

MODULE 4.3

WHEN SHOULD I BE CONCERNED?

FACILITATOR GUIDE

Module 4.3

When should I be concerned?

Introduction

The 'Module 4.3 When should I be concerned?' 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 – Reflecting on intuition	5 minutes	Paper and pens, whiteboard or poster paper, pairing strategy
2. Develop (or revisit) agreements for working together	5 minutes	Whiteboard or poster paper, markers or post it notes
3. Online wall task 'You've noticed that a student is withdrawn lately. What other factors would you need to consider to understand whether it is something to be concerned about?'	10 minutes	Online device, sorting strategy for forming small groups
4. Online video 'The MindMatters panel'	20 minutes	Online device
5. Online video animation 'When should I be concerned?' and poster activity	15 minutes	Online device, hard copy of 'When should I be concerned?' module overview, grouping strategy, poster paper, marker
6. Online wall task 'What is your role in helping students with mental health difficulties?'	10 minutes	Online device, paper and pens
7. Summarise key messages	10 minutes	Egg timer or stop watch, pen and paper, online device (or hard copy)
8. Online Next steps	5 minutes	Online device (or hard copy), paper and pens

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:** 10 minutes.

📄 **MATERIALS:**

- Paper and pen for each person.
- Whiteboard or poster paper.
- Pairing strategy.

❓ **PURPOSE:** To help people connect with each other and draw on their own experience. To focus on the importance of observation. To gain insight into the importance of intuition. To role model an activity that could be facilitated with students.

1. Energiser – Reflecting on intuition

Instructions:

1. Invite participants to consider, then individually write down their response to, the question: When was a time you trusted your instincts and it worked out well?
2. Break into pairs and share your story.
3. In a large group, invite participants to brainstorm why they think this question was raised.


Debrief: Ask participants what they have learned about 'following their intuition'? Explain to participants that following your intuition can be an underestimated strategy yet it is often reliable, in particular for adults in schools who are used to working with many young people.



 **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

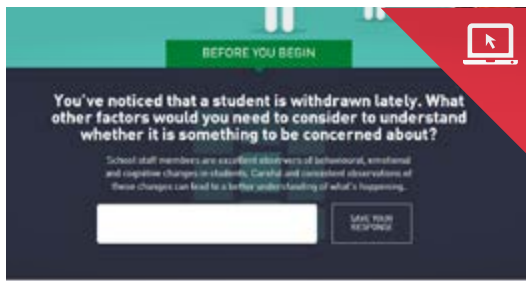
Instructions:

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."



TIME: 5 minutes.

MATERIALS:

- First wall question 'You've noticed that a student is withdrawn lately. What other factors would you need to consider to understand whether it is something to be concerned about?'.
[VIEW ON MODULE PAGE](#)
- Individual computers or tablets or data projector and group computer.
- Sorting strategy for forming small groups.

PURPOSE: To think about current approaches to observing student wellbeing.

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 4.3 'When should I be concerned?'


5. Invite participants to complete the first wall question individually:

'You've noticed that a student is withdrawn lately. What other factors would you need to consider to understand whether it is something to be concerned about?'

If people need help with this question, you could suggest some examples to get them started. Has this change been sudden or for a prolonged period? Has something significant happened in the young person's life? Have others noticed the behaviours in other classes?

6. Form groups of three and ask participants to share their ideas.
7. Ask each small group to share some of their ideas with the whole group.
8. Ask: How do ideas vary across the group? What are common observations that the group can document to assist in future discussions?

Debrief: Say to participants "At the end of this session, you will become more aware of the importance of observation and positive relationships with students as well as the value in having colleagues to talk through your concerns. You will also have the opportunity to compare your answers with what participants from other schools 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. In the Eagleton High video clip, while Phil is focused on Jackson's artwork, he misses other events happening in the background. Did you notice anything? What did you see?
2. What is the process for facilitating support at your school?

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



MODULE 4.3
When should I be concerned?
PLAY (00:00 / 00:00)
BEFORE YOU BEGIN

You've noticed that a student is withdrawn lately. What other factors would you need to consider to understand whether it is something to be concerned about?

⌚ TIME: 15 minutes.

📄 MATERIALS:

- 'When should I be concerned?' animation. [VIEW ON MODULE PAGE](#)
- Hard copy of 'When should I be concerned?' module overview. [DOWNLOAD AND PRINT](#)
- Grouping strategy.
- Poster paper and markers.

❓ PURPOSE: To have a clearer understanding of what you are observing when supporting a student who may be experiencing difficulties.

5. Online video animation 'When should I be concerned?' and poster activity

Instructions:

1. View the video animation 'When should I be concerned?'.
2. Refer to pages 5 and 6 in the module overview.
3. After the animation – as a large group brainstorm, ask: What were the four important things that were raised? I.e. pay attention, have regular open-ended conversations with students, get other people involved by talking to colleagues and/or referring a student for more support.
4. On four separate posters write the four separate headings from page 9 of the module overview i.e. each poster has either 'emotions/feelings', 'cognition/thinking', 'behaviour' or 'physical' written on it.
5. Break into four groups. Invite groups to discuss and record on their allocated poster their answers to the following question: If you were to create an observation template for all staff to access, what would be some useful questions for your group to consider under your assigned heading? E.g. student's name and age, date of observations, student's strengths, what the student is doing, what might the student be thinking, what learning areas are being affected?
6. Come back to the large group and invite participants to share a few ideas from each group.

Debrief: Invite people to share any insights they have had during this activity. Collect the posters and share them with key personnel in the school.


Note: For an example of a possible observation tool, see the KidsMatter Primary tool entitled Behaviour, Emotions, Thoughts, Learning and Social (BETLS) on page 25 of the Participant Workbook at <http://www.kidsmatter.edu.au/primary/resources-your-journey/c4-helping-children-mental-health-difficulties/resources>.



 **TIME:** 5 minutes.

 **MATERIALS:**

- Second wall question 'What is your role in helping students with mental health difficulties?'.
[VIEW ON MODULE PAGE](#)
- Individual computers or tablets or data projector and group computer.
- Paper and pens.

 **PURPOSE:** To gain a better understanding about staff roles in supporting students.

6. Repeat online wall task

Instructions:

1. Invite participants to complete the second wall question 'What is your role in helping students with mental health difficulties?'
2. Ask participants to break into pairs, discuss and record: If a person's coping capacity can be thought of as a bucket, filled with that person's balance of risk and protective factors, what protective factors can we add to a person's bucket? For example, remembering their name, acknowledging their existence with a smile and greeting and speaking to them respectfully to make their bucket bigger.
3. In the large group invite participants to share what protective factors they suggested to increase the size of a person's bucket.

Debrief: It is important that everyone in the school community has a shared understanding of protective and risk factors in order to build protective factors wherever possible.

PROBLEMS.

- School staff will be able to facilitate support for students presenting with signs and symptoms of mental health problems.

Key messages

- Adolescence is a time where many biological, psychological and social changes are occurring.
- When thinking about mental health problems, it is important to consider a young person's vulnerabilities, stressors and strengths.
- Major changes in the young person's thinking, emotional state, physical state and behavior that disrupts the young person's ability to study or work, complete day-to-day activities or continue usual personal relationships are indicators that action and follow up are required.
- Early support when difficulties are significant = early mental health care, and early mental health care = better outcomes.
- As teachers it is important to promote mental health and wellbeing and know the school's processes and their role for facilitating access to mental health support.



7. Summarise key messages

Instructions:

1. Invite each participant to 'step into the shoes' of a keynote speaker, politician or TV newsreader.
2. Say to the group "Imagine you are addressing a crowd of 500 people. You have 30 seconds to promote one of the key messages for this module."
 - Adolescence is a time where many biological, psychological and social changes are occurring.
 - When thinking about mental health problems, it is important to consider a young person's vulnerabilities, stressors and strengths.
 - Major changes in the young person's thinking, emotional state, physical state and behaviour that disrupt the young person's ability to study or work, complete day-to-day activities or continue usual personal relationships are indicators that action and follow up are required.
 - Early support when difficulties are significant = early mental health care, and early mental health care = better outcomes.
 - As staff it is important to promote mental health and wellbeing and know the school's processes as well as your role in facilitating access to mental health support.
3. Invite some volunteers to present their key message in a convincing and animated way.

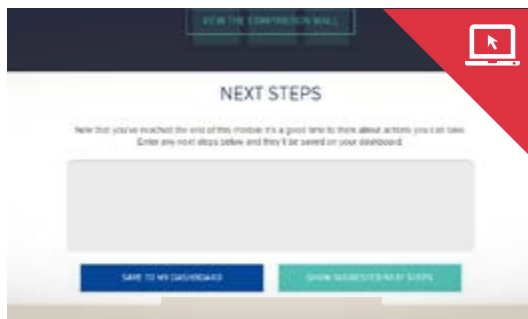
Debrief: These key messages represent the summarised knowledge from this module. Participants can consider what action they might take as a result of knowing this information.

 **TIME:** 10 minutes.

MATERIALS:

- Egg timer or stop watch.
- Paper and pens.
- Online module.
[VIEW ON MODULE PAGE](#)
- Key messages from page 3 of the 'When should I be concerned?' module overview
[DOWNLOAD AND PRINT](#)


 **PURPOSE:** To reinforce key messages.



 **TIME:** 5 minutes.

 **MATERIALS:**

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

 **PURPOSE:** To commit to taking action.

8. Next steps

Instructions:

1. Ask participants to contemplate and decide on at least one action they intend to take based on what they have learnt during this module. Or ask them to consider the following options and choose one that they could do within the next month:
 - Find out if any of the following exists in your school: an observation sheet template, a referral pathway process and/or a list of key personnel who can be contacted if staff have concerns about a student.
 - Decide on two protective factors you can continue and/or introduce to each school day.
 - Invite a mental health expert to talk to staff. Discuss 'warning signs' with colleagues to ensure you are looking for appropriate signals and have a shared understanding about what to look for.
 - Think about any students you are concerned about and discuss your thoughts and observations with other staff who also work with them. Share strategies that will support these students. Involve the school counsellor. Touch base regularly – this can create a supportive process for you.
 - Invite the school counsellor to talk to staff about the support available within their local community for students experiencing mental health 'warning signs' and when students are to be referred to each service. Encourage staff to consider ways to promote these support services with their students.
 - As a staff, discuss and clarify the referral pathways that are currently used at the school. Think about displaying referral pathways in an area easily accessed by all staff e.g. staff noticeboard or intranet page and continue to check in to ensure staff feel confident in taking action.
 - As a staff, share examples of how you get to know students at the beginning of a year or new term. It is easier to gauge the wellbeing of students in your care when you know a bit about them.
2. Invite participants to turn to another person and share their intended actions. Note: If people are using their own device, these will be recorded on their individual dashboard for future reference.

Debrief: Remind participants that if we want to support students who may be experiencing mental health difficulties, we need to be observant and stay informed about appropriate action to take if we are concerned.

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