

**TITLE**

# BREAKING THE STIGMA: AANHPI MENTAL HEALTH

GRADE LEVEL: MIDDLE SCHOOL, HIGH SCHOOL (7-9)

**DISCIPLINE:** Health

**TOPIC:** Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander mental health, including cultural views on mental health and key issues impacting the community.

**STANDARDS:** National Health Education Standards | Grades 6-8: 1.8.2, 1.8.3, 1.8.4, 1.8.7  
Grades 9-12: 1.12.2, 1.12.3, 1.12.4, 1.12.6

**OBJECTIVES:**

- Demonstrate an understanding of the cultural perceptions and beliefs around mental health in diverse AANHPI communities.
- Demonstrate understanding of how family, social, and political structures create unique struggles for AANHPI individuals.
- Identify and understand key statistical facts about AANHPI mental health.
- Explain the barriers that exist in accessing appropriate mental health care for AANHPI individuals.
- Create innovative solutions to enhance access to culturally-responsive mental health care for the AANHPI community.

**ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS:**

- Who comprises the AANHPI community?
- What are the struggles the AANHPI community faces with mental health?
- What are the cultural perceptions of mental health in the AANHPI community?
- What actions can be taken to address AANHPI mental health struggles?

**MATERIALS NEEDED:**

- Projector for the slide presentation and video
- Print outs of the note taking document, one for each student
- Print outs of the student facing project instructions, one for each student

**KIT INCLUDES:**

- [Background Reading for Educator](#)
- [Glossary of Terms](#)
- [Asian Americans Read Secrets About the AAPI Experience](#)
- [Jubilee Video](#)
- [Teacher Power Point Slides \(lecture notes\)](#)
- [Student Power Point Slides \(use to present\)](#)
- [Note taking worksheet](#)
- [Student Facing Project Instructions](#)

**CLASSROOM HOURS NEEDED:** 2 hours, 15 minutes

**FINAL ASSESSMENT TYPE:** Project

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## DAY 1, INTRODUCTION (25 MINUTES)

- Introduce the topic for today's class as mental health within the AANHPI community, and define AANHPI as an umbrella term that encapsulates Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians, and Pacific Islanders.
- Then, present slides 1-8 in this student presentation to provide students context on the AANHPI community.
- Have students watch the video, "Asian Americans Read Secrets About the AAPI Experience," but give them a trigger warning that mentions of racism, suicide, and mental health are within the video. Ask students to take notes throughout of things the video mentions that they think could affect AANHPI mental health using the note-taking worksheet.
- Ask 2-4 students to share their answers with the group.

## DISCUSSION (15 MINUTES)

Make space for other students to share their own lived experiences with mental health, especially as it relates to their cultural identities. Ensure students know Asian and non-Asian students alike can engage in this. Take special care to reiterate that all stories are welcomed and protected in this space, and that no information shared today will leave the classroom.

For further information on setting classroom norms, please see our webinar

[How to Have Difficult But Necessary Conversations in the Classroom.](#)

Ask students to split into small groups and use the following discussion questions:

- What factors most impact your mental health?
  - Do any of those factors relate to what was discussed in the video?
  - How, if at all, do you think your identity impacts your mental health?
- Consider your gender, sexuality, race, ethnicity, religion, etc.

## PRESENTATION (20 MINUTES)

After the discussion, present the rest of the slides to students, or have students work through them independently while taking notes. It is highly suggested that teachers present slides 16 through 30 to allow for some discussion of information/Q&A time. Students can continue taking notes on the note-taking worksheet.



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**PROJECT**  
(ESTIMATED  
TIME TO  
INTRODUCE:  
10 MINUTES)

This project asks students to research an AANHPI community and their experiences within the mental health field, create three action items that could be taken to address the community's issues with mental health, and create an informational flier which should be displayed around your school or throughout your community. The flyer should summarize their findings from each section in about 50 words each. This is NOT the same as the slide show provided in the teacher resources. This is a multi-day project. You may introduce the project and give students class time to work on it within this lesson, and then give students roughly one week to finish the project with their teams outside of class. The next lesson will take place after students complete this project and will culminate with an in-class presentation on their findings.

**OPTIONAL:** If you think your students can handle it, ask them to conduct an interview with someone in the community impacted by the issue they research so they get a better understanding of how stakeholders are impacted by the issue.

After finishing the presentation and answering any questions, split the class into teams of four. Ask students to do a deep dive on an AANHPI community and provide them with these instructions and this organizer to help them facilitate their research, and this template informational flier they can use. Challenge them to research an AANHPI community that is often underrepresented or wasn't spoken about as much in the presentation. **Ask students to conduct preliminary research on the group, considering the following topics:**

- 1) Cultural perceptions of mental health within the community
- 2) Common mental health issues the community faces, including statistics
- 3) Factors that could influence the community's mental health, like financial hardship, racism, immigration, cultural views of mental health, etc. They should explain how exactly these factors influence their group specifically and try not to overgeneralize AANHPI people.
- 4) Existing programs that support the community's mental health, and some resources AANHPI people from their group could access.

After completing the initial research, ask students to come up with 3 action items that people, schools, governments, non-profits, etc. can do to better support their community's mental health. Have students create an informational flyer summarizing their research and these steps.

Students should then come up with 2 places this flyer could be displayed or distributed. Examples might include the school counseling office, the public library, a community center, a mental health center, and more. Have students connect with two of these places and ask to distribute and/or display their flyer.

**TAKE  
HOME  
ACTIVITY**

Have students complete their project over the course of one week.



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DAY 2

**INTRODUCTION**  
(5 MINUTES)

**Have students journal for 5 minutes on the following topic:**

What have been your major takeaways from working on your informational AANHPI mental health project in regard to the community you researched?

**PROJECT PRESENTATIONS**  
(35 MINUTES)

**Give students 5 minutes to regroup with their project partners before giving a presentation on their AANHPI group.**

Tell students that each group will be expected to provide feedback on another group's presentation. Assign "group-buddies," i.e. groups that will evaluate each other. Have each group provide feedback on a sheet of lined paper. The feedback should focus on what the group did well in conveying their topic, and what could be improved in order to facilitate active listening skills and improve group presentation skills. This feedback should be given as a group; individual's names shouldn't be attached.

Allow students to do their presentations, giving each group 4 minutes. Depending on class size, this should take about 30 minutes. Have students give their respective groups their feedback forms.

**PRESENTATION DEBRIEF**  
(25 MINUTES)

**Ask students the following discussion questions. Have them pick 3 questions to journal on for about 7 minutes..**

- Did you learn something that surprised you? What, and how so?
- Did you notice any themes across AANHPI groups and the challenges they face with mental health?
- How do you think racism is related to AANHPI mental health issues?
- Did you relate to any of the issues the AANHPI community faces, even if you might not be AANHPI?
- Have you thought more about your own cultural identity and how that has changed your experience with mental health? What privileges, or disadvantages, do you experience with mental health?
- What is one thing you learned you can do to support your AANHPI peers/ your community's mental health?