

Lesson 1: Understanding Emotional and Mental Health

Total time for lesson: 65-75 minutes

Learning Objectives:

By the end of the lesson students should:

1. Have a clear understanding of the terms 'emotional wellbeing' and 'mental health', and where stigma comes from
2. Understand what stress is and the impact of stress on our emotional wellbeing
3. Learn some coping strategies to manage their emotions and better deal with stress

Activities	Time in mins	Resources
Starter activity: Split the class into groups of 4/5 and hand each group flipchart paper, asking them to create a brainstorm based on their understanding of the term 'mental health'. Allow 5 mins for this task, then another 5 mins for the groups to feedback to the class. Short Q&A quiz.	10	PowerPoint, flipchart paper, pens
Stigma: Briefly introduce stigma and show students the video "Break the Stigma". Encourage discussion in the class about where our own unconscious biases come from, with the teacher to write students' responses on whiteboard or flipchart paper.	5-10	PowerPoint, video, flipchart paper or whiteboard
Stress - know your limits: Provide students with an overview of stress, how it impacts people differently and how we can cope with stress. Students to discuss their own stressors in groups of 4/5, or, alternatively with the person they're sitting next to. Encourage students to discuss how they cope with stress themselves, i.e. e.g. their stress taps. Students can use the resource sheet and do this individually. Students can keep these as a source of reflection.	5-10	PowerPoint, video, Just Talk resource sheet
Managing stress: Teacher to show students the Brainsmart Managing Stress video. Teacher to explain briefly the Yerkes-Dodson law and stress curve to students.	10	PowerPoint, video
Stress and emotional health: Teacher to have a list of positive and negative statements and the impact these have on one's emotional health. Teacher to read these and ask the students their thoughts.	5	PowerPoint

<p>Coping strategies:</p> <p>Teacher to explain what coping strategies are and how essential they are in building self-esteem, resilience and emotional intelligence. In pairs, students are to discuss four unhelpful coping strategies and the impact these may have on a young person.</p> <p>Teacher can also ask the class (time permitting) how other unhealthy coping strategies may present in young people. Encourage the class to share any coping strategies they may be aware of, or one's they use.</p> <p>Show students video on the STOPP technique.</p>	15	PowerPoint, video
<p>Summary of the lesson:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We all have mental health • Our mental health is as important as our physical health • We need to look after our mental health in the same way that we look after our physical health • There are lots of things we can do to manage everyday feelings and stress levels • If we experience overwhelming feelings we should talk to an adult that whom we trust and think about utilising using healthy coping strategies 	5	PowerPoint
<p>Plenary Activity:</p> <p>Teacher to ask the class:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How did it feel to work together on some of these tasks? • Did anyone get frustrated with themselves? Or with anyone else? • In what way will you help to challenge MH mental health stigma going forward? • How has this helped us to become more aware of our own stress levels and how we can manage these? 	5	PowerPoint
<p>Extended learning activity:</p> <p>Students can create a poster, Pinterest post or video to display around the school/website to highlight the importance of stress taps and effective coping strategies to manage and improve emotional wellbeing.</p>		