

---

# Trainer's Guide to "Mental Health Information on the Internet" Classes



Department of Biomedical Informatics, Columbia University  
New York Academy of Medicine

Supported by a Grant from the National Library of Medicine



# Introduction

---

This guide is intended to help trainers teach health consumers the five “Mental Health Information on the Internet” classes. It accompanies the Consumer Health Workbook, “Finding Mental Health Information on the Internet.”

Each of the **five classes** is designed to be **75 minutes** in length. At the beginning of the first class, each student will receive a copy of the Workbook that he or she can write in and take home.

**IMPORTANT!** Make sure you tell the students to bring their workbooks back to each class.

These classes are designed for people who have some familiarity with computers and the Internet.

# Things to Keep in Mind in Teaching These Classes

---

- Even though the class participants are familiar with computers, they are likely to vary a lot in terms of their computer skills (mouse, keyboard, scrolling, etc.)
- They are also likely to vary in their understanding of health matters
- Websites present many problems and can be confusing and even overwhelming
- Requires patience, training, and repetition

# Some Training Tips

---

- **Try to assess the level of each student in class**
  - Adjust pace of teaching: find the middle ground and try to assist those who need more help
  - Encourage students to help each other – invite students to work in pairs (“buddy system”)
- **Be as clear and as explicit as possible**
  - The language of computers, the Internet, and the Web will be entirely new to many participants.
  - Make sure that they understand terms such as *website*, *links*, *scrollbars*, *windows*, etc.
  - New users often confuse the web address bar with text boxes on a page.
- **Review and repeat when appropriate.**
  - At the end of each lesson do a recap and introduce the topic for the next lesson
- **Involve students as much as possible—Don’t lecture too much**
  - Solicit their ideas
  - Engage them in discussion
- **Encourage practice and provide exercises**
- **Encourage a relaxed atmosphere where students are engaged**

# Class One Outline: Introduction to the Course and the World Wide Web

---

See Class Objectives on p. 5. (Page numbers refer to CH Workbook.)

- **Motivate:** Help your students understand how these classes can help them. Show brief video clips from the website, [www.cbohealth.org](http://www.cbohealth.org), and encourage students to share their own experiences (p. 3). 20 minutes
- 1. **Review basic Internet/Web concepts and vocabulary** (pp. 6 – 9). 10 minutes
- 2. **Introduce Web navigation concepts and demonstrate popular websites** (pp. 10 – 18). 20 minutes
- 3. **Student exercises** (pp. 19 – 21). 15 minutes
- 4. **Wrap up, review** what was covered. 10 minutes
  - It is fine to use time in the next class to finish up business from the previous class.
  - Class One covers the basic concepts of the Web that will be reinforced repeatedly throughout the 5 classes.

**Reminder:** the research staff will need about 20 minutes at the beginning of Class One to administer evaluation measures and have the students read and sign the informed consent forms.

# Class One, 1: Motivate (pp. 3 – 5)

---

- **Getting acquainted**

- Briefly introduce yourself, your computer skills (how long you have used computers, etc.), and your interests related to this course.
- Have the students introduce themselves and mention their computer experience as well.
- Talk about when they might need health information.
- Show the video clips.
- Discuss health information needs and ask the students about their experiences with the health system

Examples:

- You just left your doctor's office and you realize you forgot to ask him/her a question.
- You heard about a new drug or an alternative treatment for a certain health condition and you would like to learn more about it.

- **Course overview**

- Briefly lay out the 5 classes to be taught in the course (p. 4)

- **Review objectives for Class One (p. 5)**

# Class One, 2: Review Basic Internet/Web Concepts and Vocabulary (pp. 6 – 9)

---

- Introduce the Internet and the World Wide Web
- Explain that a Web browser is a program used to access websites. In this course, our Web browser will be *Internet Explorer*.
- Practice opening Internet Explorer.
- Review the Web terms (p. 9). Briefly explain the concept of a *Website*: A website is collection of information put together by an organization of some sort or a person. The information on each website is written on Web pages, which you will see on the computer screen. Explain that we will show them how to go to a website, explaining each part of this process one at a time.

Call attention to the address bar on the Web browser. Ask the students to point to the address bar on their screens, and to read the Web address that is written in the address bar.

# Class One, 3: Introduce Web navigation concepts and demonstrate popular websites (pp. 10 – 18)

---

Demonstrate using [www.weather.com](http://www.weather.com) (p. 10 )

Scrolling (p. 13): Sometimes you cannot see an entire page because it does not fit the screen, so you have to scroll down and scroll up in order to see everything on the page. There are several ways to scroll:

- 1) You can click and hold the scroll bar and slide the screen up or down
- 2) You can click on the up or down arrows located above or below the scroll bar (at the very end)
- 3) You can use the up or down arrow keys on the keyboard (see below)

Navigating with browser buttons (pp. 14 – 15)

Hyperlinks (p. 16)

Breakdown of a Web address (p. 17)

-note that the end of the internet address, [weather.com](http://weather.com), [nyc.gov](http://nyc.gov) and [hunter.cuny.edu](http://hunter.cuny.edu), can tell you a little about the website- we'll go over this more later!

Some popular websites (p. 18)- these can help get their interest and motivate them to learn more...



# **Class One, 4: Student Exercises (pp. 19 – 21)**

---

Allow students time to try the exercises in their workbooks- practicing on their own while you are there to help guide them through pitfalls is extremely helpful!

# Class One, 5: Wrap Up, Review

---

Review what was covered in class.

-So that your students understand the general progress of the course you can explain that we reviewed the basic tools they need in order to use the internet for anything, including finding helpful mental health information.

# ClassTwo Outline: Searching and Browsing

---

See Class Objectives on p. 22.

1. **Explain searching and browsing:** The two primary ways to find information on the web (p. 23 ). 10 minutes.  
NOTE: This class is more about searching than browsing
2. **Demonstrate the searching process:** Show them each step of the process of searching using Google (pp. 25 – 33). 25 minutes
3. **Practice searching:** Follow the Workbook (p. 33) or choose your own topic or select one of the following: 15 minutes
  - Depression, anxiety or ADHD.
  - Have students work in pairs. Once they've completed the search, discuss what they found and pay attention to each of the steps in the search process.
  - When discussing the evaluation, introduce the concept of website reliability and mention that this will be discussed in the next class
4. **Introduce [www.google.com/Top/Health](http://www.google.com/Top/Health):** New Google feature (pp. 34 – 37). 5 minutes.
5. **Demonstrate the Browsing Process:** (pp. 34 – 37) The Workbook uses the Google health directory but feel free to choose a health-related website that is of interest to you. 10 minutes
6. **Wrap-up, Review** what was covered. 10 minutes

## **Class Two, 1: Introduce Searching and Browsing (pp. 23 – 25)**

---

- Understand the two primary ways of locating and accessing information on the Web, browsing and searching, and when each method is used
- Searching: Using a search engine to find websites that might have the information you want
- Browsing: Looking around, or navigating, a specific website you already know has the information you want

# Class Two, 2: Demonstrate the Searching Process (p. 25)

---

- Introduce the concept of the *search box*, where you type the search terms or keywords, that is, the words that best represent the question you are asking or the answer you are trying to find.
- Illustrate using Google. Go over “How to Read the Google Search Results Page”
- Ask the class if it costs money to use Google as a way to introduce the concept of targeted advertising, or “sponsored links.”
  - Sponsored links are not always bad, but keep in mind that the company has paid to be at the top of the list, which often means it is a commercial site, trying to make money rather than simply to provide information.
- Explain these concepts while searching for a topic that you think would interest your students.
- Upon completion of that exercise you could introduce the idea of trying different words, or adding words, to change the results you get back.
  - Example: If someone wants to know about depression, they might simply enter “depression” but if they want to know about medications for depression they could enter “medications and depression” or “drugs and depression”

# Class Two, 3: Practice Searching

Remind your students that Google doesn't answer questions. It finds websites that might have answers.



**There are a number of different types of health questions that the World Wide Web can help you answer.**

Here are some examples:

- My doctor said that I have ADD. What is that? What does it mean?
- I heard depression is a big problem. I've been feeling down, does that mean I'm depressed?
- My doctor gave me a new medicine. What is it and what are the side effects?
- My doctor said I have an obsessive-compulsive disorder but I don't understand what that means and I want more information.
- I am looking for a support group or other people who have the same condition as me so I can hear their experience and share mine.
- My son was diagnosed with autism, what does that mean and what can I expect?

## Class Two, 4: Introduce [www.google.com/Top/Health](http://www.google.com/Top/Health) (pp. 34 – 37)

---

- This is a new feature of Google that might be very helpful.
- This is a directory of resources chosen by volunteer editors. They might have already done the work of finding the best resources for you.
- Note that both the *T* of Top and the *H* of Health must be capitalized in order for this page to load.
- Like the searching, the directory is available in Spanish, however it is still much less developed:

**Salud mental**  
[World](#) > [Español](#) > [Salud](#) > Salud mental

**Categorías**

<a href="#">Argentina</a> (55)	<a href="#">España</a> (68)	<a href="#">Psiquiatría</a> (105)
<a href="#">Chile</a> (11)	<a href="#">Psicología</a> (351)	<a href="#">Uruguay</a> (8)
<a href="#">Enfermedades</a> (323)		

## **Class Two, 5: Demonstrate Browsing Process (pp. 34–37)**

---

- **Demonstrate steps in browsing.**
  - By browsing we mean following links within a website you already know to find the information you need.
  - You can use the Google Health Topics Directory to browse through the different categories they have created.
  - It's helpful to remind your students that as they click on links they might be taken to different websites and new browser windows sometimes are opened.

## Class Two, 6: Wrap-up, Review

---

- Review what this class covered: we introduced searching using Google and browsing by looking through the Google Health Topics Directory

# Class Three Outline: Evaluating Websites

---

See Class Objectives on p. 38

There is an excellent tutorial for trainers that explains many of the issues we will discuss in this class at

[http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/webeval/webeval\\_start.html](http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/webeval/webeval_start.html)

1. **Engage the students** about the need for evaluating quality by discussing [www.malepregnancy.com](http://www.malepregnancy.com) (p. 39). 10 minutes
2. **Review the six questions** that are the criteria for evaluating websites: Who, What, Where, When, Why, How? (pages 40 - 47). Introduce the HON code (p. 48) 25 minutes
3. **Interactive class activity.** Discuss whether the Web is the right place to go (p. 49) and visit the following 3 sites: [www.alternativemedicine.com](http://www.alternativemedicine.com), [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov), [www.thyroids.net](http://www.thyroids.net) (15 minutes)
4. **Student Exercises** (p. 50): 15 minutes
5. **Wrap-up and review** what was covered: 10 minutes

# Class Three, 1: Engage the Students

---

- Go to [www.malepregnancy.com](http://www.malepregnancy.com)
- Emphasize that **anyone** can put anything on the Internet
- Discuss the issues that this site raises, for example
  - this site looks very professional **but does that make it true?**
  - The story seems to be verified by a cover from Newsweek-who's heard of Photoshop?
- Introduce the 6 questions that one should ask about a website to decide if it's authoritative and trustworthy: *Who, What, Where, When, Why and How.*

## Class Three, 2: Review the Six Questions

---

- Follow the Consumer Health Workbook for
  - *Who*
  - *What*
  - *Where*
  - *When*
  - *Why*
  - *How*

## Class Three, 3: Interactive Class Activity

---

- Discuss whether the Web is the right place to go for information (p. 49)
- Go to [www.alternativemedicine.com](http://www.alternativemedicine.com), [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov) and [www.thyroids.net](http://www.thyroids.net) and go through the six questions: Who, What, Where, When, Why, How

## Class Three, 4: Student Exercises

---

- Let the students work in pairs. Each should pick one of the websites from the Workbook p. 50 and go through the six questions: Who, What, Where, When, Why, How
- Let each pair present their findings.

## Class Three, 5: Wrap-up and Review

---

Remind students that after they've found the information they've got to decide if its trustoworthy.

Anyone can put a website on the Web so it is necessary to evaluate websites: Ask the six questions!

Who, What, Where, When, Why, How?

# Class Four Outline: MedlinePlus

---

See Class Objectives on p. 51

1. **Explain and illustrate** : Visit MedlinePlus to show that current and reliable health information can be found on the Web. 20 minutes
2. **MedlinePlus Overview**: Model the various ways to browse for answers effectively (pp. 54 – 66). 15 minutes
3. **Interactive Class Activity**: Use of the tutorial and navigating around the main features of MedlinePlus. 15 minutes
4. **Practice Browsing MedlinePlus**. 15 minutes
5. **Wrap-up and Review**. 10 minutes

# Class Four, 1: Explain and Illustrate

---

Introduce MedlinePlus and mention the following:

- 1) MedlinePlus is an excellent resource for all health information, including mental health information;
- 2) It is designed for both health professionals and health information consumers, meaning patients and other people who need health information but are not doctors;
- 3) MedlinePlus is published and maintained by the National Library of Medicine and the National Institutes of Health;
- 4) You can count on it to be reliable and credible;
- 5) Much of the information on MedlinePlus is available in both Spanish and English.

# Class Four, 2: MedlinePlus Overview (p. 53)

---

1. If you need general information about a specific health condition, go to '*Health Topics*';
2. If you want to read a short article with pictures and diagrams about a certain health condition, go to the '*Medical Encyclopedia*';
3. If you want to know the meaning of a health-related word you heard or read, go to the '*Dictionary*' (English only);
4. If you want to read up-to-date news about health topics, go to '*News*';
5. If you need help finding doctors, dentists, and hospitals, go to '*Directories*' (English only);
6. If you need information on things not listed above, such as local libraries, health organizations, or international sites, go to '*Other Resources*' (English only);
7. If you want to learn more about a certain health condition with movies, slides, and narration, go to *Interactive Tutorials*; this is an excellent tool for learning, especially for people who might prefer to hear rather than read information.

**We can easily navigate between the different parts of MedlinePlus using the tab bar at the top of the page.**

# Class Four, 3: Interactive Class Activity

---

1. Demonstrate a MedlinePlus tutorial for your students.
  - We'll look through the tutorial on depression, note that its also available in Spanish.
2. Have your students browse through MedlinePlus by having them research a topic of their choice.

# **Class Four, 4: Practice Browsing**

---

**Formulate and answer some health questions using MedlinePlus**

# **Class Four, 5: Wrap-up/Review**

---

**Remind class that MedlinePlus is one of the best health websites on the World Wide Web**

# Class Five Outline: KidsHealth, NOAH and Practice

---

1. **Introduce KidsHealth**, a great site to learn about children's health (10 minutes)
2. **Introduce NIHSeniorHealth**, a great site to learn about seniors' health (10 minutes)
3. **Introduce NOAH**, a website similar to MedlinePlus that contains links to high quality health-related web sites. (10 minutes)
4. **Exercises and Practice** (15 minutes)
5. **Wrap-up and Review** all five classes (20 minutes)

**Reminder:** the research staff will need about 20 minutes at the end of Class Five to conduct a focus group.

# Class Five, 1: Kidshealth

**Kidshealth:** is created by the Nemours Foundation, an organization devoted to promoting the health and well-being of children.

The address or URL of Kidshealth is [www.kidshealth.org](http://www.kidshealth.org)  
Kidshealth is a website that provides quality health information relating to parents, children and teens.



Now that you know how to navigate a website, go to Kidshealth and explore the parents and children sections. A lot, but not all, of the information is available in Spanish as well.

# NIHSeniorHealth

This website for older adults was developed by the National Institute on Aging and the National Library of Medicine, both part of the National Institutes of Health.

The address or URL of NIHSeniorHealth is [www.NIHSeniorHealth.gov](http://www.NIHSeniorHealth.gov). This website provides quality health information for seniors.

NIHSeniorHealth.gov

Now that you know how to navigate a website, go to NIHSeniorHealth and look for topics that interest you. A lot, but not all, of the information is available in Spanish as well.

# **Class Five, 2: NOAH New-York Online Access to Health**

---

Practice using NOAH by selecting a topic of the your choice:

**[www.noah-health.org](http://www.noah-health.org)**

# **Class Five, 3: Exercises and Practice**

---

**Review all of the classes and let students, working in pairs, practice.**

# **Class Five, 4: Wrap-up/Review**

---

**The last 20 minutes of class will be needed by the research team for a focus group**