



## Template Newsletter #3

### Make It Ok: Learn the Lingo

Talking more openly about mental illnesses is one way we can reduce the stigma and “Make It Ok.” Sometimes we resort to silence because it can be hard to find the words to say.

We’re part of a local effort to stop the silence and stigma surrounding mental illnesses. Here are some of the tips from the Make It OK toolbox to get you as you become more comfortable talking about mental illnesses.

#### What can you say

Let’s pretend someone you know just told you they’re struggling with an anxiety disorder or depression.

- What do you say? Here are a few suggestions.
- “Oh no, what can I do to help?”
- “I’m here for you if you need me”
- “Things *will* get better.”
- “I can’t imagine what you’re going through.”
- “We’ll make it right. It’ll be ok.”
- “Can I drive you to an appointment?”
- “We love you”

#### What you shouldn’t say

Sometimes our words may reinforce the stigma. Remember that mental illnesses are biological in nature, just like diabetes, and need treatment. Avoid using derogatory or dismissing language.

- “It could be worse.”
- “Snap out of it.”
- “Everyone feels that way sometimes.”
- “You may have brought this on yourself.”
- “There’s got to be something wrong upstairs.”
- “We’ve all been there.”
- Don’t use words such as crazy, psycho, nuts or insane.

#### Rule of thumb

Although talking about mental illnesses may be uncomfortable for you at first, know that it is also a difficult conversation for your friend. Be nice, supportive and listen. Offer to help and keep the conversation going.

Visit [MakelItOk.org](http://MakelItOk.org) to learn more, or to start the conversation by taking the pledge.