

COMMITTEE A1, WORLD HEALTH ASSEMBLY
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wfuna



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GLOBAL MODEL WHO 2025

ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY

MENTAL HEALTH, YOUTH AND LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS

Simulation: World Health Assembly

Welcome to Global Model WHO 2025,

We are very pleased to introduce you to the most authentic simulation of the World Health Organisation in the world; and hope to contribute to your understanding of the organisation, its mandate, and its critical role in global affairs.

Through a series of pre-conference webinars that will be offered and documents – like this resource guide – we aim to educate you not only about the global issues on the UN agenda, but also about the ways and means through which those topics are discussed, debated and negotiated by real UN diplomats.

This resource guide will provide you with a head start in doing research to gain a deeper understanding of the global issue that you will be discussing and the actions that the government you have been assigned recommends that the international community should take to address this issue. To make the research process a bit easier, the resource guide has been divided into sections and sub-sections to assist you in researching these two components. We strongly recommend you to give a careful look through the sources listed below so that the interaction with your peers is as exciting as possible.

We wish you all the very best in this journey of learning!

TOPIC DESCRIPTION

Mental health is an essential part of overall health and well-being. For young people, especially those in school or other learning environments, it plays a big role in shaping their development, relationships, and opportunities for the future. Around the world, depression, anxiety, stress, and other mental health conditions affect millions of young people. These challenges have been worsened by factors such as the COVID-19 pandemic, bullying, family instability, conflict, poverty, and social media pressures.

According to the World Health Organization, half of all mental health conditions begin by the age of 14, yet most cases go undetected and untreated. Depression is already a leading cause of illness and disability among adolescents, and suicide is among the top five causes of death in young people worldwide.

Without support, youth who face mental health challenges may struggle academically, socially, and emotionally, leading to lifelong effects.

Schools and other learning environments are especially important for addressing these issues. Teachers, counselors, and peers can play a vital role in identifying problems early and providing support. Programs that encourage safe, inclusive, and supportive school cultures help reduce stigma and give young people the confidence to seek help.

Some states have piloted promising initiatives—such as embedding counselors in schools, leveraging digital platforms for tele-mental health, and training teachers in early identification of mental distress. Yet global disparities remain stark, with low- and middle-income countries accounting for the majority of untreated youth. In many countries, however, there are not enough mental health professionals, and resources for young people are limited. Often, cultural stigma or lack of awareness prevents open discussion about mental health.

The World Health Organization (WHO) has made youth mental health a global priority. Its Comprehensive Mental Health Action Plan (2013–2030) calls for integrating services into community and primary health care, strengthening promotion and prevention, and scaling up services for vulnerable groups such as adolescents. It promotes early intervention, mental health education, and integration of mental health into primary health care.

Countries are also exploring ways to improve cooperation between health and education systems. For example, training teachers to recognize signs of mental distress, expanding counseling services in schools, and using digital tools for mental health support. (cont.)

TOPIC DESCRIPTION

A stylized world map in shades of blue, centered on the Atlantic Ocean, serving as a background for the page.

(cont.) Key questions include: How can WHO member states expand access to mental health services for young people, particularly in low- and middle-income countries where there are less resources? What mechanisms can ensure meaningful cooperation between health and education ministries? How should cultural differences and stigma be addressed in designing interventions? And how can youth voices be included in policy making? Addressing these questions will help ensure that young people everywhere grow up in environments that support both their education and their mental well-being.

Key Points and Main Issues

Here is an outline of the key points and main issues students should understand when simulating the World Health Assembly on “Mental Health, Youth, and Learning Environments”:

1. Why Youth Mental Health Matters

- Mental health is a key part of overall health.
- Many conditions start early: half of all mental health issues begin by age 14.
- Depression is a leading cause of illness among teens, and suicide is one of the top five causes of death in young people.
- Without support, youth can face lifelong struggles in school, work, and relationships.

2. Main Challenges Young People Face

- Stress factors: COVID-19, bullying, poverty, conflict, family instability, and social media pressures.
- Access gaps: In many countries, there are too few mental health professionals and limited services for youth.
- Stigma: Cultural taboos and lack of awareness prevent young people from seeking help.

3. Role of Schools and Learning Environments

- Schools are a key place for prevention and support.
- Teachers, counselors, and peers can help identify problems early.
- Supportive school cultures reduce stigma and encourage students to seek help.
- Examples of initiatives: school counselors, teacher training, and online/tele-mental health tools.

4. Global Inequalities

- Low- and middle-income countries have the highest share of untreated youth.
- Students in these countries often lack safe spaces, trained professionals, or affordable services.

5. WHO's Global Action

- WHO's Comprehensive Mental Health Action Plan (2013–2030) calls for:
 - Making mental health part of primary health care.
 - Promoting prevention and early intervention.
 - Expanding services for vulnerable groups, including adolescents.
- WHO also stresses cooperation between health and education systems.

Key Points and Main Issues (cont.)

6. Key Questions for Debate

- How can countries make mental health services more available for young people, especially in poorer regions?
- How can schools and health systems work together more effectively?
- How should stigma and cultural barriers be addressed?
- How can young people's voices be included in shaping policies?

Understanding the Mental Health Impact of Global Challenges on Gen Z

2025

Summary : The Gen Z Mental Health Global Report (UNICEF, 2025) explores how global stressors like climate change and conflict impact Gen Z's mental health. It reveals high levels of anxiety, lack of support awareness, and persistent stigma. Most youth believe schools and governments should take stronger action. The report urges system-wide mental health support for young people.

Building capacity through the 2nd WHO Autumn School on Quality of Child and Adolescent Mental Health Care

2025

Summary: This article discusses the 2nd WHO Autumn School initiative aimed at enhancing the skills and knowledge of healthcare professionals in delivering quality mental health care for children and adolescents. It highlights the program's role in capacity building through targeted training, workshops, and knowledge exchange. The source emphasizes the importance of strengthening mental health services at a systemic level to improve outcomes for young populations. It is valuable for understanding international efforts in mental health education and service improvement.

Thousands screened, Timor-Leste's school health programme brings hidden illnesses to light

2025

Summary : The article highlights the School-based Primary Health Care Package (PHCP) in Timor-Leste, launched in March 2022 as part of the "Say No to 5S" initiative. The program aims to screen 300,000 children across 1,300 schools, identifying health issues such as malnutrition, skin diseases, and undiagnosed conditions. Through collaboration between trained teachers and health workers, the PHCP facilitates early detection and referral to appropriate healthcare facilities. The initiative has been instrumental in uncovering previously hidden health concerns, thereby improving children's health and educational outcomes.

WHO backs school-based centre for children and families' mental health in North Macedonia 2025

Summary : The WHO and UNICEF have supported the launch of a school-based mental health centre at Jan Amos Komenski school in Skopje, North Macedonia. This centre offers free counselling, parent training, and family support to address emotional and behavioural challenges among children and adolescents. Developed with local partners, it also trains school staff to better support students' mental well-being. The initiative has gained strong community trust and is set to expand to more schools in the Karpoš municipality.

WHO collaborating Centre in Malta leads efforts to promote mental health and resilience in schools 2025

Summary : This article announces the University of Malta's Centre for Resilience & Socio-Emotional Health as a WHO Collaborating Centre for Mental Health Promotion and Protection in Schools (2025–2029). The Centre has been active for over 15 years in research, training, and advocacy to support mental health, well-being, and resilience in children and young people. It has conducted several research projects on the mental health and well-being of school-aged children, including a nationwide study due to be published in November 2025. The Centre also coordinates an international Master of Resilience in Educational Contexts programme in collaboration with three other European universities.

What you need to know about education for health and well-being 2025

Summary: This UNESCO page explains how education and health are deeply interconnected: learners who are healthy can better engage in learning, and education helps people adopt healthier lifestyles. It outlines the barriers to learning posed by health challenges (e.g. violence, malnutrition, mental health) and describes how UNESCO integrates health, well-being, and sexuality education into school systems. The page also presents UNESCO's strategies to support resilience, inclusive learning environments, and young people's holistic development in and through education.

Comprehensive Life Skills Framework

2025

Summary : The Comprehensive Life Skills Framework for Sierra Leone (UNICEF Sierra Leone, 2025) presents a national strategy aimed at integrating essential life skills—such as critical thinking, emotional resilience, and problem-solving—into the education system to empower children and youth. Life skills are a set of abilities, attitudes and socio-emotional competencies that enable individuals to learn, make informed decisions and exercise rights to lead a healthy and productive life and subsequently become agents of change. Life skills promote mental well-being and competence in young people as they face the realities of life.² This framework was launched with support from the Ministry of Basic and Senior Secondary Education, emphasizing a holistic, lifelong approach to education that strengthens relevance and impact for adolescents. UNICEF Sierra Leone’s initiatives further highlight the role of life skills education in fostering resilience and inclusive development, including its integration into vocational and technical education to enhance youth employability. Collectively, these resources demonstrate a comprehensive effort to equip young people in Sierra Leone with the skills necessary for personal growth and active citizenship.

Mind Matters: Advancing Mental health in Myanmar through WHO’s MHPSS and School Health Initiatives

2025

Summary : The article outlines WHO Myanmar's integrated approach to mental health, combining community-based mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) with school health initiatives. In Rakhine State, WHO collaborates with local organizations to provide training for community responders, aiming to reduce psychosocial harm and facilitate referrals to specialized care. Additionally, in Mandalay and Sagaing Regions, WHO supports monastic education schools by training teachers and peer educators to promote mental health awareness, coping skills, and anti-bullying strategies among students aged 11 to 15. These efforts are part of a broader strategy to integrate mental health into general healthcare services and build resilience in the face of ongoing crises.

WHO's Health Promoting School Initiative at Myanmar Buddhist Monasteries - promoting health and wellbeing of communities

2025

Summary: In 2023, WHO Myanmar launched a health-promoting schools initiative in Buddhist monastic schools, which provide free education and shelter to disadvantaged children. A key focus was mental health: over 2,000 students joined peer-led workshops to discuss stress, bullying, and puberty more openly. Alongside this, the programme introduced health checkups, nutrition support, and tobacco-free campaigns. Early results show students are more willing to talk about mental wellbeing, while schools improve hygiene and supportive environments. WHO plans to expand the initiative to more monastic schools.

Safe learning environments: Preventing and addressing violence in and around school

2025

Summary: The page addresses how widespread school violence (physical, psychological, sexual, cyberbullying, etc.) undermines learners' well-being, safety, and academic performance. It describes how violence can occur in class, on the way to school, online, and even from school staff; and how it disproportionately affects certain groups, especially girls, and vulnerable populations. UNESCO outlines its approach to creating safer learning environments through whole-school strategies, policy guidance, advocacy, capacity building, knowledge sharing, and monitoring. Gender and power dynamics are emphasized as key factors in understanding and preventing school violence.

UNICEF Won't Stop Helping Children in Syria

2024

Summary : The article outlines UNICEF's efforts to support Syrian children through education, health, and mental health services. It highlights school-based psychosocial support sessions helping children manage emotions and rebuild social skills. In 2023, over 560,000 children benefited from these services. The article underscores the role of education in restoring stability and hope amid the crisis.

Resilience Blooms: Central Java's Adolescents on the Path to Mental Health

2024

Summary : The UNICEF Indonesia article (2024) highlights a school-based mental health program in Central Java, part of the national UKS initiative, offering screenings, counselling, and education. Supported by the Ministry of Health and UNICEF, it helps adolescents facing stress, bullying, and emotional issues. The program has expanded to five provinces and includes suicide prevention and peer support. It shows improved student wellbeing and stronger support systems in schools.

Improving students' mental health in Bangladesh

2024

Summary : UNICEF's report highlights efforts in Bangladesh to improve mental health support for students, especially after the COVID-19 pandemic worsened existing challenges. It details partnerships with the Ministry of Education to implement school-based mental health programs and integrate well-being into the curriculum. The report emphasizes supportive policies like the 2018 Mental Health Act that enable community and school services. It calls for expanded teacher training and increased resources to sustainably promote students' psychosocial health.

Mental Well-being for Young People

2024

Summary : UNICEF India's initiative, Mental Well-being for Young People, emphasizes the importance of supporting youth mental health as integral to their educational and career development. The program highlights concerning statistics, such as 7.3% of young individuals aged 18–29 experiencing mental health issues and a significant shortage of mental health professionals in the country. UNICEF's approach includes early intervention, community-based support, and collaboration with various sectors to create a comprehensive mental health ecosystem. The initiative also focuses on integrating mental health education into schools and engaging parents and community leaders to foster a supportive environment for young people.

UPSHIFT: Transforming Mental Health Support in Schools

2024

Summary : UNICEF Albania (2024) highlights how the UPSHIFT program empowered students at Elbasan Vocational School to create mental health tools, including a digital app and a relaxation space called the "Calm Oasis." The project promoted emotional well-being, reduced stigma, and improved student engagement. Developed with mentoring and school support, it addressed real student needs. Early feedback shows a positive impact on both students and teachers.

Immediate Action Needed to Protect Nigeria's Children and Schools

2024

Summary : UNICEF Nigeria's press release highlights the urgent need to safeguard the nation's education system, emphasizing that over 10 million primary and junior secondary school-aged children are out of school, with 74% lacking basic literacy and numeracy skills. The report underscores the escalating threat posed by attacks on schools, citing 19 documented incidents in 2022 and 2023 that led to the closure of 113 schools in Borno, Adamawa, and Yobe states. A key focus is the implementation of the Minimum Standards for Safe Schools (MSSS), with discussions led by government officials and UNICEF representatives aiming to bridge the gap between policy and practice. The press release calls for collaborative efforts to ensure that every Nigerian child can learn in a safe and supportive environment.

Raising courage and hope in adolescents through mental health service

2024

Summary : This study explores how targeted mental health services in schools empower adolescents by fostering courage and hope, crucial for their emotional resilience. It highlights school-based interventions such as counseling, peer support groups, and psychoeducation as effective ways to build positive coping skills within the educational environment. The research emphasizes the importance of integrating mental health support early in school settings to prevent long-term psychological issues. Ultimately, the findings suggest that well-structured mental health programs in schools significantly improve adolescents' confidence and overall outlook on life.

Central Monastic Body and UNICEF launch Integrated Child-Friendly Intervention in Monastic Schools

2024

Summary : This press release announces the launch of the Integrated Child-Friendly Intervention (ICFI) in monastic schools across Bhutan, a collaborative effort between the Central Monastic Body and UNICEF. The initiative aims to address the holistic needs of child monks and nuns by integrating services in health, education, sanitation, nutrition, and protection. Implemented in three pilot institutions representing different regions, the program emphasizes child-centered approaches and community involvement. The launch coincided with World Children's Day celebrations and marked a significant step in UNICEF's 50-year partnership with the Royal Government of Bhutan.

Working with teachers towards positive classrooms for all

2023

Summary : UNICEF Thailand's blog post highlights a collaborative initiative between UNICEF and Central Tham to address the growing mental health concerns among students. The program focuses on equipping teachers with practical skills to create supportive and positive classroom environments. Through activities such as trust-building exercises and training in empathetic listening, educators learn to foster self-positivity and effectively support students facing stress and anxiety. This approach aims to reduce the risk of severe outcomes, such as adolescent suicide, by promoting early intervention and emotional well-being in schools.

More resilient education with psychosocial support

2023

Summary : This article highlights the integration of mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) into the education system to enhance the well-being of students. The piece focuses on Yirimadio A Primary School in Bamako, where 578 pupils benefit from a curriculum enriched with socio-emotional learning activities. Teachers, such as Aminata Koné, have been trained to identify signs of distress and employ strategies to support students effectively. This initiative is part of a broader collaboration between UNICEF and the Malian Ministry of Education, aiming to address the psychological impacts of crises on children. The article underscores the importance of equipping educators with the tools to foster resilience and create supportive learning environments.

Improving access to mental health services by integrating them into general health services in Nepal

2023

Summary : This article details Nepal's efforts to enhance mental health service accessibility by integrating them into general health services. Despite mental illness accounting for 18% of noncommunicable diseases in Nepal, only 25% of health facilities offered mental health services, predominantly in urban areas. The WHO supported the development and implementation of the National Mental Health Strategy and Action Plan 2020, providing technical assistance, training, and resources to extend mental health services to 35 of Nepal's 77 districts. The initiative also included the establishment of a national suicide prevention hotline and training programs for school nurses and teachers to address mental health concerns among students.

Making every school a health-promoting school in Kenya **2023**

Summary : The UNESCO article “Making every school a health-promoting school in Kenya” highlights Kenya’s efforts to adopt WHO–UNESCO guidelines for holistic student well-being. Through pilot programs, schools improved access to clean water, hygiene practices, mental health support, and community involvement. The initiative also addressed post-COVID challenges like anxiety, early pregnancy, and violence. It forms part of the broader O3 Programme, aiming to create safer, healthier, and more inclusive learning environments.

Mobile app helps adolescents access public health services **2023**

Summary : UNICEF and the Government of Bangladesh launched a mobile app and website to help adolescents access vital public health services and information. These tools provide guidance on mental health, sexual and reproductive health, nutrition, and violence prevention, tailored to gender-specific needs. They address key barriers like stigma and lack of awareness that prevent young people from seeking help. Supported by the Embassy of Sweden, the initiative involves schools, clubs, and peer groups to ensure broad community outreach.

Don't leave _____ for later. **2023**

Summary : UNICEF Serbia's 2023 campaign, "Don't Leave _____ for Later," aims to raise awareness about adolescent mental health by emphasizing the importance of timely support from oneself, peers, family, and professionals. The campaign highlights alarming statistics, such as the scarcity of mental health professionals—only 43 psychiatrists serving the entire youth population—and the fact that 47% of young people believe seeking help is a sign of weakness. Through this initiative, UNICEF advocates for systemic reforms, including integrating mental health education into school curricula and enhancing resources for mental health services. The campaign underscores the need for a collective effort to prioritize mental well-being and reduce stigma surrounding mental health issues among youth in Serbia.

UNICEF applauds Viet Nam's progress on the establishment of social work and counseling positions in Health and Education institutions

2023

Summary : UNICEF commended Vietnam's recent establishment of social work and counseling positions in health and education institutions, marking a significant step in addressing child and adolescent mental health challenges. The Ministry of Health's Circular 03/2023/TT-BYT and the Ministry of Education and Training's Circular 20/2023 TT-BGDDT mandate full-time counselors in schools and dedicated social workers in healthcare facilities. These initiatives aim to provide accessible mental health support, case management, and protection services for vulnerable children and women. UNICEF continues to collaborate with Vietnamese authorities to strengthen the social work profession and enhance child protection systems across the country.

Mental health for all children

2023

Summary : UNICEF Colombia highlights the urgent need to address mental health challenges affecting 44.7% of children and adolescents. They provide psychological support to over 4,495 migrant children and strengthen mental health skills in schools across Arauca and Santander. The "Abraza tu mente" campaign aims to reduce stigma and encourage open conversations about mental health. These efforts demonstrate UNICEF's commitment to improving youth mental wellbeing in vulnerable communities.

School Health Promoting Month- October 2023

2023

Summary : The Ministries of Health and Education in Sri Lanka declared the month as "School Health Promoting Month" to reinforce the Health Promoting School (HPS) programme. This initiative, supported by WHO, UNICEF, WFP, and Save the Children, aims to strengthen school environments by integrating health promotion into education. The programme focuses on addressing post-pandemic challenges, including mental health concerns and lifestyle changes, through comprehensive policies and community engagement. WHO Sri Lanka has collaborated with national authorities to adapt global HPS standards to the local context, enhancing the resilience and well-being of school communities.

Covered • Clean • Caring - version 2.0

2023

Summary : UNICEF South Africa's Covered • Clean • Caring – Version 2.0 is an updated resource designed to promote COVID-19 prevention and mental health awareness in schools and orphan and vulnerable child centres across the country. Implemented in 112 schools and 39 centres, the programme offers interactive materials to encourage good hygiene practices and foster caring communities. The updated version includes training resources for addressing mental health challenges, aiming to support young people in managing their emotional well-being. Funded by USAID and UKAid, and implemented by Partners in Development and Jive Media Africa, the programme also facilitated mental health dialogues in 24 schools in the Eastern Cape.

A safe learning environment

2023

Summary : This article highlights the establishment of child-help desks at Don Bosco School in Juba, aimed at enhancing child protection and promoting a safe learning environment. These desks provide a platform for students to discuss issues such as harassment and cultural barriers to education, thereby increasing school enrollment and retention, especially among adolescent girls. The initiative also includes psychosocial support activities and training for teachers on identifying and responding to abuse, contributing to a safer and more supportive educational setting.

Providing mental health and psychosocial support to students

2022

Summary : UNICEF Malawi's initiative to provide mental health and psychosocial support to students emphasizes the importance of teacher training in fostering supportive school environments. In 2021, teacher Chimwemwe Selemani received training in psychosocial first aid, enabling her to assist students like Josephine Tiwone, who faced academic challenges post-COVID-19 school closures. The program has trained over 1,500 educators across five districts, benefiting more than 20,000 children affected by the pandemic and natural disasters.

Promoting mental health and well-being deserves our undivided attention and long-term investment

2021

Summary : This joint op-ed by UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF, UNODC, and WHO highlights the escalating mental health challenges in Bhutan, particularly among youth, with suicide now among the top six leading causes of death. It underscores the urgent need for increased investment in mental health services, emphasizing a whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach. The article advocates for comprehensive strategies, including enhancing parenting skills, integrating mental health into education, and expanding community-based interventions. It serves as a call to action for sustained commitment and resources to address mental health issues effectively.

Bulletin 57. The Government of Mexico guarantees the right to education and health for girls and boys with the Strategy: Live Healthy, Live Happy.

2025

Summary : This official press release announces the launch of the national strategy “Vive Saludable, Vive Feliz”, aimed at ensuring the right to education and health for over 12 million primary school students in Mexico. The initiative involves deploying 738 health brigades composed of 11 specialists and public servants to schools nationwide. The strategy focuses on integrating health and education by promoting mental health, addiction prevention, oral health, and vision care, including free eyeglasses for students in need. The program aligns with the government's commitment to transforming schools into spaces of health prevention and well-being.

DepEd CALABARZON to hire more school counselors for students’ mental health

2025

Summary : This article discusses a new initiative by the Department of Education in CALABARZON region (Philippines) to increase the number of school counselors to better address student mental health needs. It highlights concerns over rising psychological stress among learners and the necessity of mental health support in schools. The move is part of broader efforts to strengthen mental health infrastructure and ensure that students have access to timely counseling services. The announcement underscores the region’s commitment to student well-being and aligning educational environments with mental health promotion.

Student Support Services Division (SSSD)

2025

Summary : The Student Support Services Division (SSSD) of Trinidad and Tobago’s Ministry of Education provides psycho-social, educational, and behavioral support to students at all school levels. Established in 2004, the SSSD delivers services such as guidance counseling, special education, social work, and psychological assessments. Multi-disciplinary teams operate across seven education districts, collaborating with other government agencies to address students’ diverse needs. The division aims to remove learning barriers and promote students’ holistic development and well-being.

The Peruvian government is promoting school well-being with the approval of the national plan "Mental Health in Your School" 2025-2026

2025

Summary : The Peruvian government has launched the National Plan "Mental Health in Your School" 2025–2026 to promote emotional well-being among public school students. Targeting over 83,000 students and 50,000 caregivers, the plan aims to prevent and address mental health issues through emotional skill-building, parental guidance, and teacher training. It responds to alarming data indicating that nearly 30% of children and adolescents are at risk of emotional or behavioral disorders. The initiative is backed by multiple government sectors for nationwide implementation.

New law aims to support learners' mental health

2024

Summary : This press release announces the signing of Republic Act No. 12080, the Basic Education Mental Health and Well-Being Promotion Act, which institutionalizes mental health initiatives in Philippine schools. The law mandates the establishment of Care Centers in public schools and the creation of new positions for school counselors to address the shortage of mental health professionals. It also emphasizes the development of anti-bullying policies, responding to the Philippines' high rates of student bullying as reported in the 2018 PISA. The legislation aims to foster a supportive environment for students' mental well-being and academic success.

Bahrain School Celebrates First Ever Wellness Week!

2024

Summary : Bahrain Elementary School hosted its inaugural Wellness Week, focusing on holistic student well-being. The week featured themed days such as "Strong Sunday," "Mindful Monday," and "Tasty Tuesday," incorporating activities like relay races, two-minute meditation sessions, and nutrition education. A highlight was the "Teddy Bear Clinic," where students engaged in role-playing as caregivers, learning about health practices and empathy. The week culminated with Falcon Field Day, offering various physical activities and encouraging students to commit to daily exercise. The event was supported by school nurse Olivia, specialist

Knowledge for Policy

2024

Summary : The RIVM page Knowledge for Policy – Mental Health (National Institute for Public Health and the Environment, Netherlands) outlines the role of evidence in shaping national mental health policy. RIVM helped the Dutch government launch “Good Mental Health for All,” an action plan that includes schools as one of its five focus areas. In partnership with other public health agencies, RIVM created fact sheets that guide how to support mental health and well-being in schools, including what preventive actions work and which data to monitor. They also run monitoring programs to track how students are doing (e.g. stress, sleep, performance pressure) so policymakers can see how mental health trends among students change over time and respond accordingly.

Student Resilience and Wellbeing Resources

2024

Summary : The Australian Government Department of Education provides a comprehensive suite of resources aimed at enhancing student resilience and wellbeing. Central to these offerings is the Australian Student Wellbeing Framework, which guides schools in creating positive learning environments through leadership, inclusion, student voice, partnerships, and support. Additionally, the Student Wellbeing Hub serves as a centralized platform, offering educators, students, and parents access to curriculum-aligned materials, professional development modules, and tools like the School Wellbeing Check. The Be You initiative, developed in collaboration with Beyond Blue and other partners, further supports mental health in schools by providing training and resources to educators.

School-Based Health Awareness Program

2024

Summary : The Saudi Ministry of Health's School-Based Health Awareness Program aims to enhance health knowledge and promote healthy behaviors among students. It includes activities aligned with international observances such as World Diabetes Day and World No Tobacco Day, and offers awareness sessions on topics like oral health, adolescent health, communicable diseases, mental health, and nutrition. The program targets the entire school community, including students, educators, and parents, to foster a holistic approach to health education. This initiative supports the Kingdom's Vision 2030 by integrating health promotion into the educational system.

Pupil and Student Welfare

2024

Summary : The Finnish Ministry of Education and Culture's Pupil and Student Welfare page (2024) describes the legal right of all pupils in pre-primary through upper secondary schools to welfare services including psychologists, school social workers, healthcare, and preventive support. It emphasizes both universal preventive welfare (fostering safety, inclusion, home-school cooperation) and individual student welfare, ensuring early support to help students learn, thrive, and feel included. School welfare is delivered via systematic multi-professional cooperation among teachers, health & social services, parents/guardians, and students themselves. The page also outlines that welfare services must be free of charge, education providers are responsible under the core curriculum and Basic Education Act, and the National Institute for Health and Welfare together with the Finnish National Agency for Education coordinate oversight.

Government launches Strategy to Strengthen Mental Health in Schools

2023

Summary : The Government of Chile launched the Estrategia de Fortalecimiento de la Salud Mental en Comunidades Educativas, aiming to integrate mental health as a core component of students' holistic development. This intersectoral strategy involves the Ministries of Education, Health, and Social Development, focusing on prevention, early intervention, and specialized care. Key initiatives include expanding the "Habilidades para la Vida" program, providing socioemotional toolkits for early education, enhancing suicide prevention training for educators, and fostering coordination between schools and local health services. The strategy also addresses occupational mental health risks for education staff and promotes family-school-health partnerships to support students' well-being.

China launches national advisory committee for students' mental health

2023

Summary : China has established a national advisory committee to improve student mental health across all education levels, from primary schools to universities. The committee will conduct research, monitor trends, and provide scientific guidance on mental health issues. It is organized into five regional groups that hold annual events to assess local student mental health needs. Findings will be reported to local authorities to help shape effective policies and interventions.

Support your child's wellbeing and mental health

2023

Summary : The New Zealand Ministry of Education's webpage on supporting children's wellbeing and mental health offers practical guidance for parents and caregivers to foster positive mental health in their children. It emphasizes the importance of establishing routines, discussing emotions, and engaging in play to promote resilience and confidence. The page also advises parents to collaborate with teachers by sharing observations and concerns, setting goals, and utilizing school resources such as support coordinators and on-site counselors. Additionally, it provides information on managing transitions, addressing online wellbeing, and accessing further support through regional offices and external organizations.

Creating hope Through Action

2022

Summary : This press release highlights Vanuatu's observance of World Suicide Prevention Day on September 10, 2022, with a focus on the theme "Creating Hope Through Action." The Ministry of Health's Mental Health Team conducted awareness campaigns in schools and communities in Sanma Province to address the rising rates of suicide and self-harm in the country. The release emphasizes the importance of raising awareness, reducing stigma, and encouraging informed action to prevent suicide. It also underscores the message that every individual can contribute to creating hope and supporting those struggling with suicidal thoughts.

Health Ministry launches School Mental Health Literacy Programme

2022

Summary : The Ministry of Health & Wellness of Jamaica, in collaboration with the Ministry of Education and Youth, launched the School Mental Health Literacy Programme in October 2022. The initiative aims to train over 500 school professionals, who will then educate more than 21,000 grade-nine students across 177 schools islandwide. The programme focuses on enhancing mental health literacy by promoting understanding of mental health optimization, recognizing mental disorders, reducing stigma, and encouraging help-seeking behaviors. This effort addresses the increasing prevalence of mental health challenges among youth, exacerbated by factors such as violence, substance use, and the lingering effects of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Early Identification and Intervention for Mental Health Problems in School Going Children and Adolescents

2022

Summary : The Ministry of Education, Government of India, in its 2022 document titled Early Identification and Intervention for Mental Health Problems in School-Going Children and Adolescents, emphasizes the importance of early detection and timely intervention for mental health issues among school-aged children. The document outlines strategies for teachers and school staff to recognize signs of mental health problems and provides guidelines for appropriate referral and support mechanisms. It advocates for the integration of mental health education into the school curriculum and the establishment of a supportive environment to promote the well-being of students. The initiative aims to create a comprehensive approach to mental health in schools, ensuring that students receive the necessary support to thrive academically and personally.

"Mental Health" is a new module added to the Healthy Living program's virtual platform.

2022

Summary : The Ministry of Public Education of Costa Rica, in collaboration with FIFCO, has added a mental health module to the virtual platform of the Healthy Life program. This module, aimed at students participating in the Community Student Service, provides 30 hours of self-paced learning covering topics such as the mental health context in Costa Rica, myths and realities, factors contributing to emotional well-being, and emotion management. The initiative seeks to promote comprehensive education that strengthens the emotional health of Costa Rican youth. Additionally, it is complemented by the "Here I Am" Telephone Line, which offers psychological and emotional support to students and families.

National youth action plan 2022-2025

2022

Summary : The National Youth Action Plan (Jugendpakt) of Luxembourg outlines a comprehensive framework for youth policy, anchored in the amended Law of 4 July 2008 on youth. It emphasizes active consultation with young people through continuous dialogue with various stakeholders, including youth organizations and socio-educational professionals. The plan sets strategic objectives focusing on promoting well-being in schools, enhancing youth and socio-educational structures, and amplifying youth voices through networking and collaboration. Specific actions include improving psycho-socio-educational services, fostering socio-emotional skills, and establishing mobile psychological teams to support youth mental health.

MoHAP discusses ways to improve mental health of school students

2022

Summary : The article reports on a training workshop organized by MoHAP in collaboration with the World Health Organization (WHO) and various national health and educational authorities. Titled "Training of Trainers on Mental Health of School Students," the workshop aimed to enhance the skills of nursing staff, teachers, psychologists, and social workers in identifying and addressing psychological and behavioral issues among students. The event emphasized the importance of early detection and intervention, as well as the need to improve students' behavioral abilities and mental health through proper counseling and support. The workshop also highlighted global and regional programs designed to promote school mental

Development of the web-based service "SANITA Mental Health Class," which delivers mental health education resources compliant with the new Course of Study **2020**

Summary : AMED announced the development of "SANITA Mental Health Class," a web-based educational platform designed to align with the 2022 revision of Japan's high school Course of Study, which introduced mental health education. The platform offers animated films, interviews with individuals with lived experience, commentaries, and demo lessons to enhance understanding of mental health issues among students. Developed through a collaborative effort involving multiple universities and the National Center of Neurology and Psychiatry, the project aims to promote mental health awareness and reduce stigma in educational settings. The initiative was supported by AMED's Research and Development Grants for Comprehensive Research for Persons with Disabilities.

National School Health Program

n.d.

Summary : The National School Health Program (PROSANE) is an initiative by Argentina's Ministry of Health aimed at integrating health and education policies to ensure comprehensive care for children and adolescents. It focuses on conducting annual health assessments, including clinical, dental, ophthalmological, and speech evaluations, and ensuring timely vaccinations. The program emphasizes collaboration between health and education sectors at national, provincial, and local levels to promote health and well-being within school communities. PROSANE operates under the framework of the National Comprehensive Care Policy for Children and Adolescents (PROSANE) and is supported by the Integrated Health Information System (SISA) for data management.

AFRICAN REGIONAL GROUP (AFRO)

Teacher's mental health support gives pupil new reason to hope

2023

Summary : Ghana Health Service (GHS) and the World Health Organization (WHO) trained 394 teachers and professionals in mental health and psychosocial support. Abraham Owusu, a teacher in Berekum Municipality, used these skills to help a student, Cynthia Adjei, overcome depression and return to school. Owusu's intervention included counseling sessions for both Adjei and her parents. Adjei successfully completed junior high school and is now studying arts at a senior

EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN REGIONAL GROUP (EMRO)

WHO Iraq highlights the important role played by educational and psychological counseling

2024

Summary : The World Health Organization (WHO) in Iraq emphasized the critical role of educational and psychological counseling during the International Symposium held in Sulaymaniyah, Kurdistan Region, in October 2024. The event brought together stakeholders from health, education, and humanitarian sectors to discuss integrating mental health support into primary healthcare and educational systems, as well as developing mental health support for the workforce. WHO highlighted the importance of collaborations between WHO, the Ministry of Health, local authorities, and non-state actors to enhance mental health services, ensuring effective support across the country. Dr. Georges Ki-Zerbo, WHO Representative and Head of Mission in Iraq, reiterated WHO's commitment to integrating mental health into health and education sectors as an essential pillar for rebuilding and stabilizing communities.

Exploring the acceptability of a WHO school- based mental health program in Egypt: A qualitative study

2022

Summary : The study tested the WHO School-based Mental Health Program (SMHP) in Egypt to see if it was acceptable to teachers, parents, and psychologists. Most saw it as helpful for student wellbeing, especially because it respected privacy, reduced costs for families, and used community resources.

Challenges included the extra burden on teachers and the need for trained staff. Overall, the program was viewed positively, but scaling it up will require easing teacher workload and protecting confidentiality.

EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN REGIONAL GROUP (CONT.)

President's initiative to promote and improve mental health in schools in Pakistan

n.d.

Summary : This article details the Government of Pakistan's 2019 launch of a five-year initiative aimed at enhancing mental health in schools through teacher training and technology integration. The program includes an online course for educators to identify and manage students' socio-emotional issues, piloted in Gujar Khan with 320 teachers. The pilot phase resulted in improved teacher skills and the identification of at-risk students, laying the groundwork for a nationwide rollout. A cluster randomized control trial is underway to assess the initiative's impact amid ongoing challenges like the COVID-19 pandemic.

PAN AMERICAN HEALTH ORGANIZATION (PAHO)

“Mind Yuh Mind” Community Conversation: Barbados Steps Forward in Strengthening Mental Health

2025

Summary : Barbados hosted its inaugural “Mind Yuh Mind” Community Conversation, marking a significant step in advancing mental health care. Organized by the Ministry of Health and Wellness, with support from PAHO/WHO, Let's Unpack It, and Healthy Caribbean Youth, the event focused on the new mental health legislation emphasizing community-based, person-centered services. Discussions highlighted provisions such as supported decision-making, advance directives, and procedural accommodations, aiming to reduce stigma and promote human dignity. Participants underscored the importance of public education to normalize mental health discussions in various settings, including schools. The Act aligns with WHO standards and the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, reinforcing Barbados' commitment to a rights-based, community care model.