create a Resource Portal account."

Slide 6: Four Pillars of Erika's Lighthouse

"As an organization, Erika's Lighthouse promotes inclusive school cultures around mental health by using a four-pillar approach to impact every stakeholder in a young person's life. These four pillars include classroom education, student-led empowerment clubs, family engagement and school policy & staff training. In addition to these four pillars, Erika's Lighthouse offers wraparound supports for schools. This includes, schoolwide campaigns, such as Give Voice for Suicide Prevention week in September, Positive Pledge for mental health awareness month in May, and more. There is a culture framework that can help schools establish their values and beliefs around supporting youth mental health. The data center offers assessment tools, program evaluations and school culture surveys. All of this and the data that schools can retrieve is free of charge. Lastly, we have strategic alignments where we partner with like minded organizations."

Slide 7: Enjoy your training:

"I hope you find this training informative and helpful. You have an opportunity to support young people and this is the first step. If you have any questions about Erika's Lighthouse resources, you are welcome to reach out to one of their team members."