

The Okay to Say™ Mental Health Patch Program



The Okay to Say™ patch program helps girls develop greater social and emotional confidence. Through a series of hands-on activities, girls will increase their social awareness and interpersonal skills. Girls will also learn how to be more considerate and caring Girl Scouts as they explore the impact emotions and thoughts have on their own and others' behavior. Parents and volunteers will get helpful resources to support their girls' mental health and wellness. *Use this patch program as a resource all year long!* This patch program was created in partnership with Okay to Say and the Meadows Mental Health Policy Institute.

Once girls have completed the requirements, please complete the online reporting form by June 30, 2021 in order to be eligible for a FREE Okay to Say Patch. Only one entry per troop or Juliette is required.

Online reporting form: www.gsnetx.org/patchform

Okay to Say Patch Program Requirements:

- **Girl Scout Daisies** – Complete 1 Discover, 1 Connect, 1 Taken Action
- **Girl Scout Brownies** – Complete 2 Discover, 1 Connect, 1 Take Action
- **Girl Scout Juniors** – Complete 3 Discover, 2 Connect, 1 Take Action
- **Girl Scout Cadettes** – 4 Discover, 3 Connect, 1 Take Action
- **Girl Scout Seniors/Ambassadors** – 5 Discover, 3 Connect, 1 Take Action
- **ALL:** Creating a Mental Health Safety Plan

Discover: Learn about mental health

- ☐ Learn about Emotions
- ☐ Learn about Empathy
- ☐ Learn about Stigma
- ☐ Learn about Stress
- ☐ Read about Mental Health. Check out the Okay to Say Reading List for ideas.
- ☐ Talk to a Mental Health Care Provider. Invite your school counselor or another mental health expert to your troop meeting to learn more about mental health.

Connect: Gain confidence when discussing mental health and manage stress

- ☐ Put people first. Practice using person-first language.
- ☐ Learn to ask for help. Act out scenarios and learn to ask for help when going through a tough time.
- ☐ Connect with Mind and Body. Complete an activity from the “Mind and Body Check List”

Take Action: Share what you learned with others

- ☐ Host a book reading. Select one of the books from the Okay to Say Reading List and host a book reading for friends and families in your community.
- ☐ Use artistic expression to bring awareness. Create a painting, sculpture, mural, poem, or a short story or play to share what you’ve learned with your friends and family members.
- ☐ Learn about mindfulness and participate in a mindfulness session through a class, YouTube video, or mindfulness app. Talk about what you learned and share mindful breathing exercises with your troop.
- ☐ Start a poster campaign. Partner with your school, place of worship, or library to display posters that bring awareness to mental health issues. [Click here](#) for poster options. Or you can create your own by using hopeful and encouraging messages.
- ☐ **CSA:** Create a social media campaign. Share factual information about mental health and positive and encouraging messages with your friends and family through your social media channels. [Click here](#) for Okay to Say graphics and quotes to share. Girls use #Okayto to share social media posts with friends and family.

Leaders: Please ensure all parents and guardians are informed that you will be completing this patch and the conversation may bring up sensitive topics related to mental health.

Discover Option 1: Learn about Emotions

Materials: Emoji cut outs found on the following pages

Say:

- Today we are going to learn about emotions or feelings.
- Would anyone like to share some emotions you felt today or yesterday? For example, have you felt happy, sad, silly, confused, or excited?
- If you would like, please share how you felt and why you felt that way?
- What do we do when we have all of these emotions or feelings?
- It is really helpful for us to understand our emotions or feelings. This activity will help us do that.

Do:

1. Hold up each emoji cut out and show them to your girls.
2. Ask girls to name each emotion or feeling, based on what they think each emoji face means.
3. Assure them that we all think and see things differently and that there is not a right or wrong answer. One experience can create very different emotions depending on how we interpret the experience.
4. Split the girls up into small groups and give each group an emoji cut out.
5. Ask the girls to look at the emoji they were given and think of a reason why someone may feel that way.
6. Once they come up with a scenario, ask them to share it with the rest of the girls in the troop as a short story or it or by acting it out.
7. Positive affirmations. Ask the girls to think of things they can say to themselves that help them feel better when they feel emotions like sadness, worry, or frustration.

Reflection:

Understanding our feelings and other people's feelings is not easy. Sometimes we feel a certain way and we don't know why. Sometimes our friends or family members feel a certain way and we don't understand why. Just know that it is okay to have these different feelings. At different times in life, we may feel happy, sad, funny, or angry and lots more. It's okay to feel emotions and it's okay to talk about them.

There are two things we want to remember:

1. We should do our best to be considerate and caring of the people around us, no matter how they are feeling.
2. If we notice that we feel a lot different than we usually do, it is Okay to Say and to tell our parents, guardians, or another trusted adult about how we feel.

Emoji Cutouts



Emoji Cutouts



Discover Option 2: Learn about Empathy

Materials: Empathy Cards

Say:

- What does the word “[empathy](#)” mean? Can you give me an example of empathy?
- Each of us are different. We have different life experiences and have different feelings.
- Have you ever heard someone say, “Treat others the way you want to be treated”? or “Put yourself in someone else’s shoes”? We are going to learn how to do just that.

Do:

1. Show the card that says “EMPATHY”. Lead a discussion of possible meanings. Then show EMPATHY definition card.
2. Introduce the LOOK, THINK, and CARE cards. Read them to the girls or ask three girls to read the cards aloud.
3. Share different scenarios with girls and have them practice using the three empathy steps.

Scenarios:

- You see a girl in the bathroom that you don’t know, and she is crying.
- Your friend was excited to invite you to their party until you told them that you cannot attend.
- Your sibling just got great news and wants to share it with you, but you are busy.
- Your friend is sad and angry because they are being bullied in school.
- A new kid just joined your class, you notice that they often look confused and have a hard time keeping up with classwork.

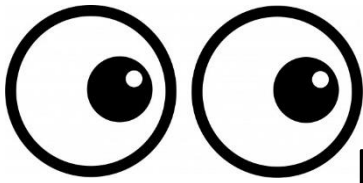


Reflection:

Showing empathy towards others is a great way to let them know that it’s Okay to Say and share how they feel.

We cannot assume to know what someone else is thinking or feeling, but we can LOOK, THINK and CARE. How can we practice this with our Girl Scout sisters, family, and friends?

Empathy Cards



LOOK

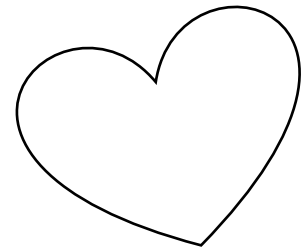
Look at the other person.
How are they feeling?
What is their body language?

THINK



Think about a time that you felt that way.
How would you want someone to treat you?

CARE



Show them you care!
Is there anything you can do to help?

Empathy Cards

EMPATHY

EMPATHY

Making an effort to understand
how someone feels, even if you
have not been in that same situation.
Putting yourself in someone else's shoes.

Discover Option 3: Learn about Stigma

Say:

- Stigma is when we think badly about someone or treat someone badly just because they are different from us or they act in ways that we do not understand.
- When we do this, it may make people feel badly about themselves. They may feel that they are alone or that no one understands them.

Do:

1. Have girls work in pairs to think of at least two things that they have in common and two things that make them different from one another.
2. Ask them to imagine if they didn't like each other only based on those two differences.



Reflection:

Each of us have things in common and each of us have differences. Stigma is when we make people feel bad because they are different from us or they act in ways that we do not understand.

The Girl Scout Law teaches us to be fair, considerate, caring, and to respect ourselves and others. One of the ways that we can do that is by treating everyone well, no matter what.

Learn more about reducing stigma [here](#).

Discover Option 4: Learn about Stress

Say:

- What do you think of when you hear the word [stress](#)?
- Sometimes, your body will give you a signal. You may get a stomachache or feel “butterflies” in your stomach when you’re nervous. You might feel shy when you are sad or have a hard time sleeping when you are angry.
- Let’s learn about ways to reduce stress. First, let’s identify some of those things that cause us to feel stressed.

Do:

- Have girls write a list of things that cause them to feel stressed.

Reflection:

How do you feel when you are stressed?

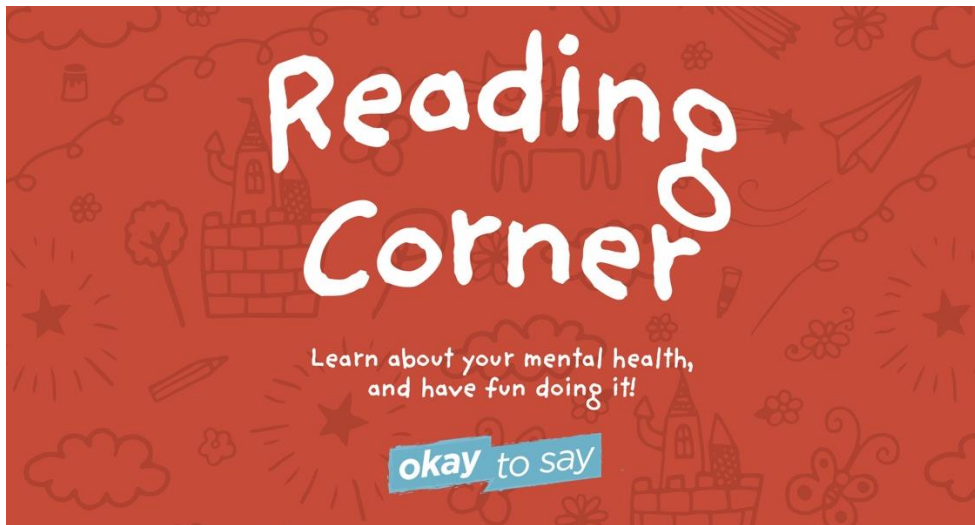
What do you do when you feel that way?

What are some things I can do to support my mental health when I am stressed? Everyday?

Learn more about how to cope with stress [here](#).

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Discover Option 5: Read about a book about mental health

[Okay to Say Recommended Reading List](#)

Elementary School:

- **Don't Feed the WorryBug** Written and illustrated by Andi Green
- **How Big Are Your Worries Little Bear?** Written by Jayneen Sanders, illustrated by Stephanie Fizer Coleman
- **What to Do When You Worry Too Much: A Kid's Guide to Overcoming Anxiety** Written by Dawn Huebner, illustrated by Bonnie Matthews
- **In My Heart: A Book of Feelings** Written by Jo Witek, illustrated by Christine Roussey
- **My Many Colored Days** Written by Dr. Seuss, illustrated by Steve Johnson and Lou Fancher
- **When Sophie Gets Angry — Really, Really Angry...** Written and illustrated by Molly Bang
- **Mr. Worry: A Story About OCD** Written by Holly L. Niner, illustrated by Greg Swearingen
- **Mindful Monkey, Happy Panda** Written by Lauren Alderfer
- **Tiger Tiger is it True?** Written by Byron Katie and Hans Wilhelm
- **My Mixed Emotions** Written by DK Maureen Healy
- **Listening with My Heart** Written by Gabi Garcia
- **Jonathan James and the Whatif Monster** Written by Michelle Nelson-Schmidt

- Beautiful Oops! Written by Barney Saltzberg
- Breathe Like A Bear: 30 Mindful Moments for Kids to Feel Calm and Focused Anytime, Anywhere Written by Kira Willey
- Feelings Written by Alik

Middle School:

- Warp Speed Written by Lisa Yee
- Wonder Written by R.J. Palacio
- Look Me in the Eye: My Life with Asperger's Written by John Elder Robison
- OCDaniel Written by Wesley King

Older Middle School/High School:

- Girl Against the Universe Written by Paula Stokes
- Hey Kiddo Written by Jarrett J. Krosoczka

High School:

- (Don't) Call Me Crazy: 33 Voices Start the Conversation about Mental Health Written by Kelly Jenson
- More Happy Than Not Written by Adam Silvera
- Mosquitoland Written by David Arnold
- Some Kind of Happiness Written by Claire Legrand
- The Astonishing Color of After Written by Emily X.R. Pan
- The Quite Room: A Journey Out of the Torment of Madness Written by Amanda Bennett and Lori Schiller
- The Rest of Us Just Live Here Written by Patrick Ness



Connect Option 1: Putting People First

Say:

- Imagine that your friend goes to an ice-cream shop and their first thought is to get ice-cream for just you? Imagine your friend lets you go ahead of them as you line up for lunch on Pizza Friday?
- When people put us first, it feels great! We are going to learn about how to put people first when we speak to them or about them.
- When we talk about people, what exactly do we say? Why is it important to use someone's name instead of just using a word that describes them?
- People first language is used to speak appropriately and respectfully about an individual. People first language emphasizes the person first not the disability or illness. For example, when referring to a person, refer to the person first by using phrases such as: "a person who ...", "a person with ..." or, "person who has..."

Do:

- Review examples of people first language

• Examples of what you should say:	• Examples of what you should not say:
• John has a disability	• He's handicapped
• Amy has autism	• She's autistic
• Jack is experiencing a mental health condition/illness	• They're crazy
• Suzy was diagnosed with depression	• They're so depressed

- Ask girls to share other examples of what they should say in order to put people first.

Reflection:

One word, one phrase, or one characteristic cannot completely describe anyone. It is considerate and caring to put people first. When we do this, it also helps us to be responsible for what we say and do.

How will you use person first language to speak to people and about people?

Learn more about first person language [here](#).

Connect Option 2: Learn to ask for help

Say: Sometimes we need help, but we don't know how to ask or who to ask. We are going to practice today by acting out different scenarios.

Do:

1. Split girls up into three small groups.
2. Give each group a different scenario and ask them to act it out or talk it out.
3. Help them think of ways that the person in their scenario might ask for help.



Connect Option 2: Learn to ask for help, continued.

Scenarios

For Daisies – Juniors:

- 1) Amanda has lots of friends and seems to have a great life. However, she has been feeling different lately, often sad and angry. Sometimes she yells at her classmates and even her friends. At home, she throws things when she is mad. She doesn't know why she is angry all of the time, but she wants to feel better. What should she do?
- 2) Alex is bigger than most of the kids in her class. Some of the kids bully her and call her names. When that happens, she usually puts her head down on her desk to hide her sad face. One time, Alex got in trouble because her head was down on her desk. Her teacher thought that she was sleeping. What should she do?
- 3) Daniella is very outgoing and loves making new friends. She made a new friend named Rachel. Sometimes Rachel is nice and sometimes she is very mean. Sometimes Rachel gives Daniella gifts and tells her she is her BFF. Other times Rachel steals things from Daniella and calls Daniella a liar when she tells her mom. Daniella wants to be friends with Rachel. What should she do?

For Cadettes – Ambassadors:

- 1) Erica gets good grades and is always on the honor role. She also does well in sports and is on the varsity team. She has lots of friends and always has fun parties and events to go to. Lately, Erica has been feeling a lot of stress and pressure to be perfect. She wants a break from it all. What should she do?
- 2) Jessica's parents recently got divorced. Since then, she's noticed a change in her mood. She used to feel happy and enjoyed being a part of several after school activities. Now she is sad all of the time and never wants to hang out with her friends. She misses her friends but doesn't want them to see her when she's sad. What should she do?
- 3) Amy once had a great group of friends, but most of them moved away. She now has a new group of friends who are always getting into trouble. Since she started hanging out with them, she has been acting differently. She never wants to go home and is constantly breaking curfew to hang out with her new friends. One of them wants to run away from home and is pressuring her to join them. What should she do?

Reflection:

Was this activity easy or difficult?

What if you needed help, would you know where to go or who to talk to?

Talking to a trusted adult, such as a parent, teacher, school counselor, or troop leader is a great first step when you don't know what to do.

Can you think of one person that you trust who you can talk to when you need help?

Sometimes we may feel something is not right, other times, we may not feel anything at all. No matter what, know that when you need help, it is Okay to Say and tell someone.

Learn more about mental health resources [here](#).

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Connect Option 3: Mind and Body Checklist

Here are some things that you can do to reduce stress and check in with your mind and body.

In a stressful moment

- ☐ Listen to music that makes you feel calm, motivated, or happy
- ☐ Take a dance break, alone or with friends or siblings
- ☐ Watch a funny video on YouTube (i.e. funny dance videos or adorable baby animals)
- ☐ Blow bubbles
- ☐ Go for a run or a bike ride

To take care of your mental health

- ☐ Create a list of things that make you smile and keep it handy for tough times
- ☐ Learn some Yoga moves
 - o Check out StoryHive's "Yoga for Kids" <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=X655B4ISakg>
 - o Check out Yoga with Adriene's "Yoga for Teens" <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7kgZnJqzNaU>
- ☐ Learn about aromatherapy and use it to de-stress
 - o Make aromatherapy play dough- <https://www.doterra.com/US/en/blog/diy-aromatherapy-playdough>
 - o Make bath bombs- <https://diyprojectsforteens.com/diy-bath-bombs-recipe/>
- ☐ Learn about mindfulness and practice it- <https://www.weareteachers.com/teaching-students-mindfulness/>
- ☐ Practice mindful breathing
 - o Check out- Stop, Breathe & Think's "Mindful Breathing Meditation" <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nmFUDkj1Aq0>
 - o Check out Stress Free Kid's "Kids Reduce Anxiety Using Deep Breathing" <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WmLmu3PDyx0>
- ☐ Have fun with Mandalas. Create mandala patterns to reduce stress <https://mindful.stanford.edu/2016/04/create-your-own-mindful-mandala/>

Creating a Mental Health Safety Plan

This worksheet is designed to allow parents to gather information they may need and help develop a mental health safety plan for their child.

For Girl Scouts: Sit down with your parents and caregivers. Talk about what you've learned so far about mental health and share some tools you've learned. While you're talking, locate and complete the information below.

For parents and guardians: If your child is experiencing mental health issues and is not currently under the care of a mental health professional, talk to your pediatrician. If your child needs immediate help, call 911.

Pediatrician:

- Phone:
- Website:

Insurance/Medicaid Managed Care Organization (MCO) provider for mental/behavioral health:

- Policy number:
- Phone:

Employee Assistance Program (EAP) available to our family:

- Website
- Phone:

Nearest Children's Psychiatric Care Center:

Name and Phone:

Helpful Terms

Medicaid MCO/Insurance. Medicaid contracts with MCOs to deliver Medicaid program health care services. In Texas, STAR, STAR+, STAR Kids and CHIP are all examples of MCOs. In other instances, families may have private insurance through one or both parents' insurance.

Employee Assistance Program (EAP). An employee assistance program (EAP) is a work-based intervention program designed to assist employees in resolving personal problems.

Children's Psychiatric Care Provider. Private hospitals located within communities to provide care to children with mental health needs.

To be completed by the Girl Scout:

Events that happen that cause me to get really angry, anxious, sad or frustrated:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

Warning signs that I am becoming overwhelmed with my feelings:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

Things I can do when my emotions – sadness, anxiousness, anger, frustration, etc. – feel overwhelming:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

Positive Affirmations. Things I can say to myself that help me feel better when I feel down:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

With the permission of a parent or guardian, watch a YouTube guided meditation for kids or teens, like [this one](#), [this one](#), or [this one](#). Or download a meditation app like [Headspace](#) (Note the 7-day free trial, there is a subscription fee after the first week.) Meditations or mindfulness exercises that I find helpful and enjoy:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

Adults I feel I can talk to:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

Emergency Hotline numbers I can call if I don't feel I have anyone else to talk with. Girls: please research numbers and include them below.

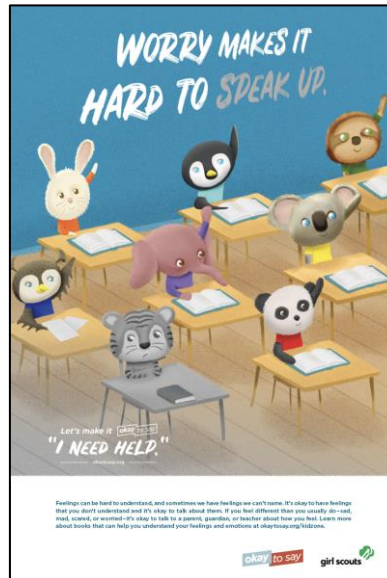
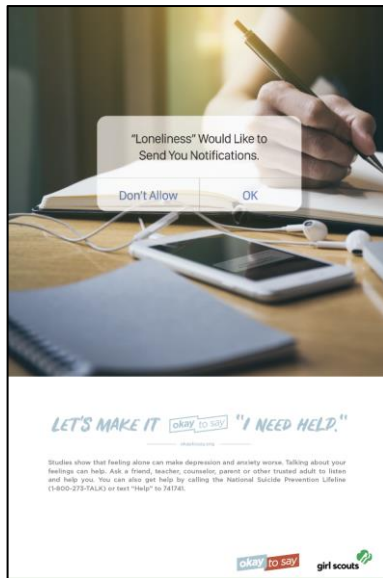
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Important Phone Numbers and Websites

- [SAMHSA's National Helpline](#): 800-662-HELP (4357), or TTY: [800-487-4889](#) is a confidential, free, 24-hour-a-day, 365-day-a-year, information service, in English and Spanish, for individuals and family members facing mental and/or substance use disorders. This service provides referrals to local treatment facilities, support groups, and community-based organizations.
- [National Suicide Lifeline](#): 800-273-8255 and 888-628-9454 (Spanish) Trained crisis workers are available to talk 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Your confidential and toll-free call goes to the nearest crisis center in the Lifeline national network. These centers provide crisis counseling and mental health referrals.
- [Texas Health and Human Services COVID-19 Mental Health Support Line](#): call 833-986-1919 to speak with a mental health professional for help dealing with stress, anxiety, or depression.
- [Texas Youth Helpline](#): Call 800-989-6884 or text 512-872-5777. The Texas Youth Health provides prevention services to youth, parents, siblings, and other family members who are in need of a caring voice and sympathetic ear.
- [Child Mind Institute](#) The Child Mind Institute is an independent, national nonprofit dedicated to transforming the lives of children and families struggling with mental health and learning disorders.
- [Disaster Distress Helpline](#): 800-985-5990 or text: TalkWithUs to 66746. The Disaster Distress Helpline can provide immediate counseling to anyone who is seeking help in coping with the mental or emotional effects caused by developments related to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Okay to Say posters and social media posts shown below can be downloaded [here](#). With any social media posts sharing how you are earning the Okay to Say patch, please use the hashtag #Okayto .

Posters



Social Media Graphics

