

Section 4: Preparing for change

This section will explore the factors that can encourage young people to access support when they need it as well as the types of support available to them as they navigate the change to post-primary school. It will include formal and informal sources of supports.

At the end of this section, young people will explore what they are looking forward to about their new schools.

What do we mean by a One Good Adult?

Launched in 2019, Jigsaw and UCD's My World Survey 2 asked young people between the ages of 12-25 if there was a special adult in their lives that they could turn to when they were in need.

76% of young people had at least one adult they could talk to when they needed support, which was linked to better mental health and wellbeing.

One Good Adult is a trusted adult that a young person knows they can turn to. From our research (My World Survey 2, 2019) we have found that having one trusted adult can make a huge difference in the lives of young people.

For young people, having a One Good Adult can be really helpful. From our research, we found that it has been linked to:

- Increased self-esteem
- More success in school life

- Better mental health
- More likely to seek help
- Less risk-taking behaviours.

The research identified that not having the presence of One Good Adult was linked to higher levels of distress, anti-social behaviour and increased risk for suicidal behaviour.

Although a large percentage of young people reported having a One Good Adult in their lives, 24% of young people stated that they did not always have access to an adult that they could turn to. When delivering lessons on One Good Adult, it is vital that the teacher emphasises that there may be a variety of individuals in their lives, not just someone in their immediate families.

Certain young people may not have a One Good Adult in their immediate family or may struggle to call one to mind. It is very important to phrase the lesson as something they can consider, not something they need to be able to call to mind right away. It could be a sports coach, a friend's parent, a teacher they get on with or another member of the community.

Help-seeking and accessing support

As young people navigate this change from primary to post-primary school, some may face more challenges than others. If a young person is finding this transition particularly challenging, they

For information, support, or just to find out more about what we do, visit [jigsaw.ie](https://www.jigsaw.ie)



may need to access support. When it comes to accessing help, some young people may face barriers that stop them asking for help.

These include:

- Feeling different to peers
- Worried that others will find out
- Fear of stigma
- Fear of being dismissed
- Concerns about being treated like a child
- Previous negative experiences
- The belief that they should solve own problems
- Concerns about confidentiality.

As their teacher, you spend a lot of time with these young people. You may be the person who identifies that a young person is struggling and supports them to access the appropriate help. Some of the things that might support a young person to access help include encouragement from others and the assistance of an adult in their social network who can identify the problem and guide the young person to the appropriate help (Stiffman et al. 2004).

In the Walking Debate Activity under the subsection Accessing Support, young people will explore some of the things that might encourage them to ask for help.

These might include:

- A trusted adult to talk to who can guide them to the appropriate support – having a trusted adult to talk to who can guide them to the appropriate supports can be really

useful for a young person who is seeking support.

- Knowing where to go for help – knowing what supports are out there and what is available can make this process easier for young people. Sharing some of the supports Jigsaw has to offer with your class may be helpful. We have a list of supports included below.
- Being able to talk about it with someone they trust – in Jigsaw, we know that being able to talk about problems can be helpful for young people. Confiding in someone they trust may encourage them to seek help and may also normalise the help-seeking process for them.

During the walking debate activity, young people will be asked to express their opinions on help-seeking. While it is important to encourage openness in conversations as a way of normalising conversations around mental health and help-seeking, it is important that stigmatising messages around mental health and help-seeking are not reinforced. As a teacher, it is important that you facilitate these conversations effectively so that this does not happen.

For more information and support on this, please see the guidance document in the introduction page of the toolkit entitled 'Preparing to Deliver the Transitions Toolkit'.

Supports within Jigsaw

It may be useful to familiarise yourself with some of the supports that are

For information, support, or just to find out more about what we do, visit jigsaw.ie



available through Jigsaw, in case you need to sign-post students to relevant supports. Jigsaw offers free therapeutic support to young people between the ages of 12-25 who live in or attend school within the catchment area of a Jigsaw service. You can find the list of Jigsaw service areas here: <https://jigsaw.ie/find-a-jigsaw/>

We work with young people experiencing mild to moderate mental health difficulties such as stress, anxiety, low mood, dealing with a break-up or relationship difficulties, or school and exam stress. The Jigsaw model of mental health support is brief and goal-focused. Young people can access up to 8 support sessions with a Jigsaw clinician, either face to face or by video or phone. Young people over 18 can self-refer by phone or e-mail, and the parents of young people under 18 can refer their child themselves. They can also be referred by GP or from another mental health service.

For young people who are unable to access face-to-face or phone/video

support, you could sign-post them to some of our online supports.

Jigsaw.ie has information, practical advice, workshops and online courses created by our Jigsaw clinicians and youth volunteers, for young people, teachers and parents <https://jigsaw.ie/>

Jigsaw Live Chat is a new way to access in the moment text-based support if you're aged between 12 – 25 years-old. Find out more at <https://jigsaw.ie/talk-online/live-chat/>

Jigsaw Live Group Chats are live online discussions on mental health themes, facilitated by a Jigsaw Clinician. See <https://jigsaw.ie/talk-online/group-chats/> for timetable and registration.

For information, support, or just to find out more about what we do, visit jigsaw.ie

