

Supporting Students with Special Needs: Mental Health Issues

Mental illness, or mental health disorders, refers to a wide range of mental health conditions — disorders that affect your mood, thinking and behavior.



Examples include:

- depression,
- anxiety disorders
- schizophrenia,
- eating disorders and
- addictive behaviors

Many people have mental health concerns from time to time. A mental health concern becomes a mental illness when ongoing signs and symptoms cause frequent stress and affect your ability to function.

A mental illness can make you miserable and can cause problems in your daily life, such as at school or work or in relationships. In most cases, symptoms can be managed with a combination of medications and talk therapy (psychotherapy).



Depression

6 Strategies When Lecturing



1. Talk with the depressed student

Work on your relationship with the depressed student. Talk with the student and show him or her that you care.

2. Be patient and positive

Be patient and positive in your instructional strategy. Don't give up on students and be sure to use positive approaches (eg praise).

3. Keep a positive mindset

Remember that depression isn't something students choose. A depressed student may want to do well, but he or she may not necessarily have the capacity or resources to do well in school. Work on finding ways to give the depressed student the support and attention he or she needs.



4. Make adjustments or accommodations

Consider making adjustments or accommodations for the depressed student. Tweaking assignments and tasks by giving the depressed student more time, breaking a task into smaller parts, or offering the student extra assistance can help the student be more successful in school without lowering expectations.



5. Provide opportunities for success

Giving the student opportunities to show leadership and be successful and then recognizing him or her for that success can increase the student's sense of self-worth. Providing these types of opportunities also shows the student that you believe in him or her.

6. Ask for assistance

Ask the University's counselors team or assistance. The support personnel in your school can be a great resource for helping students with depression succeed in school. Ask them for suggestions on strategies for the depressed student.

Anxiety Disorders

8 Strategies When Lecturing



1. Provide emotional support to the student

Encourage the student to use self-calming or anxiety-reducing techniques that were taught by a counselor or therapist.

2. Provide comfortable seating arrangement

Provide classroom seating where the student is most comfortable (near a door, near the front of the room, near the lecturer or a friend).



3. Provide advance notice

Give advance notice of changes in the class or lecture routine.

4. Be clear in your expectations

Clearly state and/or write down your expectations for assignments, etc.



5. Chunk the assignments

Break down assignments into smaller chunks if the student requires it.

6. Exempt reading aloud or demonstrating

Exempt the student from reading aloud or demonstrating work in front of the class.

7. Allow student to present to you

If it is a project, allow the student to present to you (lecturer) instead of to the entire class.



8. Provide alternate assessment arrangement

Give extended time on tests and/or separate test-taking space to reduce performance anxiety.

For queries relating to Special Education Needs (SEN), please email to SENsupport@suss.edu.sg