



Senior/Ambassador Mental Health Awareness Patch

*Some of the topics discussed in this patch program may be sensitive topics for some girls and families. Girls are encouraged to work on this patch with a family member or trusted adult. If you are completing this patch as a troop, please make sure you get a signed **Sensitive Issues Form**.*

The Mental Health Awareness Patch Program is being offered by the International Bipolar Foundation (IBPF). GSKSMO has created this At Home sheet to complement the information provided by IBPF in their [Mental Health Awareness Patch Activity Packet](#).

Seniors and Ambassadors will learn about the brain and its influence on thoughts, feelings, and behavior, and through that knowledge, increase awareness and understanding of mental health challenges. Through education we can all change perceptions and reduce the stigma of mental illness.

Patch Criteria for Seniors & Ambassadors

1. Learn About the Brain and its Role in Mental Health (pp. 8-18 of the [IBPF Activity Packet](#))
2. Mental Health Facts and Myths Quiz (p. 20 of the [IBPF Activity Packet](#))
3. Complete 2 Discover Activities (see below)
4. Complete 2 Connect Activities (see below)
5. Complete 2 Take Action Activities (see below)
6. Reflection

Discover Activities

1. Approximately one in four people will have a mental illness in his/her lifetime. Discuss with family and/or your troop whether mental illness is different than any other illness.
2. Find out about common mental health issues that children and teens experience. Make sure you use reputable sources to find your information.
 - a. <https://www.cdc.gov/childrensmentalhealth/basics.html>
 - b. <https://dmh.mo.gov/mental-illness>
 - c. <https://www.kcanxiety.com/about/children.html>
3. Discover whether there is an anti-stigma campaign in your community. Describe what you find out. Below are some examples:
 - a. Let's Talk Colorado - <https://letstalkco.org/>
 - b. Make It Ok - <https://makeitok.org/>
 - c. Bring Change to Mind - <https://bringchange2mind.org/>

Connect Activities

1. Read a book or see a play or movie that addresses a mental health challenge. Discuss with your troop or family. Below are some suggestions:

- a. Film: Infinitely Polar Bear
 - b. Film & Book: The Perks of Being a Wallflower
 - c. Book: Turtles All the Way Down by John Green
 - d. I Am Not Your Perfect Mexican Daughter by Erika L. Sánchez
2. Explore how people with a mental illness are treated in the news, TV shows or social media by reading at least one of the articles below and then read the article (under c.) about the appropriate language to use when talking about mental illness.
 - a. <https://www.nami.org/Blogs/NAMI-Blog/October-2017/Stigmatizing-Media-Portrayals-What-Can-We-Do>
 - b. <https://health.usnews.com/health-news/health-wellness/articles/2015/04/16/how-mental-illness-is-misrepresented-in-the-media>
 - c. https://www.huffpost.com/entry/mental-illness-vocabulary_n_7078984
 3. Interview someone with a mental health challenge. Find out how stigma affects them. Tell others what you learn. OR read an article about someone who has struggled with a mental health challenge. A suggested article is below:
 - a. [When athletes share their battles with mental illness](#)
 4. Express through art, music or writing how you imagine a person living with mental illness might feel.

Take Action Activities

1. Explore what resources are available for mental health in your school, community, state or country. Interview someone who works or volunteers there, if possible.
2. Create an anti-stigma or mental health poster.
3. PASS IT ON: Talk about mental illness, the appropriate language to use when talking about mental illness (see Connect Activity 2c), and stigma with at least one adult and ask them to pass on the mental health awareness message to their peers. If you want, take the [Make It Ok Pledge](#).

Reflection: After completing all chosen patch activities, review the Girl Scout Law and discuss how it relates to what you have learned about mental illness. Discuss with your troop.

If you are someone you know is struggling with a mental health challenge contact the numbers below:

24-Hour National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 1-800-273-8255 - <https://suicidepreventionlifeline.org/>

NAMI Helpline: 1-800-950-6264 - <https://www.nami.org/help>

Local Resources:

<http://itmattersks.org/>

<https://www.kdads.ks.gov/commissions/behavioral-health>

How to Receive Your Patches:

Once you have completed the activities, submit the Patch Completion Form on page 32 of the IBPF [activity packet](#) and the International Bipolar Foundation will mail you your patches for free.

Please note the Discover, Connect, and Take Action activity number may not match with the activity number in the IBPF packet. You should use the corresponding number from the packet when filling out the Patch Completion Form.

