

ENCOURAGE TEENS TO SPEAK UP

Cameron's Collection helps teens at Charlottesville High School understand and manage depression, stress, anxiety, and more.

Across the United States, the number of teen suicides has risen dramatically over the years. Whether it's the stress of high-level courses or the anxiety of divorcing parents, a staggering amount of students are overcrowding school counseling centers, says *Psychology Today*. In fact, the National Alliance on Mental Illness reports that one in five teenagers and young adults suffers from mental illness.

"It might even be higher here," says Anne Ernst, library media specialist at Charlottesville High School in central Virginia. "There are a lot of kids living in poverty or dealing with family issues. There's also a lot of pressure and stress to succeed, to take AP classes, or to get into top-tier colleges."

To help navigate these and other mental health issues, Charlottesville students now have access to Cameron's Collection, a series of eBooks that offers resources and strategies to help teens or loved ones. So far, members of the school's

international community and students who have experienced trauma as refugees are frequent users. Students can privately access and search specific terms within the books through smartphones or computers.

"I have a lot of students who quietly ask me for a book about depression or something, and I show them how to use these," Ernst says. "It is a great relief because privacy is so important. A kid who's exploring their mental health, dealing with cyberbullying, or researching depression doesn't necessarily want to walk around with a book."

An updated version of an article originally appearing in *District Administration*, June 2018.



NAMESAKE DREAMED ABOUT AWARENESS

The collection is named in honor of Cameron Gallagher. She was a bright, talented young girl battling depression and anxiety whose dream was to raise awareness and to help erase the stigma about the topic. At the age of 16, she suddenly passed away from an undiagnosed heart condition. Her legacy and efforts live on through the Cameron K. Gallagher (CKG) Foundation.

In collaboration with the CKG Foundation, Gale, a Cengage Company, curated nearly 100 titles. They cover issues such as anxiety, eating disorders, and even bullying. Cameron's mother, Grace, executive director for CKG, says bullying can sometimes be the byproduct of not taking care of your mental health. "I'm glad this collection can speak to so many and offer tools for those who need it," she says.

RESOURCES MEET DIVERSE NEEDS

Articles can be saved or shared, and the books can be translated, which is particularly relevant in this 1,200-student school where 34 languages are spoken. Each book contains additional resources, including information on getting professional help.

Charlottesville educators saw usage pick up just one month after the collection was added to the school's virtual bookshelves.

"I suspect that is mostly due to research projects," Ernst adds, explaining she deliberately didn't announce the new collection with fanfare. "We wanted a quiet rollout so students could become familiar with the resources."

As Ernst monitored usage of the collection, she saw that one eBook on anxiety disorder and another on teen self-injury were accessed at a particularly high rate. She also monitored how staff, specifically school counselors, used the eBooks to offer support when a student's parents faced divorce.

Ernst anticipates expanded use of Cameron's Collection as word spreads.

"Gale has been wonderful, and I've been really pleased to have been able to add this into our collection," Ernst says. "It was very timely for us. I think over time it will grow to be one of our most important resources for our students."

LET KIDS KNOW THEY'RE NOT ALONE WITH CAMERON'S COLLECTION

When kids are struggling with mental health issues, the fear of being viewed as different can be a barrier to asking for help.

Together, we can support students by providing a resource they can access when they need it most.

THE SITUATION



1 IN 5 TEENS IN THE UNITED STATES SUFFERS FROM MENTAL ILLNESS*

In response, educators and parents are seeking resources that better support student mental health.

WHAT ARE THE CHALLENGES FACING EDUCATORS?



Meeting the diverse needs of students and the adults who support them.



Providing content that is relevant, reliable, and reliable.



Ensuring privacy for students and families.



Making sure students have access to resources when, and where, it's needed.

*National Alliance on Mental Illness: *Mental Health by the Numbers* (September 2019).

WHERE TO START



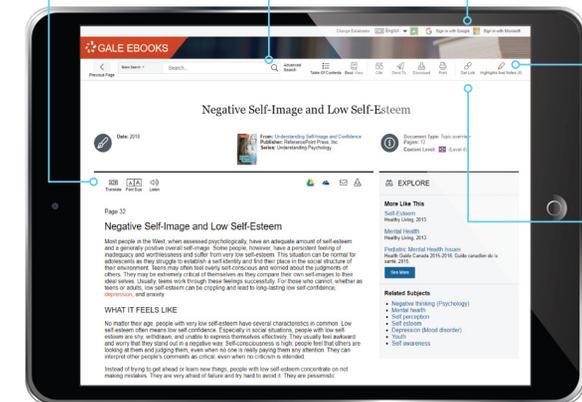
In collaboration with the Cameron K. Gallagher Foundation, Gale has curated collections with over 100 eBook titles intended to help students of all ages battle depression, stress, anxiety, and more. Available on the *Gale eBooks* platform, these collections provide private, targeted resources and guidance to support children and teens like Cameron.



TRANSLATE content into more than 20 languages, including Spanish—on screen and read aloud.

CROSS SEARCH to uncover relevant content within all titles.

COLLABORATE by leveraging integrated learning management systems, **G Suite for Education** and **Microsoft Office 365** tools.



ADD HIGHLIGHTS AND NOTES for yourself and to share information with others.

SAVE AND SHARE LINKS to reference later and embed in presentations, web resources, and more.

Product screen capture as of December 2019. Actual interface may vary.

WHAT SCHOOLS ARE SAYING



"We can never underestimate the mental health needs of our students. **As educators, we must provide the best materials and resources for every student.** Offering Cameron's Collection to our students, parents, teachers, and staff 24/7 is a step in the right direction."

—Julia Desalernos
Library Media Teacher, Stauffer Middle School, California



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—Anne Ernst
Library Media Specialist, Charlottesville High School, Virginia

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