

MODULE 4.4

# HELPING INDIVIDUAL STUDENTS

FACILITATOR GUIDE



# Module 4.4

## Helping individual students

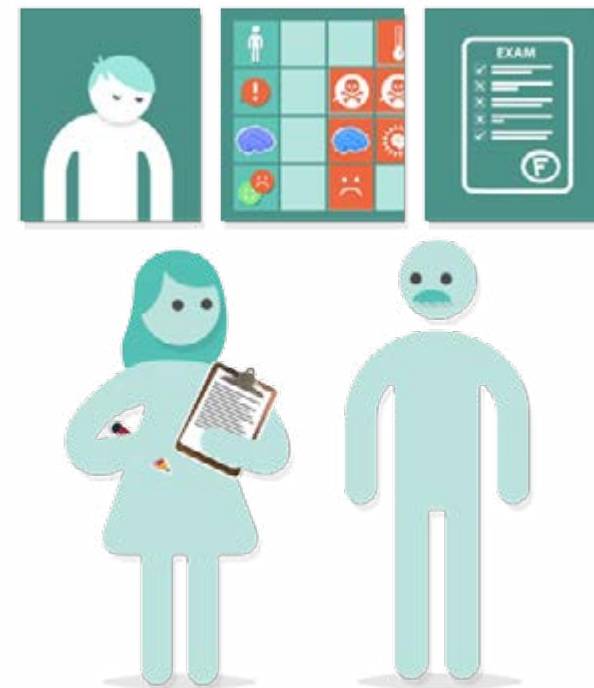
### Introduction

The 'Module 4.4 Helping individual students' 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](http://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 – Crossword connections	5 minutes	Pens and paper
2. Develop (or revisit) agreements for working together	5 minutes	Whiteboard or poster paper, markers or post it notes
3. Online video animation 'Helping individual students' and discussion	10 minutes	Online device
4. Discussing concerns with students	15 minutes	Online device or hard copies of 'Helping individual students' module overview (one per participant), pens and paper, highlighter pens
5. Online wall task 'If you are concerned about a student and need to have a conversation with them, what preparation and planning could you do to ensure the conversation goes well?'	5 minutes	Online device
6. Online video 'The MindMatters panel'	20 minutes	Online device
7. Online video clip – Hearing from young people	10 minutes	Online device
8. Online wall task 'What two or three tips would you give a colleague if they had to have a conversation with a student they were concerned about?'	5 minutes	Online device
9. 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:**

- Pens and paper.

❓ **PURPOSE:** To help people connect with each other, by finding things they have in common. To introduce participants to the content of the session by getting them to think about the use of conversation in building relationships. To role model an activity that could be facilitated with students.

## 1. Energiser – Crossword connections

### Instructions:

1. Give each person a pen and paper on which to write their name across the centre of the page.
2. Invite participants to mingle for five minutes, talk to as many people as possible and find one thing you have in common with each person. (e.g. both have the same interest, both have been to another country)
3. Participants connect their name, crossword style, to the names of others with whom they share common interests.

### For example:




**Debrief:** Sometimes conversations are easier when they have a structure.



 **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.

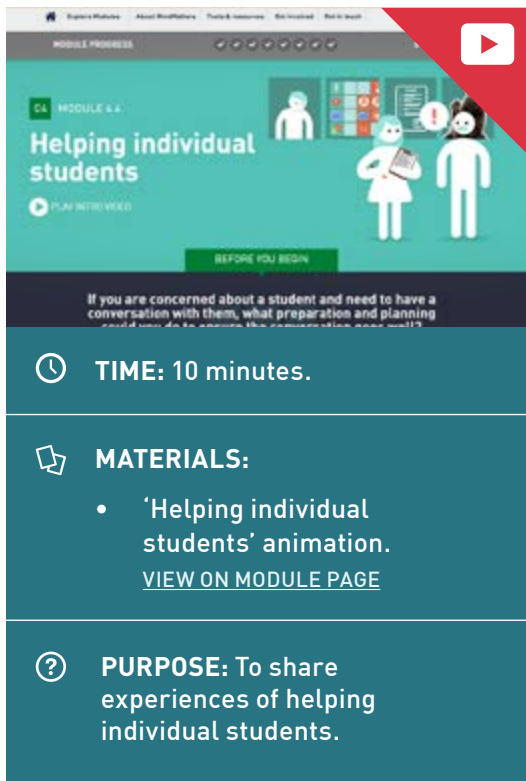
Here are some examples for agreements for a successful session:

- 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'.

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**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."



The screenshot shows a video player interface. At the top, there's a navigation bar with 'MODULE PROGRESS' and a play button icon. Below that, the title 'Helping individual students' is displayed in a teal box, with 'MODULE 4.4' and 'PLAY INTRO VIDEO' buttons. A 'BEFORE YOU BEGIN' section contains a paragraph of text: 'If you are concerned about a student and need to have a conversation with them, what preparation and planning could you do to ensure the conversation goes well?'. Below this, there are three sections: 'TIME: 10 minutes.', 'MATERIALS:' with a bullet point 'Helping individual students' animation' and a link 'VIEW ON MODULE PAGE', and 'PURPOSE: To share experiences of helping individual students.'

### 3. Online video animation 'Helping individual students' and discussion

#### Instructions:

1. View the video animation 'Helping individual students'.
2. Ask participants to find a partner, stand together and discuss the following questions:
  - How do you build relationships with students and let them know they have your support?
  - Recall a time when helping a student didn't go so well. What did you learn from that experience?
  - What approaches have you found useful when helping individual students?
3. Invite pairs to share brief summaries of their discussion.

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**Debrief:** Say to participants "Staff have their own way of supporting individual students. Sharing successful strategies with others can build good practice across the school."





🕒 **TIME:** 15 minutes.

📄 **MATERIALS:**

- Online module.
- Hard copy of 'When should I be concerned?' module overview.  
[DOWNLOAD AND PRINT](#)
- Pens and paper, highlighter pens.

❓ **PURPOSE:** To identify good practices for helping individual students.

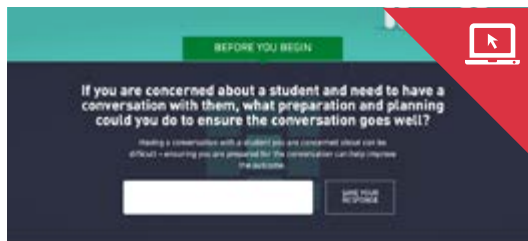
## 4. Discussing concerns with students

### Instructions:

1. In small groups brainstorm a list of concerns staff might notice about a student e.g. decline in attendance, withdrawn in class.
2. Identify the concerns that may be more difficult or uncomfortable for staff to address with the student e.g. self-harm. Discuss why this conversation might be difficult.
3. Ask individuals to browse through pages 4 to 14 of the module overview and highlight particular information that might be useful for a difficult conversation.
4. Invite individuals to share one of their findings with the large group.

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**Debrief:** Noticing and discussing concerns with individual students may be the most significant support a school staff member can provide.




 **TIME:** 5 minutes.

 **MATERIALS:**

- First wall question 'If you are concerned about a student and need to have a conversation with them, what preparation and planning could you do to ensure the conversation goes well?'

[VIEW ON MODULE PAGE](#)

- Individual computers or tablets or data projector and group computer.

 **PURPOSE:** To share current thoughts about helping individual students.

## 5. 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 4.4 'Helping individual students'.
5. Invite participants to complete the first wall question individually 'If you are concerned about a student and need to have a conversation with them, what preparation and planning could you do to ensure the conversation goes well?'

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**Debrief:** Say to participants "Strengthening our knowledge and skills helps to build our confidence in initiating difficult conversations with individual students."



 **TIME:** 20 minutes.

 **MATERIALS:**

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

 **PURPOSE:** To consider questions raised by the online video.

## 6. Online video 'The MindMatters panel'

### Instructions:

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

1. How do positive relationships with students facilitate intervention and support around mental health?
2. Phil uses a 'safe space' within Eagleton High to encourage students to open up about their problems. How does your school make students feel safe and willing to talk to staff members?

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



**TIME:** 10 minutes.

**MATERIALS:**

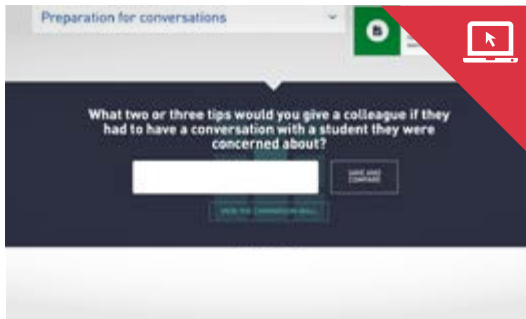
- Further resources section. [VIEW ON MODULE PAGE](#)
- Individual computers or tablets or data projector and group computer.

**PURPOSE:** To hear from young people what they find helpful in having a conversation.

## 7. Hearing from young people

### Instructions:

1. Scroll to the Further Resources section of the module.
2. Select the beyondblue 'Have the conversation' link.
3. Scroll down to 'Resources to help you have the conversation'.
4. Select the first blue tab 'Young people'.
5. Scroll down to 'Be yourself. Be a good listener. Be supportive.'
6. Invite participants to individually view one of the clips: 'How to talk about it' (3:42); 'Good things to say' (2:37); 'When talking gets tricky' (3:27).



**TIME:** 5 minutes.

**MATERIALS:**

- Second wall question 'What two or three tips would you give a colleague if they had to have a conversation with a student they were worried about?'.  
[VIEW ON MODULE PAGE](#)
- Individual computers or tablets or data projector and group computer.

**PURPOSE:** To apply learning from the module.

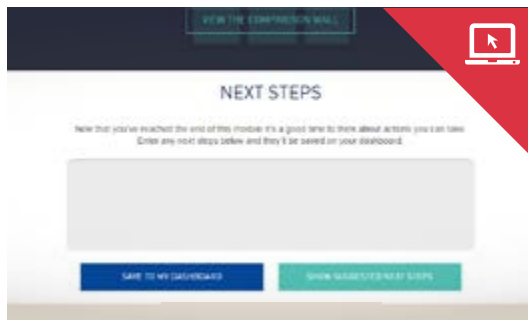
## 8. Repeat online wall task

### Instructions:

1. Invite participants to complete the second wall question 'What two or three tips would you give a colleague if they had to have a conversation with a student they were worried about?'.

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**Debrief:** It is important that all staff feel comfortable to act on concerns they notice and feel confident to help individual students – even if it is offering the student the opportunity to talk with another staff member of their choice.



 **TIME:** 5 minutes.

 **MATERIALS:**

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

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

## 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.

**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](http://www.mindmatters.edu.au)