

MODULE 1.3

WHAT IS MENTAL HEALTH?

FACILITATOR GUIDE

Module 1.3

What is mental health?

Introduction

The 'Module 1.3 What is mental health?' facilitator guide is designed to assist you to prepare and deliver group professional learning using the MindMatters modules, which can be found at www.mindmatters.edu.au.

It consists of a possible sequence of professional learning activities to use with a group of staff as you move through the module.

MindMatters modules are designed to be used in flexible ways: as an individual, in small groups, as a faculty, as a whole staff, or as an action team. Some of the activities can be explored in more detail when there is an opportunity to work with others at the same time. Group learning is best facilitated by colleagues from the school action team who have an understanding of mental health and the direction that the school wishes to take.

Implementing MindMatters as a whole school approach requires the active participation of the whole school community – teaching and non-teaching staff. Each of the four components of the MindMatters framework has associated modules.



Prepare

Before you begin facilitating a group session, you might like to undertake the following steps:

1. View and undertake the module(s) yourself.
2. Familiarise yourself with any background reading and references.
3. Decide which activities you will include and how much time you will aim to spend on them.
4. Check that your school allows access to YouTube, as each module contains YouTube videos. If not, speak to your IT team to get access.
5. Select a physical environment conducive to active learning (people sitting in discussion groups, room to move, access to water and refreshment).
6. Decide whether each person will access the module or whether the group will use large screen projection.
7. Organise any materials needed for activities.
8. Organise copies of any pre-reading.
9. Enlist support of MindMatters action team members (if relevant).

You might also like to:

1. Speak with your local MindMatters project officer about extra hints or support for facilitating groups using online professional learning.
2. Ask the school librarian or resource centre person to gather together existing and relevant social and emotional learning resources for display or use during the session.
3. Consider the range of beliefs that may be relevant to the module(s) you are facilitating – issues, participants, students, the school, the local community etc.

Overview


MindMatters modules are designed to take approximately one hour to complete. You may prefer your group to view the online video 'The MindMatters panel' at a different time, due to the video length.

Activity	Time	Materials needed
1. Energiser – Five areas of health	5 minutes	Balloons
2. Develop (or revisit) agreements for working together	5 minutes	Whiteboard or poster paper
3. Online wall task 'How would you define mental health right now?'	5 minutes	Online device
4. Online video 'The MindMatters panel'	20 minutes	Online device
5. Online video animation 'What is mental health?'	10 minutes	Online device
6. Online video animation 'Why improve mental health in schools?'	10 minutes	Online device, copy of Protective and risk factors (PDF) per group
7. Online video 'What do you see in the classroom?'	10 minutes	Online device
8. Online wall task – repeat	5 minutes	Online device
9. Online summarise key messages	5 minutes	Online device (or hard copy)
10. Online Next steps	5 minutes	Online device (or hard copy)

Before starting the activities

Explain that MindMatters modules contribute to the ongoing MindMatters journey of improving the mental health of students by building a whole school approach.

Detail any 'housekeeping' issues. Clarify the duration of the professional learning session.



TIME: 5 minutes.

MATERIALS:

- One balloon per five people (and a few spare).
- Space for people to move and be active in small groups.

PURPOSE: To understand how the five areas of health are connected.

1. Energiser – Five areas of health balloon activity

Instructions:

1. Create one or more groups of five people.
2. Each person is given a label or title of one area of health (spiritual, emotional, physical, mental and social).
3. Ask participants to hold hands and form a circle. Each circle is given a balloon to inflate and bounce, keeping it off the ground without breaking the hand links.
4. Call out one area of health e.g. physical health. Whichever person has this label stops contributing by keeping their hands down at their sides.
5. Call out other areas of health with the circle losing more and more pairs of hands working to keep the balloon in the air.
6. Eventually the task will become impossible and the balloon will fall to the ground.


Debrief: Ask the group: What did you notice about losing the help of one of the five areas of health? What impacts did it have on other members of the circle? Say to participants: This activity highlights how all areas of health are connected and how difficult it can be when any area of health are not functioning well. Notice that when we invite one aspect of our 'health' to freeze it is difficult not to affect or be affected by other areas of our 'health'.



 **TIME:** 5 minutes.

 **MATERIALS:**

- 'How to Facilitate MindMatters modules' guide [DOWNLOAD AND PRINT](#)
- Whiteboard or poster paper
- Markers or post it notes.

 **PURPOSE:** To create a safe learning environment so that all staff can contribute to the session in a respectful way. To make expectations clear to ensure all participants contribute their views and ideas. To encourage people to take responsibility for their own learning and be accountable to colleagues.

2. Develop (or revisit) agreements for working together

Instructions:

1. Ask participants to brainstorm and share ideas about how they wish to work during this session.
2. Individuals can write suggestions on post it notes or the facilitator can record suggestions on the whiteboard or poster paper.

Here are some examples for agreements for a successful session:

- listen to each other
 - respect different perspectives
 - share only what you are comfortable sharing
 - engage in one conversation at a time
 - share airspace.
3. For more examples, download the 'How to facilitate MindMatters modules' guide and follow the instructions on 'How to: Develop an agreement for working together'.

Debrief: Say to the group "Negotiating group agreements takes time and is an important part of a professional learning session. It helps to create safe and supportive environments, which is a key protective factor for our mental health and wellbeing. A safe learning environment also enables open, robust discussion in both staff and student settings."

BEFORE YOU BEGIN

How would you define mental health right now?

Let's do a quick experiment. Before you dive into this module, write a couple of sentences on what "mental health" actually means to you. At the end of the module we'll do it again and compare the answers.

SAVE YOUR RESPONSE

🕒 TIME: 5 minutes.

📄 MATERIALS:

- First wall question 'How would you define mental health right now?'. [VIEW ON MODULE PAGE](#)
- Individual computers/ tablets or data projector and group computer.


❓ PURPOSE: To share current understanding of the term mental health.

3. Online wall task

Instructions:

1. Connect to the internet.
2. Log in to your MindMatters account.
3. Select Component 1 'Positive school community'.
4. Select Module 1.3 'What is mental health?'.
5. Invite participants to complete the first wall question 'How would you define mental health right now?'.
6. How do understandings vary across the group?

Debrief: At the end of this session, you will be able to check whether your understanding has changed as well as compare it to what other people have said.



TIME: 20 minutes.

MATERIALS:

- 'The MindMatters panel' video.
[VIEW ON MODULE PAGE](#)

PURPOSE: To consider questions raised by the online video.

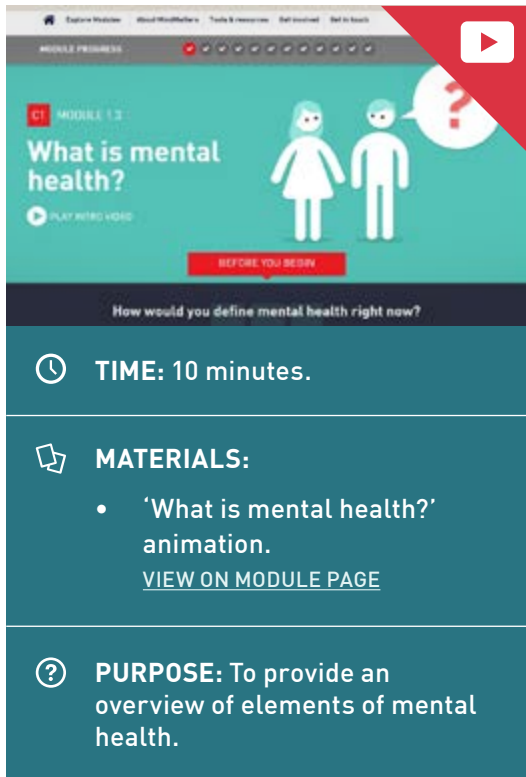
4. Online video 'The MindMatters panel'

Instructions:

Consider the following questions as you view the video 'The MindMatters panel':

1. How is your school currently supporting student mental health and wellbeing?
2. How does looking after staff mental health support the implementation of MindMatters?

Debrief: Discuss your answers to these questions with the person next to you.



The screenshot shows a video player interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with links: 'Explore Modules', 'About Modules', 'Tools & resources', 'Get involved', and 'Get in touch'. Below this is a 'MODULE PROGRESS' bar with a red checkmark and a play button icon. The main content area has a teal background with the text 'MODULE 1.3' and 'What is mental health?'. There is a 'PLAY VIDEO' button and an illustration of a man and a woman with a speech bubble containing a question mark. A red button says 'BEFORE YOU BEGIN'. Below the video player, there is a question: 'How would you define mental health right now?'. The interface is divided into three sections: 'TIME: 10 minutes.', 'MATERIALS:' with a list item 'What is mental health?' animation and a link 'VIEW ON MODULE PAGE', and 'PURPOSE: To provide an overview of elements of mental health.'

TIME: 10 minutes.

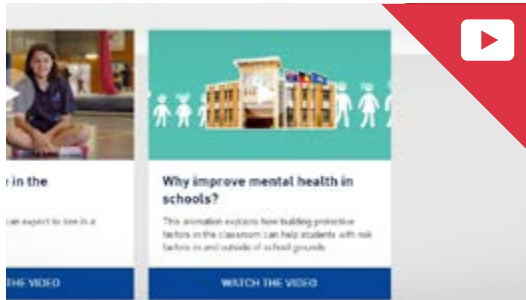
MATERIALS:

- 'What is mental health?' animation.
[VIEW ON MODULE PAGE](#)

PURPOSE: To provide an overview of elements of mental health.

5. View the video animation 'What is mental health?'

Debrief: Discuss with the person next to you what you learnt from, or had confirmed by, this animation.



TIME: 10 minutes.

MATERIALS:

- 'Why improve mental health in schools?' animation.
[VIEW ON MODULE PAGE](#)
- Hard copy of Protective and risk factors PDF.
[DOWNLOAD AND PRINT](#)

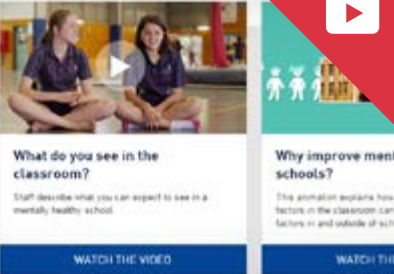
PURPOSE: To gain an overview of the benefits of a focus on mental health in schools. To apply ideas to individual practice.

6. View the video animation 'Why improve mental health in schools?'

Instructions:

1. View the video animation 'Why improve mental health in schools?'
2. Discuss in groups of three:
What are the benefits of a focus on mental health in schools?
What is something that a colleague has done for you that has made a difference to your wellbeing?
How do you currently contribute to the overall mental health of your school?
3. Use the list of protective factors to tick which ones you believe that you or your school are doing well.
4. Discuss with others in your group.

Debrief: Invite people to share any insights they have had during this activity.



TIME: 10 minutes.

MATERIALS:

- 'What do you see in the classroom?' video. [VIEW ON MODULE PAGE](#)
- List of debrief questions written on a whiteboard prior to the session.

PURPOSE: To develop an understanding of the benefits of implementing MindMatters in a school community.

7. View the video 'What do you see in the classroom?'

Instructions:

1. Watch the school interviews with staff and students in the video.
2. When watching the video ask participants to individually consider the debrief questions below.
3. Discuss the questions as a group.

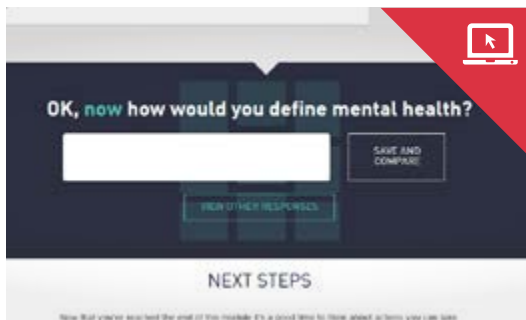
Debrief:

 Discuss the following questions:

- What were the key protective factors that were put in place by the school?
- How have these changes had a positive impact on the wellbeing of the students and staff at the school?
- What key factors have contributed to the improved relationship between the students and staff in the school?
- What strategies from your own practice achieve similar results as described in the video?

Key messages to reiterate with the group:

- Key protective factors can be put in place at the school: foster supportive relationships, value young people, maintain connections to competent and caring adults, promote a safe environment, promote high but realistic expectations, promote positive attitudes to behavior management and provide a whole school approach to social and emotional learning.
- Development of a school action team is essential to ensure a planned approach that involves everyone across a school.
- The factors that contribute to strong relationships between students and staff are: high level of respect, honest and caring relationships and the promotion of high but realistic expectations.



TIME: 5 minutes.

MATERIALS:

- Second wall question 'OK, **now** how would you define mental health?'.
[VIEW ON MODULE PAGE](#)
- Individual computers/ tablets or data projector and group computer.


PURPOSE: To share understanding of the term mental health after having done this module.

8. Repeat online wall task

Instructions:

1. Invite participants to complete the second wall question 'OK, **now** how would you define mental health?'
2. If there is time, create a shared and agreed definition. (You could share this in internal or parent communication and invite comments).

Debrief: Ask the question: How have understandings changed across the group? Say to the group: It is important that everyone in the school community has a shared understanding of mental health if a whole school approach is to be embraced and effective.



TIME: 5 minutes.

MATERIALS:

- Key messages section. [VIEW ON MODULE PAGE](#)
- Alternatively, hard copies of the information.

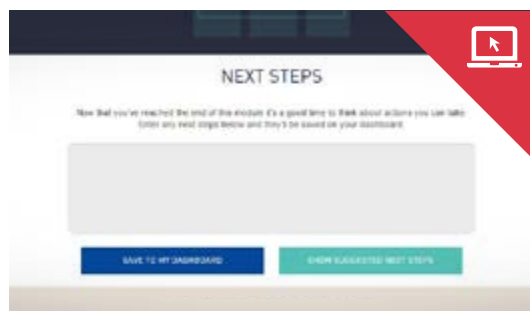
PURPOSE: To summarise the session, provide movement and encourage people to engage with the information provided.

9. Summarise key messages

Instructions:

1. Allow staff to read each of the pieces of information on the module page under the following headings:
 - a. Talking the same language
 - b. This is not about mental illness
 - c. Resilience, risk factors and protective factors
 - d. Why target mental health in secondary schools?
2. Nominate each corner of the room to represent each of the pieces of information above. Invite participants to move to the corner that represents the information that they believe ranks as most important. Have a brief chat with others who are in that corner about why you chose that piece of information.


Debrief: Say to participants: This is the information we want you to walk away with and bring to life in your own practice or work. Ask participants: Is there anything else they would summarise as a key message from this module?



 **TIME:** 5 minutes.

 **MATERIALS:**

- Next steps section.
[VIEW ON MODULE PAGE](#)
- Alternatively, pens and paper.
- Copies of Quick wins (or display content on screen).
[DOWNLOAD AND PRINT](#)

 **PURPOSE:** To translate learning into action, take responsibility for learning, accountability.

10. Next steps

Instructions:

1. Invite each person to decide on three next steps they will undertake as a result of learning in the session. Share these intended actions with at least one other person. Note: if people are using their own device, these will be recorded on their individual dashboard for future reference.
2. Show (or hand out) the Quick wins PDF. It provides four simple things you can do right now to improve mental health for you and your students. What could you commit to in the next week? What else could you do to make a difference?

or select one of the following activities:

3. Create alternative 'quick wins' e.g. Invite participants to select one protective factor to build into their work with students or colleagues over the next month.
4. Invite participants to set a goal or make a commitment to implement one change in their own life within the next month that would improve their mental health. Share this with a colleague or trusted friend or partner who will support them to achieve their goal.
5. Go deeper with further reading. Explore the external resources linked from the module page, including policy documents and research reports. These resources are not critical, but if you want to deepen understanding they are a great starting point.
6. Start or join the school action team. If your school already has a MindMatters action team, participants could consider joining it. People don't have to go to every meeting, but it can be a good opportunity to discuss school culture and mental health issues with colleagues. If your school doesn't have a MindMatters action team, you'll find advice on how to start one in Module 1.1 'Getting started', and/or by attending a leadership briefing.
7. Go to Module 1.4 'Relationships and belonging'. While MindMatters is structured for maximum flexibility, the most logical progression from this module is to go to Module 1.4.

Debrief: Say to participants: if we are interested in improving mental health, we need to commit to making a change in our behaviour and practice – even if it is a small change.

MindMatters is a national mental health initiative for secondary schools developed by *beyondblue* with funding from the Australian Government Department of Health.

See more MindMatters resources at www.mindmatters.edu.au