

SENSORY AWARENESS CHALLENGE

ACTIVITY DESCRIPTION:

Symptoms of mental illness can vary significantly between individuals. Some students react by expressing negative or aggressive behaviors at school, others may abuse substances, while some students may engage in activity that you wouldn't expect or notice such as self-harm. In addition to this, we may see students excel in academics, extracurriculars, or in social settings but suffer from crippling anxiety and depression which can affect their ability to cope and maneuver through life and school.

This activity is designed to show how anxiety and depression can overwhelm students.

MATERIALS:

Role description on strips of paper
Index card (or piece of cardboard) –1 per group
Book – 1 per group
Copy of story and questions – 1 per group
(<http://www.madehow.com/Volume-3/Ice-Cream.html>)
Bags to hold items

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Ask for 5 volunteers to come up.
2. Ask for one volunteer to play **Person #1** (make sure they are comfortable being touched lightly). This person's job is to try and listen to what is being read so they can answer questions later.
3. Give the remaining 4 volunteers of the group a slip of paper with a description of what to do. This should not be shared aloud with the rest of the group. (Note: View Role Descriptions below)
4. Give the participants a few minutes to read their descriptions and get into place.
5. Allow 5-7 minutes to perform the activity, with an additional 2-3 minutes for Person #1 to complete question sheet.

TIME: 20 minutes

ACCOMMODATIONS TO CONSIDER:

Large print copies

DISCUSSION:

1. How did it feel to have so much going on around you?
2. Were you able to concentrate on the paragraph being read? What might have helped?
3. Did you feel like you wanted to stop or quit the activity?

