

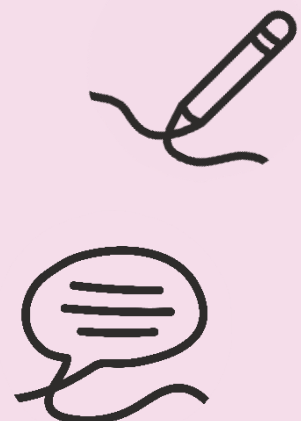


Scottish Action for Mental Health

PSE mental health and wellbeing lessons

Teacher handbook

Senior phase



Introduction

Around since 1923, SAMH (Scottish Action for Mental Health) is Scotland's national mental health charity.

Today, we operate over 70 services in communities across Scotland, providing mental health social care support, and addiction and unemployment services, among others. Together with national programme work in See Me, respect*me*, suicide prevention, and physical activity and sport, these services inform our policy and campaign work to influence positive social change.

SAMH has been campaigning for better mental health support for children and young people since 2017, when we launched our 'Going To Be' campaign. The campaign highlighted that three children in every classroom will develop a mental health problem by the age of 16, and will often struggle to get the help they need. We believe that better understanding of mental health and wellbeing can reduce stigma and give young people the knowledge and skills to better look after themselves, feel more able to reach out for support, and support others.

With this in mind, we have developed Personal and Social Education (PSE) lesson plans for children and young people in early years, primary and secondary.

This teacher handbook includes all PSE mental health and wellbeing lessons for the Third and Fourth levels. Along with the accompanying PowerPoint presentations and a small number of attachments to be used as handouts, it has all the information needed to deliver these lessons.

Lessons are specific to each level and have been developed with attention to the age, stage and mental health learning needs of children and young people. All lessons last 40 minutes.

We have split lessons for each level into topics, and developed the lessons within each topic to run one after the other. We recommend that you work through each lesson in order and complete the full topic, to maximise learning. Once these lessons are embedded within your school, children and young people will be able to work through them as they progress through their school years. However, each topic on its own can also support positive mental health and wellbeing.

We tested the lessons with schools. Feedback from children, young people and adults helped us put together the final versions.

Thank you to the following people and schools for their support:

- Jeanette Smart
- Glasgow Gaelic School
- Hyndland Secondary School

If you would like to know more about SAMH's work with children and young people, including our work in schools, contact cypenquiries@samh.org.uk

Keeping children and young people safe

While these lessons are intended to be educational and supportive for children and young people, they may bring up difficult thoughts and feelings about themselves or others. Create an environment where everyone feels safe and supported to ask questions, and respected in their views.

At the start of each lesson make it clear to your class that young people don't have to share anything personal if they don't want to. Also ask them to *share with care*, in case it leaves them feeling exposed or upset. Be especially aware if you know that a particular topic may be difficult for a young person, for example if they have personal and/or familial experience of mental health challenges.

Talk with your class about the people in your school they can speak to, and make yourself available at the end of each lesson for any young person who wants to talk through anything upsetting or worrying that the lesson has brought up.

Talk about the limits to confidentiality. If you have any concerns about a child or young person's welfare you must follow your school's Child Protection Procedures.

Remember to signpost young people to other support, including Childline 0800 1111, where appropriate.

Lesson preparation

Please take time to familiarise yourself with each lesson before delivering it. The resources you'll need are listed at the start of each lesson plan. We've tried to minimise the preparation and resources needed.

When developing these lessons we estimated the time needed for each activity. You may find it takes less or more time, depending on the level of participation from your class. Do what feels best for your class and you. If you run out of time you can revisit the lesson, but do try to complete all activities and the full topic.

Within the handbook there are links to short videos. All videos are from You Tube and the video links were correct when these lessons were developed. In advance of the lesson please check that the video links are still working and consider alternative videos if necessary.

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Senior Phase
Topic 1 | Managing challenges and changes

Lesson 1 | Understanding stress and anxiety

Duration	40 minutes
Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Senior Phase PSE Lessons PowerPoint Topic 1 (start at slide 2) • Paper and pens • <i>Relaxation Strategies</i> video by the Tower Hamlets Education Wellbeing Service for East London NHS Foundation www.youtube.com/watch?v=0rs_DMdvZ3k • Young Scot Aye Feel website www.young.scot/get-informed/national/who-to-contact-for-mental-health-support
Learning intention	To understand the effect of worry, stress and anxiety on mental health, and some ways I can manage it.
Success criteria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I understand that feeling worried, stressed or anxious is normal • I understand the effect of ongoing worry, stress and anxiety on mental health • I understand how anxiety affects the physical body and can explain why these physical symptoms are happening • I can explain some breathing exercises designed to manage anxiety

Introduction | Causes of worry for young people

10 minutes

Display and **talk** through PowerPoint slide 3 – Learning intention.

Introduce this topic, **explaining** that over the next four lessons learners will explore stress and anxiety. They'll pay particular attention to managing study and exam stress, and the changes that come as learners prepare to leave school. The lessons will give them lots of resources and strategies to help manage these challenges.

Explain that you don't expect learners to share personal experiences. **Remind** the class that time will be available at the end for them to speak to you individually about anything that's come to mind, in relation to their own or others' experiences.

Ask learners to work in small groups.

Hand out paper and pens and **ask** each group to write a list of 10 things they think cause stress for young people their age. Then **ask** them to organise this into order from most to least stressful. **Remind** them there are no right or wrong answers – everyone finds different things stressful.

Allow five minutes for this task.

Compare lists as a class and **make** a list of the five top answers from the class on the board.

Display PowerPoint slide 4 – What do teens worry about?

Explain that pupils from Barrhead High School and St. Luke's High School in Renfrewshire created the poster on the slide www.blogs.glowscotland.org.uk/er/public/healthierminds/uploads/sites/18270/2020/01/30135833/ERC-School-Posters-worrying-final.pdf

Acknowledge the ten things listed that cause the most stress for teens.

Work with the class to compare their lists to this poster, and **discuss** similarities and differences.

Tell the class that young people often have similar worries. **Explain** that the lessons in this topic will explore young people's main stressors, and the strategies and other support available to deal with them.

Activity 1 | Understanding anxiety

20 minutes

Display PowerPoint slide 5 – Discussion.

Ask the groups to discuss the questions, with one person in each group taking notes.

Allow up to 10 minutes for this task.

Take feedback on Q1 – Is stress ever useful?

Explain that stress and pressure can be useful. For example, it can get us out of bed in the morning and stop us being late, help us concentrate during an exam, help us do our best for a presentation, performance or at an interview, and make us run faster in a race.

Display PowerPoint slide 6 – Stress performance curve.

Explain that the Mental Health Foundation developed this www.young.scot/get-informed/exam-stress-with-mental-health-foundation

Explain that the stress performance curve shows how stress can be helpful when it motivates us to do our best and get things done. We need some stress to stop us being inactive, unmotivated and bored. However, too much stress will make us feel overwhelmed and anxious.

It's important to recognise when our stress levels are causing our body to move from the yellow zone (as shown on the stress performance curve) to the orange or red zones. We need to consider what we can do to reduce these difficult feelings, and get us back to the yellow zone.

Take feedback on Q2 – What is anxiety? Is it the same as stress?

Display and **click through** PowerPoint slide 7 – What is anxiety?

Explain that anxiety can become a mental health problem when we continue feeling tense, worried, stressed and scared, even when the challenging or difficult situations have passed. If anxiety is impacting on how someone is able to go about their life, they may benefit from support.

Acknowledge that young people experience many challenges in their lives. Stress and anxiety are normal responses to this, but it's important to find healthy coping strategies to manage these thoughts and feelings. Lesson 3 explores this in detail.

Take feedback on Q3 – The ways that anxiety impacts on our thoughts, emotions, physical body and our actions/behaviours.

Display PowerPoint slide 8 – What anxiety feels like and **compare** the answers to the groups' lists.

Explain that anxiety affects our feelings and thoughts, as well as our physical body. Anxiety can feel different for different people and it doesn't feel very nice.

Acknowledge that anxiety can sometimes make us feel like we're physically unwell, but this isn't the case. Instead, it's the body's stress reaction, often called the *fight, flight and freeze* stress response.

Explain that *fight, flight and freeze* is like our bodies' internal warning system. It tells us when something is happening that we need to respond to with our thoughts and actions. The response is automatic and is our bodies' way of protecting us from perceived danger. The response happens automatically when an event occurs that we perceive as threatening, challenging, stressful,

frightening or dangerous. There are times when the brain misreads risk and activates the stress response in our body, even when there's no actual challenge or danger.

Display PowerPoint slide 9 – Stress response in the body.

Explain that the *fight, flight and freeze* stress response starts in the brain with the amygdala sending signals to the hypothalamus, which then stimulates the nervous system. This leads the body to release the hormones *adrenaline* and *cortisol*, which cause the reactions in our body.

- The heart rate increases to pump blood to major muscles to get ready for action
- Bigger muscles may feel tense or shaky, and extremities like fingers and toes may feel cold as this happens
- Breathing speeds up to deliver more oxygen into the blood. Sometimes this can cause people to feel lightheaded or dizzy
- Skin might get sweaty as the body works to cool down again

Talk through some of the other explanations of the physical symptoms, **asking** if any of these are surprising to the class.

Note to teacher: For more information on the fight, flight and freeze stress response, please visit www.anxietycanada.com/articles/fight-flight-freeze/

Explain that rapid breathing can feel scary, as the person may feel like they can't breathe properly and they may become panicked, perhaps even experiencing a panic attack.

Tell the class that a way to slow our breathing, and calm anxious feelings, is through breathing exercises. These can help our breathing slow down and become deeper, allowing us to feel calmer. This in turn tells our brain to switch off the *fight, flight and freeze* stress response.

Take feedback on the groups' answers to Q4 – What can we do to manage anxiety?

Note to teacher: there's no slide for this answer.

Responses could include: talking to someone about how we're feeling; breathing exercises to feel calmer; practising mindfulness; getting a good sleep; eating well; minimising social media; journaling; using distractions; exercising; or speaking to a counsellor.

Activity 2 | Introducing breathing exercises

5 minutes

Explain that recognising the symptoms of stress and anxiety is the first step in taking control of it and being better able to manage it.

Tell the class they're going to watch a video introducing two breathing techniques. Learners can try these along with the video, or can just watch and try them later.

Play *Relaxation Strategies* by the Tower Hamlets Education Wellbeing Service for East London NHS Foundation from YouTube www.youtube.com/watch?v=0rs_DMdvZ3k (lasting 3 minutes, 27 seconds).

Take feedback from the class.

Invite learners to practise these techniques at home so they know how to use them when needed.

Plenary | Finding support for mental health

5 minutes

Remind the class that we all have mental health, and worry and stress is normal. However, when anxiety is ever present we may benefit from support.

Discuss the support available in your own school and wider community.

Encourage learners to speak to an adult in school if they're struggling with anxiety, or any other mental health problems.

Display PowerPoint slide 10 – Mental health support.

Remind learners they can find the contact details of national organisations on www.young.scot/get-informed/national/who-to-contact-for-mental-health-support. These include Childline, NSPCC and The Mix, which all specialise in supporting young people.

If you have enough time, **explore** some of the different organisations listed on this webpage.



Senior Phase
Topic 1 | Managing challenges and changes

Lesson 2 | Managing study and exam stress

Duration	40 minutes
Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Senior Phase PSE Lessons PowerPoint Topic 1 (start at slide 11) • Paper and pens • Study and exam wellbeing plan (Senior Phase Attachment 1) • Childline Preparing for Exams webpage www.childline.org.uk/info-advice/school-college-and-work/school-college/preparing-exams • Young Scot Exam stress with Mental Health Foundation webpage www.young.scot/get-informed/exam-stress-with-mental-health-foundation
Learning intention	To understand study and exam pressure, and develop ways to make this more manageable.
Success criteria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I can understand how study and exam pressure impact on my mental health and wellbeing • I can explore coping strategies to use during this time • I know how and where to seek support if I need it

Introduction | Understanding study and exam stress

5 minutes

Display and **talk through** PowerPoint slide 12 – Learning intention.

Give out a pen and paper to each learner, and **encourage** them to write down notes during this lesson.

Ask the class what causes stress during the study and exam period.

Take some suggestions from learners. These may include:

- Trying to juggle school and study, along with life's other demands
- The amount of study and work to be done, especially if sitting lots of exams
- Feeling pressure to do well from family, teachers or ourselves
- Feeling unprepared

- Comparing ourselves to others
- Worrying about results
- Worrying about the future
- Not getting enough rest and relaxation

Activity 1 | Strategies for managing study and exam stress 10 minutes

Ask the class what strategies they could use, or do use, to feel better able emotionally to study and take exams.

Display PowerPoint slide 13 – Exam Slam poster.

Explain that pupils from Barrhead and St. Luke's High Schools created this poster after surveying S3-S6 pupils about study and exam stress strategies www.blogs.glowscotland.org.uk/er/public/healthierminds/uploads/sites/18270/2020/01/30135807/ERC-School-Posters-exam-slam-final.pdf

Note to teacher: Slide 13 shows the top part of the poster and slide 14 shows the bottom part of the poster. The full poster can be viewed at the link above. The bottom part of the poster will be used in activity 2.

Compare the strategies that the class gave earlier to the list on the poster.

Ask if learners are surprised to see how popular some strategies were compared to others.

Encourage discussion about the different strategies listed on the poster, **allowing** learners to consider what they'd find most helpful.

Encourage them to write these down.

Activity 2 | How teachers and parents/carers can support us 10 minutes

Ask learners to work in pairs or groups of four and discuss what things teachers or parents/carers can do to help reduce study and exam pressure.

Give them a couple of minutes to discuss answers. They can take notes if they want to.

Take one suggestion from each of the groups.

Display PowerPoint slide 14.

Explain Barrhead and St. Luke’s pupils also considered the things they’d like teachers and parents/carers to do more and less of to reduce exam stress.

Compare the suggestions from the groups to those from the Barrhead and St. Luke’s pupils.

Activity 3 | Testing times

5 minutes

Display PowerPoint slide 15.

Read through the tips and advice on managing exam stress that SAMH (Scottish Action for Mental Health) put together for their Testing Times campaign.

Ask learners to work in the same pairs or groups and discuss everything that’s been shared in this lesson.

Ask them to make a list of their top five strategies for managing study and exam stress.

Activity 4 | Study and exam wellbeing plan

5 minutes

Display PowerPoint slide 16 and **hand out** a study and exam wellbeing plan (Attachment 1) to each learner.

Talk through the wellbeing plan with the class, **giving** examples of the information they could record on the plan and how they might use it.

Encourage learners to fill out the plan later at home.

Plenary | Further information and support

5 minutes

Explain to the class that there's lots of useful information online to manage study and exam stress.

Display PowerPoint slide 17 and **explain** that Childline has tips for the day of an exam www.childline.org.uk/info-advice/school-college-and-work/school-college/preparing-exams

Remind learners of www.young.scot/get-informed/exam-stress-with-mental-health-foundation, which includes the stress performance curve we looked at last lesson.

If you have enough time, **show** the class these webpages and **encourage** learners to explore them more at home.

Remind learners that study and exam stress is normal and common, but there are people they can speak to in school if they're struggling.

Explain that the next lesson will explore how we can include more healthy coping strategies in our life, and these may also help during study and exam time.



Senior Phase

Topic 1 | Managing challenges and changes

Lesson 3 | Developing healthy coping strategies

Duration	40 minutes
Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Senior Phase PSE Lessons PowerPoint Topic 1 (start at slide 18) • Paper and pens • Unhealthy coping strategies (Senior Phase Attachment 2) – print one copy, cut up into individual pieces and put into a box or bag • <i>How to make a self-soothe box</i> video by YoungMinds www.youtube.com/watch?v=TTYIS3u3A_E • Young Scot Relaxation exercises webpage www.young.scot/get-informed/relaxation-exercises • <i>Practice Mindfulness</i> playlist on Young Scot's YouTube channel www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLE2SRP35CyD0zL6BZLOLyFsPTMkGiAGDQ • Anna Freud On My Mind webpage www.annafreud.org/on-my-mind/self-care • Young Scot Aye Feel website www.young.scot/get-informed/national/who-to-contact-for-mental-health-support
Learning intention	To recognise the difference between healthy and unhealthy mental health coping strategies, and learn positive ways to look after ourselves.
Success criteria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I can explain the difference between healthy and unhealthy mental health coping strategies • I am able to understand the risks involved in unhealthy coping strategies • I can support myself using healthy coping strategies and know where to access further support if I need it

Note to teacher: Please be mindful of those in the class who use or have used unhealthy coping strategies, and who may find this lesson emotionally challenging.

Introduction | Coping strategies

5 minutes

Display PowerPoint slide 19 – Learning intention and **talk through**.

Remind the class to share safely and seek support at the end if the lesson brings something to mind, in relation to themselves or others.

Explain that today's lesson will look firstly at unhealthy mental health coping strategies and their risks, and then explore healthy ones.

Tell the class that sometimes unhealthy coping strategies are not immediately recognised as unhealthy, and although they may help in the short term, using them in the longer term could have a negative impact on mental health.

Activity 1 | Unhealthy coping strategies

15 minutes

Ask the class what comes to mind when they think of *unhealthy* coping strategies.

Write answers on the board.

These may include:

- Alcohol
- Drugs
- Vaping or tobacco
- Caffeine, including energy drinks
- Anger
- Isolation
- Avoidance
- Disordered eating
- Gambling
- Gaming
- Ignoring or bottling up feelings
- Self-harm
- Shopping
- Sleeping

Choose and **read**, or **ask** a volunteer to choose and read one of the individual unhealthy coping strategies from the box or bag.

Ask learners to name any risks around these behaviours including:

- Immediate risks
- Short-term risks
- Long-term risks

Allow discussion on three or four behaviours as a full class. Then **ask** learners to work in small groups and **share** out the remaining risk cards between the groups.

If you have enough time, **ask** groups to feed back to the wider class.

Activity 2 | Exploring healthy coping strategies

15 minutes

Ask the class what comes to mind when they think of healthy coping strategies that someone might use when they feel anxious or low.

Write answers on the board and **offer** your own to support the discussion.

Talk through the different healthy coping and self-care strategies below.

1. Self-soothe box

Explain that a popular tool to support positive mental health and bring calmness, particularly in times of anxiety, is a *self-soothe box*. Although it's not for everyone, it can really work for some people.

Play the video *How to make a self-soothe box* by YoungMinds from YouTube www.youtube.com/watch?v=TTYIS3u3A_E (lasting 2 minutes, 35 seconds).

Give the class a few minutes to discuss in their groups what they would put in their own box. Then **take** suggestions as a class. You could **record** the most common items and **share** these with the class and then with the wider school community.

2. Breathing exercises

Ask if anyone tried out any of the breathing exercises introduced in the last lesson.

Share the webpage <http://www.young.scot/get-informed/relaxation-exercises>, which has instructions for two more breathing exercises. **Read** the instructions aloud while learners do the exercises if they want to.

3. Mindfulness exercises

Explain that Young Scot's YouTube channel has lots of useful information and also hosts videos including guided meditation, yoga and workouts. **Explore** the list of videos to highlight different options available and **encourage** learners to try these at home

www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLE2SRP35CyD0zL6BZLOLyFsPTMkGiAGDO

4. Self-care strategies

If time allows and if there's IT equipment available, **ask** learners to work in small groups and to spend a few minutes looking through

www.annafreud.org/resources/children-and-young-peoples-wellbeing/self-care, which explores many self-care strategies.

Alternatively you can **explore** the webpage as a whole class and learners could also explore this further at home.

Plenary | Further support options

15 minutes

Invite the class to explore the resources more at home and to consider healthy ways to look after their mental health and wellbeing. This will help them continue to feel good but also support them during times of stress, anxiety and low mood.

Tell them that next lesson will explore managing change, which includes leaving school, and the strategies explored today can help them also during this time.

Encourage learners to speak to an adult if they're becoming reliant on unhealthy coping strategies. **Remind** them that being a young person is challenging, but there are adults in school they can talk to, along with organisations in the community and nationally.

Display PowerPoint slide 20 and **remind** them that www.young.scot/campaigns/ayefeel has lots of useful information about coping strategies, as well as a page listing organisations that can help. If you have time, **share** some of the websites and **encourage** learners to explore them more at home.

Remind them that Young Scot also issues the Young Scot Card, which gives young people free bus travel as well as other benefits.

Tell the class that if they're ever concerned that someone's safety is at risk they should get help immediately, and if necessary call 999.

Senior Phase
Topic 1 | Managing challenges and changes

Lesson 4 | Embracing change

Duration	40 minutes
Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Senior Phase PSE Lessons PowerPoint Topic 1 (start at slide 21) • Sticky notes • Pens/pencils • Childline School, college and work webpage www.childline.org.uk/info-advice/school-college-and-work • The Mix Leaving school: what can I do next? webpage https://www.themix.org.uk/work-and-study/your-career-path/leaving-school-what-can-i-do-next-47166.html • Young Scot Aye Feel website www.young.scot/get-informed/national/who-to-contact-for-mental-health-support
Learning intention	To explore ways to manage mental health during times of change, including leaving high school.
Success criteria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I can talk about the changes I'll face when I leave school • I recognise that some changes are challenging and impact on our mental health • I know where to go for support and advice

Introduction | Experiencing change

5 minutes

Remind the class that these lessons have explored stress and anxiety, with particular attention to ways to manage study and exam stress. This lesson will explore managing change as learners prepare to leave school.

Display and **talk through** PowerPoint slide 22 – Learning intention.

Remind the class that life is full of change and even positive change can be stressful. **Ask** the class why this is.

Possible answers: Worried about the unknown; don't know what to expect; different from our normal routine; makes us feel uncomfortable and out of sorts; can bring additional pressures.

Ask what kinds of change people might experience.

Possible answers: Moving home/to a new city; family break-up; friendship/relationship fall-outs; bereavement; illness; starting a new club or group; leaving school; starting a new job/university/college; marriage/divorce.

Explain that some change is expected and planned, while some is unexpected and sudden. We have control over change sometimes, but not always. Sometimes change is welcomed and sometimes it isn't. Change can involve giving up or moving on from something that feels familiar and secure. It may bring uncertainty and even worry, especially when we don't feel prepared for it. However, there are things we can do to reduce any stress and upset and manage change in a mentally healthy way.

Remind the class that leaving school is a significant change. Uncertainty, worry or stress about this is normal. Even adults can remember leaving school as being a big change in their life.

Activity 1 | Reflecting on time at school

5 minutes

Explain that as leaving school approaches it can be useful to reflect on the positive aspects of school life, and the different ways that all learners have grown and achieved.

Display PowerPoint slide 23 – Reflecting on time at school.

Ask learners to discuss the questions in pairs for a few minutes.

Invite feedback for a couple of minutes and **reflect** on the experiences and achievements learners share.

Activity 2 | Acknowledging concerns

15 minutes

Hand out sticky notes and pens/pencils.

Ask everyone to take a minute to write:

- What they're feeling positive about and looking forward to about leaving school (for example, less supervision, making new friends, more independence, earning money, moving towards their chosen career)
- Anything they feel unsure or less positive about around leaving school (for example, losing routine, losing contact with school friends, nervous about meeting new people, worrying about the future)

Ask learners to stick their notes on to a wall or the board, with positive thoughts grouped together and less positive thoughts grouped together.

Give the class time to read over the sticky notes.

Notice the similarities in the learners' notes and **acknowledge** the many positive aspects of leaving school and moving onto the next stage of life. **Remind** the class that it's an exciting chapter in life involving looking forward and a fresh start. Also **acknowledge** that feeling uncertain and less positive about some aspects of leaving school is very normal.

Focus on the class's concerns, and **ask** learners to look at each with a new perspective. For example, what advice they would give if someone else had this concern?

Try to address any misconceptions that learners may have about leaving school.

Remind them of the support available.

Where learners are concerned about the choices they're making around work or study, **remind** them that people can change study topics and jobs many times. Some may choose to go straight into work. Some will take a gap year, and others will go straight onto further and higher education.

Display PowerPoint slide 24 – Childline.

Explain that the Childline website has lots of information about managing challenges around school, college and work.

If you have enough time, **show** the webpage www.childline.org.uk/info-advice/school-college-and-work and also **show** The Mix webpage www.themix.org.uk/work-and-study/your-career-path/leaving-school-what-can-i-do-next-47166.html.

Encourage learners to explore these more at home.

Activity 3 | Looking after ourselves during times of change 5 minutes

Explain that this topic has explored stress and anxiety, and how we can manage our mental health during challenging times, like when we're studying or taking exams.

Ask learners to work in pairs or small groups to consider how they can look after themselves during this time. **Invite** feedback from the class.

Display and **talk through** PowerPoint slide 25, **noticing** similarities with what learners have suggested.

Plenary | Change is inevitable 5 minutes

Recap that change is inevitable. We'll all experience change throughout our lives. Sometimes we can deal with change fine. At other times we struggle with it emotionally. This is normal!

Remind the class that leaving school and thinking about next steps, including work or study, is naturally stressful. We can feel pressure to make decisions now about what we want to do in the future. But it's OK to be unsure about this or to change our minds. There's no wrong path.

We can better manage stress by examining our worries, arming ourselves with knowledge and information, looking after ourselves, and accessing help and support when we need it.

Reflect on the coping strategies the class have explored throughout this topic that they can use to help when feeling stressed, anxious, overwhelmed or low.

Remind learners of support available in school, especially who can help if they're having concerns about what to do after leaving school.

Display PowerPoint slide 26 – Young Scot Aye Feel Who to contact for mental health support.

Remind the class that they can also find contact details for many support organisations on the Young Scot Aye Feel website www.young.scot/get-informed/national/who-to-contact-for-mental-health-support.

Senior Phase

Topic 2 | Becoming a mental health champion

Lesson 1 | Challenging mental health stigma and discrimination

Duration	40 minutes
Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Senior Phase PSE Lessons PowerPoint Topic 2 (start at slide 2) • SAMH website www.samh.org.uk • See Me website www.seemescotland.org • Young Scot website www.young.scot/get-informed/national/who-to-contact-for-mental-health-support • Paper • Pens
Learning intention	To explore mental health stigma and how we can redress this through information and support.
Success criteria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I understand that we all have mental health and mental health problems are common • I understand the meaning and impact of mental health stigma and discrimination • I know ways that I can redress mental health stigma and discrimination

Introduction | Understanding mental health

15 minutes

Introduce the topic and **explain** that these lessons explore how learners can individually and collectively be mental health champions. **Explain** that this first lesson will explore mental health stigma and discrimination. It will look at how learning about mental health and challenging misconceptions through information and support can reduce these.

Tell the class SAMH (Scottish Action for Mental Health), Scotland’s largest mental health charity, developed these lessons. For more information about SAMH please visit www.samh.org.uk

Display and **read through** PowerPoint slide 3 – Learning intention.

Ask the class what mental health is and why they think it’s important that we learn about it

Take feedback and **add** that mental health is:

- Like physical health – everybody has it and we need to take care of it
- Being able to think, feel and react in ways that allow us to live our lives as we need and want
- How we manage our thoughts, feelings and behaviour
- How we cope with the ups and downs of life

Continue that you don't need to have a diagnosis of a mental health disorder to have a mental health problem.

Explain that it's important we learn about mental health so we know the signs and symptoms of poor mental health. We also need to know how and where to seek help for ourselves or others.

Display PowerPoint slide 4 – Mental health continuum.

Remind the class that we're all on the mental health continuum as we all have mental health. We experience a range of good and not-so-good emotions every day. Life is challenging and young people in particular experience a lot of stress. Most of the time we are able to manage these challenges. Any feelings of stress or low mood disappear after the difficult situation has passed, or we get support to take us back to good mental health.

However, if we go through a period of sustained poor mental health we might find the ways we're thinking, feeling or reacting become difficult to manage, or even overwhelming. People with severe and enduring mental health problems may need longer-term, ongoing support. But they can still work towards recovery and the life they want to lead.

Display PowerPoint slide 5 – Mental health statistics.

Explain that these statistics come from SAMH and the World Health Organization (WHO) and were correct at the time of writing.

Invite the class to read through the statistics and **ask** if they're surprised by any of them.

Explain that some of them may be an underestimate because mental health stigma stops people talking about and seeking help. We'll explore this more later.

In relation to the fact that one in four young people don't know where to get help for their mental health, **discuss** with the class the support available within your school and wider community.

Encourage learners to remind their peers about this.

Activity 1 | Stigma and discrimination

15 minutes

Ask the class if everyone has mental health, and mental health problems are common and can affect anyone, why don't we talk about it more?

Answer: because of mental health stigma and discrimination.

Display and read through PowerPoint slide 6 – Definitions.

Explain that these definitions come from See Me (www.seemescotland.org), which is Scotland's programme to tackle mental health stigma and discrimination. See Me is funded by the Scottish Government and managed by SAMH and the Mental Health Foundation. See Me also runs the annual Time to Talk Day (on the first Thursday in February) within Scotland. This aims to get people across the UK taking time to talk to each other about mental health.

Display and read through PowerPoint slide 7 – Stigma statistics, which come from a 2021/22 See Me survey.

Take feedback.

Hand out pens and paper.

Ask the class to work in pairs or small groups to discuss and write notes on:

- The impact of mental health stigma and discrimination
- Any stereotypes they might have heard about mental health and how these stereotypes are harmful

Allow up to five minutes for this activity, then **take** feedback from the pairs/groups.

Summarise that stigma and discrimination is about ignorance, prejudice and unfair treatment around mental health. As a result people feel unable to talk openly and seek help due to feelings of shame, embarrassment and fear of how they'll be judged or accepted. Mental health stigma and discrimination can make people who are unwell feel worse and can make it harder for them to get help when they need it.

If time allows, **explore** www.seemescotland.org with the class or **invite** them to research this more at home.

Plenary | Mental health awareness

10 minutes

Explain that learning about mental health and challenging any misconceptions and stereotypes is one of the most important things we can do to reduce mental health stigma and discrimination. We can also accept and show support to anyone struggling with their mental health, whether that's ourselves, our friends or our family members.

Tell the class that this topic aims to build learners' capacity to do all these things, and be mental health champions within school and beyond. We'll explore this more in the following lessons.

Explain that being "mental health champions" helps normalise mental health and helps people to better understand mental health problems. In turn, this makes it easier to talk about – and ultimately people are able to get support sooner and before their mental health deteriorates more.

Display PowerPoint slide 8 – Aye Feel

Remind the class that in addition to support in school and the community, there are many national mental health organisations that have helplines and websites full of useful information. Being a mental health champion means knowing what help is available for ourselves or others.

If you have enough time, **explore** the Aye Feel website www.young.scot/get-informed/national/who-to-contact-for-mental-health-support with the class and **invite** them to tell others about it.

Remind the class that if anyone needs help and support around any of the issues raised in today's lesson, they can speak to you at the end, or talk to another trusted adult at school.



Senior Phase

Topic 2 | Becoming a mental health champion

Lesson 2 | Listening to and supporting others

Duration	40 minutes
Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Senior Phase PSE Lessons PowerPoint Topic 2 (start at slide 9) • Paper • Pens • Childline website www.childline.org.uk • Breathing Space website www.breathingspace.scot • YoungMinds Supporting a friend with their mental health webpage www.youngminds.org.uk/young-person/supporting-a-friend-with-their-mental-health
Learning intention	To explore the skills necessary for listening to and supporting others.
Success criteria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I can recognise how to listen well and support a peer with poor mental health • I know where to get mental health support for myself or others

Note to teacher: During this lesson learners will explore the possible signs of someone experiencing poor mental health. Be mindful that some in the class may have experienced poor mental health themselves or know someone experiencing it. Be sensitive to this to avoid upsetting anyone.

Introduction | How are you... really?

10 minutes

Welcome the class and individually **ask** each learner how they're feeling today. **Count** how many say "I'm fine" or similar, without telling the class you're doing so.

Once the class is settled **tell** them how many "I'm fine" or similar responses you counted. **Ask** why they think people say that they feel "fine" even when it's not true.

Explain that saying we're "fine" has almost become an automatic response. People often aren't being open about how they're really feeling. Mental health

stigma and discrimination can stop people speaking honestly. But if we all felt freer to say how we truly feel it may make it easier for anyone struggling emotionally to get help.

Display and **read through** PowerPoint slide 10 – Learning intention.

Explain that young people experiencing poor mental health should have support options. These include having trusted adults within school, at home or in the community to speak to. However, young people often want to talk to their peers as well as, or instead, of adults. So it's important that we all develop skills so we can be confident having mental health conversations with friends and family.

Remind the class that adults, particularly staff, have learned listening and support skills through professional training. Being a youth mental health champion isn't about taking on a counsellor-type role. Instead it's about noticing when someone is low in mood or anxious and being able to ask "how are you... really?"

Display PowerPoint slide 11 – We can support others by...

Click through the six points, **allowing** time for discussion.

Explain that the next two lessons will explore these actions in detail.

Remind learners that they must let a staff member (or other trusted adult out with school) know immediately if they're concerned that any child or young person is at risk of harm.

Activity 1 | Recognising the signs

10 minutes

Remind the class that lesson 1 in this topic acknowledged that mental health knowledge is important. It allows us to challenge any misconceptions that exist, so we can reduce stigma and discrimination. This can help people talk about their mental health and get any support they need sooner.

Acknowledge that we all have mental health, and young people in particular experience a lot of stress and pressure. Feeling low or anxious from time to time is a normal part of life. Difficult emotions will usually pass when we resolve or work through a challenging situation. However, if they continue, and begin to impact on our day-to-day life, we may benefit from support.

Explain that young people are in a good position to notice changes in their peers that indicate they may be struggling with their mental health.

Hand out paper and pens.

Ask learners to work in pairs or small groups to list the changes in behaviour that could indicate someone is experiencing poor mental health and may need support.

Allow five minutes for this activity, then **take** feedback from each of the pairs/groups.

Display PowerPoint slide 12 – Changes in behaviour.

Talk through each point on the slide, acknowledging those the groups also suggested. **Acknowledge** that the slide list is not exhaustive.

Explain that it's important to remember that a change in someone's behaviour doesn't automatically mean they're experiencing a mental health problem.

Activity 2 | Having a mental health conversation

15 minutes

Ask the class what they think a mental health conversation is.

Explain that at a basic level a mental health conversation is simply asking someone "How are you really?", listening well to what they say, and showing kindness and empathy. Listening is the most important part. It's not about having the answers to someone's problems – sometimes just feeling they've been noticed and heard can make all the difference.

Tell the class that listening is a skill everyone can get better at.

Ask the class if anyone has heard of the term *active listening* and can define it.

Display PowerPoint slide 13 – Active listening skills.

Read the first part and **ask** learners for their understanding of each of the four main components of active listening.

Alternatively, **ask** the class to work in pairs or small groups. **Give** each group one of the four active listening components and **ask** them to discuss what this aspect of active listening involves.

Allow two minutes for this.

Add to the discussion using the narrative below.

Open body language:

- Don't stand over someone – get on their level by sitting

- Sit alongside them, as facing them can sometimes feel like an interview
- Sit comfortably
- Don't cross your arms or close off your body. This can appear closed and defensive, but an open body position shows you're open to listening
- Use eye contact if you both feel comfortable with this
- Smile and nod to show you're listening and open to what the person is saying
- Show empathy and warmth by nodding and smiling (where appropriate) to show the person that you're really listening

Attention:

- Make sure you give the person as much attention and focus as possible. Ensure there are no distractions, by putting down your phone and avoiding looking at the clock
- If you don't have the time to give your full attention, arrange another time to listen. Explain: "I'd really like to listen to what's important to you but I can't give you my full attention just now. Can we talk at...?"
- If you arrange another time, make sure you follow through. Failing to do so could leave the person feeling unimportant, and could even stop them talking to others

Check understanding:

- Show you've been listening and understand what's been said by summarising and paraphrasing
- Use sentences like: "From what you're saying it sounds to me like..." and "Just to check I understand..."
- This is important if a person is telling you a lot of detailed information and you want to ensure there's no confusion or misunderstanding
- Don't assume you understand everything and instead ask them to clarify
- Focus on enabling the person to share as much information as they feel comfortable with, saying for example: "Is there anything else you want to say? I'm here to listen"

Ask open questions:

An open question invites a longer and more reflective answer, and can help a mental health conversation to continue. Examples include:

- "Are you able to tell me a little more about this?"
- "How did this make you feel?"
- "What would you like to happen next?"
- "How can I help you?"
- Avoid 'why' questions like: "Why did this happen?" or "Why did he do that?" The person may not know why something happened. A question like this could confuse them, or make them feel foolish or even to blame for something

- Avoid closed questions that only allow single-word answers like yes or no. These won't lead to fuller conversations

Ask the class if they can think of any other open questions that may be useful during a mental health conversation. Also **ask** for any examples of closed questions which aren't helpful.

If you have enough time, **give** the class five minutes to practise active listening in pairs, with one person being the talker and one the listener.

Display PowerPoint slides 14 and 15 and **read through** to **summarise** how to listen to and support others.

Encourage them to speak to an adult if they're concerned that a person is at risk of harm, or if they see or hear something that's upsetting for them.

Remind learners of the support available in your school and community.

Tell them about www.childline.org.uk (for children and young people up to 19 years) and www.breathingspace.scot (for young people aged 16 years and above).

Display these websites if you have time.

Plenary | Supporting a friend

5 minutes

Explain that we can all be a good friend and family member by noticing when someone may be struggling emotionally, and taking time to listen and advise on support. A mental health champion involves taking this further by learning more about mental health, including how to better support others.

Display PowerPoint slide 16 – YoungMinds and **invite** learners to explore the web page www.youngminds.org.uk/young-person/supporting-a-friend-with-their-mental-health in their own time.

Encourage learners to keep practising their active listening skills.

Ask them to notice over the coming days when someone is actively listening to them. **Ask** them to also note how it made them feel when they were being actively listened to, or they were not being listened to well.

Tell the class that the next lesson will explore how they can share what they've learned in this topic to the wider school through mental health promotion, assembly talks and information stalls.

Remind the class that if anyone needs help and support around any of the issues raised today, they can speak to you at the end of the lesson. Or they could speak with another trusted adult in the school.



Senior Phase

Topic 2 | Becoming a mental health champion

Lesson 3 | Raising awareness and sharing information

Duration	40 minutes
Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Senior Phase PSE Lessons PowerPoint Topic 2 (start at slide 17) • Paper • Pens • YoungMinds website www.youngminds.org.uk • Young Scot Aye Feel website www.young.scot/campaigns/ayefeel • SAMH website www.samh.org.uk • Additional resources depending what activities learners choose to do
Learning intention	To explore and plan ways to increase mental health awareness in the wider school community.
Success criteria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I can understand the importance of raising awareness and educating others about mental health and wellbeing • I can consider what information to share with others • I can plan a mental health awareness activity within the wider school community

Note to teacher: During this lesson the class will consider how they can share mental health information with the wider school community and raise their awareness, through activities like assemblies, information stalls, posters and other communications. The resources you'll need and the steps to plan the activity will depend on which activities they choose. Please consider what's achievable for your learners depending on the time and resources you have available.

Introduction | Being a mental health champion in the wider community

5 minutes

Ask the class if anyone practised the active listening skills they learned during last lesson, and **take** feedback. **Ask** if anyone noticed when they were being actively listened to well, or indeed not listened to well. How did this make them feel?

Display and **read through** PowerPoint Slide 18 – Learning intention.

Tell the class that while the last lesson explored how mental health champions can listen to and support people individually, this lesson will explore how sharing information can increase everyone in the school and community's mental health awareness.

Ask the class why they think it's important to share their learning about mental health.

Remind them that learning about mental health is one of the most important things we can do to reduce stigma. Mental health is not always well understood. Ignorance leads to misconceptions and stereotypes, creates stigma and stops people speaking out and getting help. As mental health champions, learners can redress this by helping young people and adults learn about different mental health issues, know how to look after themselves, and know how and where to get help if they or someone else needs it.

Activity 1 | Activities to raise awareness

15 minutes

Display PowerPoint slide 19 and **ask** learners to work in pairs or small groups to consider the three questions.

Hand out pens and paper for them to make lists.

Allow five minutes for this activity.

Take feedback from the groups, **adding** any suggestions from the lists below:

1. Mental health topics:

- Normalising mental health with the message *we all have mental health*
- Different mental health issues and how to manage these, for example, stress, anxiety and depression
- Managing social media in a mentally healthy way
- Managing study and exam stress
- Knowing how and where to get help, including in school, the community and national support services
- Looking after yourself, including through wellbeing calendars

2. Who to share information with:

- P7s or new S1s
- Specific year groups around topics affecting them – for example, talking to S4s about exam stress

- Parents and carers
- School staff

3. How to share information:

- Support primary to high school transitions by visiting P7 classes to talk about the mental health support in your school
- Organise an assembly
- Host a mental health information stall at a school event
- Create and display mental health posters
- Create a social media post about mental health
- Create a mental health vlog or podcast
- Invite a local mental health charity to give a talk
- Create a wellbeing directory with information on local support organisations
- Organise mindfulness activities at lunch time
- Do any of the above on a national mental health day

Note to teacher: You could ask learners to research mental health days throughout the year, and plan a calendar of events.

- Children's mental health week – February
- Time to talk day – February
- World sleep day – March
- Stress awareness month – April
- Mental health awareness week – May
- Suicide prevention day – September
- World mental health day – October

Activity 2 | Organise a mental health awareness activity

15 minutes

Support the class to decide if they want to do one activity together, or work in small groups and do different activities.

Once they've decided, **ask** the class to work together or in small groups to make an activity plan.

Display PowerPoint slide 20 – The 5 Ws.

Ask learners to write down the ideas they already have and add to these by considering all five Ws.

Give suggestions on what learners need to prepare, the resources they need, and who in their groups will take responsibility for each task.

Depending on the activity they choose, preparation could include:

- Researching information
- Gathering equipment
- Making posters or other resources
- Writing information to be included in social media posts
- Organising a speaker
- Booking a time for the activity
- Communicating with others

Note to teacher: It's likely groups will need extra preparation time beyond this lesson. Offer support to help them consider all the steps necessary to prepare and deliver their mental health awareness activity.

Plenary | Further learning

5 minutes

Remind the class that so far in this topic they've learned about mental health, and considered how they can be mental health champions through listening to and supporting others. They've also explored how they can use what they've learned to raise awareness with others.

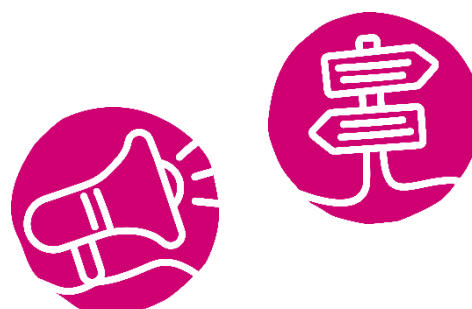
Explain that being a mental health champion is not only about supporting others and raising awareness; it's also about prioritising our own mental health. This is especially important when you're being a mental health champion to people and groups.

Tell the class that the next lesson will look at self-care strategies and developing a wellbeing plan for looking after your own mental health.

Encourage learners to continue researching mental health so they can develop as mental health champions to others and themselves.

Tell the class about the following organisations. If you have enough time **explore** their websites:

- Young Minds www.youngminds.org.uk
- Young Scot Aye Feel campaign www.young.scot/campaigns/ayefeel
- SAMH www.samh.org.uk



Senior Phase

Topic 2 | Becoming a mental health champion

Lesson 4 | Caring for my own mental health and wellbeing

Duration	40 minutes
Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Senior Phase PSE Lessons PowerPoint Topic 2 (start at slide 21) • Pencils/pens • My wellbeing plan (Senior Phase Attachment 3) • Mindful colouring sheets or another activity for those not completing their wellbeing plan in class • Young Scot Aye Feel website www.young.scot/get-informed/relaxation-exercises
Learning intention	To develop a mental health wellbeing plan that I can use to support my mental health.
Success criteria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I can recognise the benefits of a wellbeing plan • I can explore self-care strategies that help my support mental health • I can identify people that I can speak to if I'm ever struggling emotionally

Note to teacher: During this lesson learners have the opportunity to fill in a wellbeing plan. Some will be happy to complete this in class, while others may prefer to do it on their own at home. Offer an alternative activity like individual mental health research or mindfulness colouring for those who prefer the latter.

Introduction | Feeling good about ourselves

10 minutes

Ask the class to think about good mental health and share what they think are the main factors that contribute to a positive sense of wellbeing.

Possible answers:

- Experiencing positive relationships
- Having a sense of purpose
- Having a sense of agency
- Being able to cope with life's challenges
- Feeling supported and having people to talk to
- Knowing what to do and where to go if you're feeling worried, stressed, anxious or low

- Knowing what to do to maintain good mental health

Display and **talk through** PowerPoint slide 22 – Learning intention.

Explain that being a mental health champion isn't just about supporting others and raising awareness. It's also important to prioritise looking after our own mental health. This is because we're all important. We all deserve to feel good about ourselves, and to feel able to work towards the life we want and need.

Ask the class what *self-care* means.

Take answers.

Explain that self-care is simply about caring for ourselves and noticing how we're feeling at any given time. It's also about building activities into our life that help keep us feeling good when things are going well, and having activities and strategies to bring comfort and lift our spirits when things feel tough.

Self-care involves fun and relaxing activities and good personal care, like a healthy sleep routine and healthy diet. It's also about using positive self-talk, especially when we're feeling stressed or challenged, and knowing who and where to turn when we need support.

Invite learners to share what they already do for self-care.

Activity 1 | What is a wellbeing plan?

5 minutes

Explain that in this activity the class will consider self-care strategies and other things they can use to support positive mental health by developing wellbeing plans.

Ask if anyone knows what a wellbeing plan is, and **take** answers.

Explain that a wellbeing plan is an easy and practical way to record what we can do to look after our mental health and wellbeing, along with the people who can support us. It's especially useful when we're feeling worried, stressed, anxious or low.

Tell the class that writing things down is a good way of expressing what's important to us. It can improve our self-esteem as it's not only a record of how we feel and what we need to do to look after ourselves, but also includes our personal strengths and things that we're grateful for. It's solution-focused as it helps us actively consider the help and support available from people and through information.

Learners can keep and refer back to their wellbeing plan when they need to, using it as a reminder and prompt of the things important to them when it comes to keeping well.

Explore with the class why planning, writing down thoughts, setting goals and tracking emotions might be helpful.

Acknowledge that wellbeing plans may not feel right for everyone. But they will help some people who like to have a written list of self-care activities, and a reminder of who they can talk to when they need support.

Tell learners that there are a wide choice of other wellbeing plans online.

Activity 2 | Completing my wellbeing plan

15 minutes

Hand out a wellbeing plan (Attachment 3) to each learner. **Make sure** that they have a pencil or pen.

Explain that learners can either fill in their plan now or take it home to do later if they'd prefer privacy to think their plan through.

Display PowerPoint slide 23 – Wellbeing plan. **Talk through** this slide and slide 24.

Give learners time to complete their plans, and **provide** support if needed.

Note to teacher: Give anyone not completing the plan another activity to work on. For example, they could continue with their mental health research on iPads or laptops if available, or do a mindfulness activity such as mindful colouring.

Activity 3 | Exploring new relaxation strategies

5 minutes

Remind the class that caring for ourselves is just as important as caring for others. Taking time to reflect on our own wellbeing support needs and the self-care strategies that work for us is vital, as is considering the people we can turn to for support. All these can keep us feeling good when things are going well, but also help us get over challenges quicker when things are feeling tough.

Explain that the Young Scot Aye Feel website has information on various mental health topics and support services, as well as relaxation and other self-care strategies www.young.scot/get-informed/relaxation-exercises.

If you have time, **explore** this webpage with the class and **encourage** learners to try any new exercises at home. Also **invite** learners to share this information with others as a mental health champion.

Plenary | Being a mental health champion

5 minutes

Review this topic with the class and **ask** them to feed back what they found useful around:

- Mental health knowledge and information
- Listening to and supporting others
- Raising awareness within the wider school
- Recognising the importance of looking after their own mental health, and making a plan around this

Explain that being a mental health champion doesn't stop when learners leave school. They can take the knowledge and skills they've learned into the community, home and young adult life at college, university and/or work. Many young people also volunteer their time on community youth forums or even as helpers in youth clubs or other community groups and can use these skills in their volunteer roles.

Explore with the class how they might use everything they've learned beyond their time in school.

