

MODULE 3.1

MEETING PARENTS' INFORMATION NEEDS

FACILITATOR GUIDE

Module 3.1

Meeting parents' information needs

Introduction

The 'Module 3.1 Meeting parents' information needs' facilitator guide is designed to assist you to prepare and deliver group professional learning using the online 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 – Stand up – sit down	5 minutes	None
2. Develop (or revisit) agreements for working together	5 minutes	Whiteboard or poster paper, markers or post it notes
3. Online wall task 'Think about the conversations you've had with parents at your school. What do they typically want to know about mental health?'	10 minutes	Online device
4. Online video 'The MindMatters panel'	25 minutes	Online device
5. Online video animation 'Meeting parents' information needs'	5 minutes	Online device
6. What if...?	10 minutes	Hard copies of 'Meeting parents' information needs' module overview (one per group), poster paper, markers, grouping strategy
7. How and where?	10 minutes	Hard copies of 'Meeting parents' information needs' module overview (one per group), poster paper, markers, grouping strategy
8. Online wall task 'How do you suggest your school improves communication with parents about mental health?'	5 minutes	Online device
9. Online Next steps	10 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:**

- None.

❓ **PURPOSE:** To develop empathy for parents of adolescents.

1. Energiser – Stand up – sit down

Instructions:

1. As you read out the following statements, invite participants to stand up if they answer 'yes' to any of the questions below. Ask people to sit down between questions. Allow time to see how many people stand up each time.

Statements:

- Are you a parent or a carer?
- Outside of school, do you have a young person (12-25 years old) in your life who you care about? (e.g. niece or nephew, friend)
- Were you once an adolescent?
- (optional question) As far as you are aware, did you ever frustrate your parents or carers?
- As an adolescent did you share your worries or concerns with your parents or carers?
- Your parents or carers knew about services that could support them with mental health questions?
- When growing up, was your school a source of mental health information for your parents or carers?


Debrief: Explain to participants that we can develop empathy by remembering back to when we were young, and reminding ourselves about how challenging it can be to be responsible for and care about adolescents. This module is about supporting parents of adolescents by providing information about youth development, mental health issues and parenting.



 **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:

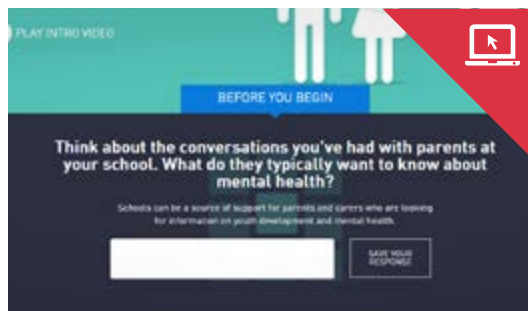
1. Ask participants to brainstorm and share ideas about how they wish to work during this session.
2. Individuals can write suggestions on post it notes or the facilitator can record suggestions on the whiteboard or poster paper.

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.

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."



 **TIME:** 10 minutes.

 **MATERIALS:**

- First wall question 'Think about the conversations you've had with parents at your school. What do they typically want to know about mental health?'.
[VIEW ON MODULE PAGE](#)
- Individual computers or tablets or data projector and group computer.

 **PURPOSE:** To consider what mental health information parents want to know.


3. Online wall task

Instructions:

1. Connect to the internet.
2. Log in to your MindMatters account.
3. Select component 3 'Parents and families'.
4. Select Module 3.1 'Meeting parents' information needs'.
5. Invite participants to complete the first wall question individually:

'Think about the conversations you've had with parents at your school. What do they typically want to know about mental health?'
6. Break the large group into groups of three and ask participants to share their ideas.
7. Each small group then shares their ideas with the whole group.
8. Ask "How do ideas vary across the group? What are common issues or perspectives that the group can document to assist in future discussions?"

Debrief: Say to participants "At the end of this session, you will be able to consider how you and/or your school can meet parent and carer information needs as well as compare answers with what other participants have said."



TIME: 25 minutes.

MATERIALS:

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

PURPOSE: To consider questions raised by the online video.

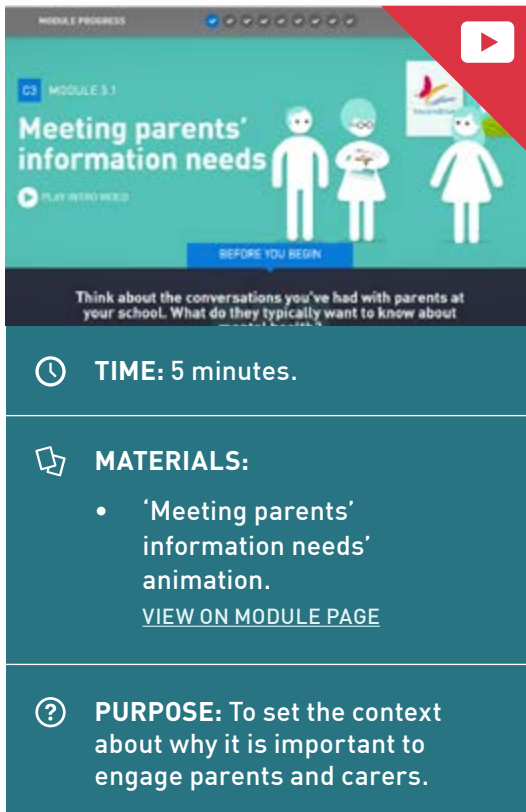
4. Online video 'The MindMatters panel'

Instructions:

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

1. What does your school currently do to engage parents with its mental health strategy and what new strategies could you implement?
2. What can secondary schools learn from primary schools about parent involvement?

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



The screenshot shows a video player interface. At the top, it says 'MODULE 3.1' and 'Meeting parents' information needs'. Below the title, there are three stylized human figures (two adults and one child) and a play button icon. A red play button is also visible in the top right corner of the video player area. Below the video player, there is a section titled 'BEFORE YOU BEGIN' with a play button icon. Below that, there is a text box that says 'Think about the conversations you've had with parents at your school. What do they typically want to know about...'. Below the text box, there are three sections: 'TIME: 5 minutes.', 'MATERIALS:' with a list item 'Meeting parents' information needs' animation. and a link 'VIEW ON MODULE PAGE', and 'PURPOSE: To set the context about why it is important to engage parents and carers.'

TIME: 5 minutes.

MATERIALS:

- 'Meeting parents' information needs' animation.

[VIEW ON MODULE PAGE](#)

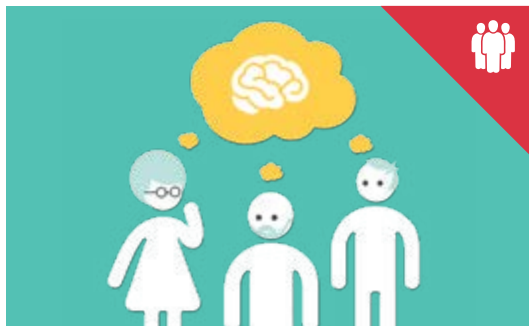
PURPOSE: To set the context about why it is important to engage parents and carers.

5. Online video animation 'Meeting parents' information needs'

Instructions:

1. View the video animation 'Meeting parents' information needs' as a large group.

Debrief: Say to participants "Parents, carers and families play an important role in the lives of young people. When schools and families work together effectively, student mental health improves."



🕒 **TIME: 10 minutes.**

📄 **MATERIALS:**

- Hard copies of 'Meeting parents' information needs' module overview (one per group).
[DOWNLOAD AND PRINT](#)
- Poster paper and markers.
- Grouping strategy.

❓ **PURPOSE:** To consider the benefits of working closely with parents. To consider how your school currently includes and works with parents and carers.

6. Activity – What if...?

Instructions:

1. Invite all participants to read page 13 of the module overview.
2. Divide the large group into small groups of three or four.
3. Say to the group "Imagine that *all* parents, carers and families of *all* your students understand mental health, know how to build protective factors and resilience and are clear about how to access help." Ask groups to brainstorm and document what they would hear, see and feel at the school if this were a reality. Ask them to think about how all aspects of the school might be different for staff and students as well as for parents and families.
4. Invite each group to share two or three positive things from their brainstorm list. Invite positive perspectives that they think other groups may not have considered.
5. Invite the groups to consider the current situation of parents, carers and family involvement at your school: Who is participating? Who gets a say? Who comes? Who doesn't? Who are we not noticing? Who may feel threatened? Who is overlooked?
6. Collect records of the discussions and share it with the leadership group in your school.

Debrief: Say to participants "This activity provides an insight into the potential benefits for the entire school of investing time in improving parent knowledge and understanding. It may also assist in identifying any gaps that currently exist."



7. Activity – How and where

Instructions:


1. Divide the large group into four groups.
2. Assign one of the following headings from pages 7 and 8 of the module overview to each group:
 - Adolescent behaviours
 - Family relationships
 - Worries related to the parenting experience
 - Parents from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds (under the previous heading, but on page 9)
3. Invite groups to suggest how each of the topics or pieces of information under their heading could best be provided to parents:
 - by the school
 - by another source – name it e.g. headspace.
4. Ask each of the groups to share their suggestions with the large group.
5. Invite groups to compare their answers to pages 18 to 20 of the module overview.


Debrief: Say to the group “Parents often do not know where to go to access information or services when worried about their child or family. Schools can provide a useful starting point.”

 **TIME:** 10 minutes.

MATERIALS:

- Hard copies of ‘Meeting parents’ information needs’ module overview (one per group).
[DOWNLOAD AND PRINT](#)
- Poster paper and markers.
- Grouping strategy.

 **PURPOSE:** To consider practical ways to provide parents with information about mental health and young people.



Have a communication strategy

How do you suggest your school improves communication with parents about mental health?

SEND ANSWER

VIEW ON MODULE PAGE

TIME: 5 minutes.

MATERIALS:

- Second wall question 'How do you suggest your school improves communication with parents about mental health?'.
[VIEW ON MODULE PAGE](#)
- Individual computers or tablets or data projector and group computer.

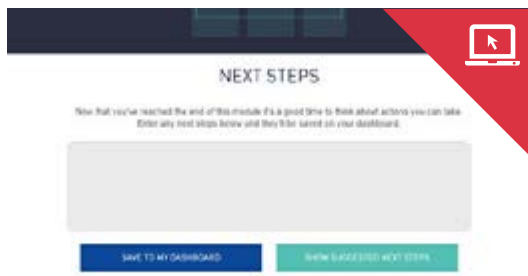
PURPOSE: To make suggestions about how the school can improve communication with parents.

8. Repeat online wall task

Instructions:

1. Invite participants to complete the second wall question 'How do you suggest your school improves communication with parents about mental health?'.


Debrief: It is important that everyone in the school community is part of improving communication with parents and carers.



 **TIME:** 10 minutes.

 **MATERIALS:**

- Next steps section.
[VIEW ON MODULE PAGE](#)
- Alternatively, pens and paper.

 **PURPOSE:** To translate learning into action, take responsibility for learning and accountability. To examine other resources available to support parent information needs.

9. Next steps

Instructions:

1. Invite each person to decide on three next steps they will undertake as a result of learning in the session.
2. Share these intended actions with at least one other person. Note: If people are using their own device, these will be recorded on their dashboard for future reference.
3. Invite participants to select and explore a website from the 'Further resources' section of the online module. Share a summary of the website resource with a partner.

Debrief: Remind participants that if we are interested in improving mental health across the school, 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