

An Emotional Health & Wellbeing Framework for Youth Workers

Wellbeing For All

14 - 18 Years

boys & girls clubs
reach : involve : enjoy : achieve

ea Education Authority

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INTRODUCTION

Background

Welcome to ‘Wellbeing for All’, the Youth Worker's Guide to Emotional Health and Wellbeing! This comprehensive resource is designed to empower youth workers like you with the knowledge, tools, and strategies needed to support the holistic development and well-being of the young people you’re engaged with.

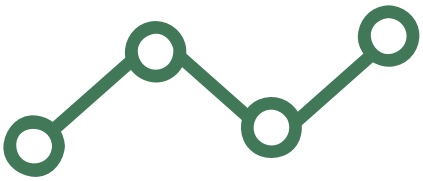
Why Focus on Emotional Health and Wellbeing?
As youth workers, you play a vital role in shaping the lives of children and young people. Adolescence is a critical period of growth and self-discovery, and the well-being of young people is essential for their future success and happiness. However, young people today face a wide range of challenges, including mental health issues, substance abuse, peer pressure, and societal pressures.

This resource is here to equip you with the information and resources necessary to address these challenges effectively through tailor made emotional health and wellbeing activities that have been tried and tested with young people in Northern Ireland. By focusing on emotional health and wellbeing, you can help young people not only navigate the ups and downs of adolescence, but also develop into healthy, resilient, and confident individuals ready to take on the world.

Introduction

Emotional wellbeing

Emotional wellbeing refers to how a person feels and manages their emotions. It's about feeling happy, content, and able to cope with life's challenges. When someone has good emotional wellbeing, they can handle stress, build positive relationships, and enjoy a fulfilling life. It's like having a stable and happy heart and mind.



Mental Health Data for Northern Ireland

CYP Mental Health Survey 2020
(Youth Wellbeing Prevalence Survey)

- One in eight children and young people in Northern Ireland experienced emotional difficulties, one in ten had conduct problems and one in seven problems with hyperactivity.
- Almost one in ten (9.4%) 11-19 year olds reported self-injurious behaviour and close to one in eight (12.1%) reporting thinking about or attempting suicide.
- Children whose parents had current mental health problems were twice as likely to have an anxiety or depressive disorder themselves. The presence of parental mental health problems increased the rate of any mood or anxiety disorder by a ratio of 1:4.
- When the 20% most deprived areas were compared to the 20% least deprived areas, there were higher overall rates of emotional and behavioural problems
- Young people in NI are 25% more likely to experience common mental health problems like depression and anxiety compared to young people in England, Scotland or Wales.

Self-Harm Registry

- Between 2012 and 2018 there has been a 15% increase (782 to 1096) in presentations of self-harm by under 18 years to Accident & Emergency Departments.



Wellbeing for All Framework for Youth Workers

This resource will include:

1. Mental Health Support:

Objective: To promote positive mental health, identify potential mental health issues, and provide appropriate support.
Strategies: Regularly check in with young people about their emotional well-being.
Educate them about common mental health challenges and signs of distress.
Encourage seeking help when needed and provide resources for professional support.

2. Self-Awareness and Self-Reflection:

Objective: To help young people develop a deeper understanding of themselves, their emotions, and their needs.
Strategies: Facilitate self-reflection activities, like journaling or discussions about personal values and beliefs.
Encourage them to identify their strengths and areas for growth.
Foster a non-judgmental and supportive environment for self-discovery.

3. Motivation and Goal Setting:

Objective: To inspire and empower young people to set and work toward meaningful goals.
Strategies: Help them identify their passions, interests, and long-term aspirations.
Guide them in setting achievable short-term and long-term goals.
Teach the importance of motivation in pursuing their dreams and overcoming challenges.

4. Self-Control and Emotional Regulation:

Objective: To equip young people with skills to manage their emotions and make positive choices.
Strategies: Teach techniques for emotional regulation, such as deep breathing and mindfulness.
Encourage impulse control and decision-making skills.
Create a safe space for discussing emotions and sharing strategies for self-control.

5. Social Skills and Relationship Building:

Objective: To enhance their ability to communicate, collaborate, and build healthy relationships.
Strategies: Facilitate group activities that promote teamwork and communication.
Teach active listening, empathy, and conflict resolution skills.
Address topics like peer pressure, bullying, and assertiveness.

6. Coping and Resilience Building:

Objective: To help young people develop coping strategies and resilience in the face of adversity.
Strategies: Provide resources and tools for stress management.
Encourage a growth mindset by emphasising the importance of learning from setbacks.
Highlight the value of seeking support from friends, family, and professionals during challenging times.

This framework provides a structured approach for youth workers to address critical aspects of emotional health and well-being in young people. It combines proactive strategies for fostering self-awareness, motivation, self-control, social skills, and resilience, while also providing resources for addressing mental health concerns and collaborating with other stakeholders to create a comprehensive support system.

Introduction

What you will need:





1. Completed ‘Needs Hopscotch’ assessment tool from all participants
2. Identified themes relevant to the group of young people partaking in the programme - this will be identified through the ‘Needs Hopscotch Total’ form
3. Learning outcome(s) for each session
4. A session plan with various methodologies to meet your learning outcome(s) for each session
5. A list of resources/materials needed for each session: these may include:

- Flipchart paper
- Blank pages
- Pens/Markers
- Scrapbook/folder for each young person to keep record of what they’ve completed (if desired)
- Activity handouts and worksheets - pre printed
- Video links - pre loaded
- All other materials that are identified in each activity sheet

Needs Assessment

Each young person must complete a needs assessment:

- A needs assessment is important to ensure the specific needs of participating young people are met.
- The 'Needs Hopscotch' allows youth workers to identify issues arising in the group that the programme can focus on. This will help with selecting relevant activities to create a fun and interactive programme for participating young people.

The 'Needs Hopscotch' focuses on how young people have felt over the past 4 weeks, highlighting their current state of wellbeing. Completion of the 6 sections will help in developing themes for your programme.

Tips

- Explain that completing the wheel will help develop a programme that is built around their needs. Talk through each aspect of the wheel first. This will allow for greater understanding of the questions asked and a more honest, accurate assessment.
- Print the prompts and needs wheel.
- Ask the young people to write their name and date on the top of the page.
- Once the wheels are completed, allow the young people to discuss their experience of completing a self-assessment.
  - How was it to do?
  - Did they learn anything?
  - Was it easy/difficult?

Once the needs assessment is completed; it is time to decide on the thematic areas for the programme.

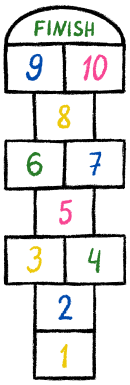
Translating Assessment Results into Themes:

- The themes must relate to the main issues that affect the young people in the group – identifying priorities of need.

- Creating themes can be done by taking all information from completed assessments and compiling it onto a blank 'Needs Hopscotch Total' form. This can be done by totalling up the responses from all young people. The priority needs will be easily seen through the total for each category. The lower the total, the higher priority of need.

- The Idea is to have young people move up 'Needs Hopscotch' by the end of the programme

Needs Assessment



‘Needs Hopscotch’

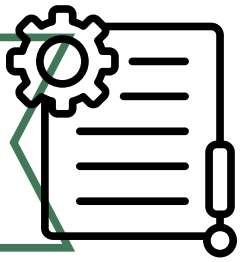
Purpose: Young people will have the opportunity to assess their current levels of emotional health and wellbeing under the six categories.

Objectives: Participants will be able to assess their emotional health and wellbeing in a holistic way and visualise areas in which they would like to improve with prompts to help along the way



Resources Required: Needs Hopscotch handout, Needs hopscotch prompts, pens

Note:
The Idea is to have young people move up ‘Needs Hopscotch’ by the end of the programme



Steps:

1. Show the Needs Hopscotch to the group, explain that they will use this tool to self-assess their current level of emotional health and wellbeing.
2. Explain the rating – 1 = needs improvement, 5 = average, 10= very good.
3. Give a copy of the ‘Needs Hopscotch’, sheet of prompts and a pen out to each young person.
4. Ask participants to rate their own emotional health and wellbeing on the hopscotch.
5. Ask participants to outline a wellbeing goal - This will give an idea of some specific topics that may need to be covered.
6. Explain to the group that this can feel very personal to them but all of their responses will be kept private.

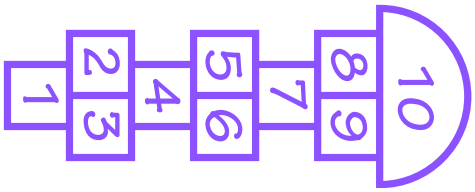
Needs Hopscotch

Colour the numbers below on a scale from 1 to 10 on how you have felt the most often in the past 4 weeks

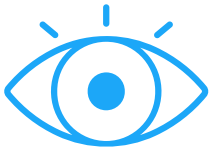
1 = needs improvement **5 = average** **10= very good**

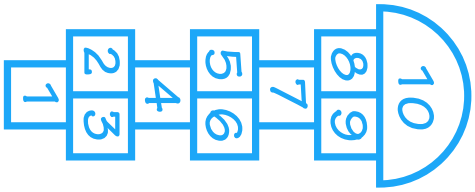
MENTAL HEALTH





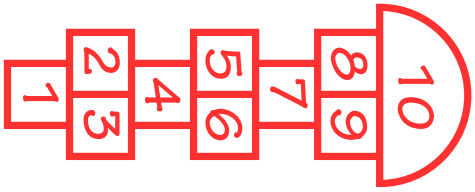
SELF-AWARENESS





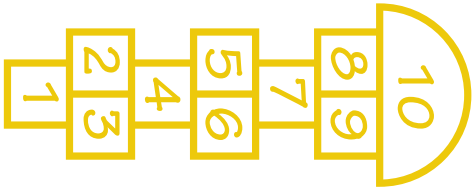
MOTIVATION





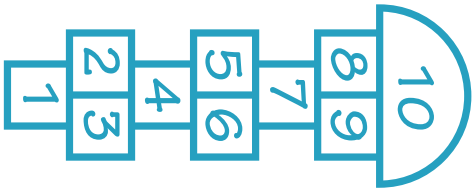
SELF CONTROL



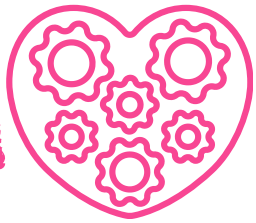


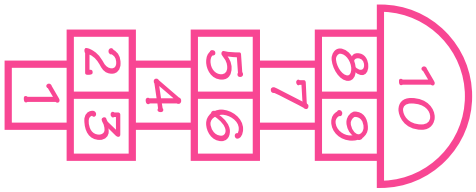
SOCIAL SKILLS





RESILIENCE & COPING





What is your health and well being goal that you hope to reach by the end of the programme?

Statements to assist with the Needs Hopscotch

Using the statements below will help to honestly and accurately rate how they have been feeling over the past 2 - 4 weeks in relation to the 6 sections of the needs analysis.



MENTAL HEALTH

- I know mental health terms and their definitions.
- I am comfortable talking about my feelings and mental health.
- I know where to access mental health help.
- I know the signs of stress, anxiety, or depression.
- I have a support network that I can turn to when I need help.
- I prioritise my mental health and well-being.



SELF-AWARENESS

- I am aware of my emotions and can identify them.
- I am aware of the impact of my actions on others.
- I am aware of my strengths and weaknesses.
- I look out for opportunities for personal growth and self-improvement.
- I practice mindfulness and live in the moment.



MOTIVATION

- I set goals for myself and work towards them.
- I stay enthusiastic even in the face of challenges.
- I understand the reasons behind my goals and aspirations.
- I seek out opportunities for personal and academic growth.
- I have a clear sense of purpose and direction in life.



SELF-CONTROL

- I am able to manage my impulses and resist distractions.
- I can delay instant satisfaction to achieve long-term goals.
- I stay calm and composed in stressful situations.
- I take responsibility for my actions and choices.
- I use self-control strategies to avoid unhealthy habits.



SOCIAL SKILLS

- I am a good listener and can empathise with others.
- I communicate effectively and express myself clearly.
- I resolve conflicts with friends and family in a healthy way.
- I am comfortable making new friends.
- I respect and treat others with kindness and empathy.



RESILIENCE & COPING

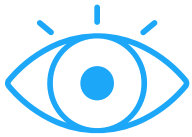
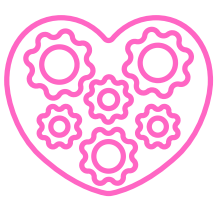
- I bounce back quickly from setbacks and challenges.
- I can adapt to change and uncertainty with ease.
- I reach out for support when I'm feeling overwhelmed.
- I actively practice self-care and stress reduction.
- I view setbacks as opportunities for growth.

Needs Hopscotch Total

Once the needs assessment is completed; it is time to decide on the thematic areas for the programme.

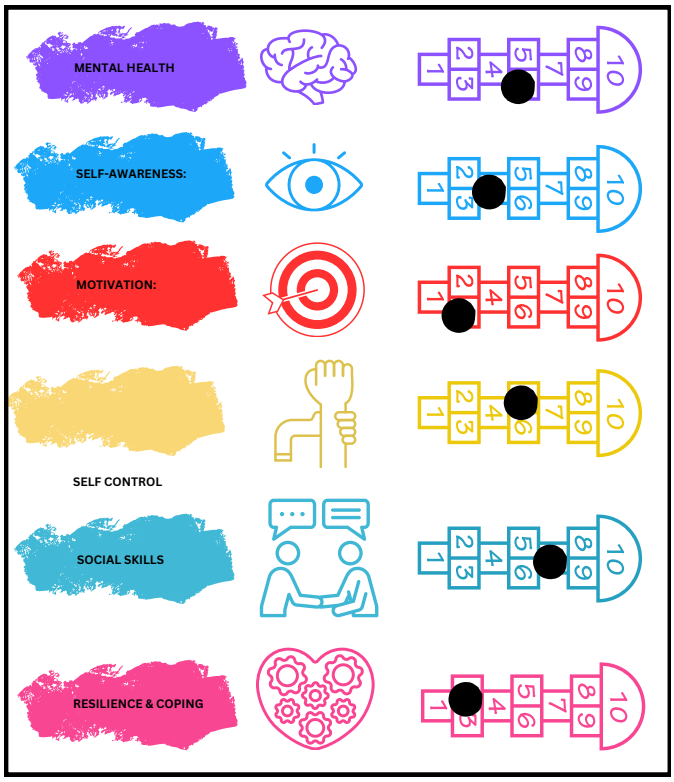
Translating Assessment Results into Themes:

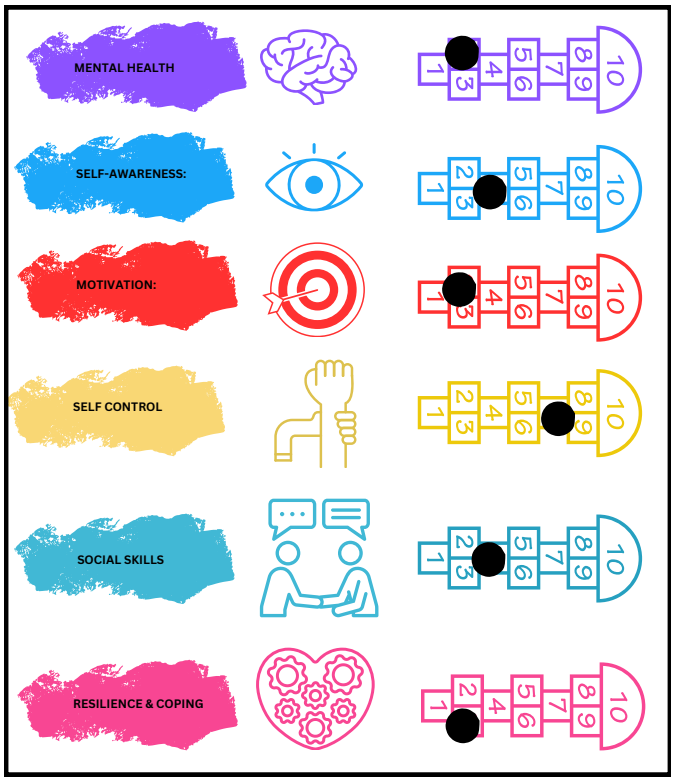
Total up all responses from young people on the 'Needs Hopscotch' and enter them into the boxes below. The area(s) with the lowest number(s) will show the areas of need for the entire group thus identify the themes that should be focused on.

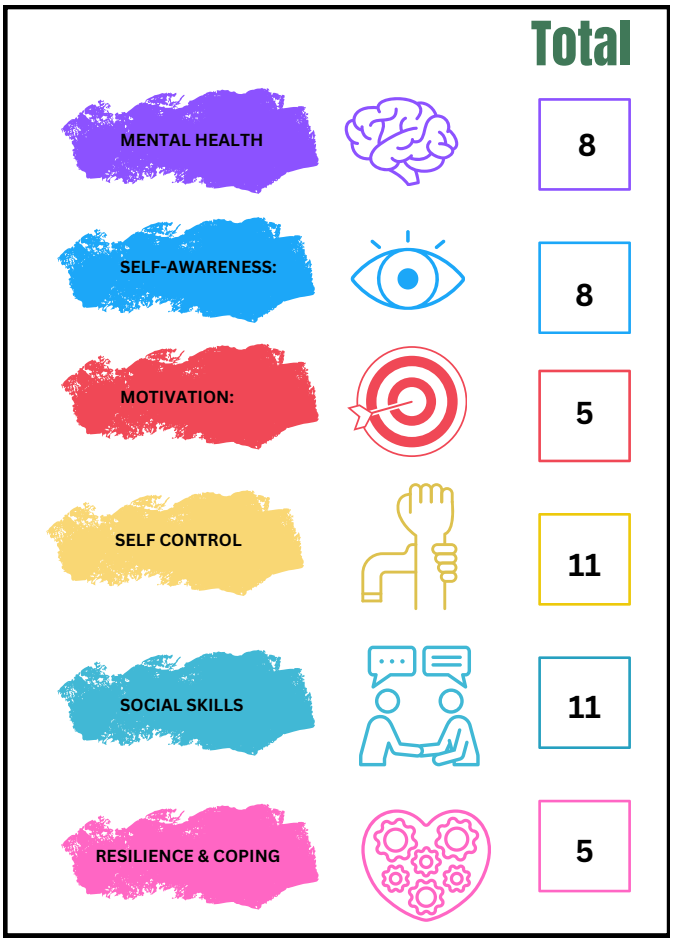
		Total
MENTAL HEALTH		
SELF-AWARENESS		
MOTIVATION		
SELF CONTROL		
SOCIAL SKILLS		
RESILIENCE & COPING		

Needs Hopscotch

EXAMPLE







From this example we can see two participants have filled in their 'Needs Hopscotch'.
We can identify from the total from both assessments Motivation and Resilience & Coping have the lowest total meaning they are the highest level of need for both participants. Having all young people fill this out will give more of a well rounded idea of the most common themes for all participating.

What's next?

1. Using Themes to Complete the Model:

- Mental Health sessions are to be used as a foundation/ introduction to the programme
- Identify other relevant sessions your bespoke programme will cover - The 'Needs Hopscotch' will help with this
- Suggested programme delivery is 6-8 sessions (2 hours per session).

2.Make your programme plan:

- Familiarise yourself with chosen sessions and ensure you are prepared to facilitate every aspect of the programme. Ensure you have access to all the activities, relevant resources and information that is necessary to meet the identified needs of the group.
- The activities provided are for you to be creative to design the best programme relevant to your young people so make it your own and get creative!

3.Delivery of the Programme

- Outline the overall programme to the group.
- Some activities/themes may overlap - sessions don't need to be repeated. Instead, organise programme sessions to include conversations and discussions around overlapping themes in the one session.

4.Revisit the Needs Assessment Wheel

- As a facilitator, it is important for you to keep each participant's needs wheel on file and revisit it at the end of the programme.
- Ask young people to get a different colour pen, and to fill out the needs wheel again.
- Alternatively, ask young people to complete a blank needs assessment wheel again and then give them their first baseline needs wheel assessment.
- This allows young people to reflect on their own personal progress and affirm how they are developing as a person.
- Please retain these in line with the monitoring and evaluation framework.

5.Future Planning & Next Steps

- Using the 'Needs Hopscotch' tool before and after assessments will be useful to demonstrate the impact of the programme on young people.
- Completing this process may also outline the need for a further programme to address other issues, or to continue to build upon knowledge gained from previous programme.
- This process may also highlight individual young people who may be in need of further support – allowing the youth worker to offer individual support or signposting.

Session Plan

Week ___

Wellbeing
For All

Time	Activity	Resources

Session Plan Week 1

Wellbeing For All



Time	Activity	Resources
5 MINS	Introduction/Welcome	Powerpoint/Copy of resource
20 MINS	Icebreaker x2 • Name game - Name and something that they do to relax • Energiser - Buzzy Bee's	Space for activities
10 MINS	What is emotional health and wellbeing? Brainstorm Activity & discussion Come up with a group definition	Flip chart, markers, large post-it notes, definitions of mental health
15 MINS	Needs assessment - Hopscotch	Needs Hopscotch handout, Needs hopscotch prompts, pens
20 MINS	What should/should not be included in a health and wellbeing programme for young people your age?	Flipchart paper, markers
10 MINS	Group agreement	Flipchart paper, markers
5 MINS	SESSION EVALUATION/End	evaluation sheets, pens

Icebreakers/Energisers

Energisers and icebreakers are designed to make group activities more enjoyable, help participants feel comfortable, and maintain their engagement throughout the session. Here are a few that you could use with your group that can be used to promote overall wellbeing

Balloon Pop:
Inflate several balloons and scatter them around the room.
Instruct participants to pop as many balloons as possible within a set time frame by sitting on them.

Human Knot:
Have participants stand in a circle and reach out to grab the hands of two different people.
Challenge them to untangle themselves without letting go of each other's hands.

Musical Chairs:
Arrange chairs in a circle, with one fewer chair than there are participants.
Play music and have participants walk around the chairs. When the music stops, they must find a chair to sit in. The one left standing is out.

Simon Says:
Choose a leader (Simon) and have them give commands to the group.
Participants must follow the command only if it starts with "Simon says." If Simon doesn't say "Simon says," and a participant follows the command, they're out.

Pass the Hula Hoop:
Form a circle of participants, and have them hold hands.
Choose one participant to start with a hula hoop and pass it through the circle without breaking the handhold.

Mingle Bingo:
Create bingo cards with interesting facts or statements in each square (e.g., "Has traveled to another country").
Participants must mingle and find others who fit the descriptions to fill in their bingo card.

Dance-Off:
Play upbeat music and challenge participants to a dance-off.
Each person takes turns showing their dance moves, and the group can cheer and judge the winner.

Freeze Dance:
Play music and have participants dance.
At random intervals, pause the music, and participants must freeze in their current dance pose until the music resumes.

Hot Potato:
Sit in a circle and pass an object (the "hot potato") around while music plays.
When the music stops, the person holding the hot potato is out.

Capture the Flag:
Divide participants into two teams, each with a flag hidden in their territory.
The goal is to capture the other team's flag and return it to their base without being tagged by the opposition.

Limbo:
Use a long stick or rope as a limbo bar.
Participants take turns leaning backward and trying to pass under the bar without touching it or falling.

Fruit Basket:
Assign each participant a fruit name (e.g., apple, banana, cherry).
One person in the middle calls out a fruit, and everyone with that name must switch places while the person in the middle tries to steal a spot.

Sack Race:
Provide participants with burlap or potato sacks.
They must hop inside the sacks to the finish line in a relay-style race.

Duck, Duck, Goose:
Participants sit in a circle, and one person walks around, tapping others on the head while saying "duck, duck, goose."
When they say "goose," the tapped person must chase the first person around the circle.

Bean Bag Toss:
Set up targets with point values and provide participants with bean bags.
They take turns tossing the bean bags and trying to score points.