

Build community support. It takes all of us to remove stigma. There are Zero Reasons Why our communities can't work together. We are Zero Reasons Why. There are Zero Reasons Why we can't make mental health equal to physical health. This is the movement. There are Zero Reasons Why we can't create change. Raise awareness. Make your voice heard. There are Zero Reasons Why we can't work together to stop teen suicide. Advocate for mental health. Let's make a difference

The logo consists of a stylized orange hashtag symbol (#) made of thick, blocky lines. To its right, the words "ZERO REASONS WHY" are stacked vertically in a bold, black, sans-serif font. A registered trademark symbol (®) is located at the end of the word "WHY".

**ZERO  
REASONS  
WHY<sup>®</sup>**

EVENT PLANNING GUIDE

# Event Planning Guide

There are many different events you can host to increase Campaign awareness and generate conversation around mental health to reduce the stigma. Consider planning events like a mental health advocacy day, a public rally or activities during Mental Health Awareness Days to unite your school or community around the Zero Reasons Why movement.

## ZERO REASONS WHY “YELLOW OUT”

Hosting a “Yellow Out” at a school sporting event is a creative way to mobilize your community around mental health awareness. Players, students, staff and community members are invited to show their support by repping #ZRW yellow — either donning their own yellow gear or having t-shirts made for students and/or attendees to wear. Yellow #ZRW awareness wristbands can also be handed out to attendees as they enter. An announcement should be made before or during the game explaining the purpose of the event and mission of Zero Reasons Why.

**Tip:** before game day, ask the opposing team to participate in a wristband exchange at half-court/midfield before the game begins as a show of solidarity from both teams in the effort to change the game around mental health and suicide prevention.

## MENTAL HEALTH ADVOCACY DAY

Consider attending your state’s Mental Health Advocacy Day at the state capitol. Individual appointments with legislators provide an opportunity to introduce the Campaign, its pillars and mental health challenges of teens in the legislators’ territories. It’s a great way to expand the Campaign’s reach and advocate for policy change that would impact mental health initiatives and programs in your state.

## MARCH + RALLY

A Zero Reasons Why March + Rally can be a valuable way to reduce the stigma around mental health, highlight the Campaign, build community support and share educational resources. This event gives students and community members the opportunity to share why mental health is important to them. Customizable yard signs allow attendees to add their voice to the movement by finishing the sentence “There are #ZeroReasonsWhy \_\_\_” and holding it up during a march around campus or a park. Parents, educators, community representatives and/or mental health professionals may also speak at the rally to help educate the public on the topic & the Campaign.

## CAMPUS ACTIVITIES

There are many different times of the year you can plan activities to generate conversation about mental health and provide information about the Campaign and mental health resources. The list is extensive, but some example awareness days include:

- **January: Mental Wellness Month**
- **May: Mental Health Awareness Month/Week**
- **September: National Suicide Prevention Month/Week**

Planning activities during an awareness day or week is a great place to begin. Find examples of in-school activities you could host on the next page!

# In-School Activities

Find ways to incorporate mental wellness activities into the school day sponsored by Zero Reasons Why or in partnership with another mental wellness group. If this concept is new to your school, consider planning something at least once a semester, increasing the frequency to quarterly if not monthly. Here are a few suggestions to get you started.

## AFFIRMATIONS

Groups can work together to create uplifting affirmation signs and posters to hang up around the school. Positive affirmations help shift thoughts from negative to positive each time students read the affirmation.

## COLORING

Coloring is a great way to relieve stress. Offer coloring materials and print out coloring sheets for students to take a break, relax their mind and check-in with each other before they continue their busy day.

## GRATITUDE DISPLAYS

Dedicate a wall to serve as a gratitude display. As students walk into school, present them with the opportunity to anonymously write what they are grateful for on seasonally themed paper. Collect responses to display or have students tape them to the wall.

## EXERCISE + MINDFULNESS

Both exercise and mindfulness are powerful tools when it comes to mental health, helping to clear the mind and channel positive chemical releases. Exercising with others by walking around the track is a great way to integrate movement and social interaction into the day. Practicing mindfulness can be as simple as trying some breathing techniques. Count to four as you inhale and again as you exhale to help calm anxiety and relax both your body and mind.

## EMPATHY BUILDING

Share different exercises and videos to build empathy within the student body. Glasses of Empathy is a cheesy video, but an effective reminder that everyone is fighting their own battle and to be kind to one another. Allow students time to reflect on the video and prompt discussions about empathy and compassion in safe environments.

## KINDNESS NOTES

Leave post-it notes in a well-trodden area with encouraging notes, especially around finals week, to remind students they are worthy, capable, loved and an important part of the community.

## MENTAL HEALTH TIPS

Integrate daily or weekly mental health tips into the morning announcements. This is a great way to introduce new techniques to the student body and expand their wellness toolboxes.

# Awareness Days

\*Not a comprehensive list

When planning in-school activities or fundraising events, consider planning them around a day of awareness. A few mental wellness related observances are noted below, but there are many others. For example, if you want to plan a stress relief activity, you may think about having it correspond with Yoga Day or National Walking Day.

When your event day comes around, don't forget to tag @zeroreasonswhy\_ on social media so we can highlight your great work on our national channels!

## JANUARY

Mental Wellness Month  
National Mentoring Month

## FEBRUARY

School Counselor Week  
Eating Disorder Awareness Week  
Random Acts of Kindness Day

## MARCH

Teen Mental Wellness Day  
Social Work Month

## APRIL

Stress Awareness Month  
Stress Awareness Day  
World Health Day

## MAY

Mental Health Awareness Month  
Mental Health Awareness Week  
Mental Health Action Day

## JUNE

Pride Month

## JULY

BIPOC Mental Health Awareness Month  
International Self-Care Day

## AUGUST

Friendship Day

## SEPTEMBER

Suicide Prevention Month  
Suicide Prevention Week  
Suicide Prevention Day

## OCTOBER

Depression Awareness Month  
Mental Health Screening Month  
Mental Illness Awareness Week  
World Mental Health Day

## NOVEMBER

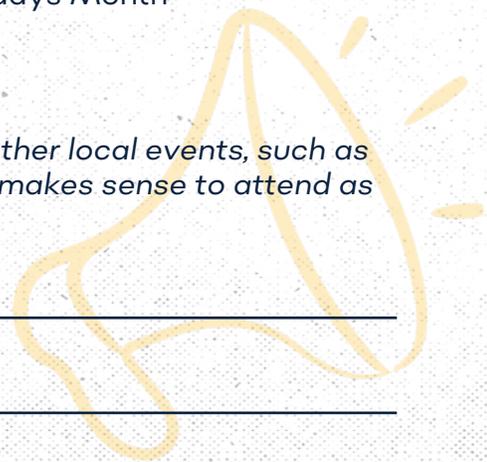
Gratitude Month  
Survivors of Suicide Day

## DECEMBER

Stress-Free Family Holidays Month

## LOCAL AWARENESS DAYS:

*Does your state have a Mental Health Advocacy Day? Are there other local events, such as resource fairs or events by other mental health organizations that makes sense to attend as a representative of Zero Reasons Why? Note them here!*



Please work as a group and write your answers in the third column.

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**Identify dates for your Mental Wellness Day/Week activities**

Refer to the Awareness Days page in the Event Planning Guide for ideas.

**Consider Partners**

If there is an established mental health club at your school consider partnering with them. Is there a parent group that might want to participate?

**Brainstorm Activities**

Consider the Activities list to determine what activities you'd like to feature.

**Identify Speakers**

Would you like to consider bringing in a speaker such as a local mental health professional? What planning is required to ensure their availability?

**Promotion**

How will you get teens to participate? Morning announcements? Posters? Personal invitations, text messages or social media?

**Purchase Supplies**

List the supplies that will be needed to conduct the activities. Determine who will purchase them. Is there an opportunity to get reimbursed by the school? Is a fundraiser required?

**Day-of Responsibilities**

Make a plan for who will set up each activity each day. Are the activities self-directed or are they group exercises? Do you need to practice?

**Notes/Additional Considerations**

# Meeting Facilitation Tips

As part of the Campaign, you may be asked to lead a meeting or plan an event. To help make the most of your time, consider these tips for holding an effective meeting:

## ROLES OF FACILITATORS

When you're in charge of a meeting, there are a few important things to keep in mind:

- Be sure to manage the time and make sure the meeting stays on track.
- Encourage group participation and make sure everyone's ideas are heard.
- Create an environment where meaningful discussions can take place.

## FOLLOW AN AGENDA

An agenda is like a road map for your meeting. It helps everyone know what topics will be discussed and in what order. If possible, share the agenda with participants beforehand so they can come prepared. This way, everyone is on the same page and the facilitators can guide the discussion smoothly.

If you're part of a Zero Reasons Why chapter or club, agendas are provided for monthly meetings.

## TAKE NOTES

It's helpful if someone takes notes during the meeting to recap what happened, especially for people who might have had to miss. These usually include a list of people in attendance, a summary of what was talked about and any action items people volunteered to work on. This helps keep everyone on the same page.

## NOTE ACTION ITEMS

Alongside the agenda, identify the key action items for each meeting. Make sure everyone knows their roles and responsibilities for upcoming events or activities. This way, everyone is clear about what needs to be done and can contribute to the team's success.

## PLAN AHEAD

Life is busy and there are many things that need your time and attention. Set meeting schedules early so everyone knows what to expect and can be active participants. If members frequently miss meetings, check in with them to make sure they're doing okay.

# Meeting Facilitation Tips

## CREATE SPACE FOR ALL VOICES

People have different personalities, and not everyone feels comfortable jumping into conversation. Create a safe space where everyone's ideas are welcomed and encouraged. You can try different things, like writing down ideas or giving everyone a chance to share their thoughts.

## TEAM UP

Join forces with other mental health clubs or organizations to involve more students. Plan meetings or activities after school or on weekends when more people can join. And don't forget to advertise in advance to get the word out!

## READ THE ROOM

If you notice that people are getting restless, fidgety or checking their phones, it might be a sign that it's time to take a break, speed things up or wrap up the meeting. Make sure you've answered all questions and covered key agenda items before closing.

## ONLINE MEETING/EVENT TIPS

The same tips carry over from in person meetings and events, but there are a few additional tips that are key to a successful online meeting:

- **Choosing a Location**  
Choose a quiet, private space where you are comfortable and avoid having bright lights behind you so people can see you clearly.
- **Online Etiquette**  
If there are more than five people, it's a good idea to keep everyone's microphones muted, except when they're speaking. Remind everyone to turn on their cameras and put away their phones to minimize distractions. This way, everyone can pay attention and participate.

# Fundraising for SWAG

Campaign SWAG is a great way to mobilize your school and community. Wearing a **#ZeroReasonsWhy** t-shirt or wristband around town or in school lets people know you are a Mental Health Advocate. Consider these activities as ways to fundraise for t-shirts or other swag to pass out at your school. Here's an idea: pass out wristbands or other items to the opposing teams at sporting events.

## COLOR RUN

Plan a 5K around your school and surrounding neighborhood where participants wear white shirts. At different checkpoints within the course, have volunteers throw colored chalk at participants. Have participants pay an entry fee and create a space for donations.

## WALK-A-THON

Have participants make teams with their friends where they pledge to walk 10,000 steps every day for a week, as an example. They will need sponsors for their pledge where donations can be received in person, or use an online fundraising platform such as GoFundMe. Prizes can be rewarded to the team that raises the most money or who reach the target goal.

## CAR WASH

Plan a car wash where members of the community pay to get their car cleaned. Tickets can be sold in advance or people can pay when they arrive. Make sure to advertise ahead of time and on the side of the road during the event.

## TRIVIA NIGHT

Have people sign up in teams of 4-6 people with a teacher and an established entry fee. Have a variety of themed questions to test students' knowledge, potentially including a mental health category to help educate students on ways to foster positive mental health.

## GAME NIGHT

Students pay a small entry fee to enter into a space filled with a wide variety of games to play with friends.

## CONCESSION NIGHT

Have volunteers from Zero Reasons Why work the concession stand at football and/or basketball games in exchange for a portion of that night's proceeds. Encourage customers to donate to the cause with an extra jar available.

## PANCAKE BREAKFAST

Set an entry fee for members of the community to attend a pancake breakfast. Consider adding forms of entertainment for guests like speakers, dancing or a performance by the pep band.

# SWAG Request Sample Letter

Local Business or Foundation

Address Line 1

Address Line 2

City, State Zip

Date

To whom it may concern,

We are reaching out to you on behalf of the Zero Reasons Why campaign to ask for help providing a t-shirt to each student in our high school.

As you may know, suicide is a leading cause of death for young people between the ages of 10 and 24. For every one suicide there are an estimated 25 attempts, and four out of five teens who attempt suicide have given clear warning signs.

Zero Reasons Why is a teen-led campaign to remove the stigma of mental health and prevent teen suicide. We believe that there are #ZeroReasonsWhy a teen should struggle alone. We hope that by removing the stigma surrounding mental health and suicide prevention, more teens will be more likely to ask for help and participate in mental health programs offered at their school and/or community.

Our hope for the t-shirts is for the larger student body to show their support for removing the stigma. By providing t-shirts to all, the logo will become easily recognizable in the community and help spread the message of the Campaign. We would like to have these t-shirts available to recognize the upcoming awareness event we are hosting: [PICK ONE OR OTHERS]

- May 1 - Mental Health Awareness Month
- September 1 - Suicide Prevention Month
- October 10 - World Mental Health Day

If you agree to fund this effort, we would engage the district print shop to fulfill the order and have the specs available that they would need.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely -

Name, Grade, School Name

Name, Grade, School Name

Name, Grade, School Name

Name, Grade, School Name