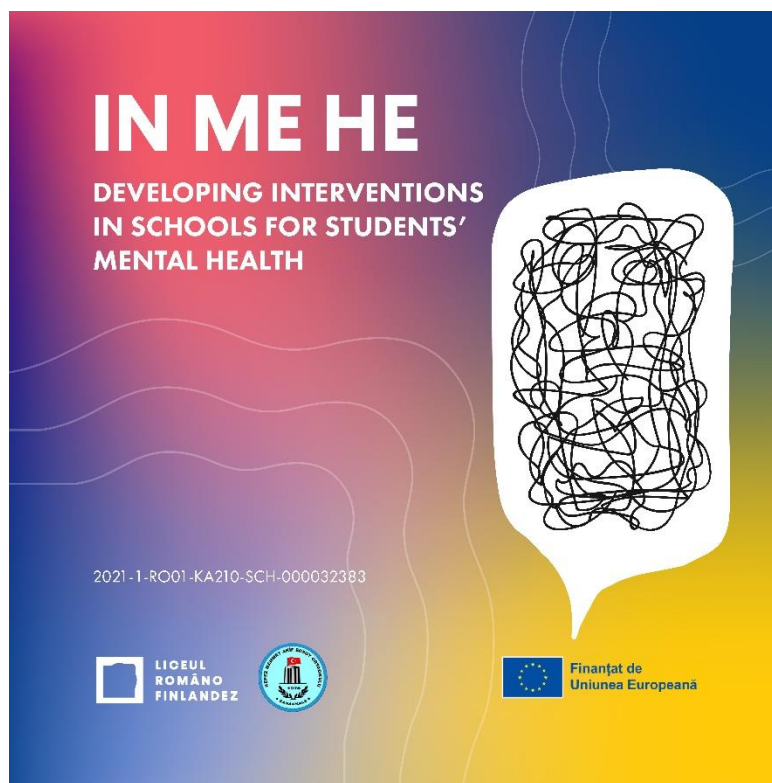


HOW TO MAINTAIN STUDENTS' MENTAL HEALTH IN SCHOOLS

Guide for teachers



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1. When should I contact the school psychologist?

The educational institution has a team of psychologists who address the psychological needs of students, collaborate with teachers to create working environments, assist families in communicating emotional, social, and behavioral issues, develop age-specific programs for children, conduct workshops for teachers, provide guidance whenever they face psychological class management dilemmas. The psycho-pedagogical cabinet's activities comply with current legislative norms.

In the school's culture, all three types of psychological support are implemented for students:

- **general support**, (where all students receive psychological assistance as part of the basic package, with each high school student benefiting from two hours of counseling upon the family's or teachers' request);
- **contextual support**, provided when a student experiences trauma such as (family death, divorce, or other destabilizing events);
- **special support**, focusing on inclusive education and tailored assistance for students with special needs, along with psychoeducation and counseling for teachers dealing with students with special educational requirements.

❖ **The school psychologist's services can be requested through teachers who observe specific issues in their students such as :**

- Absenteeism;
- Lack of concentration;
- Conflicts with other colleagues;
- Repeated inappropriate behavior;
- Signs of depression/anxiety;
- Significant changes in academic performance;
- Alcohol/substance use, attention deficit;
- Coping with destabilizing events like parents' divorce, death, or accidents;
- Uncontrolled emotions in evaluation contexts;

Issues can be addressed to parents during specially created meetings, where the class psychologist is recommended to be present.

❖ The psychologist's services can also be requested for professional problems of class leaders or teachers:

- Work overload;
- Conflicts with colleagues;
- Conflicts with parents;
- Poor management of relationships with certain students;
- Dealing with destabilizing events such as divorce, death, and accidents;
- Time management;
- Support for class hours falling within the psychologist's scope;
- Requests for materials/resources/clarifications: Ventilation of emotions;

❖ Parents can seek help when observing the following aspects of their child's life:

- inexplicable fears;
- support for emotional and socio-affective issues (internal conflicts, low self-esteem, school, family or emotional stress, excessive shyness);
- emotional traumas resulting from life events such as divorce, accidents, victims of domestic violence;
- mental health issues (depression, anxiety);
- communication problems both within the family and externally (with teachers or colleagues);
- bullying;
- support in academic and professional orientation through vocational counseling activities;
- support optimizing the learning process according to specific intelligence types and promoting mental health education programs;

Important to know!

- ✓ The school psychologist does not diagnose (this is done by the clinical psychologist following an evaluation).
- ✓ The school psychologist does not judge parents, children, or teachers, but helps them collaborate effectively.
- ✓ The school psychologist's role is to mediate the connection between teacher-student-parent.
- ✓ The information that the psychologist has access to during scheduled discussions in the office is confidential and will not be transmitted to third parties.

"I encourage you to seek help whenever the need arises! A recognized issue is the first step towards finding a solution. You can consult another colleague who knows the student, or you can go directly to the school psychologist!"

2.Psychoeducation

Psychoeducation starts from the premise that any subject can be approached if we can provide theoretical support on problematic contents. It is the bridge between theoretical knowledge and real life.

Psychoeducation is a form of therapeutic intervention that combines psychotherapy and education. It can be used both individually and in training sessions dedicated to teachers or in meetings with parents. The term "psychoeducation" focuses on informing, increasing the level of awareness, improving communication and relational skills related to the target problem.

Psychoeducation involves:

- informing about an aspect that reflects the child's current problem, but also what counseling interventions are recommended to receive the appropriate help.
- remedying a mental health problem by providing clarifying information.
- preventing problems by building behavioral models (example: early training for assertive communication)
- developing the student's strengths to be able to cope with the demanding situation they are facing at a certain time.

- informing about the job description of a school psychologist.
- Preparing parents and teachers to approach situations related to developmental psychology that arise in a child’s life.
- Counseling parents about the expectations that the school has regarding their involvement in the educational process.
- Observing the interaction between students and teachers during teaching hours in the classroom.
- Observing and guiding students with learning difficulties, social problems, behavioral problems, emotional regulation.
- Recommendations for a psychological evaluation and intervention process (clinical evaluation, psychological counseling, psychotherapy).
- Implementing intervention and prevention programs in cases of violence, bullying, school dropout.
- Providing support in demanding situations that a child is going through (low self-esteem, conflicts at home or at school, stress).
- Carrying out activities to train emotional regulation skills, impulse control, teamwork, communication, motivation, increasing well-being, self-knowledge.
- Carrying out individual counseling activities with students.
- Supporting students and parents in adapting children to kindergarten or transitioning from one education cycle to another, to facilitate an easy home-school transition.
- Supporting parents and teachers in addressing tense, inconvenient situations, or delicate subjects.
- Supporting teachers in developing personalized instruction plans, adapted to the needs of each child.
- Facilitating school-family-community collaboration.

3. Resources for the homeroom hour/teachers

3.1 For the first homeroom hours:

- What is the significance of the year's slogan?

- From the 4 essential values of LRF - Respect, Responsibility, Support, and Involvement - direction and sense - we can establish the class rules together.
- Assignment for every pupil from class who will answer to our needs and values – “Jobs in our classroom” (more materials on the internet)

3.2. Time capsule - The story goes on

Instructions: Complete every gap and fold the formular. It will be kept by the class master and it will be opened at the end of the year/level.

Name:

Age:

Nickname:

Name of the favorite story hero/favorite game:

Name of the best friend:

Favorite memory from this summer:

I am very grateful for:

The biggest challenge for me this year is:

I wish to become:

I wish to change before the time capsule opens the next aspect of my life:

"Fill in each space and fold the form."

3.3 Bullying prevention

Junior/Intermediate activities

Web of compliments

Years
1-6

Objective:
To encourage students to actively consider what they can do to help prevent bullying in their school environment.

Materials:

 Large ball of wool or string

 A large space



Method:

- Stand your class in a circle.
- Ask the first student in the circle to wrap the wool or string around their finger three times so it doesn't come off.
- The first student then passes the ball of wool or string to anyone else in the circle. As each student passes the wool or string to the next person they give them a compliment.
- Repeat this until everyone in the circle has their finger in the wool or string 'web of compliments'.
- Now for the really fun part! Try and untangle your web of compliments.
- As each student unties the piece of wool or string from around their finger, they have to say one fact about themselves and how they will work to prevent bullying.



Photo credit: Students from Class 3F, Endike Primary School, Hull, UK with their compliments web activity.

3.4. Bingo game for meeting and connection

Instructions: Teams of 5 students are formed. Every team receives a form and they will need to discover from the ones who are in the room the students who respect the criteria from the form (the name will be noted in the empty box). The first team that completes all the gaps will win, but not before checking the correctness of the written names (the ones noted on the form will need to confirm).

Someone that comes from another city/country	Someone that has a pet, other than cat or dog	Someone that is the tallest	Someone that plays a team sport	Someone that broke his arm/leg
Someone that speaks fluently English (prove it!)	Someone that plays a musical instrument	Someone that travelled by plane	Someone that has grandparents in the countryside	Someone that hasn't watched/read "Wonder"
Someone that broke a window	Someone that has at least 2 siblings	Someone that doesn't like chocolate	Someone that is an only child	Someone that knows a good joke (say it!)
Someone that likes to dance	Someone that rode a horse	Someone that wants to be become a doctor	Someone that is the oldest in the group	Someone that really likes to read
Someone that eats the skin from a chicken	Someone that doesn't watch Tiktok	Someone that has a unusual passion	Someone that knows the lyrics of a song in English. Say them!	Someone that goes to ski in January

3.5. For inspiration, with title of exemple:

[Autocunoastere - Activitate dirigentie - Deschide caseta \(wordwall.net\)](#)

[Stres-dirigentie V -anagrama rebusului manual pg19 - Anagramă \(wordwall.net\)](#)

[-final de an scolar-dirigentie;Clasa a IX-a - Chestionar \(wordwall.net\)](#)

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[Te provoc la ... încredere - Roata aleatoare \(wordwall.net\)](#)

[Dacă aş fi... - Cărți aleatorii \(wordwall.net\)](#)

[Toti avem un talent - Diferiti dar impreuna - Povesti scurte pentru copii - YouTube](#)

[Te provoc... \(Joc didactic\) - Digitaledu](#)

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<https://ecdn.teacherspayteachers.com/thumbitem/End-of-the-Year-Class-Compliments-FREE-079803000-1369092717-1478964923/original-704033-3.jpg>

<https://bullyingfree-live-storage.s3.amazonaws.com/public/Uploads/The-Emotions-Alphabet.pdf>

<https://bullyingfree-live-storage.s3.amazonaws.com/public/Uploads/Web-of-compliments.pdf>

[What Animal Am I Quiz - BestFunQuiz](#)

[Consiliere și dezvoltare personală \(edu.ro\)](#)

[Teste psihologice online | La-Psiholog.ro](#)

[Understand Your Child Better With These Child Psychology Tips \(childdevelopmentinfo.com\)](#)

[Despre acest blog – Psihologia Sănătății Aplicate \(practicalhealthpsychology.com\)](#)

[Edupedu.ro - Știri la zi despre educație](#)

[STRATEGII FOLOSITE DE PROFESORI PENTRU SPRIJINIREA ELEVILOR CU CERINTE EDUCATIVE SPECIALE \(snsh.ro\)](#)

4. Teacher, trainer of the ability to observe

Observation is the most accessible method of researching the surrounding environment and others; it is a means of knowledge, an effective learning tool for all ages. Through observation, thinking, language, imagination, attention, and memory are developed and trained.

Starting from grade 0, students can be periodically given various exercises to train their observation skills.

Exercises for the development of observation:

1. Individual – Observation topics proposed by teachers: How do I start my morning? What does the park look like when I go with friends? How does nature look in the summer? And in the autumn? What does my desk mate look like? Observation is materialized by transmitting the research undertaken by the student to others, either through storytelling, drawing, or expressed through movement (dance, mime).

2. In groups –

- **Mirror Game** – In teams of two, they sit facing each other. One of them performs a movement that the other replicates like a reflection in a mirror. At the teacher's command, the roles are switched. Another variation is for the one initiating the movement to change when one of the students decides.

- **What does your partner look like?** – Students freely roam around the class, and at the teacher's signal, they pair up for 10 seconds, during which they study each other and remember as many physical and clothing details as possible. At the teacher's command, they sit back to back so they can no longer see each other, and each describes what they remember about their playmate's appearance.

- **Recognize Your Partner!** – Students pair up, observe each other's physical and clothing details for 10 seconds, then blindfolded, they are encouraged to find their partner using the sense of touch.

5. Concentration of Attention

Attention is classified in psychology into involuntary attention and voluntary attention.

Involuntary attention is short-lived because it is directly proportional to the novelty of the stimuli to which students are exposed.

Voluntary attention involves an intention to be attentive and a voluntary effort to do so.

Exercises for the development of voluntary attention:

The Glass of Water

Each student navigates a course (the level of difficulty is determined based on the students' age) while holding a glass of water. The goal is to reach from one end to the other of the course with the glass intact, in the shortest time possible.

Ha – He – Hi – Ho – Hu – Hă – Hî Exercise with Burst of Movement and Vocalization**

Students sit in a circle. They pass claps to the right, saying on each clap one of the syllables ha, he, hi, ho, hu, hă, hî, in this order, continuously, until the game is stopped. The goal of the exercise is to maintain the same rhythm of movement and speech; the clap must circulate passing through each member of the team. This develops distributed attention and reaction speed to different stimuli (auditory, visual, vocal).

6. Managing Conflicts among Students

Conflicts arise very frequently in the lives of students, providing contexts in which they are compelled to react to resolve the issue. It is a controlled framework in which they learn to manage various emotions - anger, fear, injustice, incompatibility with others.

Guidance from teachers and careful management of conflicts that arise and are navigated are essential for the development of moral, civic principles, and dialogue.

The Exercise I want to/ I don't want to

The students organize themselves into pairs. The principle is the following: one of the children asserts and works on the exercise with „I want!”, the other one with „I don't want!”. The one with the line "I want!" has the obligation to resolve/propose the resolution of the conflict while remaining in the position "I want". The other student has the same obligation to resolve the conflict, but from the position "I don't want!". The dialogue between the two must bring socially acceptable arguments for the two antagonistic positions. The same exercise can be worked on with can/can't, leave/I don't leave, give me/I don't give you, and any other variations that may arise in conflicts between students. It is important that an appropriate speaking tone is kept all throughout the exercise, while careful not to escalate into a moment of aggression. The purpose is to honor, through valid points, the two positions and to find a reasonable solution for both participants.

7. General objectives that teachers consider, regarding the mental health of students

- Developing the students' skills to function harmoniously and efficiently in the group context;
- Forming characters capable of to easily, correctly and consciously relate to people in a social group, other than family, also respecting the rules of the dialogue and school regulations.
- Discovering and practicing personal skills.
- Forming and developing attention, sense of observation, active imagination, creative thinking and team spirit.
- Forming and practicing a positive attitude towards self, but also towards others.

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