

Helping Adolescents Thrive

**Facilitator Guide
for working with 15- to 19-year-olds**

Helping Adolescents Thrive:

Empowering adolescents to navigate their thoughts, feelings, behaviours, and relationships

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Contents

About this resource	7
Part 1: Key concepts	8
Part 2: Learning Modules	12
Part 3: Essentials for facilitators	18
Appendix	24
Appendix A: Action checklist (for facilitators)	25
Appendix B: Information sheet for adolescent intervention (for caregivers)	26
Appendix C: Information sheet for adolescent intervention (for adolescents).....	27
Appendix D: Informed consent form	28
Modules	29
Module 1: Your well-being journey	30
Module 2: Understanding how I feel	34
Module 3: Accepting how you feel	38
Module 4: Expressing how you feel	42
Module 5: Understanding stress and identifying stressors	46
Module 6: Coping with pressures	50
Module 7: Finding your strengths.....	55
Module 8: Understanding what you say to yourself.....	58
Module 9: Navigating life’s challenges: Problem-solving	63
Module 10: Navigating life’s challenges: Problem management.....	68
Module 11: Making decisions about substances.....	73
Module 12: Making decisions about substance use: Staying safe	77
Module 13: Building Supportive Relationships	81
Module 14: Listening to and understanding one other.....	84
Module 15: Communicating what you feel and need	89
Module 16: Having difficult conversations with caregivers.....	93
Module 17: Practising conflict management	99
Module 18: Setting boundaries.....	103
Module 19: Bullying (peer violence).....	109
Module 20: Finding your place in the world.....	113

About this resource

This guide is for people who will be facilitating social emotional skills building and support to adolescents aged 15–19.

What this guide contains

Part 1: Key concepts

This section includes background information on mental health and well-being related to the general population and, more specifically, to adolescents.

Part 2: Essentials for facilitators

This section reviews essential information on how to promote, talk about and support adolescent mental health and well-being. The guide covers various topics, such as communicating with adolescents, the facilitator–adolescent relationship, the facilitator’s own well-being, and how to help adolescents who need additional mental health support.

Part 3: Learning modules

This section includes learning modules for facilitators to use with 15- to 19-year-olds. Each module includes an introduction and prompt for discussion, facilitator-led learning of key concepts, skills practice activities, and an adolescent-directed closing.

How to use this guide

Each module contains learning objectives, key messages, and a number of activities. It also includes a script you can read or alter to suit your style, making sure to keep the content. Within the modules:

- Italicized text indicates dialogue you can use when speaking
- Plain text denotes background information and instructions

What this facilitator’s guide is not

This resource is not a form of psychological care or treatment for a mental health condition. If you become aware of any of the following needs or circumstances, please consult a specialist promptly and ensure that the adolescent is referred to appropriate mental health or social care services:

- An adolescent who is harming themselves, who is harming others or threatens to harm others, or has a plan to end their life soon
- An adolescent who is struggling with an existing mental health or substance use condition
- Any protection needs arise, including sexual harassment, abuse, maltreatment, or exploitation

This guide does not provide the training and knowledge needed for provision of counselling, treatment, or more specialized mental health services to adolescents. It is important to seek additional help if you identify adolescents who seem to be experiencing difficulties with their mental health.



Part 1:
Key concepts

Understanding mental health and well-being

Everyone needs to take care of their mental health and well-being. Mental health is essential to our overall well-being and is as important as physical health. When we feel mentally well, we can be productive at work or school and in other tasks, enjoy our free time, and contribute actively to our communities.

Often, when people think of mental health, they think of illness or disease and of care and treatment options, such as psychiatric care or medication. While these may be necessary for some people, they are only one aspect of mental health and well-being.

Mental health and well-being encompass strategies to take care of all people's needs, whether they have a clinical diagnosis of a mental health condition or not. While mental health systems should include care and treatment for people who may need it, they should also emphasize promotion of well-being and prevention of mental health conditions so that all people are supported to thrive.

The mental health continuum as experienced by adolescents can range from thriving to not coping:



Thriving

Adolescent feels good about themselves and can respond appropriately to everyday stressors. They have the capacity to have meaningful relationships and engage in school, work, and other activities.



Surviving

Adolescent can cope with their everyday routine, but may be worried, anxious, or distressed about one or more areas of their life.



Struggling

Adolescent has regular feelings of anxiety or low mood, worries excessively or has difficulty coping with school, work and may have lower quality relationships. They may start to show signs of subclinical mental distress and may adopt maladaptive self-soothing behaviours.



Not coping

Adolescent feels severely anxious or depressed and is not coping with their daily tasks. They may even consider taking their own life.

Myths and facts about mental health

MYTH	FACT
If a person has a mental health challenge, it means the person has low intelligence.	Mental health challenges can affect anyone regardless of intelligence, social class or income level.
You only need to take care of your mental health if you have a mental health condition.	Everyone has mental health and can benefit from taking active steps to promote their well-being. Similarly, everyone can take active steps to engage in healthy habits that optimize their physical health.
Mental health is not a big issue for teenagers. They just have mood swings caused by hormonal fluctuations and act out due to a desire for attention.	Teenagers often have mood swings, but that does not mean adolescent mental health is not a real issue. Half of all mental health conditions start by the age of 14.
Nothing can be done to protect people from developing mental health conditions.	Many factors can protect people from developing mental health conditions, including learning social and emotional skills, seeking help and support early on, developing supportive, loving, warm family relationships, and having a positive school environment and healthy sleep patterns.
A mental health condition is a sign of weakness; if the person were stronger, they would not have this condition.	A mental health condition has nothing to do with being weak or lacking willpower. It is not a condition people choose to have or not have. In fact, recognizing the need to accept help requires great strength and courage.
Adolescents who get good grades and have a lot of friends will not have mental health conditions because they have nothing to be depressed about.	Mental health challenges can affect anyone regardless of how good her/his life seems at face value. Adolescents doing well in school may feel pressure to succeed, which can cause anxiety, or they may have challenges at home.
Bad parenting causes mental health conditions in adolescents.	Many factors – including poverty, unemployment, and exposure to violence, migration, and other adverse circumstances and events – may influence the well-being and mental health of adolescents and their caregivers, as well the relationship between them. We should not blame parents if their adolescent children have mental health conditions. We should support them, as they play a critical role in their adolescents' growth and development.
Mental health conditions arise because of a lack of devotion or prayer.	Mental health conditions arise in people of all faiths, regardless of how often or how seldom they practise that faith.

Exercise for self-reflection or a small group discussion with other facilitators

- **Which myths do you feel are most common among your school and parental community?** The parental community may include other primary caregivers, such as grandparents and other family members.
- **Which facts did you find most surprising?**
- **What are some ways you can begin to dispel these myths in your school or community?**

Helping Adolescents Thrive Toolkit

The [UNICEF-WHO Helping Adolescents Thrive \(HAT\) Toolkit](#)¹ strategies emphasize actions towards:

- Ensuring laws and policies are in place to protect and promote adolescent mental health, including providing adolescents with access to evidence-based promotive and preventative mental health interventions
- Ensuring that adolescents live, study, work and socialize in supportive, healthy, safe environments that promote and protect their mental health and reduce their engagement in risky behaviours
- Ensuring that caregivers have the knowledge and skills to promote adolescents' mental health, maintain healthy caregiver–adolescent relationships, and find the support they need to protect their own mental health and well-being
- Developing and implementing adolescent psychosocial interventions for mental health promotion and prevention

Promotion and prevention in mental health and well-being

The HAT guidelines recommend universal delivery of mental health promotion and prevention interventions to adolescents.

Prevention in mental health aims to halt mental health conditions from developing by reducing an individual's exposure to risks and strengthening their ability to cope. Mental health promotion seeks to reinforce helpful behaviours and support and improve psychological well-being. Promotion and prevention are overlapping, complementary activities.

Learning social and emotional skills is recognized as one way to promote mental well-being and prevent mental health conditions.



Part 2: **Learning Modules**

Skills to promote adolescent mental health and well-being

A meta-analysis used to inform the HAT guidelines determined that interventions supporting skill-building in the areas of emotional regulation, problem-solving, interpersonal skills, mindfulness, assertiveness and stress management are essential for adolescent mental health and well-being.²



Emotion regulation

Techniques to improve one's ability to manage and respond to emotions effectively.



Stress management

Techniques to control levels of stress - especially chronic stress that interferes with everyday functioning.



Mindfulness

Activities to enhance the individual's ability to "pay attention in a particular way: on purpose, in the present moment, and nonjudgmentally" (15)



Problem-solving

Techniques to identify and act on a solution to a challenge/difficult problem.



Drug and alcohol knowledge

Education about the use of drugs/alcohol, or the effects of drugs/alcohol on development, lifestyle (including harm minimization approaches) and beliefs/perceptions about drugs/alcohol.



Interpersonal skills

Improving skills to develop or improve close, strong, positive relationships with other people.



Assertiveness

Improving skills to communicate one's viewpoint, needs or wishes clearly and respectfully.



Emotional Regulation

- We all experience different emotions, with varying levels of intensity. Adolescence, in particular, can be a time of intensified emotional responses given the many social, cognitive and physical changes young people experience and their phase of development.³
- Learning to regulate emotions is a key skill to support the well-being of adolescents. This includes learning to identify emotions, understand what the purpose and meaning of those emotions might be, and how those emotions can be expressed.
- Adolescents sometimes also express emotions in unhelpful or harmful ways, such as violence against themselves or others, so learning ways to express emotions in helpful ways is a vital skill.



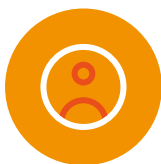
Stress Management

- Stress is a natural part of being human. Because adolescents are particularly prone to emotional intensity and face many changes in this period of life, they are also particularly prone to challenges with managing stress.⁴
- Adolescents face a number of pressures simultaneously related to their self-identity, family, peer relationships, school or community. Being able to identify stressors and stress levels and learning to cope are all important.
- Coping is a necessary skill. Everyone copes with stress in different ways, and it is important that adolescents can identify and practise coping strategies that are helpful to them.



Mindfulness

- Mindfulness is the human ability to be fully present and aware of where we are and what we are doing.
- Mindfulness can support an individual with managing stress and coping with the challenges of daily life.
- Mindfulness-based techniques are incorporated into the emotional regulation and stress management modules.



Self-esteem

- UNICEF's research shows that adolescents have significant difficulty with self-esteem.⁵ (See [The State of the World's Children 2021: On My Mind; Promoting, protecting and caring for children's mental health](#)⁶.) This is partly because of the developmental phase they are in, where their self-image is not yet well-developed and they are particularly sensitive to the opinions of others and vulnerable to criticism – all of which has a direct relationship with their experience of well-being.⁷
- The modules focus on enhancing self-esteem through identification of personal strengths, challenging negative thought cycles and promoting positive self-talk.



Problem-solving and problem management

- Problem-solving is part of everyday life and involves multiple strategies that rely heavily on critical thinking skills.
- While problems may be challenging sometimes, mastery of problem-solving skills can help build self-esteem, reduce stress, and promote well-being.
- The personal problems that adolescents face may not always have clear solutions, which can cause them to feel overwhelmed, distressed, or hopeless.
- Following problem management steps can help adolescents better manage personal problems that are not easy to solve: identifying the problem and goal setting, anticipating needs and obstacles to reaching goals, identifying and implementing possible solutions as well as evaluating progress.



Making decisions about drugs and alcohol

- Risk-taking behaviours and experimentation with drugs and alcohol can be common in adolescence.
- Developing the necessary critical thinking skills for informed decision-making is important for managing the risks associated with substance use.⁸
- Assertiveness and ability to refuse peer pressure are also important for delaying and avoiding substance use.



Building and maintaining relationships

- During adolescence, peer relationships and romantic relationships become increasingly important and have a greater influence on a young person's behaviour.
- Relationships with caregivers go through a change in dynamics but also remain important, as adolescents increase their sense of independence.
- Skills such as assertive communication, active listening, empathy and conflict management are critical for adolescents in building and maintaining supportive relationships during this period. These skills are also important for reducing bullying and peer violence among this age group.



Assertiveness

- Assertiveness is a communication style that fosters a person's ability to say what she/he feels and needs in a way that is respectful and clear.
- Assertiveness is incorporated into modules related to decision-making around substance use and interpersonal skills.

Table 1: Lessons contained within modules

Lessons	
Emotional regulation	Module 1: Beginning your well-being journey Module 2: Understanding how you feel Module 3: Accepting how you feel Module 4: Expressing how you feel
Stress management	Module 5: Understanding stress and identifying stressors Module 6: Coping with pressures
Self-esteem	Module 7: Finding your strengths Module 8: Challenging negative self-talk and promoting positive self-talk
Problem-solving	Module 9: Navigating life's challenges: Problem-solving Module 10: Navigating life's challenges: Problem management
Drug and alcohol knowledge	Module 11: Making decisions about drugs and alcohol Module 12: Making decisions about drugs and alcohol: Staying safe
Interpersonal skills	Module 13: Building supportive relationships Module 14: Listening to and understanding one another Module 15: Communicating what you feel and need Module 16: Having difficult conversations with caregivers Module 17: Practicing conflict management Module 18: Setting boundaries Module 19: Addressing bullying and peer violence

How the modules are written and organized

Modules were designed together with adolescent mental health technical experts, professionals working with adolescents, and adolescents.

- Each module can be completed in about 30 minutes, although some may require up to 45 minutes. A whole skill component can be delivered in one longer session by grouping several modules together, or it can be broken up and delivered in shorter sessions over a longer period of time. This will depend upon the time and setting of delivery.
- Each module is structured the same and consists of the following elements:
 - ✓ **Learning objectives and key messages:** These are provided to guide and support achievement of each module.
 - ✓ **Introduction and discussion prompt:** These are intended to promote conversation that will foster connection between peers and allow for self-reflection, expression, and personalized learning.
 - ✓ **Facilitator-led learning:** This will introduce new concepts and information. Key information is provided for facilitators in the form of a script, which they can personalize and utilize as a basis for instruction.
 - ✓ **In-session activities:** These allow adolescents to practise the knowledge they have gained. Instructions for activities are provided for the facilitator.
 - ✓ **Idea generation and adolescent-directed learning:** This provides a space to support adolescents in applying the knowledge and skills in their real-life environments and experiences. Prompts are provided to help guide adolescents in reflecting and actualizing what they have been learning in their own contexts.

The proportion of time that facilitators will spend leading discussions may vary in different contexts, but as a guideline, facilitator-led learning is intended to constitute about 40 per cent of each module, with the remainder dedicated to experiential learning, dialogue and adolescent-directed learning.

Considerations for using the learning modules

Preparation

Facilitators should take time to read through this entire guide before starting any modules.

- Review lesson plans in detail before teaching the lesson.
- Note any activities that require advanced preparation or materials.
- Anticipate any participant questions.
- Check with your supervisor about any topics you may feel unsure about.

Where and when to deliver the sessions

The sessions can be implemented in a wide range of contexts.

- In school settings, a classroom would be an appropriate space for facilitation.
- In community settings, facilitators and their supervisors should identify an appropriate space.
- For optional activities, such as a scavenger hunt, climate walk or additional physical activities, outdoor space may be ideal.

In addition:

- Sessions can be integrated within existing school health or relevant topic curricula
 - Sessions can be delivered in a community setting outside of school
 - Lessons were designed to be delivered consecutively and flexibly as it fits the classroom or community group's schedule
-

Support for facilitators

A supervisor who is an adolescent mental health or counselling professional is a valuable source of support for you as a facilitator. She/he may provide advice on how to effectively delivery this intervention with adolescents, guidance to ensure safety and well-being of the adolescents you work with, and encouragement to you as an individual working with adolescents.

Your supervisor's role is to provide:

- Guidance both on a scheduled basis and at times when matters of particular urgency arise
- A safe space for you to learn and grow in your role
- Support you as you engage with adolescents in their emotional development

You can turn to your supervisor when you:

- Are concerned about any adolescent's risk
- Need help accessing additional support services for an adolescent
- Need to speak to the caregiver of an adolescent
- Need a space to talk about your experience in facilitating these sessions



Part 3: **Essentials for facilitators**

Taking care of your own well-being

In working with adolescents, you face many demands and expectations from your organization, school and community leaders, as well as adolescents and their caregivers. On top of this, you will likely carry stresses and burdens from life outside of work just like everyone else. It is essential to look after your own mental health and well-being, just as you protect and promote the mental health and well-being of the adolescents you work with.

Everyone has their own approach to maintaining their well-being; there isn't a one-size-fits-all prescription for taking care of yourself. Here are some tips to consider.

Take time to regularly connect and have conversations with your colleagues and friends outside of work. Let people know how you are doing and feeling and check in to see how they are doing. Having a good support network can have a significant impact on your mental well-being.

Do something physically active to help your mental wellness and de-stress. This could be taking a walk, biking to work, or maybe doing some form of exercise or sport you enjoy. Anything to get your body moving can help.

Celebrate your successes! Take time to recognize any successes you achieved, no matter how big or small they may seem. Perhaps it is a moment of kindness, a breakthrough with the adolescents or caregivers you are working with, a good session with the adolescents, or seeing a positive change in the school or community you are working in.

Make time to do things you enjoy or that are meaningful or satisfying for you. As a facilitator, you work hard and are constantly giving. Your work often does not end once the sessions end. Making sure you have time for yourself during the week and on the weekend will make a big difference.

Seek support if you notice yourself experiencing strong feelings of distress. You may find that you experience stress or emotional exhaustion from the intense nature of supporting adolescents. If you find yourself struggling to keep up with daily activities or cope with everyday challenges, try to speak to someone you trust or seek support from your organization, school administration, health facility, a place of worship or even online.

Remember to approach your supervisor if you need help. Supervision is a collaborative learning process in which you can ask questions, get advice and feedback and also ask your supervisor for help in getting any support that you yourself might need.

Additional resources

[Doing What Matters in Times of Stress, WHO](#)

[Engaged and Heard! Guidelines on Adolescent Participation and Civic Engagement, UNICEF](#)

[Helping Adolescents Thrive Teacher's Guide, UNICEF-WHO](#)

[Nobody's Perfect Facilitator's Guide, UNICEF](#)

Working with adolescents

As a facilitator, you play a crucial role in creating a safe and supportive environment, which is particularly important for promoting positive mental health and communicating about the topics we will be covering with adolescents. Before introducing the HAT social and emotional learning content, here are a few important considerations.

Build rapport

Establishing a connection and relationship with your adolescents is the basis for effectively supporting their mental well-being and social and emotional learning.

Here are some tips:

- Show an interest in what is important to adolescents and let them know that you care about them.
- Share a bit about yourself and find ways to make connections with young people while keeping making sure to maintain professional boundaries.
- Ask adolescents about their opinions, views and perspectives.
- Seek to understand how the adolescents you are working with might feel by putting yourself in their shoes. An empathetic facilitator is someone who tries to see things from young people's perspective and who makes an effort to show they understand adolescents' experiences.

Ensure active listening

An active listener is engaged, caring, non-judgmental and empathetic, even (or especially) when they do not agree with others' views or behaviours. While some adolescents' beliefs or opinions may differ from your own, facilitators need to respect and value their views. When we apply active listening, we can help adolescents feel heard, understood, less alone and calmer. By contrast, if we do not listen well, we risk making young people feel as though we are brushing off their concerns or invalidating their feelings. This can leave them feeling defensive, frustrated, alone or hurt.

Here are some tips:

- **Show attentive body language.** Maintaining eye contact and giving affirming nods, looks of concern, or encouraging smiles are all small gestures that let young people know you are paying attention. Even without using words, you can communicate you are listening and that what the adolescent is saying is important.
- **Put away phones or other distractions.** It is important to ensure that you pay attention. Putting away your phone or other devices is one way to do demonstrate that.
- **Ask open-ended, clarifying questions.** These types of questions require more than a 'yes' or 'no' in response and help you gain a deeper understanding of how adolescents feel. These questions have no right or wrong answer; they simply help you gain insights into what adolescents think. For example, you could try any of the following questions:
 - ✓ "Could you explain what you mean by..."
 - ✓ "Why did you get upset when..."
 - ✓ "How do you think you would have felt if..."
- **Mirror what participants say.** Restating and paraphrasing what someone has conveyed to you shows you are listening and ensures you got it right. For example, you could say:
 - ✓ "What I hear you saying is that..."
 - ✓ "Am I correct in understanding that you feel..."

- **Validate what participants express.** You may not fully understand or agree with what a young person says, but nonetheless it is important to validate their feelings. This shows empathy on your part and can help adolescents accept their emotions and feel safe to express themselves. Some responses you might use include:
 - ✓ “It’s understandable that you’re feeling so angry right now”
 - ✓ “Thanks for sharing that with me. It can be hard to share with others when we are feeling sad”
 - ✓ “Sorry to hear you’re feeling stressed; I would feel that way too if I were in your shoes”

Box: Responding to an adolescent’s concerns.

When responding to an adolescent who expresses difficult emotions or experiences:

- **Acknowledge** the experience (example: “So you are having these difficulties”)
- **Validate** the experience (example: “Thank you for sharing; what you experience is important, and we can talk about these things”)
- **Universalize** the experience (example: “Many people your age go through similar difficulties”)
- **Empathize** (example: “If I were in your situation, I would probably feel similarly”)

- **Express positive feedback.** Giving specific immediate praise can help build adolescents’ confidence and self-esteem and encourage them to continue those same behaviours. For example, if someone shares that they have been feeling very stressed, you could respond by saying, “Thank you for being brave and sharing how you’re feeling right now” or “It can be hard to tell others when we are feeling stressed. Well done for sharing it with me.”

Understand the facilitator–adolescent relationship

A positive facilitator–adolescent relationship can affect a young person’s level of engagement, learning and behaviour. The presence of a non-parental or caregiver supportive adult has been recognized as an important factor in the mental well-being of adolescents.⁹ Two key pillars in the facilitator–adolescent relationship that can particularly affect young people’s engagement with social and emotional learning content include:

Maintaining clear communication and respect.

- Communicate and engage with all adolescents the same way – regardless of race, ethnicity, gender or gender identity, disability, immigration status, sexual orientation, religion, culture or other characteristics.
- Do not allow any personal information you learn about young people to bias your interactions.
- Communicate sensitively and clearly with all adolescents about your role in helping them get support if you are concerned about their safety, including whether or not they might end their own life.

- Communicate sensitively and clearly with all adolescents about your role in supporting them through any situations in which someone might be harming them.

Creating an emotionally safe space for learning.

- Respond to student questions and comments with patience and respect to create an open learning environment where different experiences, opinions and ideas are equally valued.
- Make sure the classroom or group is an emotionally safe space where adolescents feel comfortable. Create a space that is nurturing and encourages learning. Participants should only share what they are comfortable with.
- Remember that facilitating a session is different from teaching. When it comes to a student and a teacher, the person in a position of power is almost always the teacher. Consider this when delivering the lessons in this guide and make sure you do not force an adolescent to complete any activities.
- Foster tolerance of adolescents from all backgrounds by:
- Emphasizing the importance of treating one another with respect and kindness, regardless of ethnicity, gender, race, gender identity, disability, sexual orientation or any other status
- Paying particular attention to the needs of adolescents who may require accommodations or who may struggle with particular aspects of an activity, without seeking to single out any adolescents
- Emphasizing that each person's unique strengths contribute to a richer experience for the group and making sure no one is made to feel as if their contribution is less valuable than those of others

Safeguarding

In UNICEF, safeguarding refers to proactive measures taken to limit direct and indirect risks of harm to young people, arising from our work or those associated with it. The risks may include those associated with:

- physical violence (including corporal punishment)
- sexual violence, exploitation or abuse
- emotional and verbal abuse
- economic exploitation
- failure to provide for physical or psychological safety
- neglect of physical, emotional or psychological needs
- harmful practices
- privacy violations.

Key safeguarding principles

Do no harm. This intervention is aimed at supporting the well-being of adolescents. As such, if it is not in the best interests of their well-being to participate in any activity, or if it is likely to cause harm to the adolescent, the facilitator should exercise their agency to avoid this harm. Please ensure consultation with your supervisor in making such a determination.

Informed consent, assent and the right to withdraw. Informed consent is the voluntary agreement of an adolescent or their caregiver to participate in the intervention. Assent is a term used to express willingness to participate in an intervention by adolescents who are legally too young to give informed consent but are old enough to understand the intervention they are participating in. Facilitators

should seek signed assent from all adolescents under the age of 18, along with informed consent of their caregiver.

Participation in any intervention is voluntary, and adolescents have the right to withdraw at any time if they do not feel comfortable participating. It is the facilitator's responsibility to ensure that adolescents are aware of this right.

Forms in Appendix B, C and D can be used to help you ensure that consent or assent is gathered from adolescents and their caregivers, where required.

Note: In school settings, it may not be a requirement to obtain consent from caregivers but from the school administration instead. Please discuss with your supervisor.

Privacy and confidentiality. A private classroom or facilitation space is essential for effective implementation. In addition, assuring participants that you will respect their right to privacy helps create a safe emotional space. When inviting an adolescent to come to you for support, you must ensure they feel safe enough to share their feelings and know that their well-being is your primary concern. You must also inform adolescents that you must break confidentiality if you determine there is risk of imminent harm, either to the adolescent or to someone else. Make clear to them that this may mean speaking with a mental health professional or the adolescent's caregiver.

Box: When a young person may need additional support

If you ever have any questions or concerns about an adolescent participant's behaviour or emotions, you should speak to your supervisor. If you notice one or more of the following in an adolescent, you should consult with your supervisor immediately:

- Extreme or abrupt changes in mood, behaviours or personality
- Sudden overwhelming fear or anxiety
- Extreme feelings of guilt
- Expressions or suggestions of self-harming, suicidal feelings or harming others
- Withdrawal from friends, family or community
- Decline in academic performance
- Use of alcohol or any other substance
- Physical signs of violence or abuse, such as bruises
- School absenteeism or refusal
- Seeing or hearing things that are not present



Appendix

Appendix A:

Action checklist (for facilitators)

- Do you have a plan in place for taking care of your own well-being?

- Have you completed the Psychological First Aid training?

- Do you have an identified supervisor?

- Have you read the module in advance of delivering it?

- Where required, have you asked the appropriate people to sign consent and assent forms prior to the intervention?

- Do you have the necessary time and space for holding the session?

- Have you informed adolescents of the time required?

- Have you informed adolescents that their participation is voluntary?

- Is the space you are using private?

- Do you have the necessary materials for delivery (i.e., paper, markers, tape)?

Appendix B:

Information sheet for adolescent intervention (for caregivers)

Thank you for taking the time to read this. Over the course of the next 18 sessions, this intervention will focus on supporting adolescents' well-being through skill-building focused on emotions, stress management, self-esteem, problem-solving, drug and alcohol knowledge, identity formation and relationships.

If an adolescent is not comfortable with any of the questions or activities, they have the right not to answer or to withdraw from the programme at any time.

The sessions are confidential. If the facilitator notices a risk to the adolescents or to others, it is possible that she/he may break confidentiality for the purpose of ensuring the safety of everyone involved.

If you have any questions about the nature of the sessions, the specific skills covered, or anything else, please do not hesitate to speak to the facilitator. If you consent to your adolescent being part of this intervention, please sign the attached informed consent form and return it to the facilitator.

Appendix C:

Information sheet for adolescent intervention (for adolescents)

Thank you for being here. Over the course of the next 18 sessions, this intervention will focus on supporting your well-being through skill-building focused on emotions, stress management, self-esteem, problem-solving, drug and alcohol knowledge, identity formation and interpersonal relationships.

If you are not comfortable with any of the questions or activities, you have the right not to answer or to withdraw from the programme at any time. If you experience any difficult feelings, please inform the facilitator, and they will assist you in seeking appropriate support.

These sessions are confidential, but if the facilitator notices a risk to you or to others, it is possible that she/he may break confidentiality for the purpose of ensuring the safety of everyone involved.

If you have any questions about the nature of the sessions, the specific skills covered, or anything else, please do not hesitate to speak to the facilitator. If you consent to being part of this intervention, please sign the informed consent form (if you are over 18) or the assent form (if you are under 18) provided and return it to the facilitator.

Appendix D:

Informed consent form

Before you agree to participate, make sure you read and understand the invitation letter and this consent form. Then, make sure you make a checkmark in each box to provide your consent and sign below. If you are under 18 years old, you will need to obtain your parent or guardian's signature on this form, as well as your own.

If you have any questions or concerns about this form, you should talk to someone you feel comfortable with or feel free to speak to the facilitator.

**Adolescent
participant**

**Parent or guardian
of adolescent**

I have read the invitation letter, which explains the project.

I agree to myself or my child taking part in the sessions referred to in the invitation letter.

I understand that confidentiality may not apply if I am a danger to myself or others, or if my adolescent is a danger to herself/himself or to others, or if there is a report of child abuse.

I understand that my or my child's participation is voluntary and that I or my child are free to withdraw consent at any time.

Adolescent participant:

I have read the information sheet and understand all of the points above, and

→ I AGREE to take part in this programme.

Adolescent's name: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Parent or caregiver of adolescent under the age of 18:

I have read the information sheet and understand all of the points above, and

→ I AGREE to let my child take part in this programme.

Parent or guardian's name: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____



Modules

Module 1: Your well-being journey



Learning objectives

- Introduce the sessions and their purpose
- Understand adolescence as a time of important change and opportunity for developing skills and habits that foster well-being now and in the future



Key Messages

- Adolescence is an important time of change – not just physically, but also in the ways we think, feel and relate to others
- In these sessions we will have a chance to:
 - ✓ Discover more about ourselves and who we want to be in this world
 - ✓ Explore information, tools and practices that can empower us to take better care of ourselves and one another



Introduction and Discussion Prompt

- Welcome the group and introduce yourself (if they do not already know you).
- Give the group 5 minutes to discuss the following questions:
 - ✓ If you could travel through time, either to the past or the future, what year would you go to?
 - ✓ Why did you choose that year?
 - ✓ Who would you meet and what would you do?

-
- Say the following to the group:
 - ✓ Our past experiences and our hopes for the future are important and shape how we see ourselves and the world around us. Over the next few weeks, we will be taking a journey as individuals and together as a group.
 - ✓ All of you are at an important stage of your life journey – one in which you are moving from childhood towards adulthood. In addition to physical growth and change, the way we think and feel and our relationships may also go through important changes.
 - ✓ Change can sometimes feel challenging, confusing, scary or overwhelming, but change can also feel exciting or hopeful. It also brings opportunities for growth.
 - ✓ Over the next few weeks, we will be dedicating time to discovering more about ourselves and who we want to be in this world.
 - ✓ This will also be a chance for us to explore different information, tools and practices that empower us to take better care of ourselves and one another now and as we continue to grow. Some topics we will talk about might feel new or different, but I would like to ask that everyone participate to the best of their ability, because your participation is what matters most. If you ever have any questions or wish to talk with someone, I am here to talk or connect you to further resources.

Suggested: Hand out a notebook for adolescents to keep notes and use for all sessions.



Facilitator-led learning

Say the following to the group:

- Your well-being matters – it affects your ability to study, work, play, grow, live and connect with others.
 - As part of the same class or community, we contribute to one another's well-being.
 - During this well-being journey, we'll be thinking about how we take care of our feelings, how we manage stress, how we relate to ourselves and to others, and making decisions and choices that impact our well-being.
 - Here are some of the topics we will be discussing and exploring. (Show the group a printed copy of the journey map and outline the modules accordingly while giving a brief introduction to the topics.)
-



In-session activities

Activity 1: Same and different

Objective: Adolescents have a chance to discover similarities and differences with others in the group.

Instructions:

- Give the group five minutes to discuss the following in pairs: What are five differences and five similarities you can identify between yourselves?
- **Alternative:** Ask adolescents to pair up based on differences – being fans of rival sports teams or having different interests in types of music, movies, books or school subjects.

Group discussion: What was it like to learn something new about the other person? Did anything surprise you about one another?

Say the following to the group: We might find there are many things we have in common as a group and our differences are our unique contributions to the group. The more we share with one another and learn about each other, the more we can grow together and feel like a community. That is what I hope we will do over the next sessions.

Activity 2: Dear Future Me

Objective: Help adolescents express their hopes and identify the things that are important to them in life.

Instructions: Give students 10 minutes to write a letter to their future selves, 10 years from now, using the following template:

Dear Future Me,

I hope that you are...
I hope that you have...
I hope that you feel...
I hope that you don't...
I want you to remember that...

Sincerely,
Me

Debrief the activity as a group and ask them:

- How was it to write this letter?
- What are some of the things you hope for in your future?
- Did writing this letter make you realize what things are important, meaningful and valuable to you in life?

Say the following to the group: Maintaining and protecting our well-being is a very important part of helping us achieve our goals and realizing our full potential. That is why we will focus on discovering ways to better take care of ourselves and one another.



Idea generation and adolescent-directed learning

Discuss expectations and community values as a group using the following questions as a guide:

Expectations:

- What do you hope to gain out of participating in these sessions?
- What would you like to talk about, learn or do during these sessions?
- What kind of a difference would you like to see in yourself and in our group?

Community values:

- What do you think should be some values for how we treat one another?
- What are some of the actions that others can take to make you feel comfortable to participate?
- What can you do to make others feel comfortable to participate?
- What are some ways you would like to contribute to the group?

Write participant ideas on a flip chart or chalkboard.

*Propose if not mentioned: treat each other as equals, regardless of ethnicity, gender, race, gender, gender identity, disability, sexual orientation or other status.

Suggestion box: Facilitators can use an actual box, if available, as this provides for anonymous feedback. If a suggestion box is not available, offer an alternative, such as a bag in which participants can drop anonymous notes to let the facilitator know if they have any feedback, suggestions or questions.



Module 2:

Understanding how I feel



Learning objectives

- Practise identifying a range of emotions
- Practise identifying signs related to emotional responses



Key Messages

- Being able to understand and manage feelings as an important skill to practise.
- Understanding how emotions can affect mental health, learning, work, life and relationships.



Introduction and Discussion Prompt

- Welcome participants
- Give the group five minutes to talk in pairs about two emotions that they feel today (an example of a feelings chart on page 33 [here](#) can be used to help prompt them). Think about how they feel in your body and what thoughts come to mind that you might associate with the emotions.

Debrief as a group and ask: How was that exercise for you? Was it easy or difficult? Did it feel good or strange?

Say to the group: Today we'll talk about emotions, because they affect almost all parts of our lives. They affect our health and well-being; our ability to learn, work, enjoy life and contribute to our community; and our interactions and relationships with others.



Facilitator-led learning

- Say to the group: There are a few things that I would like to say about emotions:
- Emotions are a natural part of how humans react to events that happen around us.
 - Emotions come and go, and it is common to feel many different emotions throughout the day. Some feelings last just a few seconds, while other feelings might linger to become a mood.
 - Emotions can be mild, intense or anywhere in between. The intensity of an emotion depends on the situation and on the person.
 - It is natural for all humans, but especially for adolescents, to feel emotions quite strongly. This is because of the way your body and brain are changing and growing at your age. Making the transition from being a child to an adult is a big change. You might notice strong emotions coming and going. Remember that is natural.
 - Our emotions have a purpose and help us understand the world. For example:
 - ✓ Fear might tell us something is unsafe and that we should be careful and look for safety.
 - ✓ Frustration might tell us something is not going the way we hoped, and that we need to use problem-solving skills or ask for help.
 - ✓ Sadness might mean that we are responding to something that happened, such as a loss, a fight or even a song or a movie.
 - ✓ Joy might tell us something is good for our well-being and that we should do it more often or regularly.
 - These examples of emotions are all different and some are more intense than others, but they all matter.



In-session activities

Activity 1: What do the lyrics say?

Objective: Facilitate discussion about emotions and help adolescents explore, understand, and express different emotions in a relatable and natural way.

Instruction:

- Choose a set of song lyrics ahead of time that emphasizes emotions, such as love, grief, joy or sadness, and that is well-known to adolescents.
- Ask adolescents to think about what emotions are being expressed in the song using the following questions:
 - ✓ What is the song about?
 - ✓ What emotions were expressed in the song?
 - ✓ What phrases did the song use to describe the emotions?
 - ✓ Did the song talk about any actions or behaviours?
 - ✓ How were the emotions and behaviours related?

Debrief as a group using the prompt questions above.

Say to the group: This activity was about recognizing different emotions in ourselves and in the world around us. Now I want to suggest one other way to help us become more aware of how we might be feeling.

Activity 2: Body scan

Objective: Help adolescents practise one way of focusing attention on the present moment and becoming aware of the sensations they feel in different parts of their body.

Instruction: Use the following script or a pre-recorded meditation to guide the class in a body scan exercise.

Say to the group:

- Our bodies say a lot about how we're feeling. The purpose of this exercise is to listen to what our body is saying and become more aware of what we feel.
- As we do this activity, if anyone feels uncomfortable or has overwhelming feelings come up, you may stop.
- Sitting comfortably, start by taking two to three deep breaths in through the nose and out through the mouth.
- As you take your third breath out, close your eyes. Notice how the body feels right now. You might feel a sense of stillness or restlessness, heaviness or lightness, relaxation or tension. Allow 10 seconds of silence.
- Starting at the top of your head, slowly scan down through your body, noticing what feels comfortable and what feels uncomfortable. Allow 10 seconds of silence.
- Remember that you're not trying to change anything; you're just noticing how your body feels as you scan down slowly and notice each and every part of the body, all the way down to the toes. Allow 10 seconds of silence.

Now, let us take two more deep breaths as we come to the end of this exercise. Breathe in and out, breathe in and out. When you are ready, open your eyes and return your attention to the present moment.

- Debrief as a group and ask:
 - ✓ How was this exercise for you? What was hard? What was easy?
 - ✓ What did you notice about yourself during this activity?

Say to the group: This is a simple activity that takes a small amount of time to do anytime that will help us become more aware of what our body is saying and how we are feeling.

*Asking adolescents to focus attention on their bodies can bring up difficult emotions for some who may have had traumatic experiences involving being physically harmed or for those who feel very self-conscious of their bodies. Facilitators should pay attention to nonverbal cues that may signal discomfort, such as agitation, fidgeting or withdrawal. If a participant expresses a difficult feeling, this may be natural and should not necessarily be cause for alarm. In other cases, referral for further support may be needed. Be sure to discuss any concerns with your supervisor and see above for more information.



Idea generation and adolescent- directed learning

Discuss as a group any other suggestions they have for identifying how they are feeling. Some examples to note if not mentioned:

Examples:

- Ask yourself how you are feeling right now. Don't think about the past or the future, but just concentrate on that moment. How are you feeling?
 - Take a moment to connect with a friend and tell them about how your day or week is going. How are you feeling today? What's been on your mind this week? Anything cool that happened lately? Anything been difficult or challenging? What's taking up most of your time these days? Is there anything that you are looking forward to doing next week?
 - Start writing down whatever emotions you feel or try one of these journal prompts: What feelings have I experienced today? What was the best thing about this week? What has been the most challenging thing about this week? What is something I feel grateful for? What is something I am dreading or looking forward to?
 - Go for a walk outside or sit for a moment and try to notice how you feel right now or what your body is trying to tell you about how you feel.
 - Find a song that relates to the mood you are feeling.
-

Module 3:

Accepting how you feel



Learning objectives

- Learn to identify and form beliefs about a range of emotions
- Learn how to apply strategies for emotional acceptance and self-compassion



Key Messages

- Processing emotions means not ignoring feelings as they arise or judging those feelings.
- Accepting emotions does not mean feeling good all the time; it means being OK with feeling a range of emotions, even the difficult ones.
- Different things can influence how people think about feelings; these influences can be cultural or religious or may come from family members, peers and the media.



Introduction and Discussion Prompt

- Welcome the group.
- Give the group five minutes to discuss in pairs if they agree or disagree with the following statements and why:
 - ✓ It's OK for girls to cry, but not boys.
 - ✓ Feeling disappointed means you are an ungrateful person.
 - ✓ Being afraid shows you are a weak.
 - ✓ It's not OK to be angry at your parents.
 - ✓ If you are happy, you will be successful.
 - ✓ People who are frustrated just aren't trying hard enough.

Debrief as a group using the following questions:

- What do our families and cultures say about emotions?
- What are some of the myths that we are taught?
- What effect does this have on how we think about our own emotions?

.....

Say to the group: Often, people are taught that only certain feelings are acceptable, while others might not be because of the way our cultures see them, because of the way media portrays them or because of the communities we come from. So today, I want to focus on accepting all the emotions we feel without judging them.



Facilitator-led learning

Say to the group:

- Highs and lows are all a part of life and a natural part of being human. But sometimes we are taught to reject some emotions because they are considered unacceptable, bad or embarrassing in our cultures.
- In reality, we cannot deny or ignore how we feel because our emotions will find other ways to affect our lives. And there is no reason to ignore them. No emotion is unacceptable. Being able to experience a range of emotions is what makes us human.
- Often, feelings serve a purpose. They might tell us something about ourselves, the environments we are in, or the way we are engaging with others. One example is fear. Sometimes it's helpful to take notice of fear, because it might be telling you that the environment you are in makes you feel unsafe.
- Accepting our emotions means allowing our feelings to be there, allowing ourselves to feel them, and not judging ourselves for feeling how we feel, no matter what anyone says.
- No matter what we think about them and whether we want them or not, feelings come and go in a day, in a week, and throughout our lives – just like different weather comes and goes.
- Since we cannot stop ourselves from having different feelings, it makes sense that we learn about them and how we can manage and deal with them.
- If you are having difficult feelings for days and they don't seem to be passing, or if you feel overwhelmed by your feelings, know that this happens sometimes. Being able to identify and access support in these times is important and a sign of courage.



In-session activities

Activity 1: My feelings balloon

Objective: Help adolescents identify actions they can take that lead to positive experiences.

Instruction:

- Ask participants to draw a balloon on a piece of paper.
- Explain that when the balloon is inflated, that means it's full of happy and good emotions. When it's deflated, that means there aren't as many good emotions.
- Ask participants to list the things they can do to inflate their balloons. Activities listed should be actions that are simple and easy for them to do regularly, for example:
 - ✓ Spend time with friends or family
 - ✓ Participate in activities they enjoy (e.g., art, sports, dancing, playing a game)
 - ✓ Do something outside or in nature (e.g., take a walk, go for a run)
 - ✓ Spend time with a pet

.....

Say to the group:

- We will all have both positive and negative experiences in life, which is why it is natural for everyone to experience a range of different emotions.
- While we cannot always control what happens and what we experience, we can intentionally try to make time and space for doing things that we enjoy – even if it is a simple activity like talking to a friend, spending time with family, taking a walk outside, listening to music you enjoy, or playing a game that you like. These activities do not have to take a lot of time or resources.
- Building positive experiences on a regular basis (for example, taking at least one action a day) can help us have things to look forward to and serve as a reminder that life has positive moments even when we are going through difficult experiences.
- Let us all choose one to two actions we can include in our daily or weekly routines that inflate our balloon. Make sure these are things you can do easily and regularly.

*If facilitator notices that adolescents are listing risky behaviours as activities to inflate their balloon, explain:

- Sometimes people may choose to fill up their balloons with behaviours that can put their well-being at risk – such as substance use or sexual activity. If doing things that might harm you inflates your balloon, I'd encourage you to think about some alternatives that can give you the same feeling without the potential risks. We'll also be talking more about this in future sessions.
-

Activity 2: What would I tell a friend?

Objective: Help adolescents develop a sense of self-compassion and kindness towards themselves.

Instruction: Give students 10 minutes to discuss in groups what they would tell a friend in the following situations to help them feel better:

- Failed an exam
- Had an argument with a parent or caregiver
- Did not make a sports, drama, or dance team
- Did not get invited to a party organized by a group of friends
- Received an unkind remark from a classmate or an unkind comment about her/his appearance on a social media post
- Got scolded by a teacher or fired from a job for a mistake
- Got broken up with by a boyfriend or girlfriend

Now ask the group to think about times when they felt bad in similar situations and discuss the following questions:

- How would you normally respond to yourself in these situations? What would you say and what would your tone of voice be?
 - Do you notice a difference between what you would tell yourself and what you would tell your friend? If so, why?
 - How might your life be different if you talked to yourself the way you would talk to a friend?
-

*Asking adolescents to focus attention on difficult emotions or experiences can be difficult for those who may have had traumatic experiences. Facilitators should pay attention to nonverbal cues that may signal discomfort, such as agitation, fidgeting or withdrawal. If a participant expresses a difficult feeling, this may be natural and should not necessarily be cause for alarm. In other cases, referral for further support maybe needed. Please ensure that this is discussed with your supervisor, and see above for more information.

Say to the group:

- The goal of this activity is to recognize that experiencing difficult emotions is universal and it is important to show kindness to ourselves in these times, just as we might to a good friend.
- The next time you are feeling bad about something, consider what you would say to your friend and think about ways you could show yourself similar kindness.



Idea generation and adolescent- directed learning

- Discuss any additional ways the group identifies to help with accepting our emotions. Some addition examples if not mentioned:
 - ✓ Write phrases that you can post in your notebook, classroom, or at home as self-reminders
 - ✓ Identify a trusted friend or adult who you can talk to for encouragement
 - ✓ Make a playlist of songs to remind you that others go through similar experiences
 - ✓ Write a list of reminders you can tell yourself in difficult moments
 - Say to the group: Today we talked about ways to help us better accept emotions without judging them. Every person's needs are different, so you can choose a strategy that works for you.
-

Module 4:

Expressing how you feel



Learning objectives

- Learn the importance of emotional expression as an outlet for one's feelings
- Understand the difference between methods of expression that are helpful and harmful
- Practise helpful forms of emotional expression



Key Messages

- Expressing our feelings is important and necessary for our well-being
- Many ways to express emotion can be helpful, but some methods of emotional expression may be harmful or dangerous
- We have choices when it comes to how we express our emotions



Introduction and Discussion Prompt

- Welcome the group.
- Give the group five minutes to work in pairs to list ways adolescents could express their emotions. This might be the actions we take when we have certain strong feelings, such as excitement, joy, sadness, anger, fear.
- Debrief with the entire group and ask:
 - ✓ What ideas did you come up with?
 - ✓ Did you come up with a lot of options or just a few? (Some examples if the group isn't forthcoming: cry, laugh, dance, talk, write, sing, draw, make art, run, pray or participate in a spiritual practice)

Say to the group: Today, we will talk about the ways that we express our emotions.



Facilitator-led learning

Say to the group:

- Now that we have talked about identifying and accepting emotions, it's useful to note that expressing emotions is an important next step in taking care of how we feel.
- We all have methods of emotional expression. Some people listen to music, some people write poetry, some dance, some cry.
- Sometimes people can even express their emotions in ways that can hurt themselves or others. **In these cases, I want you to know that you can always come talk to me or another trusted adult so we can work on finding alternative and helpful ways to process your emotions.***
- Keeping our emotions inside and not expressing them is difficult. Think about a balloon, for example. You can't keep filling it up forever without letting it go. And often, even though we think we are holding an emotion in, it may actually reveal itself in other ways. If we use the example of the balloon, what would happen if it just filled and filled? It would burst, right? And our emotions are similar.
- Sometimes we may not feel comfortable or safe enough to express our emotions to others, but there are still other ways to express them and we will talk through some of those today.
- When you are feeling something intensely, the desire to express it might be at its strongest, too, and there are times when emotional expression is difficult to control. This can also happen if an emotion has been held in for so long that it has built up inside of our bodies and minds, like a balloon that bursts.

**If a participant mentions ways of expressing emotions that are harmful to herself/himself or others – such as self-injury or violent behaviour towards others – consider whether intervention is necessary and discuss with your supervisor.*



In-session activities

Activity 1: Drawing

Objective: To encourage adolescents to explore use of drawing as one possible mode of self-expression that might be useful to them.

Instruction:

- Ask adolescents to work in pairs or small groups.
- One adolescent will express an emotion through a drawing only (no writing, acting or talking), without telling the others which emotion it is. The other person or the group will have to guess which emotion is being expressed through drawing.
- Participants can take turns drawing and guessing.

Activity 2: Acting

Objective: To encourage adolescents to explore use of acting as one possible mode of self-expression that might be useful to them.

Instruction:

- Ask adolescents to work in pairs or small groups.
 - One adolescent will express an emotion through acting only (no writing, or drawing), without telling the others which emotion it is. The other person or the group will have to guess which emotion is being expressed through acting.
 - Participants can take turns acting and guessing.
-

Activity 3: Writing

Objective: To encourage adolescents to explore use of writing as one possible mode of self-expression that might be useful to them.

Instruction:

- Give participants time to write a poem or lyrics to a song that describe an emotion.
- Ask for volunteers to share their poem or song or let them display it anonymously for others to read.

*Asking adolescents to focus attention on difficult emotions or experiences can be difficult for those who may have had traumatic experiences. Facilitators should pay attention to nonverbal cues that may signal discomfort, such as agitation, fidgeting or withdrawal. If a participant expresses a difficult feeling, this may be natural and should not necessarily be cause for alarm. In other cases, referral for further support maybe needed. Please discuss with your supervisor and see above for more information.



Idea generation and adolescent-directed learning

- Discuss any additional ways the group identifies to help with expressing our emotions. Some addition examples if not mentioned:
 - ✓ Keeping a journal and writing down how they're feeling
 - ✓ Playing music, drawing, painting, writing or making any form of art
 - ✓ Talking to others
 - ✓ Doing something physical, such as running or moving their bodies in other ways to release some emotion without hurting anyone
-

Supplemental activities to practise emotional regulation

Activity 1: Find your emotion twin

Read the following instructions:

- Form a circle with the whole group.
- Without talking, you are going to think of an emotion and use your body movements to show what someone might look like if they are experiencing that emotion. Look around the room and try to find your emotion twin.
- Stand next to the person who you believe is acting out the same emotion as you. When everyone is done finding their twin, spend three minutes talking about what emotion you were acting out. Was it the same emotion?
- What are other ways someone might express that emotion?
- If you don't think you've found an emotion twin, stand in the centre of the room and share with the others who also haven't found their twin.

Activity 2: Morning, day, and night

Read the following instructions:

- Fold a piece of paper into three.
- In the first section, draw something that reminds you of the morning – it can be a sunrise or something else.
- In the second section, draw something that represents the day, and in the third section, something that represents night-time.
- In each section, write words or draw a picture that represents the different emotions you felt yesterday morning, yesterday during the day, and yesterday evening.
- You don't have to share your whole drawing, but try to pick one thing to share with the person next to you.

Activity 3: Put it outside

Read the following instructions:

- Stand in an open area around the room or outside.
- Think about a time you felt sad or anxious or angry.
- Point to somewhere on your body where you felt that emotion come up. There are no wrong answers.
- Grab that emotion with your hand, take it outside of your body, and put it on the ground next to you.
- Think to yourself, how big is that emotion? Is it the size of a ping pong ball, a baseball, or a basketball?
- Now walk around the room and picture the emotion following you on the ground. Don't try to get rid of it, but don't make it bigger than the size it is now.
- Take a seat.
- Close your eyes and picture the emotion getting smaller and smaller in size. Now it's the size of a small pebble.
- If you still want to feel sad or anxious or angry, that's OK. Put the small pebble in your pocket.
- If you don't want to feel that way, picture yourself throwing the pebble in a pond. Take three deep breaths. Open your eyes

Activity 4: Free writing reflection

Read the following instructions:

- For five minutes, write in your notebook about a time you expressed an emotion in a way that was harmful to you or others.
 - Then write down other ways you could have expressed the emotion that would have been more helpful.
 - When you're done, you don't have to share your whole story with the person next to you, but try to pick something you are comfortable sharing.
-

Module 5:

Understanding stress and identifying stressors



Learning objectives

- Differentiate between helpful and unhelpful stress
- Understand and practise ways to identify and monitor stress



Key Messages

- Stress is what we feel when we are worried or uncomfortable about something.
- Everybody experiences stress, and sometimes this can help us to perform better at work, school or in our daily lives. This might be helpful at times.
- When we experience too much stress or for too long, it can become overwhelming. Overwhelming stress is an unhelpful form of stress.
- Adolescence is time when certain changes happen physically, psychologically, and socially, often resulting in higher levels of stress.



Introduction and Discussion Prompt

- Welcome the group.
- Give participants five minutes to discuss what it might feel like when one experiences too much stress using the following question prompts:
 - ✓ What does it feel like in your body?
 - ✓ How does it affect your thinking?
 - ✓ How might you behave differently?
 - ✓ How might it affect our emotions?
- Debrief responses as a group.
- Say: Stress is what you feel when you are worried or uncomfortable about something. Today we'll be talking about understanding stress, because stress is something we all deal with. Learning about our stress is the first step in managing it.



Facilitator-led learning

Say:

- Adolescents face a lot of pressure in their lives, when in their home environments, school or communities. They also often worry about the future.
- And at this age, your body and brain are developing very quickly, and you're experiencing a lot of changes that sometimes make stress even more overwhelming. This is a natural part of being an adolescent.
- Stress might also arise because of how the world sees us, whether it's because of our identity or our abilities. Being treated unfairly or judged for who we are can be a difficult experience, but it's important to remember that whoever you are, you add value to this community and this world.
- We can't always control what we feel stressed about, and it's natural to feel anxious or worried sometimes. It's also natural to feel like some of the stressors in our lives are unfair.
- Some stress, like stress that comes from being treated unfairly, is difficult to manage. But you should feel comfortable and safe in this community, and we can all think about ways that our group values are contributing to each other's sense of well-being.
- Let's think about some of our sources of stress before we talk more about how to manage that stress.

Lead a group discussion for about five minutes, inviting participants to share.

Remember that while we are talking about the stressors of daily life, you may also find that some stressors feel overwhelming. Asking for help from someone you trust can be helpful in situations like that. You may even notice that your stress is more than a thought or worry, but can cause your body to feel different or affect your behaviours. If you need to discuss a situation or feeling like that, I am here to listen.



In-session activities

Activity 1: My pressure scale

Objective: To support adolescents to monitor their own levels of stress

- **Instruction:** Guide participants through the pressure scale activity by asking them to reflect on experiences they have had and rating them on a scale of one to 10. Use the following prompts: Think about a time when you have felt low stress or no stress. What made you feel this way? On a scale of one to 10, with 10 being the most stressful, think of a low-stress time as a one or two.
- Now think about a time when you have felt a lot of stress. What made you feel this way? On a scale from one to 10, with 10 being the most stressful, think of this as a nine or 10.
- Take a minute to think about how stressed you feel right now. Check in with your body, if that's helpful to you. Use the two examples you just thought of to help guide you. Where do you fall on the one-to-10 scale right now?

Say:

- Understanding the level of stress that you are dealing with and understanding what is causing that stress can help you manage it better.
- Remember that understanding what feels stressful for you is all that matters. Try not to compare yourself to someone else. A nine on your pressure scale might be different from someone else's version of a nine. What matters is that you are able to understand when you are feeling a nine and how you can help yourself or seek help when needed.

.....

Activity 2: Challenge that thought

*If you are in a context of acute distress, such as a humanitarian or displacement setting, this activity may not be appropriate. Similarly, if the stressors that are brought up by adolescents are primarily social in nature, such as violence, discrimination or systemic challenges, this content may not be suitable. Facilitators should exercise caution and refrain from trivializing traumatic events in such circumstances, and if in doubt, should not utilize this content.

Objective: To use cognitive reframing as one possible means of addressing thoughts that contribute to stress

Instructions:

- Have participants work in pairs or independently.
- Ask them to come up with alternatives to the worrying thoughts in the table below that are more helpful.
- Some examples helpful thoughts are provided in the table below as examples of helpful reframing thoughts.

Worrying thoughts	Helpful thoughts
I got some questions wrong on the test. I am so stupid. I'm never going to pass the end-of-year exam or get into university.	I made a few mistakes, but that happens. I'm going to learn from what I got wrong, prepare for the end-of-year exam and do my best. One test is not going to ruin everything.
I don't know anyone in this new class. What if no one talks to me? What if no one likes me? What if I don't make any new friends? It is going to be the worst year ever.	It might take some time to meet new friends, but I have done this before. It feels difficult, but I can try to introduce myself or join some activities as a way to meet new friends.
She didn't text me back. I must have done or said something wrong. She's probably mad and hates me.	There is probably a good reason why she didn't text me back. I can't read her mind, but I can ask her if she got my text and if everything is OK.
My parents are going to find out about what I did. They will never forgive me. I am such a failure.	I made a mistake, but no one is perfect. I can own up to my actions and do better in the future. One mistake doesn't mean I am a failure. I can move on from this.

Say:

- Unhelpful thinking often affects the way we feel and act.
- We can practise replacing our negative thoughts with ones that are more helpful.
- When you are having a negative thought, here are some questions you could ask yourself:
 - ✓ Am I only thinking about the worst things that could happen? What are some other possibilities of what could happen?
 - ✓ Is this true? Is my thinking based on facts?
 - ✓ What is a time that I have overcome something similar?
 - ✓ How might a good friend think about this situation?
- Letting go of our negative thoughts or at least adding in some more positive thoughts might not make a problem go away. But it can help bring your stress to a manageable level.



Idea generation and adolescent-directed learning

Discuss as a group for five minutes:

- What are some ways we can better support each other in this group to feel less stressed?
- What activities might be helpful?

Suggestion box or feedback: I'll give you a minute to write a note or raise your hand. There are no right or wrong comments. Feel free to say anything you are thinking or feeling.



Module 6:

Coping with pressures



- Learning objectives**
- Differentiate between coping mechanisms that are helpful and those that may be harmful
 - Foster helpful habits that can support in the management of stress
 - Practise helpful coping mechanisms



- Key messages**
- Encouraging certain habits can be useful in promoting well-being.
 - Dealing with pressure is an important skill that we can develop to help us manage stress. There are many ways that you could choose to manage the pressure you face, and these are called coping strategies.
 - Some methods of coping can be harmful, while others can help channel the energy that stress produces into strategies that help us.



- Introduction and discussion prompt**
- Welcome the group.
 - Break participants into groups of three or four for a five-minute discussion.
 - Ask them: When you feel stress from things like school, relationships with others, or conflicts with your family, what kinds of things do you do to deal with the pressure?
 - After five minutes, debrief with the entire group. Ask:
 - ✓ What ways did you come up with?
 - ✓ How do these strategies help you?
 - ✓ What about any of these strategies may not help you in the long term or even be harmful to you?
 - Say: Coping is something we do to reduce stress. Stress is a part of life, so how we cope with stress is really important. Remember that while we are talking about the stressors of daily life, you may also find that some stressors are overwhelming. Asking for help from someone you trust can be helpful in situations like that. If you need to discuss a situation like that, I am here to listen



Facilitator-led learning

Say:

- Remember your pressure scale from last session. Think about the things that make your pressure scale go up. For example, maybe it's preparing for an exam.
- Let's say you're stressed because you haven't studied enough. One way to reduce the pressure might be to ignore the exam, but that might not benefit you in the long run. Another way is to study with friends the week before so that you don't feel overwhelmed when the time for the exam comes. Both of these are coping strategies, but one will help you pass an exam while the other will likely just make things worse, right?
- I know stress affects everyone in different ways, and that not all stress is the same, especially stress about situations that are difficult to control, but there are certain habits we can practise that help our well-being and can even help us feel less stressed overall.
- Discuss the following as a group for five minutes.
- Let's take a short habits quiz.
 - ✓ How much sleep do you usually get?
 - ✓ Most people need 8-10 hours of sleep a night, and we are getting less and less sleep these days, which can contribute to feelings of stress.

Be mindful that some adolescents may share sleeping spaces with multiple family members and it may not be possible to get a full night's sleep based on everyone's schedules. If this is the case, you can talk with them to identify ways to improve their situation or find rest in other settings.

- ✓ How much physical activity do you get?
 - ✓ Physical activity can be both enjoyable and a necessary release of chemicals that restore balance in your body and mind. Try to do something physically active for 30 to 60 minutes each day. Don't forget walking to school, doing chores at home, exercise, sports, dance – all of those count.
- ✓ Do you feel like you use screens too much?
 - ✓ Get enough time away from your screen. It is tempting to be on your phone or on your computer all day, but sometimes this can become excessive, especially if it makes you feel disconnected from others. I know that sometimes being on your phone or using social media can also make you feel connected, so I'm not suggesting that you should isolate yourself. But reducing screen time has actually been shown to be a good way to manage one's well-being.

Do not raise the following in situations of acute food crisis or food insecurity.

- ✓ Do you have a balanced diet?
 - ✓ Whenever possible, ensure that you are taking care of your body by having meals that contain fresh ingredients consisting of fruit and vegetables and are rich in protein, which has been shown to support our well-being.
- Not all stress is the same. Some stressful situations come and go, while others are long-lasting. Some can be altered by a change in circumstances, while others are very difficult to control. Some sources of stress can be really unfair, and it's understandable to feel frustrated about that. Remember that I am here to listen if you need someone to talk to, and that, as a group, we can live our values in a way that contributes to each other's well-being.
- Now let's think about the pros and cons of different coping strategies in certain situations to identify what might work best for each of us.



In-session activities

Activity 1: My ways to cope with stress

Objective: To promote critical thinking and support adolescents to make decisions about the risks and benefits of different coping mechanisms

- Ask the group to brainstorm a list of coping strategies for stress that may not be very helpful or even harmful. Examples include using substances or taking actions that could harm themselves or others.
- Write their ideas on a flip chart or chalkboard.
- Next ask the group to brainstorm a list of positive coping strategies for stress. Examples include calling a friend, taking a break to do something fun or relaxing, sleeping early, doing something physical.
- Ask each participant to write down three things they could try the next time they are feeling stressed.

- Say:
- We all have different strategies we use to cope. It is important for us to be aware of coping strategies that might help relieve stress but might also cause other problems or place our well-being at harm.

Optional activity: Mindfulness scavenger hunt

Facilitators should discuss with their supervisors whether this exercise is appropriate for the target population, given contextual factors that may trivialize distress or may render it unfeasible to complete the activity because of safety or logistical considerations.

Objective: To practise mindfulness as a useful technique for managing stress

Say:

- A lot of people use a skill called mindfulness to cope with stress, and this involves trying to be present in every moment, without thinking about the future or the past, and being in touch with your senses.
- Mindfulness has been shown to reduce stress because it helps us to stay focused on where we are in the present. It can reduce a lot of the anxieties that we might feel about the past or future. It's something that's at least worth a try, and there are many ways in which to practise mindfulness. The main motto of mindfulness is to be here now.
- We've actually practised some mindfulness techniques already when we did a body scan in Module 2.
- Now we're going to do a mindfulness scavenger hunt using our five senses. I'll read you a list of attributes. You will look around the room or imagine something that fits the description and then write it on your paper.
 - ✓ See: Look around the room to find something that's round
 - ✓ Taste: Think of something that tastes sweet
 - ✓ Feel: Imagine something that feels soft
 - ✓ Smell: Either imagine or pay attention here to find something that smells pleasant
 - ✓ Hear: Listen to the surroundings or think of a time you hear something that sounds good

Say: Of course, the goal here is not just to find these things, but to focus on the present. You can use similar techniques if they help reduce your anxiety by focusing on your senses when you eat, when you listen to music, when you go outside, or even just when you are lying in bed.



**Idea generation
and adolescent-
directed learning**

→ Ask a few volunteers to share their list of how they can cope with stress (Activity 1) to the group.

Examples if not mentioned: Go for a walk, get a snack, text a friend, talk to my mom, listen to music.

Say: I hope hearing about other's lists gives you some more ideas about what you might try if you feel stressed.

Suggestion box or feedback: I'll give you a minute to write a note or raise your hand. There are no right or wrong comments. Feel free to say anything you are thinking or feeling.



Supplementary activities for stress management

Activity 1: Group storytelling

Read the following instructions:

- We are going to create a story about managing our stress, one sentence at a time.
- Each of us will add one sentence to the story.
- End your sentence with “and then...” so the next person can add their sentence. I will start: “John’s heart started to beat faster and he realized he was stressed and then...”
- Then the person next to me finishes that sentence, for example, they might say, “He thought to himself, ‘What is making me feel stressed?’ and then...”
- Once we have identified why John is stressed, three people will add a sentence describing an unhelpful way he tries to cope with that stress.
- Finally, we will go around the whole room and each person will add a sentence describing a helpful coping mechanism John uses to manage his stress.

Activity 2: Worry window

Read the following instructions:

- Pick a time of day that suits you when you will have 15 to 30 minutes of privacy to think or write.
- Schedule that time as your daily ‘worry window’.
- During your worry window, allow yourself time and space to think about your worrying thoughts. Write down or feel free to express the things that you are worried about in whatever way feels right.
- Once your worry window is closed, try to refocus your attention away from the worrying thoughts so that the stress is behind the closed window. It hasn’t gone away, but you can try to go about your day without having to constantly carry your worrying thoughts around with you.
- It takes practice, and it isn’t perfect, but opening and closing your worry window for a limited time each day can help to ensure that the stress of daily life doesn’t overwhelm you.

Activity 3: Observing objects

Read the following instructions:

- Pick an object around you (indoors or outdoors). It can be anything.
 - Observe that object for five minutes.
 - This might feel like a long time to observe one object, but the purpose is to help you focus on the here and now by observing one thing for an extended period.
 - When you’re done, talk to the person next to you about what you noticed about the object. Did anything distract you? How did you bring your attention back to the object, and how did you feel while doing the activity?
-

Module 7:

Finding your strengths



Learning objectives

- Understand the things that affect our self-esteem
- Practise identifying personal strengths as a way to build and maintain self-esteem



Key messages

- Self-esteem is how we feel about ourselves.
- Adolescence is a time when our self-esteem is very important and is influenced by many factors.
- Learning to view oneself positively and to see value in one's uniqueness is important for building and maintaining self-esteem.
- Having good self-esteem promotes well-being.



Introduction and discussion prompt

- Welcome the group.
- Give participants five minutes to discuss in pairs what they notice to be strengths in their partner using some of the prompts provided below. Explain that strengths can be personal characteristics, abilities, knowledge, or simply things that are unique about someone. Everyone has value and strengths, regardless of their identity, their abilities or any other characteristic.
- Prompts:
 - ✓ What does your partner love to do?
 - ✓ What are your partner's interests?
 - ✓ What are some positive things you would say about your partner?
 - ✓ What are some ways that your partner has shown kindness to others?
 - ✓ What characteristics or accomplishments might make your partner unique?
- Ask the group to share some of their partner's strengths and how they felt hearing someone else speak about their strengths.



Facilitator-led learning

Say:

- Self-esteem is the way we feel about ourselves. There are many things that can influence how we feel about ourselves. What are some of these things? What makes you feel good about yourself? What might make you feel bad about yourself?

Optional: You can write down the group's responses on a flip chart or simply discuss as a group.

- Many factors influence our self-esteem, including the way that we are treated by others, but each of us is unique in our own way.
- No one is perfect or good at everything, but everyone has personal strengths, regardless of identity, race, disability, gender, sexual orientation, wealth or any other characteristic. Sometimes the world can treat different people differently, and while I understand that that is difficult, I want us to use this time to think about what makes us unique as people and how that is a strength.
- Recognizing our personal strengths helps us build and maintain our self-esteem, and this can really help with our well-being.



In-session activities

Activity 1: My personal strengths list

Objective: To support the use of strengths-based thinking as a means of building self-esteem

Instruction: Ask everyone to think of their personal strengths and write them down on a piece of paper.

- Write at least five personal strengths on this sheet of paper, only for yourself to see. Over time, this list will grow and you should add to it regularly.
- To start, think about the conversation that you just had in pairs.
- Some people are strong at creative tasks like writing or painting, and so one of their strengths would be creativity. Some people are strong at trying out new things, so one of their strengths would be that they're adventurous.
- Think also about what makes you unique. You may be different from others in ways that people respect and admire, or sometimes you may be different in ways that others don't appreciate, but even these forms of uniqueness are strengths.



Idea generation and adolescent-directed learning

Now we'll discuss the following question as a group for five minutes: What are some ways that you can remind yourself of your strengths during the day and throughout the week?

Here are some ideas:

- Practise with your friends. Seeing value in others is as important as seeing value in yourself, because we're all part of the same world.
- Post your list somewhere you can see it and add to it every day.
- Ask yourself each night, What's one thing I did well today?
- Keep an affirmation jar, and each time you think of a strength, write it down and put it in a jar.

Suggestion box or feedback: I'll give you a minute to write a note or raise your hand. There are no right or wrong comments. Feel free to say anything you are thinking or feeling.



Module 8:

Understanding what you say to yourself



- Learning objectives**
- Recognize that self-criticism is a common challenge and that it can have an impact on self-esteem and well-being
 - Learn and practise ways to challenge negative self-talk



- Key messages**
- Sometimes we can be overly critical of ourselves, of the way we look, of what we can and cannot do well, of how we behave, or of the way in which we interact with others. Sometimes we do this because of the culture and social norms around us and our environmental influences.
 - It is hard to challenge these norms and break our cycles of thought. But we can practise skills to help us and, by doing, empower ourselves.
 - Self-criticism is common, but challenging the negative things that we say to ourselves can help us develop a more supportive self-image.



- Introduction and discussion prompt**
- Welcome the group.
 - Today, we're going to be talking about self-talk. These are the things we say to ourselves.
 - What we say to ourselves can be encouraging and positive or it can be negative and make us feel like we're not good enough.
 - Many factors can contribute to how we talk to ourselves, including what we can and cannot do well, our relationships and even social media.
 - In groups of three to four, take five minutes to discuss some critical or harsh words people your age might often say to themselves.

After five minutes has passed, debrief as a whole group.

- Did your group share any common thoughts or ways of talking to yourselves?
- Self-criticism is not an easy topic. And we all struggle with it, so practising ways to challenge it is important.

Additional consideration: If the group is hesitant to share, it is not necessary to force them. You can instead share some examples of critical thoughts one might have:

- ✓ I can't do anything right, I always mess up, I'm not as good as X, X doesn't like me, I'm such a failure, everyone is always disappointed in me, I'll never be happy, I'm not as pretty as X, I'm not as smart as X, etc.



Facilitator-led learning

Say:

- What we say to ourselves can be supportive or critical. We call this negative or positive self-talk.
 - For example, many people experience negative self-talk around their bodies.
 - Negative self-talk is critical and unkind. In the case of body image, this means seeing pictures or having some idea of what a body should look like, and then criticizing ourselves for not looking that way. We might say, "I'm too fat. No one will love me if I look like this" or "I don't have any muscles. People must think I'm weak."
 - Often, how we talk to ourselves is affected by comparing ourselves to what we see in the external world, whether it's how we look, what possessions we have or don't have, or what we are not especially strong at.
 - Sometimes negative self-talk is also fuelled by the way we are treated by others. I know this is difficult, but remember that it is never OK to treat someone who is different from you badly.
 - Positive self-talk, on the other hand, means being kind to yourself and acknowledging your own unique features and characteristics, because each of us is beautiful and unique in some way.
 - For all people, negative self-talk is a common challenge, and it can have a real impact on our self-esteem and well-being.
 - Today we will try challenging our negative self-talk.
-



In-session activities

Activity 1: Challenging negative self-talk

Objective: To develop skills for promoting a positive self-image and practice self-compassion.

Instructions:

- Conduct this activity as a full group.
- This activity should take approximately 10 minutes, total, so about three minutes per scenario. You can lengthen the time if you add more scenarios.
- Read the scenarios in the table below out loud and then ask participants to discuss examples of negative self-talk and examples of what they could say instead.
- If participants have a hard time coming up with negative self-talk, you can use the example provided, but still prompt for what can be said instead.
- If they do not mention ways to challenge negative self-talk, share the examples provided.

Say:

- I'm going to read you some scenarios out loud and then we will discuss as a group some examples of negative self-talk and ways we could change that to more positive self-talk.

Read each scenario below and then ask the following two questions.

- What kind of negative things might someone say to themselves?
- What could someone say instead?

Scenario	Negative self-talk	What could you say instead?
Struggling with a homework assignment	I don't understand this. I am so stupid. I can't figure this out. I will never be good at math.	This is difficult, and I don't understand how to do it yet. But I can ask for help and figure this out. With practise I can get better.
Scrolling through social media	Everyone looks so much better than me and has much nicer clothes. I hate the way I look. No wonder no one likes me.	There is not one standard of beauty. There are many things that make me beautiful too. Having nice things or clothes isn't the only thing that matters and what I see online is not always reality. My true friends like me for who I am.
Having a misunderstanding with a friend	Why does this always happen to me? No one understands me and everyone hates me. My life is terrible.	It is hard when my friend misunderstands me. There will always be ups and downs even between friends, but I can try to work things out with them. I can also find other friends to turn to.

Activity 2: What would my best friend say?

Objective: To promote the practice of self-compassion

Instructions: Give everyone five minutes to write down ways they can challenge self-criticisms and ask volunteers to share.

- If you said “I’m so ugly,” what would your best friend say to you? What if you said, “I always do everything wrong; I am such a failure” or “No one likes me”?
- Write down ways that your friend would challenge these criticisms. What are ways you could challenge them yourself?
- Challenging negative thoughts is a learned skill that we get better at as we practise. It’s a lifelong journey, but it is something that we can all do.



Idea generation and adolescent-directed learning

- Discuss as a group for five minutes strategies you could use to help with shaping a more accurate view of yourself.
- Any ideas of how we might better support each other here in this group or other adolescents in our community?

Suggestion box or feedback: I’ll give you a minute to write a note or raise your hand. There are no right or wrong comments. Feel free to say anything you are thinking or feeling.



Supplementary activities for self-esteem

Activity 1: Silhouette drawings (20 minutes)

Read the following instructions:

- Get a large piece of paper or tape four pieces of paper together.
- Write your name on the top. Draw a silhouette of yourself – either your whole body or just your head.
- Inside the silhouette, write at least five positive things about yourself.
- Everyone, put your drawings on the floor in a circle and each person should walk around the room and write one positive thing about that person outside of the silhouette.

Activity 2: The full story (10 minutes)

Read the following instructions:

- When we say or think something negative about ourselves, we often are not telling the full story. Let's use an example from earlier: "I am so stupid; I will never be good at math."
 - Maybe right now, you are struggling with the math skills you are currently learning in class - and that's OK! What are other statements you can say that give us the full story? One example is, "I am not good at solving algebraic equations, but I am good at multiplication."
 - Another example is, "I used to be bad at writing, but now I like it. I am capable of getting better at things."
 - Now we see more of the full story. When you have a negative thought, remind yourself there is more to the story!
 - Write down a self-criticism and then underneath, write things you can say to yourself to tell more of the story.
 - When you're done writing, put your pencil down and we can have a couple of volunteers share.
-

Module 9: Navigating life's challenges: Problem-solving



Learning objectives

- Acknowledge that problems are a part of our daily lives and that while we may feel challenged by problems, we can also gain skills and confidence by solving problems
- Support adolescents to apply practical problem-solving strategies



Key messages

- In our day-to-day lives, problems will arise that will require us to apply problem-solving skills.
- While problems may be challenging sometimes, solving problems can help to build our self-esteem and promote well-being.
- Practical strategies for problem-solving include breaking down the problem into smaller pieces, trying multiple solutions and working with others.
- Asking for help can also be useful when faced with a problem.



Introduction and discussion prompt

- Welcome the group.
Say:
 - This session is about problem-solving. In our day-to-day lives, we will all face challenges and problems to solve, whether we're talking about math problems, a broken bicycle, or a fight with a friend.
 - Problems are a part of life, and I know they can be frustrating and challenging, but they can also be opportunities to develop skills that will help us feel more capable of navigating through our lives.
 - Let's get into groups of five to six and take five minutes to discuss the following questions:
 - ✓ What are some of the everyday problems that adolescents in our community often encounter?
 - ✓ How do they go about solving them?

Bring the larger group back together and debrief for five minutes:

- What were some of the helpful ways to solve problems that you identified?
- Did you also identify unhelpful ways?
- Was there a lot of agreement in your group or did you disagree?



Facilitator-led learning

Say:

- Problem-solving is a useful skill to handle life's challenges. There are many different ways to go about doing this.
- If you have to deal with a challenge, it's always a good idea to take a moment to fully understand what the problem is that you're trying to solve before acting on it. Sometimes the problem and the goal we are trying to achieve is very clear, and it doesn't require much thought. Sometimes it might need some more thought.
- Once you've identified the problem, you can try some strategies to solve it. Here are some useful ways to go about doing this:

- **Breaking down a problem into smaller pieces**

Sometimes we get overwhelmed by problems because they seem big and unmanageable. This is understandable. It happens. One way to deal with this might be to ask yourself if you can break down the problem into smaller pieces.

- **Try multiple ways to get to the solution**

Even if a problem has a solution, getting there might take a few attempts. It can feel difficult to keep trying sometimes, but it can also help us to try and try again.

- **Work together**

Often, we might face problems that we have to solve with others rather than by ourselves. Have you ever seen two people rowing a boat together? Imagine what would happen if they were rowing in different directions. It's important that they work together. Otherwise, their problem (getting where they want to go) wouldn't be solved. Working with others is an important part of problem-solving.

- **Get help**

We all need help to solve some problems, so remember that it's OK to ask for help. It shows strength and courage to ask for help when you need it.

Let's practise some of these strategies for problem-solving.

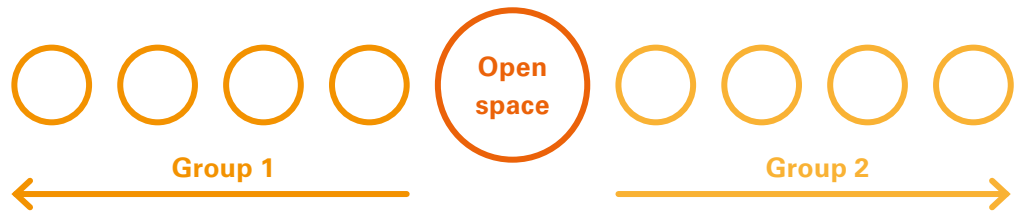
Alternative activity: traffic jam

Objective: To practise cooperation and perseverance as techniques for problem-solving

Instructions:

→ Divide participants into two equal groups. If there is an odd number, one person can serve as a traffic monitor. Ask each group to stand in a line. Group 1 team members face Group 2 team members with an open space between the two groups.

The set up should look like this:



- The goal is for each group get to the other side, but there are some rules:
- ✓ You can only move forward and not backwards.
 - ✓ Each person can only move into an empty space in front of them or around a person who is facing them.
 - ✓ You cannot pass anyone from your own group.
 - ✓ If there is no way for you to move to another space, you will have to restart by moving back into the original set up.
- You can try as many times as necessary to complete the task.

The task is over if the group manages to solve it. If the group was not able to complete the task with the allotted time, the task can be considered over as well.

Debrief as a group for five minutes:

- How do you feel your team did?
- How did the activity make you feel? If a difficult emotion arose, how did you handle it? If a positive emotion arose, tell us more about that.
- What did the team need to do to successfully get untangled and into the right order?

Say:

- From this activity we see that sometimes we need to work with others to solve a problem and we often need to try out a number of solutions before we find one that works.
- Even if this exercise felt a bit silly, it's good practice for solving problems we face in our daily lives.
-



Idea generation and adolescent-directed learning

- Discuss as a group for five minutes other ways you can practise problem-solving skills. For example:
- Play more problem-solving games.
- Identify a new skill that one might want to develop, whether it's swimming, riding a bike, or playing a musical instrument. These will all need problem-solving skills to achieve, and they can be fun, too!
- Think about any other strategies that the group would like to suggest.

Suggestion box or feedback: I'll give you a minute to write a note or raise your hand. There are no right or wrong comments. Feel free to say anything you are thinking or feeling.



Module 10: Navigating life's challenges: Problem management



Learning objectives

- Recognize and accept that some problems may not have a clear solution
- Identify and manage difficult feelings that come when facing a problem you might struggle to solve
- Identify and practise key steps for managing problems



Key messages

- Sometimes the personal problems we face may not always have a clear solutions, which can cause us to feel overwhelmed or distressed.
- Following problem-solving steps can help us better overcome and manage personal problems that are not easy to solve.
- We do not need to face all problems alone, and seeking support is sometimes necessary and important.



Introduction and discussion prompt

- Welcome the group.
- In groups of five to six, let's take five minutes to discuss the following question: What might be some problems that you can think of that don't have one clear solution?

Bring the group back together.

- I'm sure that you could probably think of many things in the world or in your own life that might feel like complex situations.
- Today we will focus on exploring some steps can help us better manage personal problems that are not easy to solve.

Some problems are very concerning and may cause a lot of distress for adolescents, and facilitators should pay special attention to the reactions of adolescents while this topic is being discussed. You should use the approach of inviting adolescents to seek support when they need it, but some situations may also require more active intervention. Please ensure to discuss with your supervisor if you are approached by a young person facing a particularly complex problem or if you notice a young person in distress.



Facilitator-led learning

Say:

→ To demonstrate how to use problem management, here's a problem that we can work through:

My friend texted me to say they don't think we can be friends anymore after I lied about what I was doing this weekend. I wanted to hang out with other people for a change, but my friend was hurt by my actions.

This is a complex problem, so let's think about problem management and how it might apply. Let's go through the steps:

1. Identify the problem and how you feel about it.
 - ✓ What is the problem is and how you feel about the problem?
 - ✓ Remember the skills you've already gained, such as understanding your feelings, paying attention to your body and using ways of coping with difficult feelings that are helpful for you.
 - ✓ Some examples of the problem and how you might feel are: The problem is that I feel like my friend dominates my time and I was afraid to tell them, I have lost the trust of a friend that I really want in my life, I feel sad, hurt, guilty, sorry, misunderstood.
2. Identify what your goal is.
 - ✓ What might be a realistic goal be that would help you in this situation?
 - ✓ Example: My goal is to regain my friend's trust, feel less hurt by my friend's text, be more truthful about my own feelings and needs, take some time apart from this friend.
3. Identify what you might need to reach your goal.
 - ✓ What information or support might you need to help you reach your goal?
 - ✓ Examples: I need help writing a letter of explanation and apology, so maybe I'll ask my older sister. I need help to understand why I didn't tell the truth, so maybe I can talk to someone I trust. I need help explaining to my friend that I can't spend every weekend with them, so maybe I can ask one of our common friends for advice.
4. Identify what obstacles you might face in reaching your goal.
 - ✓ Are there challenges that you might face in achieving this goal?
 - ✓ Examples: My friend is very hurt and is not ready to listen to me. I understand what I did was wrong, but I had a reason and I am afraid to express it. My friend has already decided that we can't be friends, so an apology or an explanation might not help.

-
5. Identify some possible solutions and actions.
 - ✓ What are some solutions and actions that can help you deal with the problem and possible obstacles?
 - ✓ Examples: I could try to explain and apologize. I could accept that my friend does not want to be friends anymore and try to be respectful of that. I can try to regain my friend's trust over time by being more honest. I can take a timeout from this friendship while I try to understand my feelings and needs.
 6. Take action.
 - ✓ What solutions do you feel might be best to try first? You may want to try a solution that feels realistic, something that has worked well for you in the past with a similar problem, and one that will not put your well-being at risk.
 - ✓ Examples: With help from my sister, I have written a letter that explains my actions and apologizes for lying. It also says that I would like to regain my friend's trust if we can find a way. I could do nothing and accept that my friend has lost trust in me and that I feel misunderstood in this relationship. I could ask my friend to come over this weekend, but tell them that I will also be inviting other people and it is their choice if they come or not. I could tell my friend that I understand how important trust is and let them know I will be more truthful from now on.

Say:

This example shows that some problems are complex and will require us to make decisions based on our own needs and feelings. The steps that we've gone through can be useful for managing some of the challenging personal problems we face in our lives.



In-session activities

Activity 1: My life is like a movie

Objective: To practise strategies that can support long-term management of complex challenges

Instructions: Break participants into groups of three to four and give them 10 minutes to write short scripts for a few scenarios. Then ask volunteers to act out their script.

→ Remember that we are in a safe space. This is a place for you to share what you are comfortable sharing. If you experience any sort of discomfort during the activity, please reach out.

There are two main characters, A and B, who are best friends. A told B a personal secret and asked her/him to keep it confidential. Later, A found out that B revealed this secret to others, causing A to feel hurt and embarrassed. A doesn't know, but B was angry at the time because A had laughed when someone made a joke at B's expense.

Write a short script of the conversation between A and B. Try to apply the strategies we just discussed to their problem.

Here are some questions to think about:

- What is the problem for A? What is the problem for B?
- What goal might A have in this situation? What goal might B have in this situation?
- What might A need to navigate this problem and achieve her/his goal? What might B need? Anyone that might be able to support them?
- What obstacles might A and B face in reaching their respective goals? Are there ways to overcome their obstacles or do they need to shift their goals?
- What are some of the solutions or responses that A might come up with for this problem? And what about B? Are her/his solutions the same or different? Are there some that seem better than others?
- What actions will A take? What actions will B take?

Ask one or two groups to present their skit to the larger group and then take five minutes to debrief using the following questions for discussion:

- What were some of the ways in which A and B could navigate the problem?
- What were some of the outcomes of their conversation?
- Many of the problems in our lives will require management over a period of time, and problem management is a skill that we can all learn and develop.



Idea generation and adolescent-directed learning

Say:

- Problem management is a skill that we will spend our lifetimes learning. I mentioned a few possible strategies that could be helpful, and these include:
 - ✓ Reaching out for help from someone you trust. Asking for help is a sign of strength, particularly in difficult situations.
 - ✓ Using the strategy of trying a number of ways to manage a problem. Remember, we can always try and try again.
 - ✓ Focusing on coping with the uncertainty of a problem that might not have a clear solution, using some of the skills that we practised before, such as doing things we enjoy and taking time to relax.
- Does anyone have any other strategies that may be used for problem management?

Suggestion box or feedback: I'll give you a minute to write a note or raise your hand. There are no right or wrong comments. Feel free to say anything you are thinking or feeling.



Supplementary activities for problem-solving and problem management

Activity 1: The problem-solving toolbox

Read the following instructions:

- Think of a problem that you faced, what it felt like to face it and the ways in which you responded
- Consider what skills solving that problem taught you, and consider what it taught you about yourself. Now imagine putting it inside a toolbox.
- Think of this as the place you go when you need to solve other problems. What are some of the resources in your toolbox? And what are the problems that are already in there that prove that you have the skills necessary to solve the problem you are facing?
- Every time you solve a problem, be sure to add it to your toolbox so that it becomes a place you can go to, inside of yourself, to draw upon when you face the challenges that life might bring

Activity 2: Dilemma

Read the following instructions:

- Let's say you have two friends, Addo and Pablo. You three were very close but they recently had a fight.
 - Addo and Pablo both blame each other for their fight, and the three of you no longer hang out with each other.
 - You personally feel sad because two of your best friends are fighting, but you also feel torn because Addo and Pablo both complain to you about the other one.
 - Using problem management strategies, think of ways that you can manage the challenges associated with the dilemma.
-

Module 11:

Making decisions about substances



Learning objectives

- Explore why adolescents might experiment with substances, while also identifying the risks and consequences of substance use
- Help adolescents examine social norms around substance use based on facts
- Practise skills to make informed decisions about substance use



Key messages

- There are different reasons why one may or may not choose to use substances.
- Substances are especially harmful to children and teens, and can also be harmful for adults.
- While using substances may feel satisfying for some people, substances can put you physically at risk and negatively affect your mental health, personal relationships, academic performance and future.



Introduction and discussion prompt

- Welcome the group.
- Say:
- Let's get into groups of five or six and take five minutes to discuss this question: Is using substances just a normal part of growing up?
- Take five minutes to debrief with the whole group and ask:
 - ✓ How common do you think substance use is?
 - ✓ What is your community's perception of substance use?



Facilitator-led learning

Say:

- It's common to have the impression that using substances is something that most adolescents do.
- For example, out of every 10 people your age, how many do you think drink alcohol?
 - ✓ Across the world, seven out of 10 people your age do not drink alcohol.¹⁰
- And how many people do you think have tried marijuana or cannabis?
 - ✓ Across the world, less than half of all adolescents have tried marijuana or cannabis, and even fewer use it regularly.¹¹

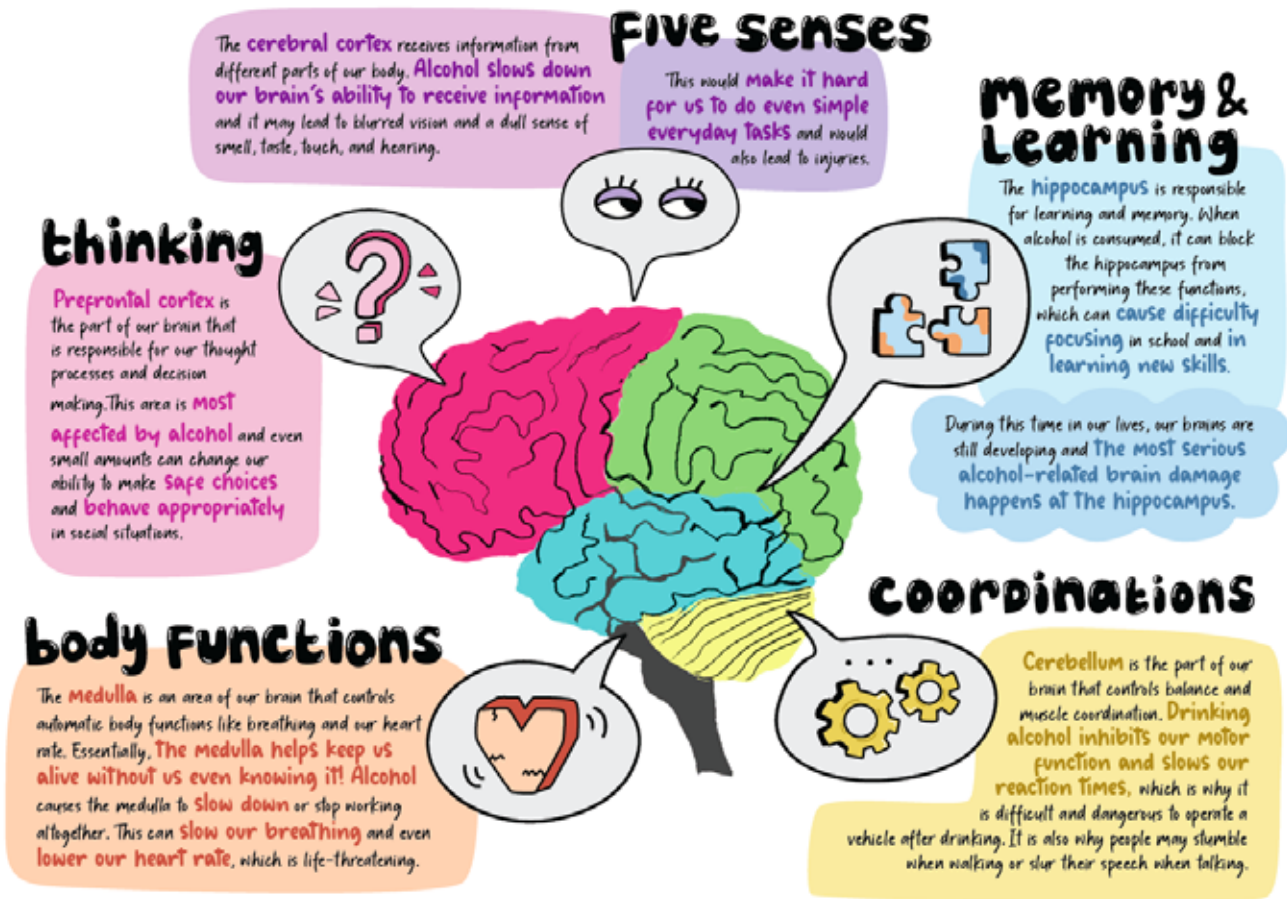
Discuss as a group for five minutes:

- What might make people your age want to use or not want to use substances?
- There are things that might pull us towards substance use or push us away from substance use. For example, our friends might influence us to use or not use substances. What are some of the things that pull or push you towards or away from substances?

Pull	Push
A way to cope with stress	Understanding and trying effective ways to cope with stress that do not involve substances
It feels exciting	There might be other ways to feel excited that aren't as harmful, like sports or dancing
The way using substances might make one feel in the moment	The feeling of being sick after using substances
Peer pressure to use substances	Feeling like we want to resist peer pressure
Parental or caregiver use of substances	Parents or caregivers discuss the risks of substance use
Advertisements and glamorous depictions of substance use in the media	Information about harmful effects of substance misuse

- Now that we've been through some of the push and pull factors, let's consider some of the information that might be helpful to know for you to make an informed decision about using substances:
 - ✓ Your brain does not stop growing and developing until your mid- to late 20s,¹² making it especially risky for people of your age to use substances. At this age, you are also especially likely to be vulnerable to addiction.
 - ✓ Substances can actually slow or shift the development of your brain, by making it difficult for our brain to learn new things, be alert, adapt to situations around you, and manage complex tasks.
 - ✓ Substance use can interfere with your interest or ability to do basic things like see, hear, talk, walk, control your emotions, and make decisions. It makes it harder to do things like pay attention when crossing the street or when walking through less safe areas. Substances impair all of those abilities.

- ✓ Substances can reduce our interest in doing our usual activities, whether that's playing sports we enjoy or spending time with friends whose company makes us feel good.
- ✓ Substances can cause a lot of physical damage to our bodies, whether that's a disease like cancer or a traffic accident because of your or someone else's impaired ability to drive.



→ I hope you'll consider this information when you make your own push or pull decision. Regardless of the decision you make, remember that substance use does not make a person 'bad'.

I just want to say that if you're using a substance and you'd like to stop, you do not have to do it alone. It's OK to seek out help from adults, including me.

Facilitators: Ask your supervisor for help if anyone self-identifies as a substance user. Supervisors should have identified referral pathways as part of service mapping.



In-session activities

Activity: I'm the expert

Objective: To emphasize the agency of adolescents in making decisions about substance use and to encourage independent knowledge acquisition and dissemination about substance use

Instructions: Divide participants into groups of four or five and give them 10 minutes to plan a substance use prevention campaign. They will then take the next week to create the final campaign and present it.

Say:

- A lot of substance use campaigns are boring or sound like lectures, and who wants that? You all are the experts on what kinds of messages reach other teens. So with you as experts, I'm sure we can do better.
- What would you do differently to help your friends make safe and healthy choices about substance use?
- You'll work together to design a campaign poster, song, dance, skit, or any creative way of communicating some of the facts we just went through to inform your peers about the possible harms of substances. Or if there is another message we did not already discuss that you think is important and persuasive for other teens, you can use that. Make it fun, engaging, and informative! You will have about two minutes to present your campaign next time, so keep that limit in mind.
- Think of some of these questions while you're doing this campaign:
 - ✓ Over time, how could substances affect your life?
 - ✓ How might it affect your relationships with family?
 - ✓ How might it affect your performance at school?
 - ✓ Are there other things that you can do that would help you feel the high that substances do?
- Your campaign can have any name, can mention any facts, and can use any methods.



Idea generation and adolescent-directed learning

- This session was about making informed choices. So while I've offered you some information about using substances, I'm hoping that you'll also take some time to learn more from the internet, libraries, and adults around you. I hope you'll also use what you learn for your prevention campaign. And if there's anything I can do to help, I am here.

Suggestion box or feedback: I'll give you a minute to write a note or raise your hand. There are no right or wrong comments. Feel free to say anything you are thinking or feeling.



Module 12:

Making decisions about substance use: Staying safe



Learning objectives

- Learn and practise strategies for staying safe in relation to substances
- Learn and practise strategies for making decisions about substances and communicating those decisions to others



Key messages

- In all situations involving substances, staying safe should remain a priority.
- Knowing and practising what to do and say when offered substances ahead of time can help you make the right choices in the moment.



Introduction and discussion prompt

- Welcome the group.
- Take about 10 minutes for each group to present the campaign they created during the previous week. (If you have five groups, each group will get two minutes to present.)
- Take five minutes to have a group discussion. Read the following questions aloud:
 - ✓ What was your approach to reaching your friends with this campaign? Were there certain strategies you used?
 - ✓ What did you find extremely important to convey?
 - ✓ Did you learn anything new about substance use from the other campaigns?
 - ✓ Did you face any challenges in talking about this topic? How did you manage or solve those challenges?
 - ✓ Aside from knowing the facts, what do you think are some of the factors influencing our decision-making about substances?
- Say:
- There are a lot of things that influence our decisions about trying substances. Maybe we see the adults in our life or our friends use substances. We might also see substance use in the media or in advertisements. Other factors include how easy it is for us to access substances and the laws and regulations in our area.



Facilitator-led learning

Say:

- Today I want to talk about staying safe in relation to substance use. Knowing how to say no to substances is an important skill, and planning ahead for situations where you might have to make that decision can be really helpful.
- Try using SPACE, which will offer some strategies for managing decision-making about substances and preparing in advance for situations when you may be faced with the challenge of having to say no.
- The 'S' in SPACE is for 'safe zone'. Deciding on a safe zone and a danger zone can be really helpful.
- Some things that might help to let us know we are in a danger zone include:
 - ✓ We are being pressured to do something we don't want to do
 - ✓ We are feeling very uncomfortable, anxious, worried
 - ✓ People around us are putting our safety at risk
- Are there other examples of a danger zone that you can think of?

Examples for facilitator's use:

SAFE	DANGER
I feel most comfortable when I'm not using substances at all.	I'm at a party, and using substances is what everyone is doing. I feel worried because I don't want to. I wonder if it's better to leave.
I feel most comfortable when the people around me aren't using substances.	I'm hanging out with 'X' and they take drugs. I'm not really comfortable being with 'X'. I'm feeling anxious.

- The 'P' in SPACE is for 'push and pull'. Knowing our own push and pull factors can also make a big difference in how we think about substances, so I would encourage you to think about them and how they might influence your own decision-making. Once you know your own push and pull factors, there are some strategies that can help keep you stay safe.
- Let's use an example of how understanding people's push and pull factors can help to make it easier to say no to substances. Assume that your friend uses substances out of boredom and wants some excitement. She/he wants you to join her/him so it will be more fun. Knowing this information can help you determine how you want to respond. For example, you could say:
I know you think drinking is cool, but I really want to win my football match tomorrow and if I drink right now, I won't be able to play that well. I'm not interested in drinking.

- The 'A' in SPACE is for 'alternatives'. Thinking about alternatives to using substances is another useful strategy. For example, if a group of friends is smoking as a way to deal with stress, how might you respond with some alternatives to manage stress? Think back to what we spoke about with coping.
- The 'C' in SPACE is for 'consequences'. Before engaging in substance use, consider the consequences. For example, some valid reasons that you could think about or could communicate to others include:
 - ✓ Using substances makes you feel dizzy, gives you a headache, or makes you feel sick
 - ✓ You have a big exam tomorrow and you don't want substance use to mess you up
 - ✓ Substance use is going to cause conflict between you and your parents
 - ✓ Using substances would result in not being able to drive safely, and this is a danger that isn't worth the risk
- The 'E' in SPACE is for 'exercising caution'. This means thinking ahead and making a plan for your physical safety. For example:
 - ✓ If you don't want to use substances, plan to be around people who will feel comfortable saying 'no' with you or avoid situations where there may be a risk of being pressured into using them
 - ✓ Make sure that you are not in situations where someone who has been using substances will be driving
- What else might you do ahead of time to ensure your safety?

I'd invite you to use SPACE whenever you need to refuse substances and when you need to communicate your decisions to others.

I just want to say that if you're using a substance and you'd like to stop, you do not have to do it alone. It's OK to seek out help from adults, including me.

Facilitators: Ask your supervisor for help if anyone self-identifies as a substance user. Supervisors should have identified referral pathways as part of service mapping.



In-session activities

Activity 1: Beya and Salma

Objective: To practise strategies that adolescents can use to refuse substances, and to encourage adolescents to think ahead about difficult situations they may face

Instructions: Divide participants into groups of three or four and have them use SPACE to write down some ways to refuse alcohol at a party.

Say:

Saying 'no' when we are feeling pressured to use substances can be hard, and often people are tempted to use substances to please others. Let's look at a scenario. In your groups, you'll use SPACE to think through some ways it can help with preparing to say no.

You can also use some of the information you included in your campaign.

.....

Salma and Beya are going to a party. Beya does not drink alcohol, but Salma does because she thinks it makes events more fun. When they get to the party, Salma and their friends start to drink. After a while, Beya feels pressured to join. How can Beya use SPACE to say no?

Be sure to think about these questions:

- What is Beya's safe zone and what is her danger zone?
- What are some of the pull and push factors for Salma? And for Beya?
- What are some alternatives to drinking that Beya might think of and might mention to Salma and her friends?
- What are some consequences of drinking that Beya might think of and might be interested in mentioning to Salma and her friends?
- What are some of the ways in which Beya should exercise caution?

Debrief with the whole a group for five minutes:

- What was that like for you?
- What was difficult about refusing?
- What was not difficult about refusing?

Making decisions about substances can be difficult, especially in the moment, so thinking and planning ahead can be important. In life, we will have to make decisions like this all the time, so remember to give yourself some SPACE!

And if you find that you are struggling, or if you are someone who is using substances and you need help stopping, remember that you can come to talk to me. You do not have to do it alone.

Facilitators: Ask your supervisor for help if anyone self-identifies as a substance user. Supervisors should have identified referral pathways as part of service mapping.



Idea generation and adolescent-directed learning

- As a group, take five minutes to discuss other ideas participants have to help them decisions about using substances.

Examples for facilitator's use if not mentioned:

- ✓ If you find that you are struggling, you can seek out help from someone you trust who may be able to help with accessing professional support. Sometimes we all need professional support to address some of our challenges. Asking for help is a sign of strength, so remember that you should never feel afraid to ask for help.
-

Module 13:

Building Supportive Relationships



Learning objectives

- Understand the importance of building supportive relationships for our well-being
- Differentiate between supportive and unsupportive relationships



Key messages

- Navigating relationships is a key part of adolescent development, and supportive relationships contribute significantly to our well-being.
- Some relationships can feel unsupportive, and learning to differentiate between supportive and unsupportive relationships is an important skill to help us navigate our relationships.



Introduction and discussion prompt

- Welcome the group.
- As a group, take five minutes to come up with a team name. Now let's take five minutes to discuss what that process was like.
 - ✓ What was it like coming up with a new name?
 - ✓ How did you go about coming up with a team name?
 - ✓ Was there a lot of agreement or disagreement?
 - ✓ How does it feel to have a team name and be part of a group?

Say:

- This is a small example of how we are required to communicate and resolve differences with other people throughout our lives. It also shows how important it can be to connect with others or feel like we belong.
- We're going to spend the next few sessions talking about our relationships. Being able to build and maintain relationships with others is an important life skill.
- Relationships have a big impact on our well-being, whether they contribute positively or negatively to it.



Facilitator-led learning

Say:

- A supportive relationship is one where you might feel respected, cared for, safe and understood.
- An unsupportive relationship can make you feel the opposite – disrespected, uncared for, unsafe, unheard or disconnected.
- Today we'll focus on what we need in our relationships for our own well-being. Deciding how we want to be treated is a major part of managing our relationships, and feeling safe and supported is necessary for our mental health.

I know that in some situations, it isn't always possible to make choices about relationships or we may feel unable to leave unsafe relationships. In situations like this, I would encourage you to seek support or advice from someone you trust, and remember that I am here to listen to you if you need someone to talk to.

Additional consideration:

Facilitators should be aware of the possibility of relationship difficulties being brought up and that some difficulties may amount to abuse. In such cases, there may be a need for third-party intervention, possibly including law enforcement. However, this should always be discussed with the young person involved and with your supervisor.



In-session activities

Activity 1: Relationship job description

Objective: To encourage critical thinking about what adolescents want and need out of their relationships

Instructions: Have participants spend 15 minutes writing a job description.

- Have you ever done any kind of interview or looked at a job advert? Usually, they will tell you the most important skills to have and what the job will require you to do. This is called a job description.
- Imagine you are interviewing someone for the job of being your friend and you are writing a job description.
 - ✓ What are the requirements of that relationship?
 - ✓ What are the personal characteristics of the person?
 - ✓ What are the responsibilities of that person?
 - ✓ What are you offering them in return?
 - ✓ How would you want to be treated in that relationship?
 - ✓ How do you feel when you're around them?

Discuss as a group for five minutes and invite participants to share some or all of their job descriptions.



Idea generation and adolescent-directed learning

- Spend five minutes talking about the following questions:
- Do you have any ideas of how we can better strengthen supportive relationships among us here?
- What kind of activities or practical steps could help?
- How might we also make a difference beyond this group and in our school or community?

Suggestion box or feedback: I'll give you a minute to write a note or raise your hand. There are no right or wrong comments. Feel free to say anything you are thinking or feeling.



Module 14:

Listening to and understanding one other



Learning objectives

- Understand and practise techniques for active listening
- Understand and practise ways of developing and expressing empathy



Key messages

- Listening is a key part of building and maintaining relationships that contribute to our well-being.
- Active listening consists of a set of techniques that we can use to make others feel heard and understood.
- Empathy is understanding how others feel and can lead to behaviours that are helpful to others and ourselves. This is important for building and maintaining supportive relationships.



Introduction and discussion prompt

- Welcome the group.
- Lead a group discussion for five minutes and ask:
- What is the difference between listening and hearing?

Say: With effort and practice, we can better listen and understand one another as ways to strengthen our connections.



Facilitator-led learning

Today we will talk about two skills that are important for building and maintaining supportive relationships.

Lead a group discussion for five minutes on active listening:

- How many of you have heard of active listening? What do you think it means? What does it look like?
- Active listening requires you to hear what the other person is saying, understand what they're saying, reflect on what's being said, as well as respond to what they are saying in a supportive way.
- Active listening is also a part of practising empathy, another important skill.

Lead a group discussion for five minutes on empathy:

- What do you think empathy means?
- Do you have an example of what empathy looks like?
- Empathy is understanding what another person is feeling and can lead to action or behaviour that is helpful to others. Empathy is an essential skill, because we all have life experiences that contribute to who we are and what we feel and need. Recognizing and valuing another person's identities and abilities and understanding her/his experiences and challenges of others are essential to being part of a community.
- Both active listening and empathy are skills we can continue to improve throughout our lifetime. Let's practise active listening and showing empathy for each other.



In-session activities

Activity 1: Are you listening?

Objective: To practise the use of active listening as a skill that can be utilized for interpersonal communication

Say:

There are few techniques that are important for active listening. One is body language – how we communicate, not with our words, but through our body gestures, movements, or posture.

Instructions: Ask a volunteer to demonstrate how body language can show that you are or are not listening.

It's not mandatory for anyone to demonstrate. If no one volunteers the facilitator can briefly demonstrate what this looks like and describe the below:

- Some things that show you aren't listening might be acting distracted with a phone or something else, looking down or not looking at the person, keeping your body turned away from the person, fidgeting, rolling your eyes.
- Some ways to show you are listening might be nodding, making eye contact, keeping your body facing the other person, not being distracted by other things.

Another active listening technique is to re-state what you heard. Re-state means saying back what the person said to you in your own words. For example, if I say to you "I am feeling sad today," you could say to me, "It sounds to me like something's getting you down."

Ask the group to provide other statements that demonstrate this skill.

.....

If not mentioned, you can share:

- What I'm hearing you say is...
- It seems like...
- If I understood you correctly, you are saying that...

Say:

One more technique is to ask questions. By asking questions that are relevant, you can check for your understanding, let a person know that you have been paying attention, and show you are interested in what someone is saying. For example, if I am telling you about something bad that happened to me, you could say "That's so shocking. How did it make you feel?"

Ask the group to provide other questions that demonstrate this skill.

If not mentioned, you can share:

- What did you mean by...?
- What happened next...?
- What did you think about....?

Now have the group split into pairs. One person should share something she/he has learned about herself/himself since the start of the programme. The other person should practise active listening.

Read this optional discussion prompt: In today's world, many of us communicate digitally. Do you think we can demonstrate active listening through digital communication? How so?

Activity 2: The other side of the story

Objective: To practise seeing things from another person's point of view and thinking about what the person might feel and need.

Instructions: Split participants into groups of three to four. Have them pick a book or movie that has a clear hero and a villain. Have the group spend 15 minutes writing the story from the villain's perspective. Ask volunteers to share.

Through this story writing exercise, we will practise seeing experiences from another person's point of view and trying to understand what they feel and need.

- Often, stories are told from the perspective of the hero. Your task is to narrate the other side of story and try to understand the villain's perspective.
 - So, for example, if you choose 'Three Little Pigs', you would be telling the story from the wolf's perspective. Or if you choose Batman, you might tell the story from the Joker's perspective.
-

-
- As you come up with the story, here are some things to consider:
- ✓ Which of the villain's actions are perceived as bad?
 - ✓ What experiences might the villain have had that led her/him to do the things she/he did?
 - ✓ How might the villain be feeling? What might the villain need?

Is the villain really as bad as we think and the hero really as blameless?

Debrief with the whole group for five minutes and ask:

- ✓ Was it difficult to see the perspective of the villain?
- ✓ Was it easy?
- ✓ Did it make you see the hero differently?
- ✓ How does this apply in your own life?

Everyone has a unique story and a unique perspective, so understanding what the other person is going through is really important.

Additional considerations: Depending on the examples shared, it might be important to clarify that certain actions or behaviours are objectively damaging, wrong or unethical. That statement can be true and, at the same time, you might also have empathy for how a person is feeling and what experiences might have led them to taking those actions. Understanding an action or behaviour is not the same thing as accepting or condoning it.



Idea generation and adolescent-directed learning

Let's discuss as a group how we can better show empathy to each other.

Some examples include:

- ✓ Undertake acts of kindness
- ✓ Try getting to know peers who have a different background than you
- ✓ Choose to partner or work with someone new
- ✓ Be part of community service projects
- ✓ Ask others what's on their mind

Suggestion box or feedback: I'll give you a minute to write a note or raise your hand. There are no right or wrong comments. Feel free to say anything you are thinking or feeling.



Supplementary activities for interpersonal relationship skills

Activity 1: Humans of our community

Read the following instructions:

- Choose someone in your community who you do not know well. Ask their permission to conduct a short interview where they share a story or idea that is important to them, but don't ask anything too personal or difficult.
- Some examples are:
 - ✓ Who is the most important person in your life right now?
 - ✓ What is the most important lesson you ever learned?
 - ✓ What makes you happy?
- During the interview, practise your active listening skills and expressing empathy when relevant.
- Write a short summary of the interview and include a portrait of the person you interviewed, either a drawing or a picture if cameras are available.
- When assignments are complete, hang the assignments around the room and discuss as a group:
 - ✓ How did it feel to interview strangers?
 - ✓ What active listening techniques did you use?
 - ✓ Was there anything you did in the interview that helped your participant share more of their story?
 - ✓ Did you have the opportunity to express empathy? If so, tell us how that went.

Activity 2: Communicating without words

Read the following instructions:

- Sit in pairs. Without showing your partner, choose an emotion and write it down.
- Flip your paper over so the word is hidden.
- Now, for 60 seconds show your partner that emotion without using words or touching them.
- When you are done, have your partner guess which emotion you were communicating with your body language. Switch roles and do the activity again.
 - ✓ Did they get it right? How might some people interpret body language differently?
 - ✓ Do you always notice when you are communicating nonverbally?
 - ✓ What body movements did you choose to convey your chosen emotion?

Activity 3: Broken telephone

Read the following instructions:

- Let's all gather in a straight line, facing forward. Do not turn backwards until you have been tapped on the shoulder.
- I'll pick someone who is first and whisper a sentence in their ear. (Read this sentence quietly into one participant's ear: On Saturday afternoon, I took the train to the beach and picked up twenty seashells.)
- The first person now taps the shoulder of the person in front of them and whispers the sentence into their ear without anyone else hearing.
- Each person will do the same: Tap the shoulder of the next person in line and whisper to them until the last person has heard the sentence.
- Ask the last person to say out loud what they heard.

Return for a group discussion on what went wrong and what went right (maximum five minutes).

Module 15: Communicating what you feel and need



- Learning objectives**
- Recognize the behaviours and effect of different communication styles
 - Practise applying assertive communication behaviours and language
 - Identify strategies for managing difficult conversations with caregivers



- Key messages**
- Assertive communication is a way of expressing what we feel and need in an honest and respectful way to others.
 - 'I' statements can be a useful strategy to help with assertive communication.



**Introduction
and discussion
prompt**

- Welcome the group.
- Assign four volunteers to the four communication styles and give them a copy of the table below.

Say:

Today we'll talk about communicating to others how we feel and what we need in a respectful way.

Think about a situation where you are studying for a test and the person next to you is playing loud music. You feel distracted and annoyed by the noise and want them to turn it down. What would you do?

Our four volunteers will act out how they would deal with this scenario based on different communication styles.

Passive	Aggressive	Passive-aggressive	Assertive
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Quiet, hard to hear → Looking down → Hesitant and nervous tone → Stepping back, head down, hunched shoulders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Loud and harsh → Stare-down → Threatening and demanding tone → Finger pointing, leaning forward 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Raised voice → Looking away → Insincere and sarcastic tone → Clenched fist, arms crossed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Not too loud or quiet → Eye contact → Sincere and confident tone → Sitting or standing upright and confidently
<p>Example: "Your...music...um, well it's just that it...um...I'm trying to study...and I...um... never mind, your music... it is nice."</p>	<p>Example: "Are you blind? Can't you see I'm trying to study?! Turn that annoying music off right now before I come over there and do it myself."</p>	<p>Example: "It doesn't bother me at all. I can study with or without music on... but maybe not the whole world wants to hear your music."</p>	<p>Example: "I really like your music. But I'm studying for a test and the music makes it a bit difficult for me to concentrate. Would you mind using headphones or turning it down a bit?"</p>

Debrief with the group for five minutes.

- ✓ Which communication style do you relate with the most?
- ✓ What might happen based on each of these ways of communicating?

Say:

The way we choose to express ourselves is an important part of how we relate to others. Some ways of communicating can be helpful for our relationships and for our well-being, while others might be less helpful.



Facilitator-led learning

Say:

Communicating what we feel and need is important for expressing ourselves to others. Assertive communication is when we let others know what we feel or need in a respectful way.

Choosing how to communicate is complicated, because sometimes it feels easier or safer to communicate in one way when really you want to communicate in another. The truth is that we all use different styles of communication in different situations, so it's natural, but it's also important to think about what the consequences are of how we choose to communicate.

Let's practise choosing how to communicate.



In-session activities

Activity 1: Communication styles

Objective: To demonstrate the varied ways in which different communication styles affect our ability to relate to one another

Instructions: Assign each person a style of communication (assertive, passive, passive-aggressive, aggressive) or use a hat, envelope or a bag with the different styles written on pieces of paper and ask adolescents to choose one. Split everyone into pairs or groups of three.

→ Using the style of communication that you have been assigned or have chosen, your task is to decide which movie to watch with your group.

Give small groups five minutes and then bring together the larger group to debrief.

- What was it like for your group to decide using your assigned communication styles?
- Did some groups come to an agreement? Did others disagree?
- What were some of the most helpful communication styles? What were some of the least helpful communication styles?

Activity 2: 'I' statements

Objective: To practise language that can be used for communicating assertively

Instructions: Split the group into pairs.

Say:

One way to communicate assertively is by using an 'I' statement. An 'I' statement lets others know what you feel, what happened that made you feel that way, and what you need or would like them to do differently. Let me give you some examples:

- I feel frustrated when I'm interrupted. Could you please let me finish what I'm saying?
- I feel stressed because I don't understand the math problem. I would like your help figuring this out.

I'm going to provide you with a few different situations. Try to come up with an 'I' statement for each. When considering your response, take time to think about what you feel and need or want in these situations, and also how you might respectfully communicate what you feel and need.

1. Your classmate asks, "Can you show me your answers to the homework assignment last night? I didn't have time to do it."
Example for facilitator's use if needed: I don't feel good about sharing my answers. Can I help by explaining anything you don't understand?
2. Your best friend asks, "I know you're supposed to go home soon, but can you just go home late this once? I don't want to be at this party without you."
Example for facilitator's use if needed: I feel bad leaving you here at the party, but I need to get home on time.

-
3. You play on a soccer team and have an important soccer match tomorrow, but your mother says, "I need you to stay home and watch your sister for me tomorrow."

Example for facilitator's use if needed: I feel like it isn't fair because I have been practising hard for this match, and my team is counting on me to be there. Can you find someone else to watch sister tomorrow?

4. You want to go out with a friend, but your father says, "I don't want you hanging out with that boy. He's a bad influence."

Example for facilitator's use if needed: I know you are concerned, but I feel like you are rushing to judgment about my friend. Can you please give him a chance?

5. You want to buy an expensive jacket, so you ask your parents for an advance on your allowance but they tell you, "You will have to wait because it's a rule that we don't want to break."

Example for facilitator's use if needed: I understand that it's a rule, but I feel frustrated because I don't disrespect rules. Can you please make an exception just this once?

The more we practise using 'I' statements, the more natural it will feel in using them to communicate what we feel and need with others.



Idea generation and adolescent-directed learning

Say:

- We've been over some important ways of choosing how to communicate. Communicating assertively and effectively can be a difficult skill to learn. Can anyone think of situations during their week during which they've had to decide what type of communication style to use?

Suggestion box or feedback: I'll give you a minute to write a note or raise your hand. There are no right or wrong comments. Feel free to say anything you are thinking or feeling.



Module 16:

Having difficult conversations with caregivers



Learning objectives → Practise steps that can help with having difficult conversations with caregivers or others.



Key messages

- There are important but difficult conversations that we will need to have with our caregivers or others from time to time.
- There are ways to prepare for difficult conversations and helpful ways to communicate your feelings and needs to your caregiver or others.



Introduction and discussion prompt

- Welcome the group.
- Give participants 5 minutes to discuss the following prompt in groups of three to four: What are three topics that you would feel OK talking to your friends about but not your caregivers? Why so?
- Ask participants to share some of their ideas.

Say: Often times, we might feel like avoiding difficult conversations, especially with our caregivers. Maybe because we are afraid of them getting angry, we feel like they won't understand us, or we don't want to cause problems. It actually takes a lot of courage to talk to your caregivers about certain topics but doing so ultimately allows them to better understand and support you. We will explore some strategies that can help us with difficult conversations today.

Preparing for difficult conversations is an important skill, but I just want to say that I know that not all difficult conversations are the same. Some can be harder than others. Even though I want to help you practise preparing for difficult conversations, I also want you to know that when especially difficult conversations are coming up, you do not need to feel alone when you are preparing to have them. And remember that if you need someone to talk to about a difficult conversation in your own life, I am here to listen.



Facilitator-led learning

Say:

Sometimes we need to have conversations about something that is worrying us, ask about a topic that might make us feel uncomfortable such as substance use or sex, or tell someone about a mistake we made or something bad that happened to us.

Many adolescents feel awkward, embarrassed or unable to talk with their caregivers about certain topics. But the support and guidance from our caregivers can really help in these situations. Some ways to help communicate with caregivers might include the following:

- **Identify what you need from your caregivers.** Maybe you want their advice, support, money, permission to go somewhere, a listening ear so you can vent, or to tell them about a mistake you made. Or maybe you don't exactly know what you need but want their help with a troubling situation. Being able to tell your caregivers what you need from them will help them better understand how to respond to you.
- **Think about how you are feeling.** You might feel nervous, embarrassed, anxious, scared, sad or angry. These are natural emotions to have. Knowing how you feel and being able to let your parents know how you feel can help them better understand and support you.
- **Plan and practise what you want to say.** Talking to caregivers about what you feel and need can be difficult. But preparing ahead of time can make the conversation feel more manageable. Consider writing out what you want to say or practising with a friend or sibling before you talk with your parents. Remember to try using 'I' statements when you communicate what you need and what you feel.

Here are some examples of starting phrases:

- ✓ "I'm feeling embarrassed and confused about something, but I want to talk to you. I don't need advice right now; I just need to vent. I would really appreciate being able to tell you how I feel without you saying anything yet. Is that OK?"
 - ✓ "I need to tell you what happened, but I'm scared you will be angry. I know you will have a lot to say about it and I need your help on figuring out what to do next, but is it OK if I first tell you everything that happened and then you can tell me what you think?"
 - ✓ "I need to ask you for something, but I'm worried about being a burden or disappointing you. I know you might say no, but can I first explain my situation?"
- **Make a self-care plan.** Discussing difficult topics with our caregivers is challenging and might not always go as we hope. If you know this is going to be a difficult conversation, it is helpful to have a plan for how you might cope with difficult emotions that come up. This could be writing down your thoughts and feelings, going for a run, listening to or playing music. If you can, try to identify someone that you can talk with after. This could be a friend, sibling, other family member, or any other person you might trust.
 - Remember that if you need someone to talk to, I'm here as well.

Let's practise preparing for difficult conversations.



In-session activities

Activity 1: What could you say?

Objective: Practise strategies that can help adolescents communicate with caregivers about difficult or uncomfortable topics.

Instructions:

- Ask students to think through possible responses to the following scenario using the questions below as a guide.
- Have students role-play a conversation with and without applying the strategies you discussed earlier to compare how things might end up.

Say:

Imagine you are helping your friend prepare for a difficult conversation that she/he is going to have with her/his caregiver. I am giving you an example scenario here, or you could come up with your own scenario.

Scenario: Your friend, who is 15, has started experimenting with substances, and it has now become a daily occurrence. Someone saw your friend using substances and has informed your friend's caregiver about it. Your friend knows that someone has told her/his caregiver. Your friend arrives home and her/his caregiver is waiting for them.

- What might your friend need from her/his caregiver in this situation?
- What might your friend be feeling?
- How can you help your friend prepare to communicate what she/he feels and needs? What kinds of 'I' statements would you include?
- What self-care plan can your friend create for after the difficult conversation?

Let's now try acting out a scenario to see what the difference might be when we do and don't apply the strategies we talked about when having a difficult conversation with our parents.

Example script of conversation before application of strategies:

Caregiver	Hey, we need to talk. Where did you just come from?
Adolescent	What do you mean? I just got back from school. Where do you think I was?
Caregiver	Are you sure about that? You know I can tell when you are lying.
Adolescent	Why would I be lying? Where do you think I came from?
Caregiver	You have been skipping school to drink and smoke with those no-good friends of yours, haven't you?
Adolescent	Who told you this nonsense? I told you already, I just came back from school.
Caregiver	Don't you dare lie to me. Someone told me they saw you drinking and smoking, and now I know that you have been up to no good.
Adolescent	Whatever. I don't want talk about it. You wouldn't really believe me anyway so what's the point?

Caregiver You are going get into so much trouble for this, wait till your father [or mother] comes home. You will be grounded and punished for this. I am taking your phone away.

Adolescent Do whatever you want. I don't care. You don't even know or care about what I am going through. All my friends drink and smoke. I am old enough to make my own decisions. It is my life; I'll do what I want.

Caregiver How dare you talk back to me? Is this how you talk to your parent?

Adolescent I hate it here, I am leaving.

Caregiver I don't know what to do with this kid.

Adolescent Storms out of the house.

Example script of conversation after application of strategies:

Caregiver Hi. Where have you been?

Adolescent I was at school. By the way, there is something I would like to talk to you about. You may already know what I want to tell you, and it probably isn't something you will like, but I need to speak with you about it.

Caregiver Yes, I did come to know about a few things, and we do need to talk.

Adolescent OK, but can you give me a few minutes? I'll come to talk with you.

Caregiver Sure. I'll be waiting.

Adolescent So, thing is. I know someone already told you, and it is true. I have been drinking and smoking for few months now.

Caregiver What? It's already been a few months?! Why would you do this? Is that why you come late from school? How could you do this?

Adolescent Please, I know you have a lot of questions, but hear me out first. I won't be able to explain things to you if you react this way. I just need to you listen right now.

Caregiver Hear you out? OK, fine go ahead.

Adolescent It started couple of months ago, I was with some friends from school, and they were smoking and drinking, so I just felt like trying. I guess I was curious, I wanted to fit in, and it seemed fun. So I did.

Caregiver Oh my. How often do you do it? Who are you doing this with? Where did you get these things from?

Adolescent Can I please finish explaining before you ask me questions?

Caregiver	OK, yes.
Adolescent	Well, at first it was only a few times, but since about a month now I find myself doing it more regularly.
Caregiver	Wait, let me understand this. You smoke and drink regularly now? This is highly concerning. I am very worried and upset about this.
Adolescent	I am sorry you feel that way, but I do feel bad about this, too. I don't like that I am doing this, but I feel like these things help me feel more relaxed and deal with all the stress and drama.
Caregiver	People do use substances to cope with the stress, but it's not a healthy way to cope you know. And substances are bad for health, especially for adolescents like you.
Adolescent	I know. It's just that...when I don't smoke and drink, I somehow don't feel good and doing it makes me want to do it more. I don't know what is happening with me and what to do right now.
Caregiver	OK. I hear what you are saying. I am here to support you and I know someone who might be able to help.
Adolescent	Like who?
Caregiver	How about we talk to your school counsellor. I am sure she will be able to provide us with some help.
Adolescent	Yes, maybe we can do that, but I feel really nervous about talking to her.
Caregiver	I will be there with you. I will contact her and see if we can set up a time to talk, OK? I know it was not easy for you to talk about this, but I am glad you did. Thank you again for sharing this with me.
Adolescent	I am glad I told you, too. I was so scared to talk about it and feeling out of control. Thank you for listening to me. I don't feel as guilty or helpless now.

Difficult conversations are a part of all of our lives, but I want to acknowledge that some can be more difficult than others, and I also want you to know that, while this exercise might help you prepare for a difficult conversation, you should not feel alone in such situations. Seeking out support from people you trust can really help if you are feeling distressed, and remember that I am also here to support you.

Difficulties with caregivers can often be extremely triggering for adolescents, particularly if they are in situations where abuse may be occurring or may be suspected. Facilitators should be sensitive to the possibility of adolescents experiencing such situations. Facilitators should understand that the exercise might cause difficult emotions to arise and should invite adolescents to seek support when needed. In some instances, this may require intervention from health or social work professionals, but this should be discussed with your supervisor.



Idea generation and adolescent- directed learning

Say:

- We've gone over some important strategies for preparing to have a difficult conversation, but I wanted to ask if anybody has other strategies for having difficult conversations that they'd like to share?

Suggestion box or feedback: I'll give you a minute to write a note or raise your hand. There are no right or wrong comments. Feel free to say anything you are thinking or feeling.



Module 17:

Practising conflict management



Learning objectives

- To identify helpful ways to react when experiencing conflict with others
- To understand that how we react to conflicts with others impacts our relationships



Key messages

- Using the skills we've learned already – how to take care of our feelings, communicate what we need and want, problem-solve, and be a good listener – can help us manage the way we react in challenging situations.
- How we react to conflict with others can affect our relationships.



Introduction and discussion prompt

Welcome the group.
Take five minutes to have a group discussion.

Say:

Today we will be talking about how we manage disagreements and conflict in our relationships.

- When might disagreement or difference be useful?
- When might it become a problem?

After the discussion, say:

Disagreements are a part of our everyday lives. Many people experience a lot of difficult emotions because of conflict in their relationships. We can't always control the way others behave, but sometimes we can develop skills that will help us manage our relationships.



Facilitator-led learning

Say:

- I want to share some steps that can help us better manage conflict in our day-to-day lives. These steps build on the skills that you've already learned – managing our feelings, communicating what we need and want, problem-solving, active listening, and empathy.

 - If you find yourself having conflict with someone else, and you are feeling emotional about it – perhaps angry or upset – you can try following these steps.
- 1.** Take a moment to identify and manage your feelings: How do you feel?
 - ✓ Having a disagreement or conflict with someone else can bring up a strong emotional response.
 - ✓ You can use any of your strategies for coping with difficult emotions here.
 - ✓ Often, intense emotions can escalate conflict. When you identify your feelings, you can ask yourself, “Am I going to press the brake or am I going to press the accelerator?”
 - 2.** Identify what the conflict is about: What is the problem?
 - ✓ You can identify the problem using the problem-solving strategies we learned.
 - ✓ We often have an emotional response in conflict because a disagreement becomes personal, and we start blaming the other person (or the other person blames us). The key is to focus on the problem, not the person.
 - 3.** Communicate your needs and feelings clearly and respectfully: What do you feel and need?
 - ✓ First identify what you are feeling and what you would like to happen.
 - ✓ Use your strategies for assertive communication to respectfully communicate what you need and want.
 - 4.** Understand the other person: What does the other person feel and need?
 - ✓ Be sure to use active listening skills and empathy.
 - ✓ Try to remain calm.
 - 5.** Take responsibility: Do you need to apologize?
 - ✓ We are all human and we all make mistakes sometimes, so this is a good place to try to understand whether you are partly or wholly responsible for the conflict.
 - ✓ Saying you're sorry when you may have done something wrong is a sign of maturity and an opportunity to learn how you might do things differently in the future.
 - 6.** Try to think of a way forward that meets both people's needs.
 - ✓ When faced with a conflict, some people might only think of their own needs, while some might only think about the other person's needs. In either of these situations, at least one person's needs won't be met. When finding a way forward, it's important to ask yourself, “Are both people's needs being considered?”
-



In-session activities

Activity 1: Joe's fight with his dad

Objective: To apply principles of conflict management to situations that arise commonly among the target population

Instructions: Split the group into pairs and ask each individual to take on the role of Joe or Joe's dad to act out the scenario below for 10 minutes.

Part 1: The fight

- A few weeks ago, Joe got caught smoking. Joe told his father this was the first time he tried smoking and that he was feeling stressed out by school. They had an argument. Joe's father says Joe's actions are irresponsible and unacceptable. He takes the cigarette away and, as a punishment, also takes Joe's phone away for a week.
- Using some of the steps we've just talked about, role-play how you think this conflict could be managed.

Debrief with the entire group using the following questions (maximum five minutes). Say:

- How do you think Joe felt during the conflict? What was Joe's father feeling?
- What was the problem?
- How did they communicate their feelings and needs? Did they each press the brake or the accelerator?
- What questions did Joe and his father ask to understand how the other person was feeling?

Part 2: Finding a way forward

Now, let's say that Joe and his dad are both angry. To assert himself, Joe says he's going to smoke more now because his dad took his phone away. This causes his dad to increase the punishment by saying that Joe can't go out with his friends anymore either. In pairs, role-play Joe and his father trying to find a way forward when:

- Each person focuses only on their own needs and feelings without paying attention to the other's
- Each person only thinks of the other person's needs, without paying any attention to their own
- Both people are thinking about each other's needs

Debrief the following questions (maximum five minutes).

Say:

- What ways forward did you come up with in the different situations?
- How did it feel in each situation?

I hope these techniques will be helpful to you and you can find a way to use them in your life. And remember that if you are facing a conflict that you are struggling to manage, asking for help from someone you trust is always a good idea.

Conflict situations with caregivers can often be extremely triggering for adolescents, particularly if they are in situations where abuse may be occurring or suspected. Facilitators should be sensitive to the possibility of such situations and should invite adolescents to seek support when needed. In some instances, this may require third-party intervention, but this should be discussed with the adolescent and your supervisor.



Idea generation and adolescent-directed learning

Say:

- We've gone over some important strategies for managing conflict, but here are some other possible ways you could approach conflicts.
 - ✓ You could choose the technique of picking your battles. Sometimes we find that we are fighting battles that we do not need to fight, but are doing so out of pride or habit. Not all battles are worth fighting, and choosing conflict requires your energy is a simple way to compromise.
 - ✓ Think back to one of our earlier activities where we talked about breaking up a problem into smaller pieces. This is often the case with complex conflicts that contain a number of different areas of disagreement. Think about the problem as a whole, but also try to break the conflict into smaller parts. Which of these require your attention?
 - ✓ Does anybody have any other strategies for managing conflict that they'd like to share?

I also just want to acknowledge that while we've practised conflict management today, there are some situations when it is OK not to compromise, particularly in situations that make you feel unsafe. This is what we will be covering next time. If you currently have a situation that makes you feel unsafe, I suggest you reach out for help from someone you trust. Remember I am here to help if you need.

Suggestion box or feedback: I'll give you a minute to write a note or raise your hand. There are no right or wrong comments. Feel free to say anything you are thinking or feeling.



Module 18:

Setting boundaries



Learning objectives

- Identify behaviours that are signs of safety and respect in a relationship
- Understand the concept of boundary-setting in relationships and its importance for protecting our well-being
- Practise setting and communicating boundaries



Key messages

- Boundaries are limits we can set to protect our own emotional and physical well-being.
- Each of us can decide what makes us feel safe and respected and determine boundaries for ourselves.
- Setting boundaries and communicating them to others can sometimes be challenging and require us to clearly and respectfully let others know what we need and want.
- It is never OK for people to hurt or threaten to hurt one another. It's important to seek support if this happens.



Introduction and discussion prompt

Welcome the group.

Say:

- Today, I want us to start by focusing on what makes us feel safe and respected in our relationships. This refers both to physical safety and emotional safety – feeling comfortable, respected and supported in a relationship.

Instructions: Split participants into groups of five or six and have them discuss the following questions (maximum five minutes).

Say:

- What might make someone feel safe and respected in a relationship? Let's call those green flags.
- What makes someone feel unsafe or disrespected? Let's call those red flags.
- Remember that safety and respect matter as much in the digital world as in the real world, so the green and red flags you come up can be from interaction in real life or online.

Instructions: Draw a horizontal line down the middle of a flip chart page or chalkboard, and label the left column 'green flags' and the right column 'red flags'.

Debrief with the entire group using the following questions (maximum five minutes).

Say:

- Can you share some of the green flags your group identified?
- What were some of the red flags?

Include some of the examples below if not mentioned:

Green – safe and respected

Red – unsafe and disrespected

- | | |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">→ Does not pressure you into doing things you don't want to do→ Is honest→ Apologizes when needed and is willing to resolve conflicts→ Shows an interest in what you need and want→ Is understanding of your limitations, including on your time and energy→ You can trust them→ You can be yourself→ Says encouraging and supportive things→ Respects you when you say 'no'→ Does not threaten you or your physical safety→ Demonstrates concern about your well-being | <ul style="list-style-type: none">→ Makes you feel pressured into doing things you may not want to do→ Makes you feel guilty about not doing things you don't want to do→ Lies or is dishonest→ Never apologizes, even when it is needed→ Is mean when you argue or is unwilling to resolve conflicts→ Acts dismissive of your needs and wants→ Demands more time or energy than you can give→ Is not trustworthy→ You feel as though you have to hide who you are→ Threatens you or causes physical harm→ Laughs or makes fun of you when you are hurt or unwell→ Is overly jealous or angry when you spend time with other people→ Puts you down and criticizes you |
|---|---|

Today, we will discuss the subject of setting boundaries when you feel you are in a situation where you feel unsafe or disrespected. If you feel like you are in a situation like this, know that there are people who can support you. We will practise strategies for dealing with these situations and seeking safety. We will also practise how to support others when they are feeling like they are unsafe or being disrespected.



Facilitator-led learning

Say:

- Boundaries are limits we can set to protect our own emotional and physical well-being. They are important for having supportive and respectful relationships with others.
- A boundary might mean setting a limit on how much time you can share with a person, the physical intimacy between you and someone, or to what degree you go out of your way to meet someone else's needs or do what someone else asks of you.
- Setting boundaries and communicating them to others can be challenging at times. They require us to stand up for ourselves and let others know what we need and want.
- Setting a firm boundary for yourself might sometimes mean that others will not be happy with you, but respecting and protecting yourself is important for your well-being.
- Sometimes people will push your boundaries and violate them. They might pressure you to do something you don't want to do, try to make you feel guilty for not doing what they expect, or threaten you when you don't do as they wish. This is not acceptable. It is also not acceptable for you to disrespect and violate the boundaries of others.
- If you are in a situation where someone keeps violating your boundaries, makes you feel threatened, or does something that physically harms you, here are some important things to consider and try:
 - ✓ Write down what happened and tell someone you trust about it. This can feel hard and scary to do but remember that you do not have to go through this alone. Support from someone you trust can make a big difference. You might consider talking to a friend, family member, teacher, health-care worker, or other professional.
 - ✓ Go someplace where you feel safe. This might be home, a friend's house, school, place of worship, a health facility, or other kind of centre that provides social services.
 - ✓ Avoid being in situations where you will be alone with this person, limit contact, or even cut off contact. This can be a difficult choice, but is sometimes important to protect your own well-being.
- There are some challenging situations that might make it hard to ask for support, find safety, or avoid a particular person. Someone might blame you or make you feel like what happened is not a big deal. You might not be able to avoid a person – if you live with them or they hold authority, such as a teacher or boss. Or you might care deeply for the person. But even in these situations, it is important to protect your own well-being. Seeking safety or support is a good first step.
- Remember that it is never OK for anyone to hurt you or threaten to hurt you. Sometimes we might feel like blaming ourselves for what happened, but it is not your fault.



In-session activity

Activity 1: Helping Nina

Objective: To practise setting and communicating boundaries through role play.

Instructions: Describe a scenario and ask the group to respond to the following questions. Give the group five minutes to do this exercise.

Setting boundaries

Say:

- Let's say your friend Nina attends a party with you. She meets a boy, Victor, and they start to flirt with each other. Nina seems to like Victor. After a while, Nina and Victor leave together. You ask Nina if she's OK, and she says she thinks so.
- That evening, Nina is at Victor's house, and while before they were just flirting and kissing, Victor starts pressuring Nina into having sex. When she physically pushes him away, he tells her that she's immature and uptight. She feels unsure, but Victor tells her that if she doesn't have sex with him, he won't speak to her again.
- Write down some ways that Nina can respond to Victor. Here are some ideas to consider:
 - ✓ What are Nina's green and red flags? Example: Red flags: Victor does not listen to what Nina is saying, puts her down, calls her names, and threatens not to speak to her.
 - ✓ What are some of the boundaries that Nina might use to protect her emotional and physical well-being? Example: Avoid being in places alone with Victor, only hang out with Victor around other friends or in public places.
 - ✓ What could Nina say to communicate the boundaries she sets? Example: "I am OK kissing or holding hands, but nothing more." "I would like to stay and hang out, but I actually have to go as mother expects me to be home by 11 p.m."
 - ✓ What can Nina do if her boundaries are not respected? Example: Nina could go to another room in the house or outside where other people are, text a friend to come meet her at Victor's house, or leave Victor's house.

Debrief the following questions (maximum five minutes).

Say:

- Would anyone like to share some of the responses that Nina might have given?

It is not mandatory for adolescents to share. However, if adolescents do not share, it is important that the facilitator acknowledges that consensual sex is not unacceptable but consent is vital. It is also necessary for the facilitator to provide suggestions and recommendations, including using 'but' statements (i.e., "I would love to, but I have to go somewhere else"), avoiding being alone with Victor, and asking for help if the pressure continues.

Supporting a friend to stay safe

- Now let's say that Nina calls you from Victor's house. She wants your help saying no to Victor. She likes Victor, and she was enjoying herself, but now she is beginning to feel unsafe. I want you to turn to the person next to you and discuss how best to help Nina.

Give pairs five minutes to discuss and then debrief for five minutes with the whole group.

- Would anyone like to share some of the ways in which they might help Nina?

It is not mandatory for adolescents to share. However, if adolescents do not share, it is important that the facilitator provides suggestions and recommendations, including providing suggestions for saying 'no', encouraging Nina to not be alone with Victor, suggesting that she call the police or other relevant authorities, or suggestions that she seek the help of a trusted adult.

Setting boundaries online

- Now let's say that Nina gets a new smartphone and signs up for a few different apps. One, HEY!, is for making new friends of a similar age in her town. Another, ChitChat, is for meeting people who have similar interests in online games and music. On both, people can share pictures and videos and arrange to meet in person. Nina meets Sam on HEY!, and the two decide to meet in person. Sam is her age and goes to a nearby school; the app says it has verified this information. Nina also enjoys ChitChat so much that sometimes she stays up all night chatting on it, but she's not always comfortable because sometimes people send explicit pictures without asking her first or sometimes the language that they use is graphic. In groups of three to four, discuss the following questions:

- What might Nina's green and red flags be for using the apps?
- What about green and red flags for how Nina interacts with others? What should she consider about what she says or posts and how those posts might make others feel?
- What boundaries should Nina have for meeting Sam? And what about Sam? What boundaries should he have?
- How would you advise Nina to deal with the unwanted actions on ChitChat?
- **Discussing challenging situations like these can bring up difficult feelings. If you need someone to talk to, remember that you can reach out to me at any time.**

Facilitators should exercise particular sensitivity during this session because of the difficult topic and should invite adolescents to seek support when needed, while also paying attention to any signs of distress that may require active intervention. In some instances, active intervention may include engaging with relevant authorities, such as law enforcement, or referring to social support services. This decision should always be made with your supervisor and in conjunction with the adolescent and, if safe to do so, with their caregiver.



Idea generation and adolescent-directed learning

- We've been through some strategies for managing boundary-setting and seeking safety. Here are some other strategies that may be of use to you:
- ✓ You could continue to build your green and red flag list over time, as you decide what is OK for you and what is not. This can be the basis for the boundaries you set and what you say no to.
 - ✓ You could also practise the body scan exercise from the session on understanding how you feel. Listen to your body. Does it feel safe and respected in a particular situation? Does it feel unsafe? Often, our bodies know what we are feeling and can help us decide where our boundaries are or should be.

Suggestion box or feedback: I'll give you a minute to write a note or raise your hand. There are no right or wrong comments. Feel free to say anything you are thinking or feeling.



Module 19: Bullying (peer violence)



Learning objectives

- Understand what bullying is and how it affects all of us
- Identify things that can be done in situations where bullying occurs
- Consider ways to promote a supportive climate that minimizes bullying



Key messages

- Bullying is a significant challenge that adolescents face both in person and online.
- Bullying is when a person or a group of people repeatedly do or say things to make someone else feel hurt, embarrassed or afraid.
- Bullying affects all of us, whether we are the bully, target (person being bullied) or bystander.
- We all play a role in addressing bullying in our school, community or online.



Introduction and discussion prompt

Welcome the group.

Say:

Today, I want to talk about a challenge that a lot of adolescents face – bullying. Let's take five minutes to discuss the following questions:

- How much of a problem do you think bullying is in our school or community?
How about online?
- Why do you think bullying happens?
- Do you think adolescents have the power to change bullying? How so?

.....

If not mentioned, point out these reasons why bullying might happen:

- People might bully others:
 - ✓ To feel powerful, in control or popular
 - ✓ Because they think it is fun
 - ✓ To fit in or get attention
 - ✓ As a way of coping with difficult emotions or stress
 - ✓ To get something they want
 - ✓ Because they have also been bullied before or because they want to avoid being bullied
 - ✓ Because they face difficulties at home
 - ✓ Because they are afraid or don't like how some people are different from them
 - ✓ Because they don't think bullying is a big deal

I know that some of you may have experienced bullying in real life, so this might be a difficult topic for you. I want you to know that no one deserves to be bullied and you are not alone. Please feel free to come and talk to me after this session, or talk to someone else you trust.

Wherever possible, the facilitator should invite adolescents to seek support rather than intervene when it may be unwanted. However, in situations where a young person is clearly distressed, facilitators may need to adopt a more active approach to intervention. Facilitators should pay attention to nonverbal cues that signal distress, including anxiety or particular sensitivity to the subject matter. If you are concerned, discuss with your supervisor.



Facilitator-led learning

- Bullying is when a person or a group of people repeatedly do or say things to make someone else feel hurt, embarrassed, or afraid. This can happen in person or online.
- Bullying is a form of violence that affects everyone involved – whether you are bullying someone, being bullied, or observing as a bystander.
- Let's keep in mind that bullying is a harmful behaviour, and harmful behaviours can be changed with the right support and by applying some of the skills we have been practising.
- Now let's talk a bit about bullying from three standpoints: someone who is being bullied, a bully, and a bystander.

If someone is being bullied, they should know that:

- It is not their fault, and no one deserves to be treated this way.
- They are not alone. People who are bullied can often feel embarrassed, ashamed and alone. But they do not need to face the situation on their own.

If you could say one thing to someone who is experiencing bullying right now, what would you want them to know?

.....

.....

If someone is acting like a bully and repeatedly taking actions or using words to make another person feel embarrassed, hurt, or afraid, they should know that:

- Bullying is a behaviour that negatively affects you and others both now and in the future.
- There are better ways to feel good than by making others feel bad.
- Support is available to you. We talked about the many reasons someone might bully others. If you are going through or have gone through something difficult, you might use bullying as a coping mechanism or because you have not been taught more helpful ways to express your emotions. You deserve compassion and support.
- You can stop. Bullying is not who you are. It is a behaviour, and behaviours can be changed. It is possible for you to build better relationships with others and take better care of yourself. The skills that can help you change include the ones we have been learning about – taking care of your feelings, managing your stress, building your self-esteem and having empathy for others. You should not feel alone. Remember that asking for support is a sign of strength.

If you could say one thing to someone who is bullying someone else, what would you want them to know?

If you know of someone being bullied or have witnessed bullying, you should remember that:

- You are part of a community. You do have a choice about how you want to participate and shape your community. What happens in your community affects you, too.
- What can we do if we notice someone being bullied? What are some reasons for us to take action in response to bullying we witness? What might make us hesitate to take action?

I am asking this group these questions because bullying is a problem facing many adolescents today. To overcome this in our school, community and online, we need solutions driven by adolescents.



In-session activities

Activity 1: What could you do?

Objective: To apply skills already taught to an age-relevant challenge, and to emphasize the significance of an interpersonal and community-level lens to approach the problem of bullying and cyberbullying

Instruction: Divide participants into groups of three to four. Ask them to review the following situations and develop a skit of what they could do in response using the information presented in the instructor-led section. Give participants 10 minutes to create their skits.

If, at any point, you feel uncomfortable participating in this activity, you may choose not to participate or come speak to me.

.....

Facilitators should pay specific attention to any cues for re-traumatization that this role play may elicit. If individuals are traumatized, they may seem particularly anxious or withdrawn. Facilitators should use their best judgment to assess whether inviting adolescents to seek support or active intervention is required. The latter is essential if there is a possibility of imminent risk to self or others.

Assign one scenario per group:

- A new participant from another city has joined your class. She/he looks and acts a bit different from everyone else. Your good friends start making fun of the new participant and come up with ways to make the new participant feel embarrassed every day at lunch. What could you do?
- You find out that someone is spreading a mean and untrue rumour about you through a group text. You have asked them to stop, but they keep on doing it anyway. What could you do?
- There are two adolescents in your class who have been bullying other people. Everyone, including you, is afraid of them. One day they ask you to join them in forcing another student to give them his lunch money. You feel nervous that if you don't help them, they will start bullying you next. What could you do?
- You find yourself regularly leaving unkind and mean comments on a classmate's social media page using an anonymous account. You think it is fun and not a big deal since they don't know who you really are. At school you notice this classmate crying and telling another friend about the mean comments she's been getting. What could you do?

Ask adolescents to act out their role play to the group and thank everyone for sharing their strategies.



Idea generation and adolescent-directed learning

We know that bullying happens and that it is not OK. As a group, I would like us to come up with some ideas of what we can do reduce bullying and its negative effects in our school and community. You have already shared some great examples. What other actions do you recommend?

Examples for facilitator's use if needed:

- Coming up with a classroom code of conduct
- Developing and launching an anti-bullying campaign; adolescents are experts in how to reach other young people, so what you share in a campaign could be an effective way to eliminate bullying
- Forming a committee with teachers to monitor bullying and support those who experience bullying

Suggestion box or feedback: I'll give you a minute to write a note or raise your hand. There are no right or wrong comments. Feel free to say anything you are thinking or feeling.



Module 20:

Finding your place in the world



Learning objectives

- Summarize the key learnings from the previous modules
- Consider the individual's role in the broader community



Key messages

- Our identities continue to grow and develop over our lifetimes. No one is ever finished growing and learning.
- We all exist as part of communities and as members of a global community.
- Our identities, and the paths we choose, can contribute to our communities and the world.



Introduction and discussion prompt

- Welcome the group.
Say:
- Today is our final session in the series.



Facilitator-led learning

- Let's recap what we've learned and practised together.
- What are some of the important skills we have focused on in the past few weeks? (Facilitator: Be sure to recap if not already said: Identifying, accepting and expressing our emotions, managing our stress, building our self-esteem, navigating life's challenges, relationship skills, making choices about substance use.)
- What are some ways that you have been able to practise or apply these skills outside of our sessions? What kind of a difference do you notice in yourself? In our group?

-
- Did anything surprise you about these sessions?
 - Is there anything you feel unclear or have questions about?
 - What do you feel most proud about?



In-session activities

Activity 1: Dear Future Me

Objective: To reflect on the knowledge gained as part of the intervention and encourage adolescents to consider their role as part of broader communities

Just like you did at the beginning of your journey, I would like you to now write a letter to your future self, 10 years from today. In your letter you might consider:

- What you wrote in your first letter, what goals, skills and practices you've taken with you through this journey, and what you might still want to develop
- A reminder of what is most important to you and the kind of person you want to be
- How you are feeling at the moment about your friendships and family and how you hope those relationships will be 10 years from now
- Your biggest challenges right now and what you hope to learn or get better at over the next 10 years
- What kind of difference you hope to make in your community and in the world

I'll give you 10 minutes now, but that's just the start of the letter. You can finish it or add to it whenever you feel the need. It's yours.

Optional activity: Climate walk

Objective: To encourage adolescents to consider how knowledge gained through the intervention can impact their immediate environments

Now, let's get up now and actually go out into the world around us. Let's take a walk around the school or community. As you're doing this, I want you to pay attention to what you feel you can change and what you can't. Let's go.

After the walk, bring the group together and debrief:

- You have the choice to do whatever you think can make a difference.
- Throughout this course, you have identified things you'd like to be different, and you've even engaged in a prevention campaign. I know you have empathy, and you can use that to gain a sense of what the school or community needs. Is there any action you want to take to improve some aspect of our school or community?

Lead a group discussion (maximum 15 minutes).

Closing

- I'm really glad that we had this time together, so thank you for going on this journey with me and this group. Now it's time for me to let you go on your own journey.

****Closing to be added****

Endnotes

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- 4 Ibid.
- 5 United Nations Children's Fund, 'On my mind: How adolescents experience and perceive mental health around the world', UNICEF, New York, May 2022.
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- 12 National Institute of Mental Health, 'The Teen Brain: 7 things to know', U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, National Institutes of Health, 2020.

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