

MODULE 4.2

YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH DIFFICULTIES

FACILITATOR GUIDE



Module 4.2

Youth mental health difficulties

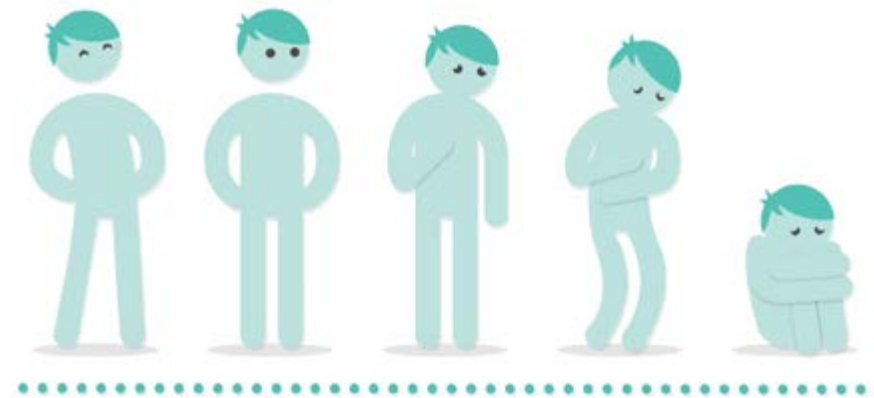
Introduction

The 'Module 4.2 Youth mental health difficulties' 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).
10. Consider having a mental health professional present at this session to answer any specific questions about mental health disorders, indicators or treatment.

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 – Heads and tails	5 minutes	Space for participants to stand up
2. Develop (or revisit) agreements for working together	5 minutes	Whiteboard or poster paper, markers or post it notes
3. Online wall task 'What mental health difficulties have you seen in a school environment?'	5 minutes	Online device
4. Online video 'The MindMatters panel'	25 minutes	Online device
5. Online video animation 'Youth mental health difficulties' and discussion	10 minutes	Online device
6. Read, reflect and share	20 minutes	Online device or hard copies of 'Youth mental health difficulties' module overview (one per group), grouping strategy
7. Online wall task 'What behaviours and signs could indicate that a student is experiencing a mental health difficulty?'	5 minutes	Online device
8. 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:**

- Space for participants to stand up.

❓ **PURPOSE:** To orient participants to the content of the session by introducing key mental health terms and concepts. To gain insight into participants' understanding of mental health difficulties and disorders. To role model an activity that could be facilitated with students.

1. Energiser – Heads and tails

Instructions:

1. Invite participants to stand up. When you read out a statement, if participants think the statement is true they put their hands on their head and if they think the statement is false they put their hands on their hips. After each statement provide an explanation of the correct answer.

Statements:

- Mental health is a positive and productive state of mind that allows an individual to respond to the challenges of everyday life. **True.**
- Mental health disorders can happen to anybody. **True – Everyone is vulnerable to mental health problems. It affects people regardless of age, education, income or culture.**
- Mental health disorders are treatable. **True – Most people with a mental health disorder recover well with appropriate ongoing treatment and support.**
- People with a mental health disorder are violent. **False – People with a mental health disorder are no more violent or dangerous than the rest of the population and are more likely to harm themselves than hurt other people.**
- Mental health is not fixed or static. **True – Mental health can change depending on circumstances and can move back and forth along a continuum.**
- People with a mental health disorder should be kept in hospital. **False – With appropriate treatment and support, people with mental health disorder can live successfully in the community. In fact, the majority of people with a mental health disorder live independently in the community.**

▼ ACTIVITY CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE ▼



🕒 **TIME:** 5 minutes.

📄 **MATERIALS:**

- Space for participants to stand up.

❓ **PURPOSE:** To orient participants to the content of the session by introducing key mental health terms and concepts. To gain insight into participants' understanding of mental health difficulties and disorders. To role model an activity that could be facilitated with students.

- Mental health disorders aren't real illnesses. **False – Mental health disorders are not part of the regular ups and downs of life. Mental health disorders create distress, don't go away on their own, and are real health problems with effective treatments.**
- Positive and planned action by schools can directly improve and support students' mental health. **True.**
- Stigma is one of the biggest problems for people with a mental health disorder. **True – One of the biggest challenges is confronting negative attitudes about mental health disorders.**

2. Ask participants to reflect on the activity and consider 'Where do the myths and misunderstandings surrounding mental health disorders come from?'

Debrief: Explain to participants that myths, misunderstandings, negative stereotypes and attitudes surrounding mental health difficulties and disorders can result in stigma, discrimination and isolation of people with mental difficulties and disorders, as well as their families and carers.


This session will provide an understanding of youth mental health and support participants' understanding of mental health disorders and ways to reduce stigma and discrimination within the school community.



 **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:

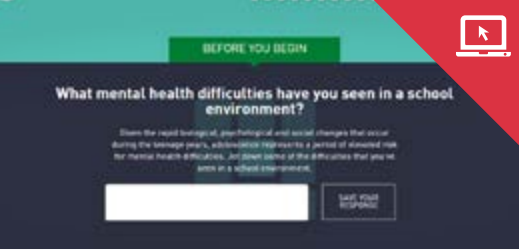
1. Ask participants to brainstorm and share ideas about how they wish to work during this session.
2. Individuals can write suggestions on post it notes or the facilitator can record suggestions on the whiteboard or poster paper.

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.

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

What mental health difficulties have you seen in a school environment?

Given the rapid biological, psychological and social changes that occur during the teenage years, adolescents face over a period of elevated risk for mental health difficulties. Just what some of the difficulties that you've seen in a school environment.

SUBMIT YOUR RESPONSE

⌚ TIME: 5 minutes.

📄 MATERIALS:

- First wall question 'What mental health difficulties have you seen in a school environment?'.
[VIEW ON MODULE PAGE](#)
- Individual computers or tablets or data projector and group computer.

❓ PURPOSE: To reflect on personal observations.


3. Online wall task

Instructions:

1. Connect to the internet.
2. Log in to your MindMatters account.
3. Select component 4 'Support for students experiencing mental health difficulties'.
4. Select Module 4.2 'Youth mental health difficulties'.
5. Invite participants to complete the first wall question individually 'What mental health difficulties have you seen in a school environment?'.

6. Invite participants to share their ideas with a partner.
7. Invite people to share with the large group any insights they have had during this activity.

Debrief: Say to participants "At the end of this session, you will be able to check whether your understanding and knowledge of mental health difficulties and disorders has changed."



TIME: 25 minutes.

MATERIALS:

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

PURPOSE: To consider questions raised by the online video.

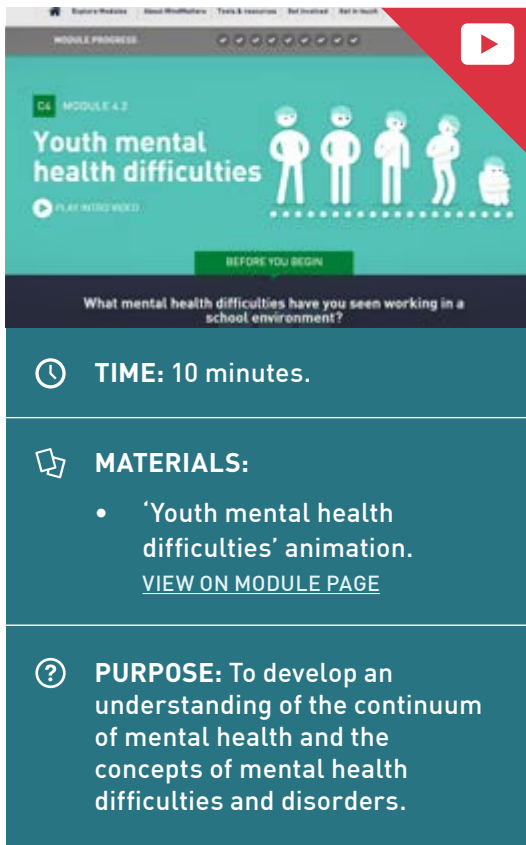
4. Online video 'The MindMatters panel'

Instructions:

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

1. How can labels be stigmatising? What are the consequences?
 2. How does your school address student stigma about mental illness?
-

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



TIME: 10 minutes.

MATERIALS:

- 'Youth mental health difficulties' animation.
[VIEW ON MODULE PAGE](#)

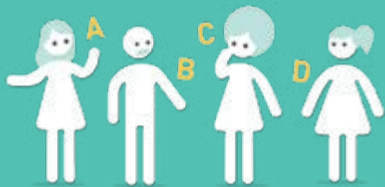
PURPOSE: To develop an understanding of the continuum of mental health and the concepts of mental health difficulties and disorders.

5. Online video animation 'Youth mental health difficulties' and discussion

Instructions:

1. View the video animation 'Youth mental health difficulties'.
2. Ask participants to break into pairs after viewing the video animation.
 - Discuss with your partner in your own words the continuum of mental health concept presented in the animation.
 - How effectively does your school consider and cater for all students on the continuum of mental health?

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



🕒 **TIME:** 20 minutes.

📄 **MATERIALS:**

- Online module.
- Hard copies of 'Youth mental health difficulties' module overview (one per group). [DOWNLOAD AND PRINT](#)
- Grouping strategy.

❓ **PURPOSE:** To develop an understanding of mental health difficulties and disorders. To understand the likely impact mental health difficulties and disorders have on student performance. To develop an understanding of some of the practical support schools can provide for young people experiencing mental health difficulties.

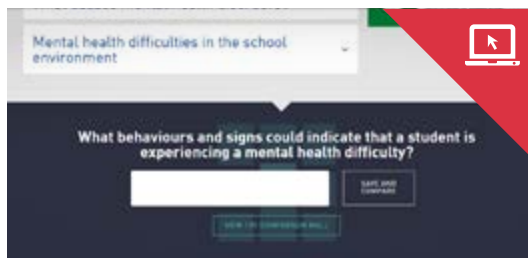
6. Read, reflect and share

Instructions:

1. Create groups of four using a grouping strategy.
2. Allocate each person in the small group a letter **A**, **B**, **C** or **D**.
3. Provide each person a section of the module overview:
 - **A.** receives pages **4 to 7**: What are mental health difficulties and mental health disorders? What causes mental health disorders?
 - **B.** receives pages **8 to 11**: What are the common mental health issues young people experience?
 - **C.** receives pages **12 to 13**. How common are mental health disorders in young people and are they increasing? Mental health difficulties in the school environment.
 - **D.** receives pages **14 to 17**. Practical support school staff can provide students experiencing mental health issues.
4. Allow individuals five to 10 minutes to read their section of the module overview and record six to eight key points to share with their small group.
5. In the small group discuss three practical ways this school can support students experiencing mental health difficulties.
6. Share ideas with the whole group.

Debrief: It is important that everyone in the school community has a shared understanding of mental health difficulties and disorders and the impact these can have on student performance.


School staff members are well-placed to notice changes and behaviours associated with mental health difficulties and provide practical strategies to support students experiencing mental health difficulties.



 **TIME:** 5 minutes.

 **MATERIALS:**

- Second wall question 'What behaviours and signs could indicate that a student is experiencing a mental health difficulty?'.
[VIEW ON MODULE PAGE](#)
- Individual computers or tablets or data projector and group computer.

 **PURPOSE:** To identify possible behaviours and signs that indicate a student may be experiencing a mental health difficulty.

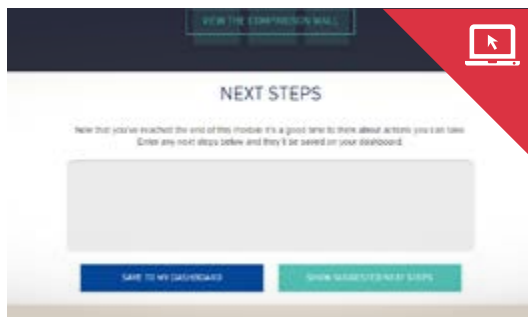
7. Repeat online wall task

Instructions:

1. Invite participants to complete the second wall question 'What behaviours and signs could indicate that a student is experiencing a mental health difficulty?'.

2. Ask the participants to share their ideas with the group.


Debrief: It is important that everyone in the school community has a shared understanding of behaviours and signs that indicate that a student is experiencing a mental health difficulty.



 **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 students experiencing mental health difficulties.

8. 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. There are many excellent resources available to support students experiencing mental health difficulties.

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