

Module 2:

The Stigma of Mental / Neurodevelopmental Disorders

- Stigma involves negative thoughts, feelings and behaviours towards mental disorders and their treatments
- People with a mental / neurodevelopmental disorder can live a fulfilling life
- We all can help to reduce stigma around mental / neurodevelopmental disorders



Links for Activities:



Classroom Slide Deck (see Module 2):

- [Google Slide Deck](#)
- [PDF Slide Deck](#)



Student Activity Sheets

- [Digital](#)
- [Colour \(printable\)](#)
- [Black & White \(printable\)](#)



MHL Journal

- [Digital](#)
- [Colour \(printable\)](#)
- [Black & White \(printable\)](#)

- See [Appendix E](#) for download instructions
- Please see individual activities for video links, sample quiz links and all other resources

Conceptual Knowledge	Procedural Knowledge	Handle with Care
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mental / neurodevelopmental disorders are common (1 in 5 of us will experience a disorder in our lifetime) • Anyone can have a mental disorder • Stigma involves negative thoughts, feelings and behaviours towards mental disorders and their treatments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Each person can be appreciated as a unique individual, instead of judged by a label • By better understanding the stigma of mental disorders, we can reduce the impact 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students who already feel stigmatised may react emotionally to this topic



Activity I - Anyone Can Have a Mental Disorder

Purpose: Draw attention to the fact that anyone can have a mental / neurodevelopmental disorder

Conceptual Connection:

- You cannot tell if a person has a mental / neurodevelopmental disorder just by looking at them
- People are more than just the characteristics of the diagnosed mental disorder



Watch the *Meet the Mental Health Literacy Kids* video that introduces the characters in the EMHLR.

Resource: <https://youtu.be/GGEk9clxBhs>



Provide students with the *Guess Who?* student activity sheet and ask them to complete it based on what they have learned about the characters and their best guess. Share the answers to the questions drawing attention to the final question 'Who has a mental disorder?' (Answer: they all do.) *Hint: it's okay if the students don't know all of the answers to the questions - that's part of the activity! Encourage them to give their best guesses.

Resources:

- Digital Activity Sheets
- Printable Activity Sheets
- [Sample Quiz Link](#)



Digital Delivery:

- Waterfall - Use the *Guess Who?* slide. Ask each question as a waterfall activity, having students type the name of the character in the chat to answer the question.
- Use a digital quiz.
- Asynchronously, have students complete the *Guess Who?* mix and match sheet. Then discuss together as a group.



Invite students to share which character they guessed had a mental disorder.

Reflect: What was it like to try and answer the question, 'Who has a mental disorder?' Did we have enough information? Did we know the characters well enough? Did we make any assumptions when we were guessing?



Summarise the key understandings:

- Anyone can have a mental disorder.
- You cannot tell if someone has a mental disorder by just looking at them.
- It is important to view each person as a unique individual instead of a label.



Prompt: What did you learn about each character? What surprised you? Which character(s) do you feel most curious about? Who would you like to get to know better?

Resources:

- Digital MHL Journal
- Printable MHL Journal

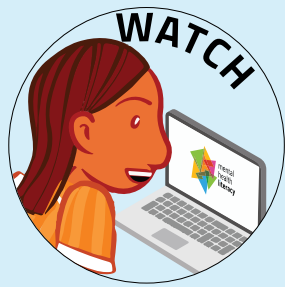
Activity II - What is Stigma?

Purpose:

Introduce students to the concept of stigma and deepen their understanding of what it means

Conceptual Connection:

- Stigma can lead to negative thoughts, feelings or behaviours towards individuals with mental / neurodevelopmental disorders
- The stigma surrounding mental disorders may be decreased by expanding our personal understandings
- People are more than just the characteristics of the diagnosed mental disorder



Watch the *What is Stigma?* video which portrays the character Angela with typical ADHD behaviours. Pause the video at the end of *Part One*.

Resource: <https://youtu.be/aftIJsKqWlw>



Ask the students to fill in the first section of the *What Is Stigma?* student activity sheet for *Part One*. As a class, share some of the student descriptions for this character.

Resources:

- Digital Activity Sheets
- Printable Activity Sheets



Digital Delivery: Instruct students to complete the *What is Stigma? Part One* activity in their digital workbooks.



Think-Pair-Share or in small groups: How do the other students feel about Angela during the morning?



Digital Delivery: Think-pair-share (using virtual breakout rooms) or as a large group.



Watch *What is Stigma? Part Two* as a group, which portrays the same character engaging in positive behavioural interactions.

Resource: <https://youtu.be/aftIJsKqWlw>

(Note: *What is Stigma? Part Two* starts at 02:11)



Invite the students to fill in the second section of the *What is Stigma?* student activity sheet.

Resources:

- Digital Activity Sheets
- Printable Activity Sheets



Digital Delivery: Instruct students to complete the *What is Stigma? Part Two* activity in their digital workbooks.



Think-Pair-Share or small group discussion:
How do the other students feel about Angela during the afternoon?



Digital Delivery: Use virtual breakout rooms.



Discuss together the descriptions of the character in *Part Two*.



Digital Delivery: Facilitate a large group discussion.



Say:

'This character has Attention-Deficit / Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD). This is a brain-based disorder that affects a person's ability to manage their behaviour. We will be learning more about ADHD in a later module, but for example, it might be difficult for the person to wait their turn, stand still in a line or stop and think before they say something. Like everyone, individuals with ADHD also have many strengths. They can be kind, creative, generous and helpful. This is why you cannot judge a person because they have ADHD or any other mental disorder'.



Show the definition of stigma and tell the students:

'Unfortunately, in society people often hold a set of negative beliefs, thoughts, feelings and behaviours about mental disorders. We look at the behaviours related to the mental disorder and not the whole person. This can lead us to treating people with mental disorders unfairly. This is called stigma.'

Resource: Classroom Slide Deck



Ask the students, 'How do you think a person facing stigma might feel?'

Invite the students to think about whether or not they would have been a friend to the character (Angela) in Part One of the video if they judged Angela based only on the challenging ADHD-related behaviours. How would they feel?



Review the key concepts with the students:

- Stigma about mental disorders can negatively affect our thoughts, feelings and behaviours towards others.
- If we are aware of the stigma of mental disorders and take the time to get to know others, we can make better choices and reduce stigma.



Prompt: If you were Angela, what concerns would you have? What might you want from your friends? How could a teacher support you? What would you need to feel safe and included?

Resources:

- Digital MHL Journal
- Printable MHL Journal

Alternative Activities

Put Yourself in Angela's Yellow Shoes!

Imagine you are Angela. Reflect on how your morning and your afternoon went. What might you wonder about? What might you want from your friends? How could a teacher support you? What would you need to feel safe and included? What strengths or talents might you feel proud of? Students can discuss these questions as a large group, in small groups or as a written reflection.

Get the Full Picture

Divide the class into five groups - one group for each character. Give each group a paper or poster with a blank picture frame. Invite students to draw or paste a picture of their assigned character in the middle of the page. Then have each group write or draw what they know about their character. Example prompts can include:

- interests / hobbies
- skills / strengths
- family
- friends
- pets
- fun facts
- positive characteristics (e.g. creative, friendly, funny, etc.)

Now ask each group to write down their character's mental disorder(s) somewhere on the page / poster. Reflect on how a person's mental disorder is only one part of their fuller picture.



Become an Upstander Against Stigma

Students can create posters, comic strips / graphic novel scenes or write in their MHL journals about what they might say (scripts) or do (actions) to challenge stigma when they encounter it.