

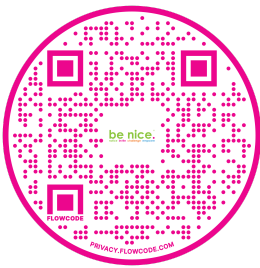
## Assembly Outline

Assemblies are unique to each school depending upon grade level, your time limits, and whether or not you have an active Student Leadership Group. Regardless, all schools should host an assembly to gain full student body and staff support. Use the suggested outlines below, but make it your own!

### I. Intro to the **be nice.** Program

a. Play an introductory video! A few options would be:

- i. What is **be nice.**? Scan the QR Code or follow the link:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fSJh7VWBRI>
- ii. Create your own using the "Promo Video Script" on the portal \*(Activities → School-wide & Classroom Activities → All Ages)
- iii. Show the **be nice.** movie and teach the action plan (this option takes at least 45 minutes and would replace sections III and IV)
- iv. Create a slideshow to go along with your presentation (make a copy of our "be nice. Assembly Powerpoint Template")



### II. Defining mental health

- slide - 'your mental health is how you think, act, and feel'
- talking point: "let's keep it simple, and know that we can all help ourselves and others by using the be nice. action plan"

### III. Defining n.i.c.e.

**(Get creative! Use students or videos to introduce the action plan)**

Split up and have students explain each word in the action plan with examples:

- have a slide behind you explaining the step of the action plan
- have a fun example during each step (a game, video, etc.)

#### **Examples**

a. notice

- i. What do we do well at our school when it comes to noticing value?
- ii. What can we do better?

b. invite

- i. What do we do well at our school when it comes to inviting conversations about mental health?



ii. What can we do better?

c. challenge

i. What is stigma? How can we challenge stigma?

ii. What do we do well at our school when it comes to challenging stigma?

\*\*make sure that you talk about resources here!

- have a slide of your school counselors, national hotlines (988, 741-741, Okay2Say)
- have your counselor come up and talk about how to reach them

d. empower

i. What do we do well at our school when it comes to empowering others?

ii. What do we do well at our school when it comes to empowering our individual mental health?

iii. What can we do better?

#### IV. **Voices from the Community**

The purpose of this section is to let students know that they are not alone if they feel like they are struggling with their mental health. It is also to gain understanding that we can have an effect on the mental health of others – how someone thinks, acts, and feels. There are stories in your community that will help students understand they are not alone!

##### **a. Student Stories**

i. Have 3-5 students from your leadership group share a story of how the **be nice.** action plan was used in their own life. It could be as simple as “Someone noticed I was feeling down at lunch...” or “Someone noticed I was showing signs of depression...” – these are each unique stories. They can be shared aloud or anonymously.

**Make sure each story truly ends with the empower piece.**

ii. **Does someone have a more in-depth story of overcoming mental health struggles?**

1. This fits well with the challenge step - sharing our personal stories challenges stigma! **NOTE:** These stories need to be



**read and approved ahead of time** by your liaison and/or school counselor/social worker.

2. If they would like to remain anonymous, write the story and have someone read it as "this is a student from our school"
3. Record the student reading their story on video (see portal for examples)
4. Have the student come up and read
5. Examples that we have seen:
  - 8th grader - telling the story of when she was in 6th grade, getting labeled because of one thing that she did. Walking the audience through how that felt. Ending with how important it was that she had one friend who stuck by her, and that she had the understanding that she was more than that label.
  - Senior - very well-liked, everyone knew him, sports scholarship. No one knew that he struggled with depression and came to school every day with a 'mask' on. Being part of a group (the **be nice.** chapter) helped him understand that he was not alone. He was empowered to ask for help

#### **b. Staff / Community Story**

- i. Do any of your school staff or community members have a story to share? Seek out speakers who can inspire your students to come together and live the **be nice.** action plan.
- ii. Examples of speakers:
  - Staff
  - High school students (for middle school assembly)
  - Recent graduates
  - Community members in unique roles (military, healthcare, sports, business) who have overcome mental health challenges
  - *We have ideas too! Reach out to us to request a speaker!*

#### **V. Taking the **be nice.** Pledge**



- a. Wrap up assembly
- b. Have all students "Take the Pledge" together at the assembly, or afterwards ([www.benice.org/take-the-pledge](http://www.benice.org/take-the-pledge)). Allow students from the crowd to sign the banner immediately after the assembly or sometime during the school day.

### **Suggested Wrap-Up Speech Guidelines**

**be nice.** Liaisons often give the closing speech at the assembly, but it can be given by another staff member, or even a student leader. If you do not have a student leadership group yet, this is a great opportunity to share that one will be created and for anyone interested to contact the designated liaisons. The important part is to leave students motivated to change the culture of their school, and start talking about mental health and suicide prevention.

### **Suggested conclusion points / key takeaways:**

- "Think about whether or not you really 'get it.' Do you 'get' that the way you treat someone can have an effect on their mental health? How they think, act, and feel? Each of us has a choice each day about how we treat others. It's much simpler to make the right decision with this knowledge: You can make someone's day, week, or month – you can even save someone's life – by being nice."
- "Being nice can be as simple as smiling at someone instead of looking away. It can be more challenging, like choosing not to repeat gossip, or bigger yet, noticing and inviting someone you can tell is having a hard time. All of these simple or more difficult actions could save someone's life."
- "This is so exciting! Please keep a lookout for activities that our leadership chapter will facilitate, reminding us all to notice, invite, challenge, and empower."



## **Additional Assembly Components: Tried and true, fun and successful activities**

### **Logistics:**

- Split up assemblies by grade levels for maximum participation
- Make sure that everyone in your group is wearing **be nice.** gear!
- Ask the administration to **require that staff attend this event!**
- Give each student a glow stick as they enter (see below)
- Make sure that there is music playing as students enter!
- Have a scrolling slideshow of pictures, resource numbers, positive quotes as students enter

### **Beginning of the assembly:**

- Have someone from administration set group rules and expectations at the beginning of the assembly
- Ask students to keep themselves safe during assembly

### **Activities during assembly:**

- **\*Glowsticks\*** - turn out most of the auditorium lights. prepare a survey that is both funny ("raise your glowstick if you like pineapple on pizza) but also deep ("raise them if you have divorced parents," or "raise them if you have ever felt alone") Explain that we are never alone as \_\_\_\_\_ (students of this school), and you are important every day to this school!
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- Students share their interesting **empowerment activities** (does anyone in that grade have an interesting talent?? At one assembly, a student rode his unicycle on stage - explain how our interesting activities become our coping skills)
- Is someone in your grade **in a band**? do you have time for them to play a lil something? Getting a pep band is fun as well!
- Create a **social media challenge** and introduce it at the assembly



**In conclusion, the most important goals of the assembly are to**

1. Review the steps of the **be nice.** action plan
2. Leave everyone feeling:
  - a. School is a safe space to get help if I need it
  - b. School can protect my mental health
  - c. I can empower my mental health by concentrating every on my mental health
  - d. The way that I treat others has an effect on their mental health
  - e. Have FUN!