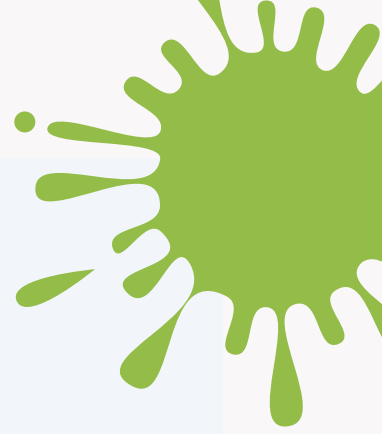


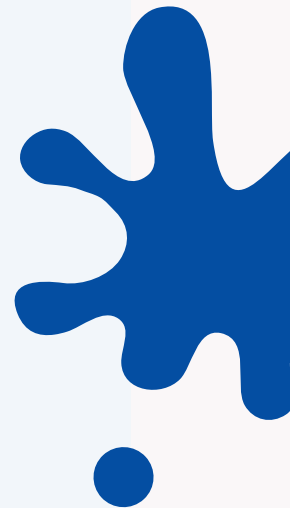


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# METHODOLOGY FOR TEACHERS TO INTRODUCE WELL- BEING IN SCHOOLS

HOPE4schools Project-Health, openness,  
and prosperity education for schools  
2021-1-RO01-KA220-SCH-000024401





Co-funded by  
the European Union

*Several people and organizations have combined their experience and efforts in the development of this methodology.*

*Thus, we would like to acknowledge and thank the invaluable contribution of:*

*LICEUL TEORETIC "WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE" - Timisoara, Romania*

*CENTRUL PENTRU PROMOVAREA INVATARII PERMANENTE*

*TIMISOARA ASOCIATIA - Timisoara, Romania*

*Know and Can Association - Sofia, Bulgaria*

*Regional Directorate of Primary and Secondary Education of Western Macedonia - Kozani, Greece*

*Agrupamento de Escolas José Estevão - Aveiro, Portugal*

*Základní škola Orangery. s.r.o. - Prague, Czech Republic*

*osnovna skola Veljko Dugosevic - Branicevo, Serbia*

## DISCLAIMER

This methodology has been produced under the Erasmus+ project "HOPE4schools-Health, openness, and prosperity education for schools", № 2021-1-RO01-KA220-SCH-000024401, and the mention or reference to it should indicate such quality.

The European Commission support for the production of this publication [document] does not constitute an endorsement of the contents which reflects the views only of the authors, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.

# TABLE OF CONTENTS



4

Chapter 1 - Introduction

8

Chapter 2 - A whole-school approach to well-being

12

Chapter 3 - Supporting the well-being of teachers and school staff

19

Chapter 4 - Well-being of children and their families

37


Chapter 5 - Assessment of well-being level and needs of school staff

46

Chapter 6 - How to support well-being in school?

52

Chapter 7 - Good practices and successful examples on well-being



# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

The Council of Europe defines well-being as *“the experience of health and happiness. It includes mental and physical health, physical and emotional safety, and a feeling of belonging, sense of purpose, achievement and success.”* Having in mind its vast and broad concept, well-being may be perceived and felt differently depending on a person's age or stage of life.

The term "well-being" refers to a wide variety of psychological and physical capacities.

There are supposedly five main categories of well-being:

- The capacity to be resilient, control one's emotions, and produce emotions that result in positive feelings is known as **emotional well-being**.
- **Physical well-being** is the capacity to enhance bodily performance via balanced nutrition and regular exercise.
- Ability to interact with others, form deep connections with them, and establish one's own emotional support system is perceived as **social well-being**.
- **Workplace well-being** is the capacity to pursue one's own passions, ideals, and principles in order to find fulfillment and satisfaction in life as well as to advance one's career.
- Ability to participate in an active community or culture is a measure of **societal well-being**.

Regardless of the backgrounds of the people involved, well-being is extremely essential when it comes to educational institutions. In other words, whether it is at the elementary or secondary (high school) level, it applies to students of all ages and academic levels. It also applies to all employees, including teachers, administrative assistants, non-teaching staff, and school administrators. Last, but not least, the school well-being can't be complete and effective, without the active involvement of the students' and teachers' family members and the community as a whole.

One of the requirements for guaranteeing high quality education is the quality of school life and ensuring well-being for everyone at school, which also serves as a measure of a school's effectiveness. It is a multifaceted idea that is significantly influenced by both informal and formal components of a school, from unique school traits to individual opinions of the interactions between students, instructors, parents, etc. within the school. It combines different manifestations, such as academic and professional pursuits, the surroundings, working conditions, etc.

Insofar as it is characterized by a high degree of abstractness and is correlated with the extent to which the varied perceptions, needs, and expectations of all participants in the learning process and in the life of the school community are met, the quality of school life does not lend itself to precise measurement and evaluation.

However, there is compelling scientific evidence linking the standard of school life to children's academic success and participation in the learning process. For instance, fostering a supportive environment in the classroom and developing respectful interactions are requirements and conditions for better student achievements.

Schools will be most successful in their educational mission when they integrate efforts to promote children's academic, social, and emotional learning (Elias et al., 1997). There is a long history of schools focusing on areas such as social responsibility and moral character (e.g., Jackson, 1968), and learning and behaving responsibly in the classroom have been seen as causally related.

The idea of the quality of school life and ensuring adequate levels of satisfaction and well-being for all participants is also directly related to the efficiency of the school and the learning process, the school climate, the teachers' satisfaction with the school and their work, the evaluation of their self-efficacy, the relationships of the participants in the learning process, and the quality of professional life and career development opportunities.

The child's well-being now a condition for his well-being as an adult. Moreover, many of the skills we need for a fulfilling adult life - teamwork, social trust, self-esteem, psychological coping mechanisms - can only be acquired and developed in childhood. If a school makes a concerted effort to improve the well-being of its children, it develops precisely these skills. In addition, the child rights approach gives us the understanding that it is important that every child is guaranteed a good life here and now. Well-being carries detailed information about precisely this quality of life for the child.

Often we focus primarily on student outcomes as a measure of a quality educational service. But the concept of well-being in school allows us to have a holistic approach - because it encompasses all the components of a fulfilled person and does not limit education to grades alone.

The concept of well-being helps schools and parents identify - what in the learning and education of children is important for them to make a concerted effort so that children not only have successful academic performance but also develop competencies that will enable them to feel fulfilled in school and shape their character.

Not only could the students benefit from introducing and having well-being on the school agenda. It is scientifically proven that teachers who continue to have poor personal wellbeing are increasingly worn out, apathetic, and more distant from their students. They restrict their own potential, doubt their own self-efficacy, lose motivation in the face of difficulties, and are more prone to burnout. Conversely, educators who are happy are better able to engage students, impart knowledge, and accomplish goals (Bentea, 2017).

Prioritizing well-being sometimes only calls for little adjustments to schedules, rules, and priorities, but these adjustments may have a lasting good effect on both students and educators, therefore for the whole community.

In view of the aforesaid considerations and findings, seven educational institutions from six European countries (Romania, Bulgaria, Greece, Serbia, Portugal and Czech Republic) combined their efforts and expertise in introducing the idea of the project HOPE4schools-Health, openness, and prosperity education for schools. This initiative is planned and implemented with the purpose of aiding and supporting the stakeholders in charge of the development of the educational system: school leaders, teachers, educators, inspectors or policy makers in introducing the concept of well-being at whole school level and reminding them that schools are not only places for academic achievements, but also for learning social and emotional skills, interaction, resilience, support and personal growth not only for teachers and educators, but also pupils and parents as well.

Every school that wants to get engaged in a well-being process needs its own well-being plan. Without an action plan, school improvements to address wellbeing and mental health will likely be uncoordinated and not sustainable. Since school staff has limited time and resources, having a concrete plan can help them know what to do first, and from where to start. To ensure and support the development of a “culture” of well-being throughout the whole school with the active involvement of teaching and non-teaching staff, students and families, the current Methodology aims to provide knowledge and awareness regarding all aspects of well-being and a concrete action plan that can help school leaders and teachers to visualize the steps to implement a wellbeing approach in school, the proper strategy and results they want to obtain.

As a stepping stone in the development of the current Methodology, the partnership of Hope4Schools project implemented thorough researches in each partner country (both desk research and consultation groups with educators) aiming to gather useful information regarding the state of the art and current situation on existing policies, practices and aspects of fostering well-being and supporting mental health at national level.

With the active involvement and invaluable feedback of more than 80 teachers, school leaders and counsellors who took part in the national consultation groups, the Hope4Schools consortium managed to openly discuss the current situation and the realities educators face in managing the teaching/learning process and ensuring well-being and supporting mental health, especially in the light of the pandemic.

The aim of the consultations was to gain a proper understanding of the current situation, barriers, needs, opportunities, and school resources in implementing a well-being strategy. The results from the group consultations served as a blueprint for the partners to better understand the teachers and their current needs which ensured that the current Methodology will be tailored to the specific needs of the final users.

The “Methodology for teachers to introduce well-being in schools” is divided into seven parts, as follows:

**Chapter 1: Introduction** – offering brief information about well-being; why it is important; what it means for students and educators; Hope4Schools project idea and background.

**Chapter 2: A whole-school approach to well-being** – providing examples and suggestions of ideas and related activities to develop a whole-school approach towards well-being.

**Chapter 3: Supporting the well-being of teachers and school staff** – teachers’ well-being and its importance; teachers’ needs, problems and challenges; elements of national and school policies promoting teachers’ wellbeing; elements of an effective teacher wellbeing strategy.

**Chapter 4: Well-being of children and their families** – providing basic definitions of terms related to wellbeing; explaining the most common mental health issues children are facing.

**Chapter 5: Assessment of well-being level and needs of school staff** – providing examples and templates for different assessment strategies and tools (surveys) aiming to measure the level of well-being.

**Chapter 6: How to support well-being in school?** – offering advice and steps to be followed when introducing a well-being strategy at school; a checklist for well-being and an example of an action plan.

**Chapter 7: Good practices and successful examples** – aiming to further support school staff in applying strategies and actions for boosting the well-being of students and educators, the partnership gathered more than 20 additional useful resources that could serve as an inspiration in this regard.

*The “Methodology for teachers to introduce well-being in schools” is developed by educators for educators (teachers, school leaders, and counselors) to help them design a strategy and steps for introducing a whole school approach to ensuring well-being, mental health and resilience for everyone involved in the educational process. We strongly believe that fostering and teaching well-being is a way to show students and educators we care about them and want to support them by enabling them with short- and long-term benefits, thus supporting their academic achievements, personal and professional growth and accomplishments, happiness and overall satisfaction with life.*



# CHAPTER 2

## A WHOLE-SCHOOL APPROACH TO WELL-BEING

**A whole-school approach:** Improving the quality of education that students enjoy by involving all those dimensions of school life which may have an impact on educational achievement and the emotional dynamics and the subjective quality of our daily lives.

The Action Plan template for the whole-school approach has the following sections:

1. Vision and mission of the school
2. Stress reducing activities among teachers and school staff
3. Student support activities
4. Well being in school and local community
5. School-parents links
6. Extra-curricular support activities and modern teaching activities using digital technologies
7. Cross-sector cooperation between social assistance services, psychologists, counselors and schools.

The suggested activities are not mandatory they should be used as prompts for the development of a school teams own activities. A school team may have entirely new activities or use the suggested as a starting point to achieve its goals and address each section.

### Section One: Vision and Mission of the School

*Example of suggested ideas and related activities:*

IDEAS / STEPS	RELATED ACTIVITIES	PEOPLE INVOLVED
Development of mental health of all persons involved in educational act, reducing the level of stress and teaching all how to develop a satisfactory, versatile personality which possesses spiritual peace.	Open Call for volunteers (teachers, trainers, educators, educational staff, school leadership, parents) to participate in well-being activities	School leaders Teachers Educational staff Students Parents



## Section Two: Stress reducing activities among teachers

Example of suggested ideas and related activities:

IDEAS / STEPS	RELATED ACTIVITIES	PEOPLE INVOLVED
Research/ survey on the distinct (educational, social, psychological, emotional) needs of students attending the school	Questionnaires and/or interviews with teachers, school staff, parents and students on their needs regarding the well being in school.	School leaders Teachers Educational staff Students Parents
In- service teacher training on well-being and mental health and activities that could lead to an improvement	<p>Potential topics of training:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Smart empathy-a toolkit for promoting Empathy in School</li> <li>• Peer mediation – peaceful conflict resolution method (alternative to traditional disciplinary practices)</li> <li>• Verbal and non-verbal communication</li> <li>• Mindfulness sessions- Yoga breathing (a guided exercise by Daniel Goleman)</li> </ul>	School leaders School staff Educators Teachers Trainers

## Section Three: Student Support Activities

Example of suggested ideas and related activities:

IDEAS / STEPS	RELATED ACTIVITIES	PEOPLE INVOLVED
Development of tools and methodologies to be applied in the classroom to engage and promote well-being of all students	<p>Collection of tools and activities</p> <p>Reviews by teachers, school leaders</p> <p>Selection of suitable activities and tools</p> <p>Application in the classroom</p> <p>Evaluation, follow-up and amendment, where necessary</p> <p>One-to-one tuition or mentoring in learning difficulties</p> <p>Peer mediation or emotional support</p>	School leaders Teachers Educational staff

## Section Four: Well being in school and local community

Example of suggested ideas and related activities:

IDEAS / STEPS	RELATED ACTIVITIES	PEOPLE INVOLVED
<p>Embrace new teaching methods to better motivate and engage students in online learning and digital technologies.</p>	<p>Interactive workshop with parents –students and members of the local community „In Circle”            Working sessions on: jobs, hobbies, mutual interests, leisure followed by recreative activities            Stress management courses and programmes with the help of the local community: on demand of NOGs, Universities or certain foundations.-., Stress management,,/ ,, Relaxation Techniques.            School-parents-Local Community partnerships through which to promote the patterns of the neighborhood with cultural and educational patterns:            ,, IMPACT CLUB -Shakespeare,, Through these common actions parents-students we aim to promote the historic and architectural patterns of the Fabric Neighborhood.            But, in the mean time we want to increase well being and strenghten participants’cultural identity.            School partnerships with direct involvement of parents and local community -School, exchanges in order to reunite students’ parents from more schools, exchanges that would ease more activities taking into consideration the mutual purposes.</p>	<p>School leaders            Teachers            Educational staff            Students            Parents</p>

## Section Five: School-Parents Links

Example of suggested ideas and related activities:

IDEAS / STEPS	RELATED ACTIVITIES	PEOPLE INVOLVED
<p>Engagement of as many as possible parents in the school environment</p>	<p>Organization of events with parents and students            Open school days for parents and direct involvement in teaching and learning process ( Job Shadowing, parents’ meetings etc)            Stress management programs and courses for parents, with the support of the local community            Involvement of parents in the everyday running of the school            Regular face to face or electronic communication with parents on the progress of their children</p>	<p>School leaders            Teachers            Educational staff            Students            Parents</p>

## Section Six: Teaching activities using digital technologies and Extra-Curricular Support Activities for well-being in schools

Example of suggested ideas and related activities:

IDEAS / STEPS	RELATED ACTIVITIES	PEOPLE INVOLVED
Use a wide range of extra-curricular activities to support well-being and mental health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leisure Activities/ Sport Activities</li> <li>• The importance and success of the</li> <li>• "Open Doors Day", the school Christmas fair, etc.</li> <li>• Drama project – Building Confidence</li> <li>• Debate club</li> <li>• Trips (team buildings)</li> <li>• Children’s Day, beginners’ ball/leavers’ball etc</li> <li>• The teachers and the students will get more familiar with new methods of teaching and learning online like: Jamboard, Kahoot, Mentimeter, Canva, Ted-Ed Lessons, Padlet, flipped classes and videos with personal development messages.</li> <li>• Photos exhibitions in school „ MAGIC FRAME,, : photos taken in one’s family in which the students get happy moments from their family background ( parents, relatives, siblings)</li> <li>• Paintings exhibitions or hand made products featuring parents and children all together „TOGETHER,,</li> <li>• Sports contests/races to which parents , children and local community can attend,, MARATONUL VESELIEI,,/ Joy Marathon”.</li> </ul>	<p>School leaders Teachers Educational staff Students Parents</p>

## Section Seven: Cross-Sector Cooperation Between Social Assistance Services, Psychologists, Counselors and Schools

Example of suggested ideas and related activities:

IDEAS / STEPS	RELATED ACTIVITIES	PEOPLE INVOLVED
Collaboration with professionals to support the well-being and mental health process	Tracking and inviting professionals to organize events, talks, workshops, seminars, festivals, etc to promote well-being in school. These can be psychologists, social workers, special educators, role models from the local society, professionals in sports, entertainment, etc	<p>School leaders Teachers Educational staff Stakeholders</p>

# CHAPTER 3

## SUPPORTING THE WELL-BEING OF TEACHERS AND SCHOOL STAFF

Being an educator is justifiably considered to be indeed a public function. It is not only about teaching and imparting knowledge to students, but also about building students' character by cultivating their critical thinking, respect towards institutions and principals in a creative and pleasant school and classroom environment. However, during the last years, and especially after the COVID-19 pandemic period, the majority of the educators of all the education levels have to deal with stress, exhaustion and burnout (report of the European Commission). In view of the current situation in education, educators compete with other sources of knowledge and information, seeking new educational tools, new teaching techniques and methods. Comparing all the above with challenging working conditions and relations, income stagnation, undervalued views about educators and increasing demands by students, parents, society, educators' well-being has been negatively affected.

### Teachers well-being and its importance

It is difficult to give a definition of the concept of “well-being for teachers”, because of its complexity and its relying on different factors. Individual and external factors could be two main categories of factors that affect teachers' well-being (Logan et al., 2020). In other words, individual factors consist of mental, physical, psychological and emotional health (Liu et al., 2018), components that have impact on educators' mindfulness, self-compassion and self-efficacy (Jennings, 2015). On the other hand, external factors are related to the social and political framework, the existing resources to support educators' work and the working conditions (Logan et al., 2020).

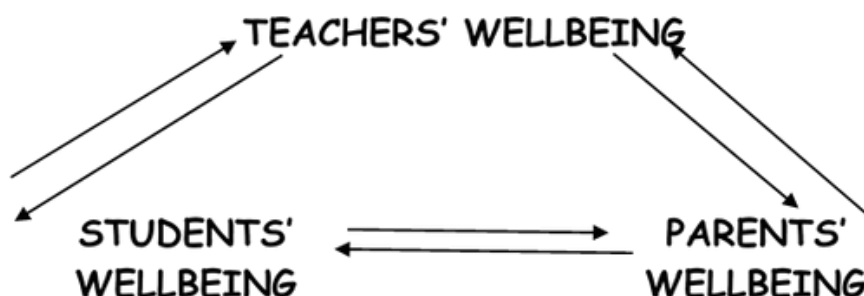
It is supported that teachers' well-being is the milestone of education, while affecting the schools, the educators, the students and the parents. Specifically, teachers' well-being contributes to creating a positive and cooperative atmosphere conducive to the school flourishing. In this situation, the educators develop healthy interpersonal relationships with their colleagues and the school management. The association of the school educators is supportive and cooperative in a mood of optimism. Calmness and respect are found in this school environment.

It should be noted that teachers' well-being influences both students' and parents' well-being. According to the Ontario Ministry of Education (2018) "*educators who feel valued, respected and heard will be motivated to provide the best possible education and care for children*". They increase their teaching quality and their classroom performance helping their students to succeed better school records. They feel truly effective and useful to their work (Day & Gu, 2009).

It also seems that they are more willing to apply innovative projects, modern teaching techniques and intervention programs. Thus, they are open to training courses, broadening their horizons and enriching their knowledge. As a result, they organize educational visits, they encourage and support their students' participation in school contests and Erasmus programs, they realize projects to bring their students closer to the local society and they make significant efforts to cultivate principles and values in their school classroom. Moreover, they embody the use of modern technology to the teaching process making the new knowledge more attractive and easier approachable to their students. Educators discuss and analyze students' behavior working on their socioemotional adjustment.

Educators also have great communication with parents discussing their children's strengths and weaknesses regarding not only their school performance, but also their behavior at school. Indeed, educators express their willingness to get involved to solve possible problems in the school framework developing cooperation with the parents.

Consequently, educators' wellbeing is essential because educators can manage their time at school better; they have a harmonious relationship with others; they enjoy their time at school; they have calmer emotions and they can improve their work-life balance (Madhavi Nawana Parker, 2020).



### **Teachers' needs, problems and challenges**

We will build on the National Reports from the 6 participants of the Hope4Schools programme, and perform a comparative analysis of the problems and challenges that teachers face daily in the school context. There is a reciprocal relationship between the needs of teachers and the obstacles, barriers, problems that arise whenever these needs are hardly met. The existing literature about teachers' well-being indeed reflects the empirical evidence retrieved from the Reports; moreover, an obvious pattern emerges that helps classify the teachers' needs and corresponding problems into three broad categories, best summarized in the conceptual framework below:

**The external factors:** To start with, there is consensus in the Reports that **a load of financial constraints** or **failing government policies** seriously compromises teachers' needs. Indeed, early literature reveals the significance that teachers have often ascribed to external factors, such as the workplace environment or education policies, establishing thus a strong connection between the well-being of teachers and the school setting, building, infrastructure in general. Van Petegem, Creemers, Rossel, and Aelterman (2005), described well-being, specifically in relation to teaching, as a positive emotional state and harmony between context and person, meaning teachers must be capable of attuning to their own needs and expectations to specific context factors and demands of the school and must feel a fit with the school in which they work. The National Reports reveal a host of factors ailing teacher well-being such as **noise, few green spaces, shabby buildings, lacking technical support, scant financial resources, lack of staff, small number of students in small schools, too many students in urban areas, lack of autonomy, bad working conditions, or the very demanding curriculum in the last grades of high school.**



**The internal factors:** However, an approach on well-being solely from an organizational or policy standpoint soon started to fall short, as recent literature suggests (Weiland, 2021; Iancu, Rusu, Maroiu, Pacurar, & Maricutoiu, 2018; Maricutoiu, Sava, & Butta, 2014). Therefore, research around more subjective aspects of burnout has begun to emerge recently (Weiland, 2021), suggesting that burnout stems from within. Literature focused specifically on positive aspects of well-being aligning with various theories of positive psychology (Ryan & Deci, 2001; Ryff, 1989, Ryff & Keyes, 1995; Seligman, 2002, 2011), instead of a focus on burnout or stress. As a result, the conversation turned to empowering teachers through mindfulness (De Stercke, Goyette, & Robertson, 2015), and focusing on well-being as a priority in its own right (Cherkowski, 2018). In the National Reports, teachers mention that they are in **need of personalized care and support** due to their compromised state of mental health, feelings of insecurity, poor time management, a mismatch between their efforts and the results, low self-esteem, feelings of failure, rejection and isolation.

**The interpersonal factors:** Latest surveys pinpoint a misalignment between the teachers' interests with those of their colleagues'. Hence, they suggest that more focus now be given to the critical role relationships play in teachers' well-being, specifically with teaching colleagues (Le Cornu, 2013; Morrison, 2013; Soini, Pyhalto, & Pietarinen, 2010), school leaders (Cherkowski, 2018; Hebson et al., 2007; Konu, Viitanen, & Lintonen, 2010), and parents of students (Le Cornu, 2013; Soini et al., 2010). A comprehensive review of the Reports highlights the fact that teachers often complain about little or no cooperation between the school and the parents. They also wish they themselves had more support from the leadership, the school psychologists and the social workers in the school context. There is profound disapproval of the competitive, aloof mentality of colleagues, and teachers often find themselves in need of more communication and collaboration among their fellow colleagues, based on openness, mutual trust and solidarity.

### **Elements of national and school policies promoting teachers' well-being**

The social, emotional and physical health of teachers is a shared responsibility and the critical parameter for student learning and community well-being. Governments and organizations have been working to meet teacher well-being through a variety of policies that consider well-being as a multidimensional concept.

According to OECD (2020) teacher well-being consists of the following dimensions:

**Cognitive dimension:**

*relating to the set of skills and abilities teachers need to work effectively and their self-efficacy*

**Physical and mental dimension:**

relating to teachers' good psychosomatic health

**Subjective dimension:**

relating to teachers good mental state and their effective reactions towards their teaching experiences, such as job satisfaction and motivation

**Social dimension:**

relating to the quality and depth of the social interactions between teachers and students, parents, support staff, the local community, etc.

Research and survey findings have played an important role in shaping system level and school level policies which take the form of national policies and school policies respectively. Moreover, undoubtedly the role of government is pivotal for supporting schools in promoting well-being. This is usually achieved through a range of policies, initiatives, frameworks, curricula and programs. Based on the partners' desk research and the group consultation results, it turned out that either there are few, if there are any, national well-being policies or that teachers and staff are unaware of them.

Following there are some aspects of wellbeing that national policies might (or might not) meet for teacher wellbeing. For example, material conditions of teachers, such as earnings and job security, determine teacher wellbeing. In many cases, teachers are not satisfied with the amount of money they earn. Another important aspect of national policies relates to the management of the teaching workforce and the planning of teachers working arrangements. This is a very important aspect because it determines teachers' motivation and commitment to the profession. To make things clearer, let us consider the case of an inexperienced teacher working in a disadvantaged school with students coming from low economic backgrounds and having special needs. This situation clearly shows that teacher allocation and teacher support decided at a national level plays an important role in teacher wellbeing. Pre-service and in-service training (university courses, seminars, workshops, training courses) play a very important role in preparing teachers for their job challenges and equipping them with the necessary tools to keep them updated with modern needs and challenges.

Many teachers complain about their workload, since they dedicate long hours to teaching as well as other tasks beyond teaching, such as planning, marking, collaborating, participating in meetings and organizing events. Also, national decisions relating to the classroom composition, such as the class size, have an effect on teacher well-being. So do decisions about employing special education teachers that help teachers to support vulnerable groups of children or children with additional needs.

In decentralized educational contexts however, schools might have a more decisive role in shaping teacher well-being because the decentralized context enables schools to make decisions themselves to establish a teaching environment that promotes teacher well-being. For example, an agreeable physical learning environment or school facilities seems to be an important factor for teacher well-being. In addition, decisions relating to teachers and parents cooperation, school's networking, the classroom environment and teaching methodologies are determined at school level. ***Is the school climate positive? Do colleagues cooperate effectively and respect each other? Do the school policies contribute to the democratic governance of the organization? Are there opportunities for teachers' social interaction?*** These are all examples of school policies that might help or hinder teacher well-being.

Therefore, it is important for school policies to share the following features:

- **All teachers should be treated equally regardless of gender, type of employment or working hours**
- **It is very important for the school environment to promote feelings of respect, value, feeling of belonging and trust.**
- **Teachers should be provided with opportunities to develop professional networks that will allow them to connect and exchange good practices.**
- **When teachers are given opportunities to learn and develop professionally, they become more self-confident and effective with student cognitive, social and emotional growth.**
- **It is important teachers to participate in decision making to support their professional growth and connections to the learning environment.**



## Elements of an effective teacher well-being strategy

The relationship between pupils and teachers is central to school life and to pupil outcomes. It matters in terms of attainment, it matters in terms of classroom behavior, it matters for the teachers' sense of fulfillment and commitment and it really matters when it comes to the pupils' emotional health.

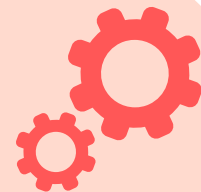
Pupils learn through social interaction, not just knowledge transfer. Social interaction in the classroom of a stressed, overwhelmed, unsupported teacher will be different from that of a supported teacher with a strong sense of professional autonomy and self-efficacy.

Whether we think about academic outcomes or emotional health, the well-being and mental health of the teacher matters and it is essential for cultivating a mentally healthy school. But it's one thing to recognize that teachers' well-being is important and it's another to take action strategically. Creating a well-being strategy is a challenging task. What makes a well-being strategy effective and successful?

### First of all, collect your data and set a goal

An effective well-being strategy should be cohesive, built on specific requirements, have a clear vision, direction and purpose from the beginning. It is crucial to see where you are now, what is the current situation, look at and assess how present policies are used so that you can create a vision for the future. To decide on a specific approach and plan you need to start by understanding what you are aiming to achieve and why.

Where could you start? Ask your teachers (in-person, through a survey, a poll or a questionnaire) how they are doing and what they need to support their well-being. Feedback is a great way to identify opportunities to provide immediate and future supports! Select tools that are valid and reliable and that are connected to the outcomes you are striving to measure.



### Then, communicate it – raise awareness

When using a tool, such as a survey or interview protocol, communicate a clear goal to participants, share how results may be used, and provide a process for protecting confidentiality. These practices increase participants' trust and willingness to share their experiences. Well-being strategy and provision is worthless if staff do not know about them or how they are accessed. Communication is vital as engaging with the participants about the well-being programme will help to demonstrate that it is ongoing and not just a fad.

Consider how and when staff are informed about and encouraged to take advantage of school well-being programmes. Support steps taken to develop a culture of co-operation, trust and mutual respect within the school and engage teachers in all stages of the development of the strategy and evaluating its progress.



## Design a strategy and launch it

The well-being initiatives that you choose to implement will be unique to your own needs and resources. In order to be realistic and applicable, a number of issues should be considered:

- How will this strategy be embedded in the ongoing management of the school and who will have responsibility for managing it? Principal – school psychologist – team of teachers?
- What will you need and how could you get it? Resources - budget - costs
- What activities could be used? How will they be used (one-to-one, teams)? These should be regularly reviewed and updated to reflect current practice and made easily available.
- How much time is needed? Separate short, medium and long term objectives and focus on specific areas.



## Monitoring and evaluation

It is crucial that surveys and policies are not one-off efforts. Instead, they should form the basis for an embedded culture and support of positive staff wellbeing and mental health. To that end, it is necessary to ensure ongoing monitoring and evaluation of policies and that their efficacy takes place. Before you implement your strategy, you need to consider what Key Performance Indicators you are going to measure so you know whether your strategy is a success.

Surveys of staff views should be undertaken regularly to gauge any negative trends or reactions to changes in school policy or practice. The results of these surveys, even if only a summary, should be shared with staff, and commentary invited.

Feedback should be sought in appropriate and varied fashion; anonymously as well as in one-on-one and group meetings. Specific forums should be created to discuss staff wellbeing at school.

Developing a wellbeing strategy is not a 'once and done' process. Even after you have launched and delivered your strategy, you need to make sure you set aside time to evaluate and refine what you are doing to ensure it continues to meet the needs of your colleagues. Review and refresh regularly.



## Follow up

Ensure that techniques continue promoting well-being and teachers maintain a healthy mental state of being.

As mentioned in several parts of the chapter, teacher well-being is closely related to a variety of factors determined by national policies, school practices or personality traits. The next chapter gives useful information on the well-being of students and their families and how it can be effectively promoted.

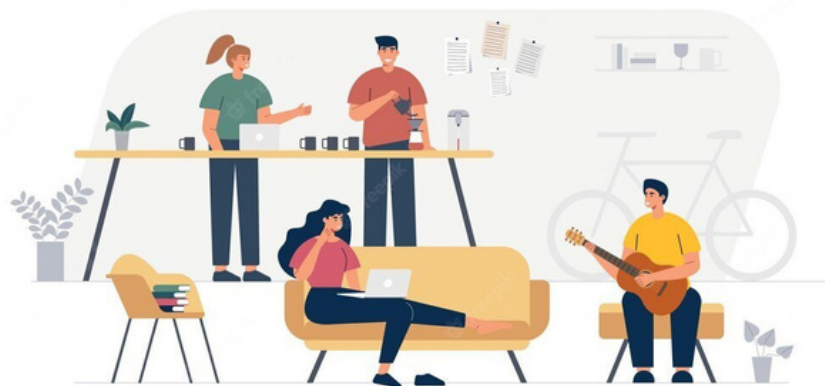


# CHAPTER 4

## WELL-BEING OF CHILDREN AND THEIR FAMILIES

It is important to clarify the basic concepts, related to well-being, to be able to effectively address it. **Mental well-being** and **mental health** are often being confused, however, these are two related, but independent concepts.

Well-being includes having both good mental and physical health, high life satisfaction, and a sense of meaning. Emotional well-being is defined as having both, an awareness of your emotions and the ability to manage and express those feelings in a healthy and age-appropriate way. Mental well-being is a broad “sense of self”, and an “ability to live our lives as close as possible to the way we want”. A flourishing mental well-being is associated with meeting our potential, developing strong relationships, and doing things, that we consider important and worthwhile. More generally, well-being is feeling good about yourself and your life.



The WHO defines mental health as a state of mental well-being that enables people to cope with the stresses of life, realize their abilities, learn well and work well, and contribute to their community. It is an integral component of health and well-being that underpins our individual and collective abilities to make decisions, build relationships and shape the world we live in.

Mental health is a basic human right. And it is crucial to personal, community and socioeconomic development.

Mental disorders are specific, diagnosable health conditions involving changes in emotion, thinking, or behavior (or a combination of the three). Mental disorders are associated with specific signs and symptoms that cause significant and persistent emotional distress and/or problems functioning in social, work, or family activities.

Below is a guide to mental health issues, and situations, that can affect a child's well-being with practical advice for teachers on how to support children.

**ABUSE** can happen in different ways. It can be:

- **Physical** – when someone is hurt or harmed on purpose, including being hit, slapped, kicked, punched or shaken.
- **Mental or emotional** – when someone is treated badly, including being ignored or criticized, called names, shouted at, threatened, frightened, blamed or controlled.
- **Neglect** – when a child or young person is not looked after, or does not get the love, care and attention they need. This includes not getting things like food or clothing, and not being kept healthy or safe.
- **Sexual** – sexual touching of any part of a child’s body, or forcing a child to see or take part in any kind of sexual activity. This includes a child being kissed, touched or forced to have sex, and being exposed to sexual acts, images or videos.
- **Domestic** – any kind of abuse that happens between people in a relationship.

If a child experiences abuse, it can have a huge effect on their mental health and well-being – both while it is happening and later in life. Abuse is never okay or excusable, and everyone has the right to live a life free from fear, harm and control.

The most important thing you can do is find the right support to help you take the next step, so that you can make sure the child is safe, that the abuse stops and that they can get the help they need to deal with what’s happened.

## **ANGER AND AGGRESSION**

A young person who is feeling angry may:

- **be outwardly aggressive** – acting aggressively towards other people, including shouting, hitting or breaking things
- **be inwardly aggressive** – hurting themselves, for example by self-harming, or being very self-critical
- **be passively aggressive** – withdrawing, ignoring people, being sarcastic or sulking
- **feel things in their body** like a racing heart, feeling hot or tensing their muscles – for example clenching their fists
- **seem tense, unable to relax or easily irritated**
- **find it difficult to concentrate.**



**Outward  
aggression**

**Inward  
aggression**

**Passive  
aggression**

A child who seems very angry might be struggling to cope with a difficult experience at school, at home or in another part of their life that they feel unable to talk about.

It can be helpful to remember that, while it might not be obvious, what they often need is support. Supporting children to put their feelings into words can help them to feel less overwhelming, making it less likely that they will need to act out.

### What can help?

Try to separate your child's feelings from their behaviour, remembering that all feelings are okay, even though some behaviour is not. Explain why their behaviour is not okay so they understand – and hold consistent boundaries around consequences. Try not to get angry yourself, as this will only escalate the situation. Avoid asking them lots of questions when they're feeling very angry or distressed. Acknowledge that they're feeling angry, and let them know that you'd like to talk with them about what's going on when they feel ready. If it feels appropriate, offer them some time and space to calm down.

### ADHD

Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) is a neuro-developmental condition that affects behaviour and concentration. ADHD is not a mental illness or a learning disability, though children and young people with ADHD may also have other conditions or experience mental health problems.

#### **The most common symptoms of ADHD:**

- easily distracted, finding it difficult to start or finish tasks
- often unable to concentrate
- often restless or fidgety
- very talkative, often interrupting or blurting things out
- impulsive, acting before considering consequences, prone to taking risks
- easily angry or frustrated, struggling to deal with emotions
- finding making or maintaining friendships difficult
- disorganized, for instance often losing things or being late
- lacking awareness of time

ADHD can be treated with medication and/or therapies, for example Cognitive-behavioural therapy.

The teacher can help a child with ADHD by being understanding, giving simple instructions, setting clear boundaries, building healthy routines, helping with organisation, praising the child, managing triggers, and recognising strengths. It is crucial to involve the family and find local support.

## ANXIETY

Anxiety is a feeling of worry or fear that is experienced as a combination of physical sensations, thoughts, and feelings. All children and young people feel worried sometimes, and this is a normal part of growing up. Anxiety can become a problem when a young person feels stuck in it, or when it feels like an overwhelming, distressing, or unmanageable experience.

### **Physical symptoms:**

- panic attacks, which can include having a racing heart, breathing very quickly, sweating or shaking
- shallow or quick breathing, or feeling unable to breathe
- feeling sick
- dry mouth
- sweating more than usual
- tense muscles
- wobbly legs
- irritable bowel syndrome (IBS), diarrhea or needing to pee more than usual
- getting very hot

### **Thoughts and feelings:**

- preoccupied by upsetting, scary or negative thoughts
- nervous, on edge, panicky or frightened
- overwhelmed or out of control
- full of dread or an impending sense of doom
- alert to noises, smells or sights
- worrying about being unable to cope with daily things like school, friendships and being in groups or social situations
- worrying so much that it is difficult to concentrate and/or sleep

### **Coping behaviours:**

- withdrawing or isolating themselves – including not wanting to go to school, be in social or group situations, be away from parents or try new things
- repeating certain behaviours, actions or rituals (often called ‘obsessive compulsive behaviours’)
- eating more or less than usual
- self-harming

### **The following kinds of things can make some children and young people feel more anxious:**

- experiencing lots of change in a short space of time, such as moving house or school
- having responsibilities that are beyond their age and development, for example caring for other people in their family
- being around someone who is very anxious, such as a parent
- struggling at school, including feeling overwhelmed by work, exams or peer groups
- experiencing family stress around things like housing, money and debt
- going through distressing or traumatic experiences in which they do not feel safe, such as being bullied or witnessing or experiencing abuse.

If a child is struggling with anxiety, there are things teachers can do to help them – including providing emotional support, working on practical coping strategies together (breathing, mindfulness, meditation, yoga) and finding the right professional help if they need it.

### **AUTISM**

Autism is a developmental condition that affects how someone sees the world and interacts with other people. Because it is a spectrum condition, autism affects people in different ways – and individuals can experience different aspects of the condition to greater or lesser extents.

While experiencing one or more of these traits doesn't necessarily mean someone is autistic, most autistic people tend to experience the following things to some extent:

- difficulty recognising or understanding other people's feelings, and expressing their own
- being over- or under-sensitive to things like loud noises and bright lights, and finding crowded noisy spaces challenging
- preferring familiar routines and finding unexpected changes to those routines challenging or distressing
- having intense and specific interests in certain things
- difficulty reading body language and facial expressions, and understanding figurative language such as irony and sarcasm

Just like any child, autistic children and teenagers can experience good mental health, or go through periods in which they are struggling with their mental health and well-being. Autistic people can be more at risk of experiencing mental health problems such as anxiety, depression, OCD or eating disorders.

Supporting a child with autism at school includes keeping daily routines as predictable as possible, giving them extra time to recharge, finding out what kind of communication works for them, supporting them to understand which strategies help them manage difficult situations, supporting them to do daily activities to promote well-being, cooperating closely with the family, and seeking professional help.

## **BULLYING**

Bullying is any persistent behaviour that is intended to hurt someone. It can happen at school or online. Examples of bullying include name-calling, making threats, being violent or aggressive, spreading rumours and undermining, humiliating, excluding or pressuring someone. While lots of young people experience bullying, it is an incredibly difficult thing to go through and can have a huge effect on the child's mental health and well-being.

### **Signs that a child is being bullied:**

- seems low or anxious
- seems less confident in themselves
- shows signs of distress such as feeling upset, teary or panicky
- avoids school or refuses to go altogether
- often complains of feeling physically unwell
- has outbursts of unexplained anger at home
- seems withdrawn, isolated and wary of others
- has few friendships
- makes changes in their behaviour, for example dressing very differently or suddenly doing new activities to meet peer pressure
- acts in a bullying way towards others
- has unexplained physical injuries such as bruises or scratches
- does less well at school
- eats and/or sleeps more or less than usual
- uses things like self-harm or drugs and alcohol to cope with difficult feelings

Schools must have clear and comprehensive prevention practices and policies that address all forms of bullying and harassment and emphasize prevention; timely, consistent intervention; social-emotional supports for victims and bullies; and clear, effective disciplinary policies. School psychologists work with educators, students, and families to ensure that every child feels safe at, and on the way to and from, school.





## DEPRESSION

Signs that a child may be feeling depressed include:

- withdrawing, or avoiding friends or social situations
- finding it hard to concentrate, and/or losing interest in schoolwork
- not wanting to do things they previously enjoyed
- feeling irritable, angry or frustrated
- feeling tearful, miserable, lonely or hopeless
- feeling empty or numb
- being very self-critical, or feeling less confident
- sleeping more or less than normal
- eating more or less than normal
- feeling tired or not having any energy
- showing less or no interest in self-care activities like washing
- wanting to self-harm
- experiencing suicidal thoughts or say things like "I wish I wasn't here", "I can't go on", "I can't take it anymore", or "people would be better off without me"; or or talk a lot about death
- give away their possessions

At school, the teacher can offer emotional support and reassurance, open conversations and listen actively, try to find the reasons for their feelings, remind them of their support circle, encourage them to support their daily well-being, do activities they enjoy, and make a plan with coping strategies. If the school has a health service, a child may be able to access help through this. Alongside counseling, schools can often provide support such as drop-in chat sessions, mentoring, peer buddying and clubs and activities.

## DRUGS AND ALCOHOL

The use of both legal and illegal drugs among teenagers and young adults is widespread. Teenagers are likely to experiment, test boundaries and take risks. Smoking, drinking and trying drugs are some of the most common ways in which many young people do this.

However, substance misuse is also one of the most common risks to a young person's health and development. All drugs have the potential to cause harm, some can be addictive, and using drugs in combination can increase the risks. Legal drugs such as alcohol and tobacco can be very addictive. Illegal drugs include cannabis, cocaine, ecstasy and heroin.

The teacher can help children by being a healthy and responsible role-model, talk to children about alcohol and drugs, explain the dangers of addiction, help children make healthy and safe decisions by building healthy routines and avoiding substance abuse.

## **SELF-HARM**

Self-harm is when someone hurts themselves on purpose as a way of trying to manage distressing or overwhelming feelings and experiences. Someone who is self-harming might be dealing with lots of intense thoughts and feelings and hurting themselves may feel like the only way to cope. Or, they might feel numb and hurt themselves in order to feel something. In the moment, the sensation of self-harming and experiencing some physical pain can feel easier than feeling out of control emotionally.

If a young person is self-harming, it's often a sign that something in their life isn't quite right or has become too much to deal with. It can be understood as an important message about how a young person is feeling – one that needs to be noticed with care by the adults around them.

### **Ways that children self-harm include:**

- cutting themselves
- scratching skin with fingernails
- burning skin
- biting skin
- hitting themselves, or banging their head or another part of their body on a wall
- pulling hair out from their head, eyebrows, or eyelashes
- inserting objects into their body

It is crucial to seek professional help for children who self-harm. However, teachers can also provide support with open, non-judgmental conversations, help them explore the reasons for self-harming and identify the triggers, keep an eye on them, offer different coping strategies. Some children will want to do something soothing like wrapping themselves up in a comfy space, while others might want to do something very active to burn off the energy in their body.

## **EATING DISORDERS**

Children's problems with food can begin as a coping strategy for times when they are bored, anxious, angry, lonely, ashamed or sad. Food becomes a problem when it is used to help cope with painful situations or feelings, or to relieve stress, perhaps without even realising it. Children can fear getting fat and may perceive their body shape differently than those around them. It is useful to know that an eating problem is usually symptomatic and suggests there is an underlying problem that needs to be identified, understood, and treated. Usually, it can be more about their emotions and self-esteem.

Some children find it easier to talk to the teacher than to their parents, so teachers can first try to start an open conversation, offer support, and remind them of their support system. However, it is important to be aware that they will probably deny having a problem. Eventually, teachers need to inform the parents, advise them to visit their GP, join family or individual therapy, sometimes even hospital admittance is necessary.

## GAMING

The way a child games will be influenced by lots of different factors – including their personality, interests, family, friendships and life at school.

For many children, gaming is a fun, relaxing and social activity. Some may need help to set healthy limits, while others may turn to gaming to cope with difficult feelings. Sometimes, gaming can seem like the ‘problem’ from the outside, when it’s more of a symptom of how a child is feeling – and may actually be helping them to manage.

For different reasons that depend on the individual situation, gaming can become compulsive for a minority of children. It can have a significant impact on their life and longer-term wellbeing.

We know that connecting with others and spending quality time with family, sleeping and eating well and doing regular physical exercise are all important for a child’s wellbeing. If someone is regularly gaming in a way that stops them from doing these things, this could be a key reason why it starts to negatively affect their mental health.

## GENDER IDENTITY

Sex describes biological differences between the female and male genitalia. A child's sex is usually assigned at birth. Gender describes a person's internal sense of their identity. For example, someone might identify as a woman or girl, non-binary, transgender, a man or boy, gender fluid, or something different.

**These are some words people use when talking about gender identity:**

*Cisgender/cis:* This refers to someone who identifies as the same gender they were assigned at birth.

*Transgender:* This is someone whose gender is different from their sex at birth.

*Non-binary/genderqueer/gender fluid:* These are gender identities that sit within, outside of, across or between ‘male’ and ‘female’.

*Intersex:* This refers to a person who is born with biology that is not solely male or female. For example, chromosomes, hormone levels or reproductive organs that have female and male characteristics. These variations may not always be seen on the outside and so sometimes they are not diagnosed.

Questions around gender identity can emerge at any time, and there is a wide range of reported experiences. If a child is questioning their gender and they are being supported by professionals, you may hear doctors using terms such as *gender dysphoria*, *gender identity disorder (GID)*, *gender incongruence* or *transgenderism*.

Gender identity is a deep-rooted sense of self. Having a sense of identity in this way is really important for our mental health, wellbeing and sense of resilience. If a child doesn't feel certain about their gender, life can be very stressful, and there may be times when they feel that they don't fit in anywhere. Young people going through gender identity issues can experience stigma, bullying, isolation and even violence from others. They might also struggle with difficult feelings and use coping mechanisms like self-harm.

Teachers can make it clear they want to support them, stay patient, be open-minded and do not judge, find support for the child and be alert for signs that the child is struggling.

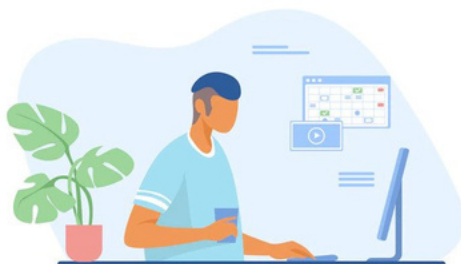
## SOCIAL MEDIA

The internet offers huge opportunities. From a young age, children have the chance to learn, research, play games, have fun and connect with family who may not live nearby. But it's important to help them to use the online world in a way that's safe and positive for their mental health. That's why it's good to have regular conversations about the internet and social media from a young age: ask them about the apps and sites they are using.

Teachers can talk to children about their own experience of the online world. Show them sites and apps that they like and explain why they like them. Show them how to use the internet in a positive way – to research things, to do homework, to talk to family, and to find out about the world. This helps them to have a critical eye. They can also talk about their own less positive experiences online, such as pressure by the 'perfect' photos people share on social media. Encourage the children to talk to you if they're struggling with this.

### **Teachers can teach children about social media, gaming, cyberbullying, and how to take care of personal information:**

- What you put online stays online. Even things you delete can be saved or screenshotted – including those Snapchats meant for just one friend.
- Online strangers are still strangers. Forums and group chats can be a great way to connect over things you wouldn't say face to face, but don't feel pressured to share more than you feel comfortable with.
- It's easy to over-share on social media, especially if you forget who can see your profile.
- Privacy is possible. You can change your settings to make your account private so that only people you know, and trust can see your updates.
- Don't hesitate to block anyone who makes you feel uncomfortable and talk to someone you trust about it if this happens.



## PARENTAL MENTAL ILLNESS

Challenges for young people living with a parent who has a mental illness can include:

- not understanding what is happening
- worrying that the mental health problem is their fault
- having to help a parent with medication or personal care
- trying to predict what mood their parent is going to be in
- being shouted at if their parent is very angry or upset
- being scared their parent will self-harm or take their own life
- seeing their parent self-harming, taking drugs or drinking
- worrying about money problems if their parent is not able to work
- missing school if they feel they need to look after their parent
- being separated from their parent if they spend time in hospital or are not able to look after them
- not being looked after or cared for themselves
- having to look after or care for siblings

Teachers can support the child by encourage them to talk about how they feel, what their worries are and how the mental illness in the family is affecting them. They can try to explain what the parent is experiencing and ask the child if there is anything about the situation they find particularly difficult, upsetting or scary – then think together about whether there are any changes that could be made to make things easier. The teacher will also need to find professional support for the child from counsellors or social workers. It is important to realize that school can represent the safe place for these children and teachers can encourage them to continue with healthy routines when they go home.



## **SELF ESTEEM**

Self-esteem is how a person feels about themselves. Most children will have dips in self-esteem as they go through different stages or challenges in life, and there are different pressures that may affect them - including social media, bullying, exams, family problems and abuse.

Things like starting a new school, moving house or going through changes in the family can also affect a child's confidence - but with support from parents, teachers, and other adults, they can usually get through this.

### **Children and young people with low self-esteem often:**

- have a negative image of themselves - they might feel bad, ugly, unlikeable or stupid
- lack confidence
- find it hard to make and keep friendships, and may feel victimised by others
- feel lonely and isolated
- tend to avoid new things and find change hard
- can't deal well with failure.
- tend to put themselves down and might say things like "I'm stupid" or "I can't do that"
- are not proud of what they achieve and always think they could have done better.
- are constantly comparing themselves to their peers in a negative way

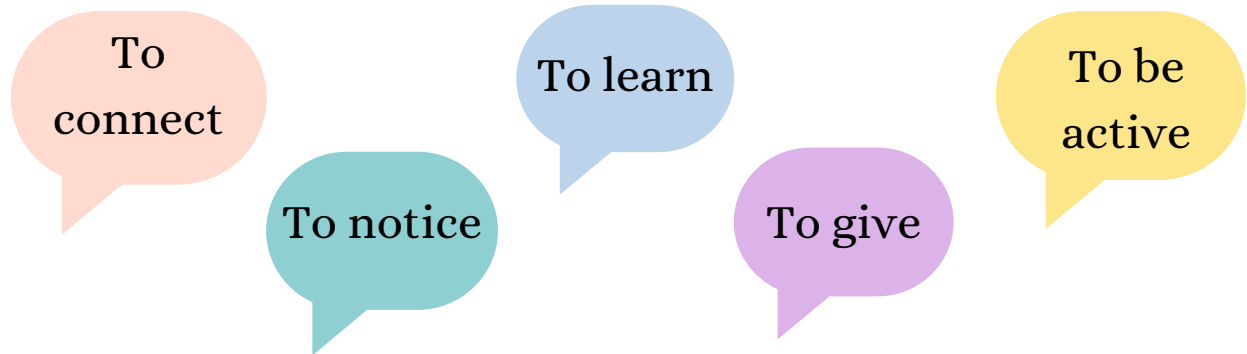
Teachers can offer support by showing them how much they appreciate them, letting them know that they value effort more than perfectionism, encourage them to try new challenges and celebrate them for it, encourage them to voice their ideas, and opinions, set an example, ask about the things they enjoy and find rewarding, acknowledge their feelings, challenge their perception of themselves, help them to discover new talents, give them appropriate challenges and give praise for their progress.

If the teacher is worried the child's low self-esteem is affecting their day-to-day life, relationships or ability to learn and develop, it is worth to suggest to their parents to seek professional help in form of counselling or therapy for the child.

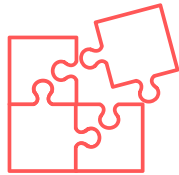
## Five ways to well-being strategy

To introduce and apply wellbeing strategies at schools, evidence suggests there are five ways which can be used.

First, it is important to introduce the concept of wellbeing to schools by informing teachers and other school workers, children, and parents. **The 5 ways to wellbeing strategies are:**



### TO CONNECT



It is important to spend time on building relationships between friends at school, caregivers, and teachers. Befriending strategies prevent children from feeling lonely or isolated. By connecting with our surroundings, we realize the importance and value of ourselves.

To promote connections at schools there are peer-led programmes to help train students on how to promote wellbeing in their schools.

#### 1. The concept of Morning Greetings

Teachers are standing by the entrance and greeting children and caregivers with a positive attitude and smile. A game card can be invented where new incoming students will choose what way of welcome they would like: a hug, high five, dance, simple wave etc.

In return, children are encouraged to practice the same positive attitude towards their peers.

#### 2. Be nice to someone challenge

Teachers can encourage students for new challenges to become a daily routine, such as a natural habit for being nice to someone without a reason. Activities can include the following. Send someone a flattering note, anonymously. Speak to a friend in a nice way. Offer help to a random student.

During school breaks children can be encouraged to play games to help improve kindness in the group.

#### 3. The queen/king game

Students are seated on a throne one by one and the rest of the group mentions one positive trait the student has or what they like about them.

#### **4. Teaching empathy - to be in someone else's shoes**

Children are being introduced to differences they have from each other. Applying programs on how to accept someone with disabilities and to understand or relate with other people's feelings.

#### **5. Speed friendship**

Children are encouraged to speak to someone new from school for five minutes to learn about them as much as they can. Turns are taken and children swap seats with another student.

#### **6. My worries box**

Well-being ambassadors are responsible for "my worries" box with topics to be discussed weekly. Everyone is encouraged to share.

#### **7. Box of feelings**

Activity led by a school counselor to ensure mental health and general wellbeing in class. Replying to notes and comments of students.



### **TO LEARN**

Children are introduced to know what it is to have a goal or how to be interested in something new. To learn can be to learn a new word, to learn how to start a conversation or how to find a new hobby. It improves mindfulness and creates thinking out of a box. Children are encouraged to find out what is their favorite thing and how to learn more about it. Learning is social, it means to discover or try something new together with others in the group or by observing them.

E.g - Teacher helps a student discover they like butterflies. The focus is now on where to find more information about it (library, a friend, family, documentaries).

#### **1.Set a book club**

Encourage students to find a new favorite book or a topic and be able to express an opinion or idea about it.

#### **2.Learning to play a new instrument**

During a school break, teachers can give a space and enhance students to learn about new instruments or find a passion for music.

#### **3.Fun facts hour**

To enhance playful learning, fun fact hour is a way teachers can motivate students to willingly and enthusiastically connect with learning new facts and be more interested in learning itself.

#### **4.Learning in free time**

Children are taught that school is not the only place where learning occurs. Teachers encourage students to do extracurricular activities such as photography, gardening, or dancing. To ensure success, children are motivated to talk about extracurricular activities in front of their classmates and learn to support each other.



## TO BE ACTIVE



There is a link between being active and well-being in schools. To introduce and start practicing children's physical health is one step towards general improvement of mental health. Not only a physical exercise, but healthy responses to children's perception of their physical self and the enforcement of eating healthy and having a good relationship with food.

### **1.To boost the physical self**

Children are motivated to move during their school time. Set a daily routine of exercise before class. Children can start a day with morning yoga, dancing, or any kind of suitable physical activity.

### **2.Everyday affirmation**

Physical activity shall be reinforced and supported by the whole school system and introduced to caregivers and families. Stretch the body to stretch the brain.

Schools can organize a family sporting activity to reinforce the importance of physical health.

### **3.The LITTLE nudge**

The importance is to start simple, slow and small. Teachers can give a good example to children how to move more, by taking long walks during the school breaks. Walk a longer distance to lunch or move instead of sitting by the desk. School can organize snack meetings and teachers can introduce healthy eating habits.

### **4.Make a plan**

A regular plan of physical activities can be added to a yearly curriculum to create a habit and motivate children to have a good relationship with physical exercises.

## TO GIVE



To learn how to give and how to receive is beneficial for the well-being of children. The happiness of an individual is linked to the ability of giving without expectation of receiving back. Children are led to accept and learn to give someone something nice or to do something nice for someone and observe their own feelings about it.

### **1.Volunteering**

It is important to teach children to volunteer. Children can have an option to choose to help a new friend at school or to share something with someone who needs it.

### **2.Nice gestures**

Children can be supported to give simple, nice gestures such as giving someone a smile and saying thank you. Teachers can motivate pupils by creating a game, with a certain amount of nice gestures tokens, such as holding a door for someone, giving a compliment, giving a hug, or sharing, and support children to give them all away in a day.

### **3.Enhancing the creativity**

Children are encouraged to think of their own way of expressing what it is for them to give someone something nice or how to make someone else happy.

## TO NOTICE



To put more attention on the moment. Children are overwhelmed with the daily rush of activities and busy schedules. It is important to teach how to stop, calm, rest, and notice.

### **1.To notice nature**

Daily walks in nature can teach children how to stop in the present moment, sit in a place, and observe the surroundings. Mindfulness techniques help them engage all five senses: what can you see with your eyes, touch with your hands, hear with your ears, what scent do you smell with your nose, what taste do you feel in your mouth?

### **2.Notice the taste**

To prevent eating fast and finish a meal quickly before the class starts. Children can improve their physical and mental health by slowing down and taste the food they are eating, notice the texture and how it makes them feel. Thus, creating a great relationship with food and ensuring to stay in a moment.

### **3.Silence and mindfulness**

A relaxing method such as meditation can help children to calm down and notice themselves. Daily 5-minute meditation, relaxation, and breathing exercises taught by a teacher will improve the wellbeing of children.

### **4. Notice me**

To reinforce to notice others. Might be as simple as connecting with a friend in a class and learning something new about them, by observing.

The teacher can also assign a challenge “daily detectives” to a group of children- their task is to observe how other children in the class are behaving (who was helping others, who was participating in class activities, who was in a good/bad mood, who could not concentrate... ).

## The SEARCH wellbeing framework

**SEARCH is a data-driven meta framework developed by Waters and Loton (2019) designed to help school leaders, teachers and practitioners make evidence-based decisions when implementing positive education interventions.**

It is widely recognised that to successfully build wellbeing in students, an embedded approach throughout a school or setting is required rather than simply delivering a stand-alone positive education intervention.

Waters and Loton developed the SEARCH framework through large scale literature review of evidence from across the globe (collated from multiple studies involving 35,888 students) as well as action-research to test the practical validity of the framework.

Through their research and refinement, involving the input of educators and young people, Waters and Loton identified six overarching pathways to wellbeing (from which they generated the SEARCH acronym): **strengths, emotional management, attention and awareness, relationships, coping, and habits and goals.**

The six pathways to school wellbeing identified in the SEARCH framework:

**1. Strengths** – pre-existing qualities within individuals that arise naturally and are intrinsically motivating to use and energizing. Character Strengths are the positive parts of your personality that impact how you think, feel and behave and are the keys to you being your best self.

Following extensive character strengths research drawing knowledge from a range of sources including literature, science, philosophy and religion, Peterson and Seligman (2004) identified six universal virtues and twenty-four character strengths considered to be the foundation for developing human flourishing resulting in the introduction of the VIA classification. The VIA has become known as a guide which can robustly identify each strength and virtue.

The virtues identified are wisdom and knowledge, courage, humanity, justice, temperance, and transcendence: the twenty-four character strengths sit within these six virtues. When used character strengths can actually have a significant positive impact on your life. Research shows that using your character strengths can help you:

- Buffer against, manage and overcome problems
- Improve your relationships
- Enhance the health and overall wellbeing
- Protect against the onset of mental health problems
- Build resilience
- Improve work performance for pupils and adults
- Develop skills for learning and achievement

**2. Emotional management** – the ability to identify, understand and manage one’s emotions by understanding how emotions operate through our thoughts, feelings, and actions. The aim is to enable children and young people to learn strategies to understand and express all emotions and develop pleasant emotions: this is particularly useful in stress management.

**3.Attention and awareness** – attention is our ability to focus, either on inner aspects of self, such as emotions and physical sensations, or on external stimuli. Awareness refers to the ability to pay attention to a stimulus as it occurs. Mindfulness also plays an important role in this category. We can help children and young people develop choice and control over where they put their attention and build self-awareness.

**4.Relationships** concerns the skills required to build and support supportive social relationships, develop belonging and connection, as well as capitalise on momentary social interactions. Much of positive education work focuses on skills to develop positive relationships – communication skills – and understanding how we’re coming across to others.

**5.Coping and Resilience** – defined as constantly changing cognitive and behavioural efforts to manage specific external and/or internal demands that are appraised as taxing or exceeding the resources of the person. A wellbeing programme can help children identify what their personal stressors are and helps them build a broader range of coping strategies to be resilient and manage day to day challenges they face.

**6.Habits and goals.** Habits are persistent and learned patterns and preferences in decision making and behaviour. Goals are formal milestones, endpoints, achievements, or aspirations, that articulate what people desire, aim for and are willing to invest effort in to. We can use coaching to teach children goal-striving behaviour and help them develop wellbeing habits for life.



# CHAPTER 5

## ASSESSMENT OF WELL-BEING LEVEL AND NEEDS OF SCHOOL STAFF

Creating a staff mental health and well-being strategy is a fantastic place for schools to start when demonstrating their commitment to prioritizing the welfare of school workers. It is a location where school administrators may define specific areas of concentration, agreed-upon activities, and success measurements, as well as who is accountable for carrying out the tasks outlined in the plan.

A decent well-being plan and strategy isn't something that is created in one day and then remain unchanged. It should be evaluated, measured against, updated, and conveyed to staff on a regular basis. When it comes to worker mental health and wellbeing, this is critical since school staff requirements will always vary. Your plan might be part of a larger mental health and wellbeing strategy that outlines your school's overarching vision and goals for prioritizing staff mental health and wellbeing and most importantly including carefully designed tools for assessing and measuring of the well-being level, needs and requirements of all involved parties.

There are a variety of mental health and wellness measurements that schools may use to understand what drives good and bad mental health among personnel, as well as the sort of help workers require. In this chapter we offer you several simple tools that you may use in this regard. The provided examples could be modified according to your current needs and applied when needed.

### **"Staff well-being audit tool"\***

One of the starting points along the way of designing a whole school well-being strategy is to identify where your school currently is in terms of assisting and supporting staff mental health and wellbeing.

The provided below "Staff well-being audit tool" is a simple, but yet very effective instrument that can provide a clear overview of the current situation and the activities already in place in terms of supporting staff mental health and well-being at school.

If when applied at first, there are many answers in the "not in place" or "Partly in place" columns, don't be discouraged! On the contrary, those results will provide a more detailed road-map and help you to thoroughly identify all gaps and areas that need more attention and improvements.

\*<https://teachershub.educationsupport.org.uk/introduction/where-is-your-school-now>

Staff well-being audit tool	Not in place	Partially in place	Fully in place
A structured approach to prioritising staff mental health and wellbeing in schools			
Staff mental health and wellbeing strategic commitment and/or policy			
Staff mental health and wellbeing plan			
Policies that support staff mental health and wellbeing (mental health at work, flexible working, mutual support, etc.)			
Staff wellbeing group to lead and develop staff initiatives			
Measures in place to monitor and manage stress and burnout			
Tools to help with work/life balance			
Staff collegiality and appreciation fostered and promoted			
Peer support/mentoring/supervision available to staff			
External support for head teachers (mentoring, supervision, peer support)			
A safe comfortable space for staff to take time out and de-brief outside of staff room environment			
Inclusive opportunities for all staff to participate in social activities not linked to work			
Physical working spaces that promote wellbeing (quiet rooms, plants, exposure to light, space, facilities)			

Staff well-being audit tool	Not in place	Partially in place	Fully in place
School leadership team encourages regular discussion/openness on mental health and well-being issues			
Wellbeing part of daily operations/activities (inductions, team meetings)			
Promotion/awareness campaigns of mental health and wellbeing across the school community			
School leadership team models good working practices and self-care			
Staff training available in wellbeing and mental health to promote self-care, support and normalising a supportive culture			
Managers mental health and wellbeing trainings			
Return to work conducted with a focus on wellbeing			
Staff confident and encouraged to recognise and support/signpost when a colleagues mental health and wellbeing is under threat			
Staff know where to access internal and external sources of support			
Access to counselling/mental health services			
Processes in place to support staff after difficult or distressing incidents			
Staff wellbeing promoted and monitored by school governors			
Staff wellbeing survey (at least annual)			
Resources available and support for issues relating to Coronavirus (long Covid, trauma, bereavement)			

## "Staff needs and current levels of wellbeing"\*

When it comes to development of an effective whole school well-being strategy, there is one step, without which the journey towards well-being won't be possible, namely to take the proper actions to understand staff needs, current levels of wellbeing and to gain an understanding of the types of support staff want. In the following example, created by "Taking Care of Teachers: mental health and wellbeing hub", funded by Welsh Government, you may find another useful assessment tool that can provide an insight on these topics and will serve you as a guidelines when developing the future activities and initiatives in your well-being strategy.

Question	Absolutely agree	Rather agree	Not sure	Rather disagree	Absolutely disagree
<b>Your school provides the leadership to create a positive environment that promotes emotional health and wellbeing through:</b>					
1. A clear mission statement is in place which includes a commitment to emotional wellbeing of staff					
2. An ethos that promotes a happy, secure and stimulating environment in which all members are valued and health and wellbeing are promoted					
3. Governors that value the emotional and physical health and wellbeing of the whole school community					
4. Leadership where the head teachers and senior management team apply work to promote emotional wellbeing in all areas of school life					
5. The active support for and the promotion of staff emotional wellbeing					

\*<https://teachershub.educationsupport.org.uk/measuring-success/mental-health-and-wellbeing-measures>



Question	Absolutely agree	Rather agree	Not sure	Rather disagree	Absolutely disagree
<b>School ethos and environment</b>					
The school provides information for parents and carers related to mental health and emotional wellbeing of students.					
The following policies are in place and up to date:					
• Whole school wellbeing policy					
• Staff wellbeing policy					
• Safe to Learn / Anti Bullying policy					
• Dealing with emotional distress / bereavement policy					
<b>How the school environment promotes staff emotional health and wellbeing</b>					
1. The school provides a safe and inclusive working environment					
2. The school provides quiet areas for staff breaks					
3. The school supports a peer mentorship/buddie system					
4. The school promotes opportunities for staff to engage in physical activity					
5. The school supports staff social groups					

Question	Absolutely agree	Rather agree	Not sure	Rather disagree	Absolutely disagree
6. The school provides opportunities for staff to share concerns in a supportive environment					
7. Staff have regular opportunities to discuss wellbeing with the school leadership team					
8. Staff know how to access mental health and wellbeing support					
9. The school offers/organizes mindfulness and resilience trainings					
10. The school offers/organizes stress management training					
11. The school promotes the benefits of healthy eating and physical activity					
<b>Staff development</b>					
1. The school has a programme to train staff in mental health and wellbeing					
2. Staff have had training on mental health awareness					
3. Staff have had training on developing and applying coping strategies and mechanisms					
4. Staff have had training on bereavement					
5. Staff have had training on the benefits of healthy eating and physical activity					
6. Staff are aware of organisations who can offer guidance and support when needed					

Question	Absolutely agree	Rather agree	Not sure	Rather disagree	Absolutely disagree
<b>Staff views on work and wellbeing</b>					
1. I am clear what is expected of me at work					
2. If work gets difficult, my colleagues will help me					
3. I know what to do in order to get my job done					
4. I am given supportive feedback on the work I do					
5. I never have to neglect some tasks because I have too much to do					
6. There is no friction or anger between colleagues at school					
7. I am able to take sufficient breaks					
8. I am not pressured to work long hours					
9. I am not subject to bullying at work					
10. I do not have unrealistic deadlines and time pressures					
11. I can rely on my direct manager to help me out with a work problem					
12. I am clear what my duties and responsibilities are					
13. I get the help and support I need from colleagues					
14. I have some independence when choosing the tools and methods to apply in my work					

Question	Absolutely agree	Rather agree	Not sure	Rather disagree	Absolutely disagree
15. I have sufficient opportunities to question managers about changes at work					
16. Staff are always consulted about change at work					
17. I can talk to school leadership about something that has upset/annoyed me about work					
18. My colleagues are willing to listen to my work-related problems					
19. I am supported when I have to deal with emotionally demanding work					
20. Relationships at work are not strained					
21. My manager encourages me at work					
22. When changes are made, I have a clear vision on how they will work out in practice					

## "Workplace Well-being Question Bank"

The Workplace Well-being Question Bank offered below attempts to assist educational decision-makers in understanding what well-being is, how to evaluate it, and what works to promote it. The Workplace Well-being Question Bank contains a set of questions that institutions may use to assess and track their employees' well-being. Employers may better focus wellness initiatives and programs in the workplace by directly asking employees how they feel about various elements of their jobs. The questions are tailored to fit in any professional sphere, but you can use them as the basis for your own questionnaire, tailoring and adapting it to the needs of your school or educational organisation, the specific circumstances of your employees (teachers, school staff and educators) and the results you would like to achieve.

The questions have been organized to address the key characteristics of workplace well-being, namely:

- A. Subjective wellbeing outcomes
- B. Health outcomes and behaviours
- C. Organisational health policy
- D. Purpose and engagement
- E. Job prospects
- F. Autonomy and skills use
- G. Work demands
- H. Relationships and social environment
- I. Working time quality
- J. Physical environment
- K. Financial wellbeing

The full version of the "Workplace Well-being Question Bank" is available on [this link](#) in English language.

# CHAPTER 6

## HOW TO SUPPORT WELL-BEING IN SCHOOL?

To foster well-being, we may think of different actions targeting different issues and groups in a school: **school environment and facilities; education and in-class activities; extracurricular and outdoor activities; all-level communication; collaboration and peer support.**

In order to promote well-being in terms of **school environment** and facilities, key actions would be to improve the physical environment of the school to make it more student-friendly, e.g. *new furniture and fittings, carpeted areas, appropriate colour schemes, safe toilet areas, recreational areas; to encourage healthier eating by providing healthy options in the school canteen, e.g. avoiding high amounts of sugar, saturated fats and salt, etc.*

As for **education and in-class activities**, teaching methods that contribute to a positive classroom climate and well-being should be prioritized, such as *cooperative learning, student-centred methods, and self-organisation of time*. Steps should also be taken to reduce the anxiety students feel about examinations and testing through the introduction of less stressful forms of assessment, e.g. *formative assessment, peer assessment and involving students in the identification of their own assessment needs*. Finding curriculum opportunities to talk about well-being issues with students (*healthy eating, exercise, substance abuse, positive relationships*) and *integrating democratic citizenship and education* for intercultural understanding into different school subjects and extra-curricular activities, e.g. openness to other cultures, knowledge and critical understanding of human rights, awareness of environmental problems and adoption of sustainable behaviours can also bear in the sense of well-being in a school.

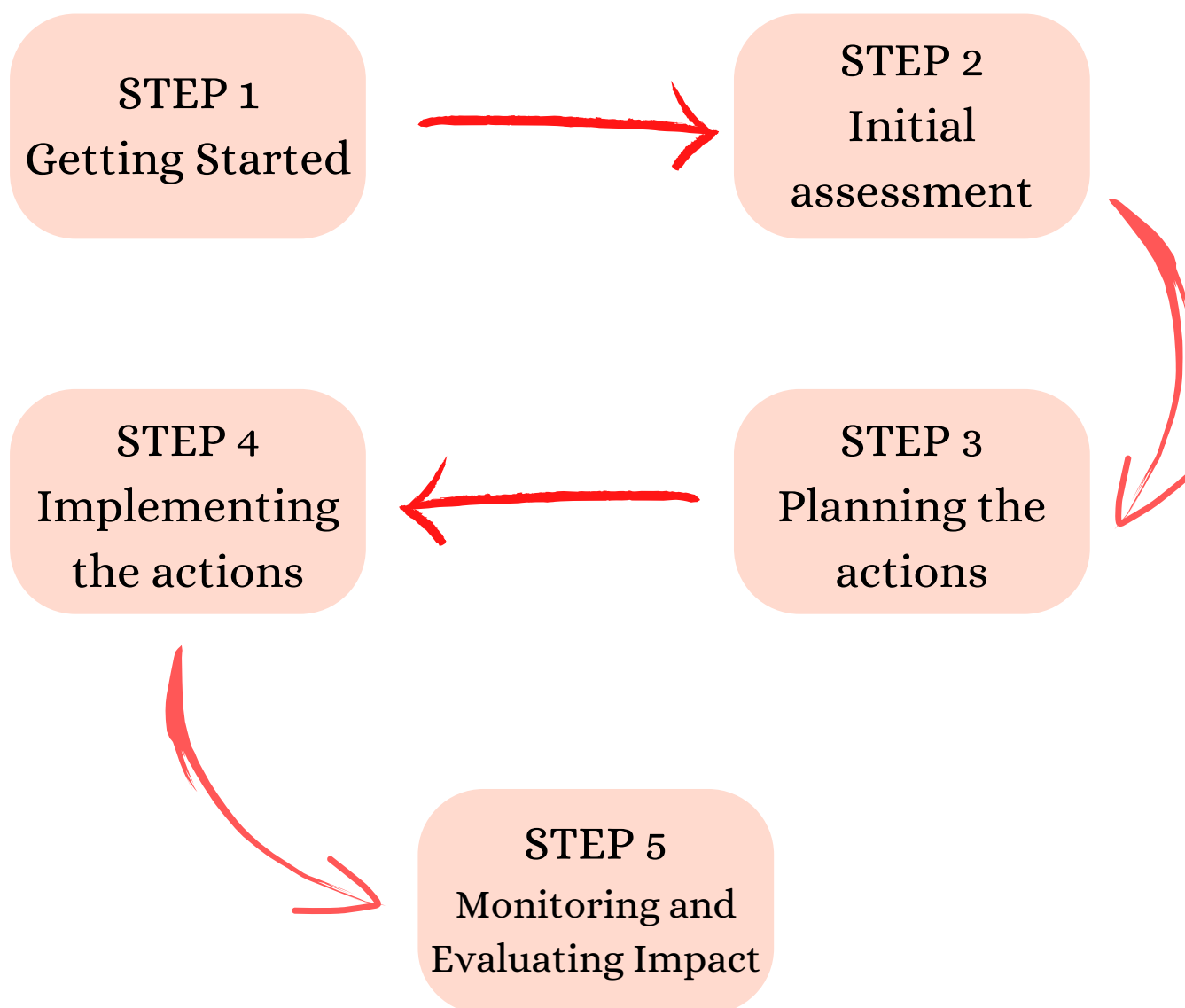
In what **communication** is concerned, it is of extreme importance to provide opportunities for all members of the school community to participate in meaningful decision-making in school, e.g. through *consultations, opinion surveys, referendums, electing class representatives, student parliaments, focus groups, in-class feedback on learning activities, and an element of student choice in relation to topics taught and teaching methods used*.

Developing a welcoming environment where everyone at school can feel supported and safe through access to meaningful activities, such as, *clubs, societies, interest groups and associations dealing with issues of concern to young people, including health; and or organising field trips and special celebrations or special days are ways to address the issue of extracurricular and outdoor activities*.

As for **collaboration and peer support**, strategies involving the introduction of student-led forms of conflict management and approaches to bullying and harassment, e.g. *peer mediation, restorative justice could be of value*.

Of course, every school is a different school and many struggle in all the mentioned areas and others in just a few. Moreover, the same approach may not work for a specific school with its specific needs. The development of a culture of well-being is quite necessary throughout the whole school and also through the involvement of everybody that works there, both teaching and non-teaching, which can be challenging. **Therefore, in order to support well-being in a specific school, a specific plan must be designed and put in place. One that suits the needs of the specific school working towards the promotion of its emotional health and well-being which can't be left only to random acts or uncoordinated activities.**

Creating a set of realistic and achievable goals in your school, based on the needs, interests and difficulties diagnosed can be one of the first steps to take towards defining a plan to foster well-being in a particular school. To establish an effective plan to support well-being in schools, clear steps must be taken:



**Assembling a well-being team** and **identifying priorities for the well-being action plan** should be the first two steps to take. A good team would be formed by professionals from across the school organisation (*step 1*) - leadership/ teachers/ support staff... This team should have regular meetings and should start by collecting data and observations to identify any clear themes and discussion topics (*step 2*). Template 1 can be of help in this task.

After this is done, the well-being team should decide on around three priorities to address in each school year. Examples can be focusing on the improvement of facilities, raising awareness to mental health issues or even improving food choices (snacks) in the students. Not everything can and should be done at the same time. It can even be counter-productive to address too many issues simultaneously, as the plan could become confuse and ineffective.

Having placed the well-being team to work; having diagnosed the current status of well-being in your school and having selected the most pressing topics to deal with, the team should start thinking about the actions they must undertake to address the diagnosed problems and achieve an objective, which would be *step 3*. A list of the actions required to address the identified problems and reach the objectives of the team should be made. The people/ professionals who are going to be involved in reaching these objectives must be identified. The well-being team may at first face some difficulties in having everybody on board as change and challenges are sometimes hard to embrace. The undeniable advantages of a well-being culture in a school should be discussed as a means of encouragement for those more reluctant in embracing the goals set by the well-being team.

Once you have your priorities straightened out, you have thought about the actions you need to put in place to achieve your goals, you know who else you need to involve in the project and how they will help, you get to *step 4* - you must develop/ implement your plan. Template number 2 is a simple example that can be followed and or studied so that how to implement a well-being strategy can be better understood.

Finally, you get to *step 5* - monitoring and evaluating the measure you have put into place. You must decide on what tools you are going to use to monitor both the implementation of the actions and their outcomes. Online questionnaires may be a good idea. What could also work are simple meetings with key actors (students or teachers) to get their opinions and views. Nevertheless, whichever tool the well-being team decides to use, this evaluation is of extreme importance to discover if the actions had the desired outcome, if they need improving or even to be replaced by others.

Never forget that student well-being is essential because it is intertwined with academic excellence. Schools should, therefore, not only be a place for students to learn. They should also be a place where students' well-being is prioritized, while still delivering excellent instruction and learning activities.



<b>Template 1: Checklist for well-being</b>	<b>Not in place</b>	<b>Partially in place</b>	<b>Fully in place</b>
The school has got a clear and updated vision on the situation regarding health (physical/ mental/ social) and well-being of students.			
The school has knowledge on current health behaviour of students involving eating habits, physical activity, sexual behaviour, dependencies, hygiene.			
The school has evaluated the needs and desires of students concerning well-being.			
The school includes in its Educational Project the prevention and resolution of problems connected to health			
Health and well-being are linked to the Educational goals of the school.			
Health and well-being are included in the curricula.			
Students and teachers are heard and participate in the planning and implementation of activities connected to well-being and health.			
School facilities like yards, classrooms, toilets, canteens, bar and corridors are safe and clean.			
The school facilities suit the age group and are adapted to students with special needs.			
School buildings have good lighting and are kept at a comfortable temperature.			
Students have access to outdoor areas.			
The school canteen and bar offer healthy food choices.			
The school offers extra sports and physical activities (after school hours).			

Checklist for well-being	Not in place	Partially in place	Fully in place
The school prioritizes cooperative learning and student-centred methods.			
Formative assessment/ peer assessment/ self assessment are fostered.			
The school provides extra curricular activities, such as clubs and interest groups.			
The school enhances socializing through the celebration of special days and festivities.			
The school promotes student participation in conflict management.			
The school has clear policies concerning bullying and harassment.			
Students are provided with support (from teachers or other staff) if they show signs of anxiety or stress related to evaluation.			
The school has psychologists and other support staff.			

## Template 2: Action Plan - Well-being at Schools *(example)*

Problem	Goal	Activities Actions	When?	Person(s) involved	Resources	Evaluation
Children are too focused on cellphones	<p>Make students aware of the problem</p> <p>Have students voluntarily go without the phone for some time.</p>	<p>Promote outdoor activities;</p> <p>Have a cellphone “free” break each day</p> <p>Promote class discussion on screen addiction</p>	All along the school year	<p>Sports teacher</p> <p>Head teacher</p>	Time of people involved	Survey at the end of the year

# CHAPTER 7

## GOOD PRACTICES AND SUCCESSFUL EXAMPLES ON WELL-BEING

**Name:** Games for tolerance

**Description:** The T-GAMES "Games for Tolerance" project aims to involve all students and their families in violence prevention activities. The topic of bullying in schools needs to be addressed with the participation of all stakeholders such as teachers, victims, aggressors, parents, counselors, etc. Wanting to reduce and alleviate the problem of bullying by starting prevention from an early age and contributing to the reduction of bullying incidents, the partnership worked on the creation of new educational anti-bullying games and a database with analysis of games and resources for three age groups (4-5, 6-7, 8-10 years). The main aim of the project was to provide pre-school and primary teachers with the knowledge and skills to use the games methodology. The direct target group of the project were pre-school and primary teachers, and the indirect target group: children aged 4-10, their families, and community members.

During its implementation, T-GAMES project has produced, tested and launched three main products, available in six EU languages: Methodology for elaboration of educational games; Guide and testing scenarios on game methodology for educators and Database of games, activities and resources for bullying prevention. The Methodology is a systematic guide for kindergarten and elementary school teachers who want to actively devote themselves to bullying prevention, by using the methods of game design and gamification. The Guide focuses on the practical aspects of using games for bullying prevention, mitigation control and proposing activities for helping all stakeholders involved in bullying. The Database is an innovative repository of games suitable for kindergarten and primary school children (aged 4-10). The tangible results contributed to the accomplishment of many intangible ones, above all: the teachers and educators directly involved in the project activities increased their own and their pupils' knowledge of bullying prevention, developed their abilities to create and preserve a safe and inspiring learning environment, therefore boosted their teaching profile, satisfaction and motivation for further development.

**Source/Link:**

[Methodology for developing educational games](#)

[Guide and testing scenarios on game methodology for educators](#)

[Database with educational games](#)

**Name: Nestlé for Healthier Kids**

**Description:** "Nestlé for Healthier Kids" is an educational programme that aims to promote balanced nutrition and active lifestyles in children aged 3 to 12. The desire and ambition of the program is not just to provide and educate Bulgarian children in a healthy lifestyle, but to build a holistic vision for the growth of future generations. The principles of this vision are a balanced diet, an active daily life, sustainability and care for the environment, accepted as key in educating children and encouraging them towards a healthy lifestyle. From these, the programme's method of achieving and upholding these goals and principles is born. "Nestlé for Healthier Kids creates fun and interactive lessons for schools and kindergartens all over Bulgaria to give young and old alike the boost they need to achieve healthy living.

In 2018, the programme was able to expand its reach and enter educational institutions across the country, and in 2019 it reached kindergartens for the first time. So far, Nestlé for Healthier Kids' educational content has reached over 30,000 children in kindergartens and schools across the country.

Through curious and dynamic lessons, Nestlé for Healthier Children manages to unite its efforts with those of parents, teachers and educational institutions ready to ensure a better and healthier future for Bulgarian children.

**Source/Link:**

[The official website of Nestle Bulgaria - click here](#)

**Name: The path to creating an inclusive environment for deaf children in a mainstream environment**

**Description:** This initiative is led by "Listen" Foundation in connection with the implementation of a project for the participation of schools and kindergartens in the project "The path to creating an inclusive environment for deaf children in a mainstream environment" aiming to ensure children's participation in Bulgarian sign language classes by testing innovative teaching methods by deaf trainers.

Through interesting activities and games, the kids learn how to communicate with people with hearing problems. This will help the children to become more tolerant and to treat people with differences with respect and understanding.

**Source/Link:**

[The official website of "Listen" Foundation - click here](#)

**Name: Well-being Improvement for New Generations at Schools**

**Description:** The idea of WINGS (Well-being Improvement for New Generations at Schools) has been conceived as all partners' concern is to find ways to provide the conditions in which student physical, mental, affective, social and academic potential can grow and flourish and equip them with skills for their successful transition to the labor market and dynamic involvement in a knowledge-dependent economy. The Good Practice project involved 6 PARTNERS from FINLAND, GREECE, ITALY, LUXEMBOURG, POLAND and SPAIN. The project target audience was the whole school community (family, students, teachers, other school staff and local organizations). Trying to handle early school leaving and the social inclusion of disadvantaged students, the MAIN OBJECTIVE was: IMPROVING THE STUDENTS' WELLBEING by focusing on 5 SPECIFIC WELL-BEING AREAS (SCHOOL,SOCIAL,EMOTIONAL,MENTAL,PHYSICAL).

The main RESULTS have been:

- Healthy eating habits Cookbook
- Well-being Surveys and reports
- Video ads:Physical exercise benefits
- Local sports&games eGuide
- eManual: How to control anxiety before and during exams-Comic
- YES/NO video-ads on "Want to improve social skills? Try to ... and say I love U"
- School violence prevention campaigns
- Mediation case studies role-plays
- eGuide: Cultural Heritage

**Source/Link:**

[The official website of WINGS Project - click here](#)

**Name: Theater - way of expression ("Innovation through Creative Arts")**

**Description:**

Benefits:

- students learned to express themselves through theater, to express their feelings more easily and to manage emotions;
- improved their verbal, para-verbal and non-verbal communication;
- the relationship between children, parents and teachers was intensified by involving the family in the creation of sets and costumes, but especially through the emotion that the little ones have challenge it to their parents;
- there were children who discovered acting talents.

**Source/Link:**

[The official training course in Romanian language - click here](#)

**Name: Exhibitions - "Innovation through Creative Arts"**

**Description:** The products made by the students in the lessons in which the creative arts were introduced, were exhibited in various spaces, in conventional or unconventional ways. Thus there were organised mini-exhibitions in the classrooms, in the performance halls, in the school hallways, in library, in the school gardens. These have could be admired by older students in school, teachers, parents, people who have visited the school, and some of them were popularised on school websites or on networks of socialization. Benefits:

- increased students' self-esteem;
- students learned to organize an exhibition and self-evaluate/evaluate the products
- exposed;
- students' works were admired by a wide audience (other students, teachers, parents, school visitors);
- the exhibitions were a way of disseminating the activities of the project.

**Source/Link:**

[The official Good practice guide in Romanian language - click here](#)

**Name: Rodawell Project**

**Description:**

When a child feels good - emotionally, cognitively, physically - their desire to learn flourishes. That's why the Rodawell Project, the Romanian-Danish Centre for Children's Well-being was implemented. The aim was to generate learning performance by creating and promoting an education model that focuses on the psychological well-being dimension of children in kindergartens and primary schools.

The three-year project was funded by the Velux Foundation and implemented by the University of Bucharest, through the Faculty of Psychology and Educational Sciences, in partnership with VIA University College in Denmark. The project is supported by the Ministry of Education and the Romanian Agency for Quality Assurance in Pre-University Education (ARACIP).

RODAWELL's expertise and practices will be targeted at educational institutions with a large number of children (in relation to the school network average), vulnerable to risk situations such as: special educational needs, poverty, parental migration, neglect, abuse or health problems.

**Source/Link:**

[The official website of Rodawell Project - click here](#)

**Name: "Right to a break"**

**Description:** Bullying is a phenomenon that occurs in groups of children and refers to a variety of behaviours that are humiliating and exclusionary in nature, repeated or part of a pattern that occurs over a period of time. Most often, bullying behaviours are hidden from adult eyes and continue in the absence of specific intervention measures. So bullying has consequences for everyone - even for those who don't initially seem to be involved.

Save the Children organization launched the campaign "Right to a break", which aims to raise awareness among parents and teachers about the importance of their role in reducing bullying and to inform them and children about concrete ways they can get involved in the creation and proper functioning of anti-bullying action groups in each school. From June 2020, all schools are obliged to set up anti-bullying action groups to prevent, identify and resolve bullying situations.

**Source/Link:**

[The official website of "Right to a break" campaign in Romanian language - click here](#)

**Name: YTM psycho-vocational testing platform**

**Description:** The YTM platform is a psycho-vocational testing platform developed by the West University of Timisoara in order to generate reports on users' interests, skills and aptitudes, with the aim of guiding them towards a specific educational and professional path. Thus, in addition to the possibility of testing, YTM provides the beneficiaries with information on the study programmes of the universities in Timisoara and information on socio-cultural programmes and events aimed at students.

Through this platform, students can assess their personality, skills and professional interests through a vocational orientation test. The report and recommendations resulting from this test can be very useful in the process of making a decision about their future university studies.

**Source/Link:**

[The official YTM platform in Romanian language - click here](#)



**Name:** **"Fell into secondary education... and now?"**

**Description:** "Caí no Secundário... e agora" ("Fell into secondary education... and now?") Programme for 10th grade students aiming at giving them tools to deal with the adaptation to secondary education - new classes/ courses/ ...

**Source/Link:**

**[The "Fell into secondary education... and now?" programme in Portuguese language - click here](#)**

**Name:** **"I feel" web portal**

**Description:** "eu sinto.me" (I feel.) is a web portal that gathers a set of information and quality resources on Mental Health and Well-Being - based on scientific evidence from Psychology and which are up to date, trustworthy, free and accessible to all (children; young people; adult and senior citizens)

**Source/Link:**

**[The official "I feel" web portal in Portuguese language - click here](#)**

**Name:** **Doing What Matters in Times of Stress: An Illustrated Guide**

**Description:** Doing What Matters in Times of Stress: An Illustrated Guide is a stress management guide for coping with adversity. The guide aims to equip people with practical skills to help cope with stress. A few minutes each day are enough to practice the self-help techniques. The guide can be used alone or with the accompanying audio exercises.

Informed by evidence and extensive field testing, the guide is for anyone who experiences stress, wherever they live and whatever their circumstances.

**Source/Link:**

**[The official Illustrated Guide:"Doing What Matters in Times of Stress in English language - click here](#)**

**Name:** CONVEY digital game

**Description:** Through the development of the CONVEY digital game and the implementation of a training programme for teachers and students of secondary schools, the project aims to foster the respect for women's rights and to change the behaviour of young people that reinforces gender stereotypes and leads to gender-based violence.

**Source/Link:**

[The official website of CONVEY digital game - click here](#)

**Name:** ENABLE (European Network Against Bullying in Learning and Leisure Environments)

**Description:** ENABLE (European Network Against Bullying in Learning and Leisure Environments) aims to tackle bullying in a holistic way, helping young people exercise their fundamental rights in the home, school, class and community (i.e. peer group).

Using a unique approach that combines social and emotional learning (SEL) with Peer Support, the ENABLE team strives to provide school staff with the skills, knowledge and confidence that can help them establish an effective student Peer Support scheme in their schools and develop their students' social and emotional skills.

**Source/Link:**

[The ENABLE booklet in English language - click here](#)

[The ENABLE Educational material in Greek language - click here](#)

**Name:** DOBRONAUTI

**Description:** A team of child psychologists, creatives designers, and game designers created an experiential educational-preventive game Star Team for children from 2.-5. elementary school classes.

The programme tackles:

- aggression
- bullying
- peer pressure
- conflicts and quarrels in the class
- consequences of distant learning
- different issues of children"
- increased need of psychological care for children
- introducing peace and solidarity among children

**Source/Link:**

[The official website of DOBRONAUTI in Czech language - click here](#)

**Name:** **Celé Česko čte dětem** (*All of the Czechia Reads to Children*)

**Description:** The mission of the non-profit society Celé Česko čte dětem (All of the Czechia Reads to Children) is to build strong bonds in the family through reading together. Regular reading to children is of great importance for the development of their emotional health. Reading develops memory and imagination, teaches thinking. Reading creates a strong bond between parent and child. We don't say "Go and read!", but "Come, I'll read to you". 20 minutes a day is enough. Daily.

**Source/Link:**

[The official website of Celé Česko čte dětem in Czech language - click here](#)

**Name:** **KLUB AUTOBUS**

**Description:** The low-threshold bus club is a registered social service, where qualified workers with appropriate education discuss with children whatever they need, play games, do sports, do arts, help with schoolwork, but also go on trips, multi-day trips and prepare interesting Programmes for young people. Use of the club is free, voluntary, children do not have to say anything private about themselves and can come and go at any time. The club is intended for children from socially challenged environments, and for examples offers also free sports equipment. The club focuses also on topics such as school bullying, alcohol and drug abuse, school failure and tutoring (online or ftf).

KLUB AUTOBUS offers interest and leisure activities for tackling: eating disorders, self harm, body shaming, trauma from sexual abuse, isolation, disorders of social relationships, demotivation, loss of interest.

**Source/Link:**

[The official website of KLUB AUTOBUS in Czech language - click here](#)

**Name:** **Non-governmental organization Nevypuř Duři**

**Description:** Non-governmental organization Nevypuř Duři is a non-profit organization whose goal is to improve the Czech Republic's awareness of mental health. As part of their activities, they aim to spread facts, dispel myths, educate and help.

The organization:

- uses social networks to spread facts, dispel myths and improve prevention
- prepares and leads workshops focused on education and prevention of mental illness
- organizes educational activities focused on mental health for teachers and students of primary and secondary schools

**Source/Link:**

[The official website of Nevypuř Duři in Czech language - click here](#)

**Name:** **WORTH IT: Well-being Resources that Improve Children and Young People's Mental Health**

**Description:** This online toolkit of downloadable wellbeing resources and evidence-based wellbeing activities strategies and practical methods for developing positive mental health for children and young people.

A whole-school approach to mental health and wellbeing involves the whole school community working together to build and embed processes and strategies that develop wellbeing for pupils, staff and stakeholders. To work a whole school approach requires collaborative work between senior leaders, teachers and all staff as well as parents, carers and the wider community. Mental health and wellbeing become part of the fabric of the school and its culture and ethos.

The WORTH IT Toolkit:

- supports pupils and students
- improves mental health
- improves achievement
- teaches coping strategies
- reduces negative coping
- consistent approach
- evidence-based wellbeing activities strategies

**Source/Link:**

[The official website of WORTH IT in English language - click here](#)

**Name:** **WE - Promoting positive well-being through education**

**Description:** The WE Schools program brings well-being through service-learning into the classroom. In collaboration with leading mental health professionals, the modules help youth and educators in Grades SK to 12 improve their own emotional, social, physical and mental well-being and the well-being of others.

The WE Well-being Foundational Module:

- is a resource designed to help TEACHERS and students set up for success.
- is based on social-emotional learning
- helps create caring classrooms
- engages and supports students
- helps students develop important skills such as resilience, empathy, compassion and problem-solving
- is downloadable for free

**Source/Link:**

[The official website of WE in English language - click here](#)

**Name: "Violence prevention" Project**

**Description:** The first part of the "Violence Prevention" project entitled "Development of social skills" aims to strengthen mental health, provide methods for stress reduction and spiritual development of the individual. Elements of this project were used during the pandemic.

**Source/Link:**

[The "Social skills development" unit in English language - click here](#)

**Name: "Prevention of risky behaviour in children and youth in Serbia through sport and education" Project**

**Description:** Support of teachers in their direct work with students so that, in addition to academic, equal and psychosocial needs of students are in focus.

**Source/Link:**

[The official guidelines in Serbian language - click here](#)

**Name: Stress Management to improve teaching performance and personal life of teachers**

**Description:** In today's knowledge economy the importance of education has been worldwide recognized. All developed countries are spending a major part of their budget on education. Within the education system of any country, teachers have a vital position, as the success of educational institutions is mostly dependent on teachers, who educate the most valued assets of the country, i.e. students; therefore the teachers' performance is a fundamental concern of all educational institutions.

**Source/Link:**

[The official description of the stress management course in English language - click here](#)

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Co-funded by  
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