



Mental Health Advocacy Toolkit

Empowering Black Women to Advocate for Mental Wellness

"You are worthy of care. You are allowed to take up space. You deserve healing."

Self-Advocacy Reflection Worksheet

1. What does mental wellness look like for me right now?

2. What are three words that describe how I feel in health settings?

3. Have I ever felt unheard by a doctor or service provider? What happened?

4. What would help me feel safer or more supported?

5. Who can I bring with me to appointments or meetings as an advocate?

6. What questions do I want to ask about my care or rights?

7. What is one action I can take this month to advocate for my wellness?

Mental Health Advocacy Toolkit (Continued)

This toolkit is designed to empower Black women to advocate for their mental health care, understand their rights, and navigate systems with confidence. It offers guidance for navigating health, workplace, and education settings with an emphasis on cultural safety and self-advocacy.

1. Know Your Rights

- You have the right to culturally safe, trauma-informed mental health care.
- You have the right to ask for a Black, African Nova Scotian, or culturally competent care provider.
- You have the right to take medical leave for mental health reasons under most employment laws.

2. Advocate for Yourself in Healthcare

- Prepare your questions before your appointment.
- Ask for clarity-it's okay to request simpler explanations or second opinions.
- Keep records of appointments, medications, and symptoms.
- Bring a support person with you when possible.

3. Navigating Mental Health at Work

- Know your policies on mental health leave and accommodations.
- Document all conversations related to your mental health and treatment.
- Speak with HR or a designated mental health support person confidentially.
- Advocate for culturally inclusive support like Employee Assistance Programs (EAPs) with Black therapists.

4. Advocating in Education Settings

- Inform your school or institution about mental health needs through a counselor or advisor.
- Request accommodations (extra time, rest breaks, extensions) if needed.
- Access campus-based services that provide mental health support or community.

5. Crisis Resources and Support Lines

- Mental Health Crisis Line NS: 1-888-429-8167
- Talk Suicide Canada: 1-833-456-4566
- Kids Help Phone: 1-800-668-6868 or Text 686868
- ABSW Black Support Line: 1-855-732-1253