



Z Zurich Foundation and UNICEF launch global partnership to promote young people’s mental well-being

The partnership aims to benefit more than half a million adolescents and caregivers in seven countries and hopes to reach 30 million people worldwide through a communication campaign.

Zurich/New York, 23 September – Z Zurich Foundation and UNICEF today launched a three-year partnership that aims to promote mental well-being among young people worldwide.

The partnership will equip 400,000 adolescents and 150,000 caregivers in seven countries with information, skills and strategies on how to care for their own and each other's mental well-being. It will also support a global communication campaign that aims to reach 30 million people and promote positive conversations and connections that increase awareness, knowledge and action around mental well-being.

An estimated one in seven adolescents aged between 10 and 19 lives with a diagnosed mental disorder. While adolescence can be a period of heightened risk for developing mental health conditions such as anxiety and depression, it is also a critical time of life for establishing healthy behavior patterns and social and emotional learning that can bring life-long benefits. To reduce the rising burden of mental disorders, efforts to promote mental well-being among all young people and their caregivers are critical. However, despite growing awareness about the negative effects and financial costs of mental health conditions on lives and communities, wide investment gaps persist, particularly for mental health promotion and prevention programs.

“Positive mental health helps us to think, learn and build our lives. But for too many young people, psychosocial distress is disrupting their daily lives, negatively impacting their health, and preventing them from thriving,” said Charlotte Petri Gornitzka, UNICEF Deputy Executive Director for Partnerships. “The COVID-19 pandemic has only added to the pressures on young people and their families, putting the mental health of a whole generation at risk. With this partnership, we are kick-starting an urgent response to a crisis that the world cannot afford to leave overlooked and underfunded.”

UNICEF and Z Zurich Foundation are announcing the partnership today at the Leaders on Purpose CEO Summit during the 76th session of the United Nations General Assembly in New York. As well as supporting programs and campaigns, the partnership seeks to build a coalition of public and private sector leaders who are willing to take action to promote the positive mental well-being of young people—including by scaling up the programs piloted through the partnership—and to support global and local advocacy on the importance of investing in mental health promotion and prevention for adolescents.

“Today we are launching a global movement that envisions a world where every young person is supported to achieve positive mental well-being. This is an increasing and vital challenge. Working together we can turn the tide and help many young people realize their potential. Join us,” said Gary Shaughnessy, Chair of the Z Zurich Foundation.

The programs supported by the partnership will start in Viet Nam, Mexico, Indonesia, Nepal, Colombia, Ecuador and the Maldives. Program tools and approaches developed in these countries will focus on the delivery of interventions that build mental health literacy, strengthen social and emotional learning and skills, as well as improve caregiver and adult support. The materials developed will include information on emotional regulation, stress management and problem solving, among other topics. Teaching methods will include storytelling, peer learning and learning through role models, and will leverage a variety of digital, school, and community platforms for distribution. The global campaign supported by the partnership will launch in early October 2021, in the run-up to World Mental Health Day.

About UNICEF

UNICEF works in some of the world’s toughest places, to reach the world’s most disadvantaged children. Across more than 190 countries and territories, we work for every child, everywhere, to build a better world for everyone.

About Z Zurich Foundation

The Z Zurich Foundation works alongside Zurich Insurance Group employees, customers, business partners, as well as with governments and NGOs in pursuit of a future where people can thrive in the face of increasing climate hazards, where those of us feeling the stresses of life are empowered to speak up, and where the marginalized in our society can reach their full potential.

The Z Zurich Foundation is a Swiss-based charitable foundation established by members of the Zurich Insurance Group. It is the main vehicle by which Zurich Insurance Group delivers on its global community investment strategy.

Visit the Z Zurich Foundation’s website to learn more about its work: <https://zurich.foundation>. Follow Z Zurich Foundation on [LinkedIn](#), [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#) and [YouTube](#).

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