**PATHWAYS TO BEHAVIORAL HEALTH CAREERS**

**PRESENTATION GUIDEBOOK**

The Pathways presentation will meet several goals:

1. Provide education and information on the various career opportunities in the field of public behavioral health to high school students.
2. Create interest among high school students who may have not known or have had interest in the field of public behavioral health
3. Increase the number of applicants to universities for students looking at majors in the field of public behavioral health.

Students who participate in the Pathways presentation will gain knowledge of the definition of behavioral health, the types of career paths involved as well as the educational requirements of these types of professions. Career maps will be introduced that explain the steps necessary to obtain education, training and licensure if necessary.

While this presentation is not an exhaustive list of the wide variety of possibilities within the field, they will learn about the most common roles that impact public behavioral health outcomes. Students will, however, be directed to several resources to explore more opportunities with the field by way of social media outlets and a newly created website specifically targeting information within the state of Tennessee.

The state of Tennessee recognizes the need to increase the number of behavioral health professions due to the increasing needs. This presentation and program seeks to help remedy this gap by educating high school students about the field and increasing the level of interest so that they might enter this exciting and necessary career and, in turn, benefit the residents of Tennessee by providing much needed behavioral and mental health supports and services.

Because there is outcome data collected for this presentation, it is necessary for presentations to be delivered in a standard method. There are several presentation requirements for the outcome data to be valid.

**These requirements include the following:**

* **Information should be provided in an unbiased manner.**
* **Students with questions requiring further research should be directed toward reliable resources such as this program’s website.**

**Presenter’s expectations:**

* **Present at least 2 presentations each semester.**
* **Complete the post-presentation report document:** [**https://utk.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\_5cMm4ThFScNEXJA**](https://utk.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_5cMm4ThFScNEXJA)
* **Provide any feedback you may have through email or the** [**www.mapmypathway.com**](http://www.mapmypathway.com) **website form.**
* **Introduce others in your school/district to the Pathways project and provide this information by way of providing orientation for them or encourage them to register for a training session on our website.**

**BEFORE THE PRESENTATION:**

When delivering the presentation, students should be directed to a determined location. Student groups can be self-selecting or counselors/teachers, etc. may nominate students to participate. The groups can be made up of students who already know about behavioral health careers and have indicated a desire to learn more, those who have no knowledge of the field but tend to exhibit characteristics that might be of benefit in the behavioral health field or students who are undecided about their future path. Individuals may also watch a video recorded presentation available that includes both pre/post questionnaires.

This presentation could also be part of a career fair or college exploration event or provided to a single student with access to the recorded version of this presentation.

Download the PowerPoint Slides and determine which slides are most relevant to the needs of the audience you will be presenting. With the exception of the content warning slide, you may provide as many slides as you would like or have time. You may also consider breaking the presentation into smaller pieces and create a series of information.

Included in the Activities Menu, you will find a list of possible activities you may choose to use. Video content may be used through the presentation or skipped if there is not enough time. All videos will be available for students to view on the website: [www.mapmypathway.com](http://www.mapmypathway.com) and on YouTube.

The Talk the Path Podcast, featured on the project’s YouTube Channel is a great resource for students to hear more in depth about particular topics and could be a way to help students consider various career paths. <https://www.youtube.com/@PathwaysCareerProject>

The project Instagram page offers weekly information regarding the field of behavioral health with tips, career specific information and other useful tools for both students, families and educators. <https://www.instagram.com/pathwayscareersproject/>

**Consideration of the audience:**

Because the Pathways presentation can be tailored to meet the needs of your audience, it is important to consider who will be involved and their level of understanding of the concepts.

* If your students CHOSE to come to a presentation (signed up or otherwise indicated interest in this career path), then they more than likely have an interest in the field of behavioral health. They may be most interested in the mapping concepts and how to reach a goal of becoming a behavioral health professional.
* If your students were ASSIGNED to hear a presentation as part of a class or career day, they may have limited knowledge of behavioral health and may need more information regarding the field as a whole with less detail of all the mapping process.
* If your students have no idea what they want to do after high school graduation, then more time should be spent discussing how to determine if this field is right for them by discussing characteristics of a helping professional and the impact that these roles have on the community.

**Time Constraints/Considerations:**

Ideally, the Pathways presentation should have plenty of opportunities for engagement through discussion and activities as well as reflection. We recommend having at least 2 hours to fully engage and discuss potential pathways including the reflection materials that follow.

However, we also know that during the school day, time is limited and therefore may not have the luxury of having large amounts of time available. In this case, we suggest that the slides are reviewed in the following manner:

* For 30 minute intervals: Opening slides with content warning slide, some of the What and Why slides, the Characteristics slides and a brief overview of the maps. If time allows, the overview video should be shown and any of the other video content that is allowable in the time frame.
* For 45 minute intervals: All the above slides with more time spent on discussing the various roles of the behavioral health professionals.
* For 1 hour or more: All the above slides with all video content and activities throughout. Reflection pdf’s can be utilized through the session and/or also sent home with them.

**Follow up materials:**

The website provides a type of self-reflection journal with pages to discover the student’s own perception of their likes and dislikes, strengths and challenges, and explore various types of colleges and universities as well as training programs available. These can be printed and used as one full journal or a couple of pages at a time; in class or taken home. The purpose of these pdf forms is to allow students to continue the conversation and could prove to be very enlightening when used in small groups or allowed to have conversations surrounding their answers.

The website provides resources to look further into college programming and scholarship opportunities as well as find some articles and links to other information regarding post-secondary education and training.

The YouTube channel provides all video content for the presentation as well as podcast episodes for a deeper understanding of specific roles, professionals and students alike are featured throughout those episodes.

Our Instagram page offers a fun collection of information across many arenas in the behavioral health field including coping skills, mindfulness activities and challenges.

We encourage educators and presenters to use these items throughout the school year before or after presentations for a much more full understanding of the field.

**Presenting the content of the Presentation:**

The slides provided for your presentation are currently in a suggested order. As you know more about your audience, you may choose to use the slides most appropriate for your groups or individuals. The content warning slide MUST be provided each time the presentation is given with the resources for helping those who might be experiencing a mental health crisis of their own or someone they know needs assistance.

The following “script” is meant to be a starting point for your presentation. Feel free to use your own words for your group. Notes are also listed on the presentation slides and can be used as your discretion.

Lastly, directing the students toward the follow up materials on the website:

[www.mapmypathway.com](http://www.mapmypathway.com), YouTube and Instagram is a great way to continue the exploration for the student on their own time or as part of a group discussion.

*A Note About Presentation Content \*Content Warning Slide\**

Say: We are going to be talking about the field of behavioral health. In today’s presentation, there will be mention of Substance Abuse services, Suicide Prevention as well as Mental Illness. These can be hard topics to discuss and can bring up thoughts and feelings that might be difficult for some. Please know that if this becomes overwhelming or if you have concerns about yourself or others that might need help in any of these areas, there are supports available here at the school that want to help you. Please make an appointment with your school counselor or speak to another trusted adult if you need support.

**After the presentation:**

Following a presentation, students may have follow up questions. You may direct students to the [www.mapmypathway.com](http://www.mapmypathway.com) for resources available to help guide them on their path. The website provides resources for understanding various careers in the behavioral health field, connecting them with other websites about colleges and universities in the state. More video content is also available on the website and YouTube channel. Students may also submit questions through a form located on the home page. We try to answer all questions as soon as possible.

Podcasts will soon be available with links through the website as well as instagram posts with educational content and basic information about behavioral health.

**Reflection Materials:**

Contained in the Presenter’s Page is a downloadable reflection journal. These materials are not totally focused on the field of behavioral health but can be used to help students explore any field or future goals. You will find the following pages:

* Personality Inventory
* Exploring Your Values
* Stating Your Strengths
* Self-Assessment
* Interests
* Wants vs. Needs
* Comparison of Career Paths
* Comparison of College Programs
* Blank Career Maps
* Next Steps Organizers
* A Letter to my Future Self

These materials could be used as a packet in a folder or binder, or you may choose to use them individually depending on the student’s needs. The worksheets help encourage further research about future careers regardless of the field of study.

**Tips and Traps** - the following tips are “lessons learned” from our pilot presentations. You may find some of these ideas helpful as you plan your presentations.

* Ask students to follow the Pathwayscareersproject instagram account and the YouTube channel at the conclusion of the presentation.
* Use personal stories as appropriate. Provide students with unique perspectives to how people’s pathways vary
* Behavioral Health supports are not just for crisis situations - early support can help alleviate emergencies from happening.
* WE ALL NEED BEHAVIORAL HEALTH CARE - just like we need medical health care. It’s all part of taking care of ourselves.
* Having a longer time frame in order to provide activities/games/experiences, is much more effective than a 30 minute presentation.
* REMIND STUDENTS TO CONTINUE TO EXPLORE THE FIELD USING RESOURCES ON THE WEBSITE
* Encourage the use of the reflection pieces. Idea might be to print a few of the reflection pages and assign one per week.
* The presentation could be broken up into segments -
  + Pros: less content provides more time for potential activities and reinforces the content covered, allows for more conversation and possibly some reflection pages to be completed together.
  + Cons: too much time between the segments could lead to the interest in the content waning.
* Presentation could be a launch for small group activities for students who have exhibited an interest in the field with follow up sessions used to participate in the reflection pieces each week in combination with further information review from presentation - or research on the field each week as a group.

**Final Words:**

We hope that these materials will enhance career exploration for your students and that you find them easy to use and beneficial. Please feel free to reach out with any questions or concerns that you might have as you use the information provided. This is not a complete curriculum, but a guide to help spark interest in the field for your students and to help them discover some ways that would be helpful in exploring any career path they might choose to embark upon.

Thank you for your support and participation in this project! If you would like to become more involved in our project, we welcome you to contact us. We are always looking for new podcast interview ideas and video content.

Pathways to Behavioral Health Careers Project:

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**MENTAL HEALTH ACTIVITIES/SMALL GROUPS ROLE PLAY:**

**On the ball questions:** have several volleyballs available and have the students break up into groups. The volleyballs will have questions written on them that will range from information about you to some feeling type questions. The students toss the balls to each other in a circle. The question on the ball that their right hand thumb lands they get to answer. This a great activity to create community, get to know each other, as well as an example of talking about our feelings or maybe something that is hard for us.

**Emotional Check in:** Social/Emotional check-in - Have students telling us how they are feeling at this moment using thumbs up, down or in the middle or some sort of emoji (non-verbal response). Optional idea is to use Pear deck, kahoot or something similar.

**Body Scan:** Students are provided with an outline of a person (just a simple drawing) and asked to show in their body where they most likely feel distressed - angry, sad, anxious, etc. Some ideas might be “butterflies in the stomach” or “headache” or “hot”. Start at the feet and do a tension/release exercise as you move up to the head to address these feelings. Also, providing breathing exercises or guided meditation to help calm and focus for the next segment of activities.

**CLOSING ACTIVITIES:**

**Gallery Walk** ~ Split into groups of 3 or 4. Have a few large post it notes up around the room with different topics. (Each team has a different color marker) Some ideas: What characteristics are needed in a helping career? What is the most interesting thing that you discovered today? Which college majors are associated with Behavioral Health Careers? What is Behavioral Health? What job interests you the most? What questions do you still have? Give each team 3 minutes (depending on how much time we have) at each station and have them write down their answers on the large paper. At the last station, whichever team wrote last will share everyone’s ideas!

**“This Person Right Here” -** Students sit on the floor in a comfortable position with eyes closed (or using a sleep mask/blindfold of some sort). One or two participants in the circle are chosen and provided one or two prompts about the others in the group. Statements such as “This person made me laugh today”; “This person communicates well”; “This person is someone who showed strength today” and so on. The person goes around the circle and lightly touches the person who they think of in those prompts on the shoulder. After this student sits back down and is blindfolded, another student is chosen to do the same with different prompts (or the same if needed)