

Neart

Supporting mental health in post-primary schools

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An Roinn Oideachais
Department of Education

Information Pack for School Leaders





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Welcome to Neart – Jigsaw’s mental health supports for post-primary schools

Jigsaw, in partnership with the National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS)/Department of Education, provides a comprehensive suite of mental health and wellbeing resources, training and programmes for post-primary schools. Over the next 3 years, Neart will support schools to provide learning opportunities for students which promote mental health and wellbeing. Neart will also provide a range of mental health webinars and eLearning courses for parents and school staff. Our work will complement the supports already available in schools which include the provision of guidance counselling, the work of NEPS, as well as the SPHE curriculum and other existing wellbeing programmes and initiatives, including the Student Support Team structure.

A flexible, multi-component approach:

Supports provided for **all school staff** are relevant for those who have subject-teaching responsibilities, and also for those who have additional responsibilities outside of the classroom, for example, chaplains, HSCL, behaviour support teachers, wellbeing coordinators, Year Heads, SEN teachers, SEN leads, guidance counsellors, middle leaders in the school and the senior leadership team. **‘All school staff’** also refers to non-teaching staff such as SNA’s, SCP staff, clerical officers, caretaking and maintenance staff, cleaners, caterers, librarians, and other ancillary staff that support the work of the school.

For school staff **with specific teaching responsibilities** for SPHE and wellbeing as a part of the transition year programme, Neart provides school supports for wellbeing promotion, aligned with the Continuum of Support set out in the Wellbeing Policy Statement and Framework for Practice (pg14) <https://www.gov.ie/pdf/?file=https://assets.gov.ie/24725/07cc07626f6a426eb6eab4c523fb2ee2.pdf#page=null>

These include universal **‘Supports for all’**, i.e. ‘Whole school support for wellbeing promotion that includes prevention and development of social and emotional competence and coping skills for all’. Universal programmes and lessons for students will be delivered in the classroom by teachers who have engaged with and undertaken training as part of our programme offerings. We see this as the most sustainable approach, building the capacity of teachers to deliver universal sessions and programmes in the classroom. We have also included a range of resources and training for school staff to support this universal approach.

Our approach also pays particular attention to enhancing training and support for Student Support Teams across a number of areas and, in particular, providing a range of clinically led training and resources to further support Student Support Teams in terms of **'Support for All'** as well as in the area of **'Support for Some'** i.e. 'Identification, targeted prevention and early intervention for those at risk'. Within this training, our experienced clinicians will also provide advice and guidance for Student Support Teams, and identify appropriate referral pathways addressing 'Individualised, targeted intervention for children and young people with more complex and enduring needs', i.e. **'Support for Few'**.

Parents/guardians are also critical stakeholders in relation to mental health and wellbeing in schools. Neart provides a range of supports for parents/guardians through a podcast series as well as a live webinar series. Schools will also be provided with an Interactive Toolkit to support them to enhance parent/guardian involvement and engagement with schools.

Overall, our multi-component approach complements the **four areas of wellbeing** (included below) within the Wellbeing Policy Statement and Framework for Practice (pg16) i.e. culture and environment, curriculum (teaching and learning), policy and planning and relationships and partnerships.



Supports provided by Neart:

Target audience	Neart Objectives:
Supports for students – through teacher training to deliver classroom-based programmes	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Enhance the capacity of Student Support Teams to actively seek and respond to the voice of young people in relation to wellbeing and mental health in schools- Provide training for teachers to deliver classroom-based programmes, which will, in turn, provide learning opportunities for students that promote mental health and wellbeing.
Supports for school staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Provide eLearning opportunities for staff on mental health and wellbeing promotion- Build capacity of staff to promote whole school approaches to wellbeing and mental health awareness- Enhance training and support for Student Support Teams to raise awareness of positive mental health and wellbeing- Provide wellbeing and self-care webinars and eLearning courses for school staff.
Supports for parents/guardians	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Enhance parent/carer involvement in wellbeing school initiatives and engagement in promoting wellbeing and mental health in the school community- Enhance Student Support Teams to actively seek and respond to the voice of parent/ guardian in relation to wellbeing and mental health in schools- Provide psychoeducation on the promotion of wellbeing/mental health for parents via webinars, podcasts and e-Learning opportunities.

How your school can avail of the supports and programmes available through Neart:

The table overleaf outlines the timeline for when programme areas will be made available to schools in 2025.

To best avail of the supports available through Neart, it is recommended by NEPS that your school's Student Support Team implements the guidelines for Student Support Teams (gov.ie - [National Educational Psychological Service \(NEPS\) resources and publications](#)) and/or has availed of the training available from NEPS. Please contact your NEPS Psychologist or local NEPS office for further information.

It is also recommended that your school has initiated a wellbeing promotion review and development cycle using School Self Evaluation (SSE) See gov.ie - [Wellbeing in education](#) for further information as well as videos on

Reflections of Using the School Self Evaluation (SSE) Process to Initiate a Wellbeing Promotion Review and Development Cycle from schools showcasing best practice [gov](http://gov.ie) - [Reflections of Using the School Self Evaluation \(SSE\) Process to Initiate a Wellbeing Promotion Review and Development Cycle \(\[www.gov.ie\]\(http://www.gov.ie\)\)](#)

How to register your interest in Neart: Please complete this short typeform [here](#) which will register your interest in receiving further information about the programme components of most interest to you, as they become available. A more detailed outline of each of the programme components can be found [here](#). Please also pass on this information to your staff colleagues in your school.

Timeline for release of programme areas for schools from January 2025:

Target audience	Programme areas	Approach	Available from...
eLearning for school staff	Supporting mental health & wellbeing in the school setting	1hr self-directed eLearning course	Jan 2025
	Leading Learning in mental health & wellbeing	1hr self-directed eLearning course	Jan 2025
	Understanding anxiety in the classroom	1hr self-directed eLearning course	Jan 2025
Webinars for school staff	Supporting the mental health of LGBTIQ+ students ¹	1hr live webinar	Mar 2025
	Trauma-informed approaches for school staff (<i>developed and delivered in partnership with NEPS</i>)	1hr live webinar	Apr 2025
	Self-compassion as a strategy for self-care for school staff	1hr live webinar	May 2025
	Body image and creating a body-confident school environment	1hr live webinar	Sept 2025

¹ Please note that work is underway to develop supports and resources for schools in relation to the mental health and wellbeing of students from other minority groups, in line with Department of Education social inclusion priorities. These supports will be available in year 2 of NEART, 2025/26



Target audience	Programme areas	Approach	Available from...
Teacher training to deliver classroom-based programmes for students	Take Action! Programme A 13-week, teacher-led Gaisce programme for Transition Year students	1hr self-directed eLearning course	Jan 2025
	Let's Talk Sure Why Not? 4 classroom-based sessions for 3rd year junior cycle, led by teachers	1hr self-directed eLearning course for teachers to support them to deliver 4 classroom-based sessions	Feb 2025
	Managing Exam Stress 4 classroom-based sessions for junior and senior cycle, led by teachers	1hr self-directed eLearning course for teachers to support them to deliver 4 classroom-based sessions	Feb 2025
	Innovate for Wellbeing A 10-week curriculum-based student voice programme for Transition Year students, led by teachers	2hr self-directed eLearning course + 2hrs live online training for teachers	Mar 2025
	One Good Friend 4 classroom-based sessions for senior cycle, led by teachers	1hr self-directed eLearning course for teachers to support them to deliver 4 classroom-based sessions	Sept 2025
	Peer Education Programme A training programme for transition year peer educators, led by teachers	90minute self-directed eLearning course for teachers + 2x2hr live online training workshops	Sept 2025



Target audience	Programme areas	Approach	Available from...
For Student Support Teams	Best practice and evidence-based approaches for mental health promotion in schools	1hr live online master-class webinar (clinician led)	Feb 2025
	Maximising student voice for mental health and wellbeing in schools	1hr live online master-class (clinician led)	Mar 2025
	Supporting trauma-informed practice in schools (<i>developed and delivered in partnership with NEPS</i>)	1hr live online master-class (clinician led)	Apr 2025
	Relationships as the foundation for mental health and wellbeing in schools	1hr live online master-class (clinician led)	Sept 2025
	Developing compassionate schools	1hr live online master-class (clinician led)	Oct 2025
	Relational and compassionate approaches to responding to parents concerned about their child's mental health and wellbeing (responding to distressed parents)	1hr live online master-class (clinician led)	Nov 2025
	Interactive, multi-media toolkit for SSTs focused on the top presenting issues relating to student mental health and wellbeing	Interactive Toolkit	Sept 2025 Onwards
	In-person seminars for Student Support Teams (county-based)	In-person 1-day seminars (county/ Education Centre based)	Oct - Dec 2025
For parents & guardians	Podcast series on a range of mental health issues of interest to parents	Podcast series (one per month), informed by consultation with parents	Feb 2025 Onwards
	Psychoeducation webinar series for parents on mental health issues	Live webinar series for parents, informed by consultation with parents	Mar 2025 Onwards
	Interactive toolkit to support schools to enhance parent/carer involvement and engagement	Interactive Toolkit	Sept 2025

Links to existing mental health and wellbeing supports and resources for post-primary schools:

It is important to re-emphasise that the Neart programme of supports, resources and training is designed to complement the existing supports provided to post-primary schools by the other key education stakeholders. Please follow the relevant links below to access these resources and supports.

Department of Education resources:

- [Wellbeing in Education](#) (this site provides access to a wide range of wellbeing information and supports for schools, students and parents.
- TPL directory - [gov.ie - Wellbeing information for school staff – post primary](#)
- Catalogue of resources - [gov.ie - Wellbeing information for school staff – post primary](#)

NEPS resources:

- [National Educational Psychological Service \(NEPS\) Resources and Publications](#)
- [National Educational Psychological Service \(NEPS\) Guidelines, Tips and Handouts for Parents and Teachers](#) which includes the following:
 - [Wellbeing support for Leaving Certificate Students, parents and school staff](#)
 - [Critical Incident resources on gov.ie](#)
 - [Responding to Self-Harm in Schools](#)
 - [Psychological First Aid](#)
 - [Feelings cards](#)
 - [Managing Stress and Anxiety](#)
 - [Panic Attacks](#)
 - [Normalising Thoughts, Feelings and Behaviours: A Guide for School Staff](#)
 - [The Response to Stress: Information for School Staff](#)
 - [Self-regulation for pupils](#)
 - [Student Support Teams Guidelines](#)
- Wellbeing supports for students from the Ukraine ([Primary](#) and [Post Primary](#))
- [Wellbeing information for schools: Ukraine](#)

NEPS eLearning training:

- [Introducing a Trauma Informed Approach: The Stress Factor. Getting the Balance Right A NEPS e-Learning course for schools](#)
- [Critical Incidents e-Learning module for schools](#)

Other relevant wellbeing resources:

- NCCA: Junior and Senior Cycle SPHE curriculum and resources: [Home - National Council for Curriculum and Assessment](#) and [SPHE | Curriculum Online](#) and <https://www.curriculumonline.ie/senior-cycle/sphe-old/sphe-toolkit/>
- Oide wellbeing supports: <https://oide.ie/post-primary/home/wellbeing/>
- Self-care and EAP programme for school staff provided by Spectrum.Life: [gov.ie - Employee Assistance Service for school staff in recognised primary and post-primary schools \(www.gov.ie\)](#)

Other information and resources:

- [HSE Mental Health supports](#)
- Other Jigsaw resources, articles and supports available at [jigsaw.ie](#)



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