

WELLBEING - ALL ABOUT MINDFULNESS LESSON OVERVIEW

In this lesson, students explore the meaning of wellbeing. They learn to recognise early signs of mental health issues and where to get support and advice. They consider the connection between mind and body and explore the impact of physical activities and strategies like mindfulness on mental wellbeing. They have the opportunity to put their learning into practise by setting healthy living goals.

WHAT YOU'LL NEED

- Wellbeing – all about mindfulness PowerPoint presentation
- Advice for Mental Wellbeing Activity Sheet (one per person)
- Mindful Breathing Exercise Video: bit.ly/mindfulbreathingexercise
- Healthy Living Goals Activity Sheet (one per person)
- Access to computers or online devices for research (optional) or pre-prepared material from suggested mental health websites (see Activity 1)

OBJECTIVE

To explore mental wellbeing, its connection to physical wellbeing and strategies to support mental health.

OUTCOMES

- Recognise the early signs of mental wellbeing concerns and know where to get support and advice
- Understand the connection between mental and physical wellbeing
- Identify a range of strategies to promote wellbeing and develop good mental health, including physical activity and mindfulness

DELIVERY

The activities in this lesson have been designed for delivery in sequence.

Depending on time available and students' prior learning and needs, the content could be delivered in one lesson or broken down into two or more lessons, with flexibility to extend or cut discussion as appropriate.

Activity 4 is intended as an extension activity.

LESSON PLAN

Setting the tone

SLIDES 2 & 3



SLIDE 2: WHAT ARE WE GOING TO LEARN?

Share the purpose of the lesson with students.

SLIDE 3: RESPECT. YOUR RULES.

Show students the key words on the slide: HEAR, RESPECT, KIND, LISTEN, UNDERSTAND, SPEAK, SENSITIVITY, EMPATHY

Ask them to write three positive rules they want everyone to follow when discussing sensitive topics. As a class, share and agree on the rules you all want to observe.

This lesson deals with sensitive topics where some students may need further support. Signposting to organisations that can help is included, and you may also wish to direct learners to other sources of support locally and in school.

This lesson covers:

- Mental health
- Substance abuse

You may like to set up an anonymous question box, so that any questions students don't want to ask, or that remain unanswered at the end of the session, can be addressed in a future session.

Starter

SLIDES 4 - 6

WELLBEING - WHAT IS IT?



SLIDE 5: WHAT IS WELLBEING?

Introduce the wellbeing focus. In small groups, ask students to come up with their own definition of 'wellbeing'. Ask each group to share its definition with the class.

SLIDE 6: DICTIONARY DEFINITIONS

Share the definitions on the slide. How do they compare with students' definitions



Activity 1

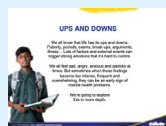
SLIDES 7 - 14

ADVICE FOR MENTAL WELLBEING ACTIVITY SHEET

ACCESS TO COMPUTER OR PRE-PREPARED INFORMATION ON MENTAL HEALTH CONDITIONS

MENTAL WELLBEING

This activity provides an introduction to mental wellbeing. Students explore the signs and symptoms of common mental health problems and sources of support and advice.



SLIDE 8: UPS AND DOWNS

Introduce and discuss some of the challenges that can trigger strong emotions and have a negative impact on mental wellbeing.



SLIDE 9: COMMON MENTAL HEALTH PROBLEMS

Ask students to name as many mental health problems as they can. Click on the slide to reveal the graphic. Divide the class into five groups and ask each to research and report back on one of the mental health problems highlighted in blue.

You could prepare information for this task in advance by printing off relevant sections from websites such as Mind, the NHS, YoungMinds and Rethink. Alternatively, to make the task more challenging and open ended, students could carry out the research themselves. (They will need access to computers to do this).

LESSON PLAN



SLIDE 10: RESEARCHING AND MENTAL HEALTH

Display this slide as a prompt while students carry out their research and report back to the rest of the class.

Extension: ask students if they can find any case studies about young people living with their chosen condition.



SLIDE 11: SUPPORT AND ADVICE

Discuss the different sources of support and advice for mental health problems listed on the slide. Which came up in students' research? What type of support do they provide?



SLIDES 12 AND 13: HELP FOR NICO AND SOPHIE

Talk through the scenarios on each slide with students then ask them how they would suggest Nico and Sophie get help for their anxiety and self-harming. Click on the slide to reveal information about the support the teenagers were given.



SLIDE 14: MILLIE AND JAKE

Working in pairs, give students a copy of the **Advice for Mental Wellbeing Activity Sheet** to complete.

As a class, share thoughts on Millie and Jake's mental health problems. What advice would students give them to get support and improve their wellbeing?

Remind students of sources of support and of the importance of getting a diagnosis from a professional if they are concerned about their mental health.

Extension: students could create their own scenario about a young person with unhealthy habits that other people have to try to help.



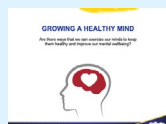
Activity 2

SLIDES 15 - 21

MINDFUL
BREATHING
EXERCISE VIDEO

HEALTHY MIND

In this activity, students explore ways to exercise their minds to contribute to improved mental wellbeing.



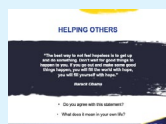
SLIDE 16: GROWING A HEALTHY MIND

Make sure students understand that just as we exercise our bodies, there are things we can do to exercise our minds and help to keep them healthy.



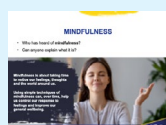
SLIDE 17: ABSORBING ACTIVITIES

Talk as a class about the benefits of taking part in activities we love, or learning a new skill. What effect does this have on our mental wellbeing? In pairs, ask students to share thoughts on what helps them get in the zone.



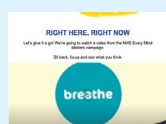
SLIDE 18: HELPING OTHERS

Share the quotation from Barack Obama with students and talk about what it means to them. How does helping others make us feel better?



SLIDE 19: MINDFULNESS

Introduce the concept of mindfulness to students. If some are already familiar they can explain it to the class.



SLIDE 20: RIGHT HERE, RIGHT NOW

Give mindfulness a go in the classroom by playing the **Mindful Breathing Exercise Video** and encouraging students to try the simple techniques covered. Afterwards, ask them for their views.

LESSON PLAN



Activity 3

SLIDES 22 - 25

HEALTHY LIVING GOALS ACTIVITY SHEET



SLIDE 21: BE MINDFUL OF YOUR MIND!

Give students an opportunity to reflect on what they have learned in this activity.

HEALTHY LIVING GOALS

This activity encourages students to begin to apply what they have learned to their own lives by setting themselves healthy living goals.



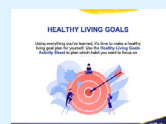
SLIDE 23: THE BODY-MIND CONNECTION

Talk with students about the importance of forming good habits to improve their physical and mental wellbeing.



SLIDE 24: HEALTHY HABITS?

Ask students to identify which habits shown on the slide are healthy and whether they contribute to mental wellbeing, physical wellbeing, or both. With class agreement, decide where the boxes should go within the Venn diagram. You may find that some of the habits, such as social media and baking, provoke some debate. Review and discuss which are the most and least harmful to health.



SLIDE 25: HEALTHY LIVING GOALS

Give each student a copy of the **Healthy Living Goals Activity Sheet**. They should use it to plan a realistic healthy goal for themselves that will help support their physical and/or mental wellbeing.

Emphasise that they can share the goals they identify if they wish, or keep the information private and confidential. If appropriate, direct students to complete the activity in silence.



Activity 4

SLIDES 26 & 27

LIFESTYLE DIARY

This final extension activity encourages students to keep a lifestyle diary for a week to help them identify the impact of different activities and habits on their wellbeing.



SLIDE 27: LIFESTYLE DIARY

Use this slide to introduce the extension activity. Emphasise that this activity is for students' own use and they will not need to show anyone their diary.

Reflection

SLIDES 28 & 29



SLIDE 29: PUTTING IT INTO PRACTICE

Talking with someone else, ask students to identify an interesting fact they've learned today about looking after their wellbeing. How will they use it in their own life?

Remind students about the anonymous question box where they can post questions to be answered in another session.

CURRICULUM LINKS

Curriculum links: England

Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) Physical health and mental wellbeing

Mental wellbeing

Pupils should know

- how to talk about their emotions accurately and sensitively, using appropriate vocabulary.
- that happiness is linked to being connected to others.
- how to recognise the early signs of mental wellbeing concerns.
- common types of mental ill health (e.g. anxiety and depression).
- how to critically evaluate when something they do or are involved in has a positive or negative effect on their own or others' mental health.
- the benefits and importance of physical exercise, time outdoors, community participation and voluntary and service-based activities on mental wellbeing and happiness.

Physical health and fitness

Pupils should know

- the characteristics and evidence of what constitutes a healthy lifestyle.

PSHE (PSHE Association programme of study) Learning opportunities in health and wellbeing

Mental health and emotional wellbeing

H5. the characteristics of mental and emotional health; to develop empathy and understanding about how daily actions can affect people's mental health

H6. about change and its impact on mental health and wellbeing and to recognise the need for emotional support during life changes and/or difficult experiences

H7. a broad range of strategies – cognitive and practical – for promoting their own emotional wellbeing, for avoiding negative thinking and for ways of managing mental health concerns

H8. to recognise warning signs of common mental and emotional health concerns (including stress, anxiety and depression), what might trigger them and what help or treatment is available

H9. The importance of and ways to pre-empt common triggers and respond to warning signs of unhealthy coping strategies, such as self-harm and eating disorders in themselves and others

H10. how to recognise when they or others need help with their mental health and wellbeing; to explore and analyse ethical issues when peers need help; strategies and skills to provide basic support and identify and access the most appropriate sources of help

Health-related decisions

H11. to make informed lifestyle choices regarding sleep, diet and exercise

H13. to identify, evaluate and independently access reliable sources of information, advice and support for all aspects of physical and mental health

Drugs, alcohol and tobacco

H19. The consequences of substance use and misuse for the mental and physical health and wellbeing of individuals and their families

Curriculum links: Northern Ireland

LEARNING FOR LIFE AND WORK Personal development

Pupils should be enabled to:

- develop an understanding of how to maximise and sustain their own health and well-being;
- reflect on, and respond to, their developing concept of self, including managing emotions and reactions to on-going life experiences.

CURRICULUM LINKS

Curriculum links: Republic of Ireland

SOCIAL, PERSONAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION (junior cycle, year 3)

Physical health

Physical exercise

- To develop an appreciation of the central role of physical exercise in a healthy life-style

Relaxation

- To develop awareness and appreciation of the importance of relaxation in the life of the young person
- To help the students practise some techniques for mental and physical relaxation

Emotional health

Stress

- To help the students to recognise the place of stress in day-to-day living
- To help the students to recognise the effects of a high level of stress on themselves and others
- To enable the students to identify factors that can reduce stress

Feelings and moods

- To help the students come to an understanding of a variety of feelings and moods, particularly those common in adolescence
- To promote the development of skills for expressing feelings appropriately

Personal safety

Help agencies

- To promote an awareness of help agencies and to help the students develop skills for obtaining access to these if appropriate

Curriculum links: Scotland

HEALTH AND WELLBEING

Mental and emotional wellbeing

- I am aware of and able to express my feelings and am developing the ability to talk about them.
- I know that we all experience a variety of thoughts and emotions that affect how we feel and behave and I am learning ways of managing them.
- I understand that there are people I can talk to and that there are a number of ways in which I can gain access to practical and emotional support to help me and others in a range of circumstances.
- I understand that feelings and reactions can change depending upon what is happening within and around me. This helps me to understand my own behaviour and the way others behave.
- I understand the importance of mental wellbeing and that this can be fostered and strengthened through personal coping skills and positive relationships. I know that it is not always possible to enjoy good mental health and that if this happens there is support available.
- I am learning skills and strategies which will support me in challenging times, particularly in relation to change and loss.
- I understand that people can feel alone and can be misunderstood and left out by others. I am learning how to give appropriate support.

Substance misuse

- I am developing a range of skills which can support decision-making about substance use. I can demonstrate strategies for making informed choices to maintain and improve my health and wellbeing and can apply these in situations that may be stressful or challenging, or involve peer pressure.
- I know how to access information and support for substance-related issues.

CURRICULUM LINKS

Curriculum links: Wales

PERSONAL AND SOCIAL EDUCATION

Health and emotional well-being

Learners should be given opportunities to:

- accept personal responsibility for keeping the mind and body safe and healthy
- develop a responsible attitude towards personal relationships

and to understand:

- the short and longer term consequences when making decisions about personal health
- the personal, social and legal consequences of the use of legal and illegal substances
- the factors that affect mental health and the ways in which emotional well-being can be fostered
- the statutory and voluntary organisations which support health and emotional well-being
- how to access professional health advice and personal support with confidence