

# Be Real

## DISCUSSION GUIDE

Engage youth in a discussion about the importance of sharing their thoughts and feelings with trusted friends and adults.



## CAMPAIGN SUMMARY

*Be Real* is a public service campaign video designed to:

- Encourage Black male teens in Georgia to seek help from a trusted adult.
- Encourage this audience to seek help from a supportive friend.
- Reduce stigma around help-seeking.
- Promote the Georgia Crisis and Access Line.

The Prevention and Community Support Section (PCSS) of the Georgia Division of Family and Children Services (DFCS), the Georgia Department of Public Health (GDPH), and partner organizations developed this youth help-seeking campaign in 2021.

## START THE CONVERSATION

This guide exists to support you in screening the *Be Real* PSA and facilitating a conversation with young people about the benefits of social connections with their peers and adults. When kids have relationships in which they can express their true thoughts and feelings, they are more likely to feel supported and less alone. These friendships and community connections have played an especially important role in the past year, as the COVID-19 pandemic has interrupted everyday environments, routines, and social interactions.

The *Be Real* campaign also aims to normalize asking for help. This discussion presents an opportunity to talk about the common barriers to teens asking for help or talking to others when they feel sad, scared, anxious, or hopeless. Suicide is a leading cause of death among adolescents aged 15–19 and affects young men of color more than their female or white peers. This discussion and exposure to health messages can help prevent suicidal thoughts and behaviors.

1. Introduce the topic.
2. Play the [Be Real PSA](#).
3. Use the following questions to spark conversation and encourage participants to “be real.”

### Note to Facilitators

Let the young people in your group know that the video **may trigger people** who are experiencing emotions or situations similar to the ones shown in the video. They can step out of the room or focus on another activity if the video sets off difficult emotions for them. As the facilitator, you should **follow up** with anyone triggered by the video to **offer support or resources**.

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. The video talks about the importance of “being real” when you’re feeling out of sorts. What does “being real” mean to you?
2. Think back to the last segment with the cousins texting. How do we let people know when we’re feeling anger, sadness, or another emotion?
3. Why is it difficult sometimes to ask for help when you need it?

**Facilitators:** After youth respond to why it’s difficult to ask for help, follow up by letting them know that the following questions may prompt ideas on how to overcome those barriers.

4. The young men in the video reached out to their coach, barber, friend, and cousin for advice or help. Asking for help and sharing your feelings, while sometimes seen as showing weakness, are actually signs of *strength, confidence, resourcefulness, and resilience*. What would make you feel comfortable asking for help?

**Facilitators** can offer suggestions if youth struggle in answering this question. Get them started by offering terms like non-judgmental, trustworthy, honest, and good listener. Don't supply all the answers, and be comfortable with silence if it takes a while for them to respond.

5. Who do I trust to go to for help? Write down the names of *three* trusted adults or peers.

**Facilitators:** Ask the youth to write these down. Encourage volunteers to share, but don't require everyone to share. Observe any young person who seems to struggle here and check in with them after the activity. Some youth may not feel they have three people to reach out to, and you can let them know that they have at least one – you!

6. How can you be the person that someone feels comfortable “*being real*” with?

7. How do you show your friends that you're there for them and that you care?

**Facilitators** – again, you can get this conversation started without immediate responses, but be comfortable with some silence. Some ideas: showing empathy, listening, being honest, just being there, etc. Youth need to know that they don't have to fix their friends' problems, especially if they are sharing suicidal thoughts. Provide them with the resources below so they will know where to go if and when a friend comes to them with a significant problem.

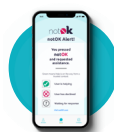
## CONTINUE THE CONVERSATION

After you complete the discussion questions, encourage the young people to reach out to someone they've been thinking of lately. They can text, call after school, pass a note, offer a snack, or reach out in another way that feels real to them.

Share the GCAL text line as a resource (QR codes/posters/rack cards). For **immediate access** to routine or crisis services, please call the **Georgia Crisis Access Line (GCAL)** at 1-800-715-4225. GCAL is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week to help you or someone you care about through a crisis.



[www.freeyourfeels.org](http://www.freeyourfeels.org)



[www.notokapp.com](http://www.notokapp.com)

## RESOURCES FOR FACILITATORS

Connections Matter Georgia Training:

[www.cmgeorgia.org](http://www.cmgeorgia.org)

Belonging for Hope:

[www.belongingforhope.org](http://www.belongingforhope.org)

Sources of Strength:

[www.sourcesofstrength.org](http://www.sourcesofstrength.org)

COVID-19 Emotional Support Line:

[www.dbhdd.georgia.gov/covid-19](http://www.dbhdd.georgia.gov/covid-19)



Prevent Child Abuse Georgia Helpline:  
1-800-CHILDREN

[www.abuse.publichealth.gsu.edu/  
resources-helpline/#map](http://www.abuse.publichealth.gsu.edu/resources-helpline/#map)