

# Neart

Supporting mental health in post-primary schools

**JIGSAW**  
Young people's  
health in mind



An Roinn Oideachais  
Department of Education

# Neart Programme Areas 2025





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# NearT Programme

## Areas 2025



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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 to promote mental health and wellbeing, as well as 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.

The Neart programme of supports offers schools a flexible, multi-component approach to participate in a wide range of training courses, eLearning, webinars, masterclasses and seminars, in response to the school’s needs. 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](https://www.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](https://www.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 - Reflections of Using the School Self Evaluation \(SSE\) Process to Initiate a Wellbeing Promotion Review and Development Cycle \(www.gov.ie\)](https://www.gov.ie/reflections-of-using-the-school-self-evaluation-sse-process-to-initiate-a-wellbeing-promotion-review-and-development-cycle)

Supports and training 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.

Supports for **students** are provided through teacher training for **school staff with specific teaching responsibilities for SPHE and wellbeing**. Neart provides a number of classroom-based programmes which teachers can deliver to students following self-directed and online training. These classroom-based programmes will, in turn, provide learning opportunities for students that promote mental health and wellbeing

Supports and training for **Student Support Teams** will enhance their knowledge and skills and build their capacity to promote and support mental health and wellbeing across the whole school community.

Supports for **parents/guardians** includes 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.

**This document provided a detailed overview of all programme areas available to schools from in 2025.**

eLearning courses and webinars for **all school staff**

**Aim:** Build the knowledge and capacity of all school staff to promote whole school approaches to wellbeing and mental health.

Programme area	Description and approach	Learning outcomes	Available from...
<p><b>Supporting mental health &amp; wellbeing in the school setting</b></p>	<p>A 1-hour self-directed eLearning course for all school staff.</p> <p>It is recommended that school staff delivering classroom-based sessions for students (outlined below) complete this course to build their knowledge and capacity in advance of delivering the classroom-based sessions.</p>	<p><i>School staff will:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Develop a better understanding of mental health and wellbeing</li> <li>- Have a better understanding of why schools are important settings for promoting and supporting youth mental health and wellbeing</li> <li>- Increase their understanding of the role that they can play in promoting and supporting mental health in their school</li> <li>- Develop a range of strategies that they can use in their role to promote and support mental health and wellbeing.</li> </ul>	<p>Jan 2025</p>
<p><b>Leading learning in mental health &amp; wellbeing</b></p>	<p>A 40-minute self-directed eLearning course for all school staff.</p> <p>It is recommended that school staff delivering classroom-based sessions for students (outlined below) complete this course to build their knowledge and capacity in advance of delivering the classroom-based sessions.</p>	<p><i>School staff will:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Explore the important considerations in planning to teach about mental health and wellbeing in the classroom</li> <li>- Have a better understanding of the importance of boundaries in teaching about mental health and wellbeing</li> <li>- Gain practical strategies that can be used in the classroom to teach about mental health and wellbeing.</li> </ul>	<p>Jan 2025</p>



Programme area	Description and approach	Learning outcomes	Available from...
<p><b>Understanding anxiety in the classroom</b></p>	<p>A 1-hour self-directed eLearning course for all school staff.</p>	<p><i>School staff will:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Have a greater understanding of what anxiety is</li> <li>- Understand many of the ways in which anxiety can manifest itself in young people</li> <li>- Be able to identify triggers for anxiety that may be impacting on young people</li> <li>- Have learned some strategies to support your response to students experiencing anxiety.</li> </ul>	<p>Jan 2025</p>
<p><b>Supporting the mental health of LGBTIQ+ students<sup>1</sup></b></p>	<p>A 1hr training webinar for all school staff to build their knowledge and confidence to promote and support the mental health and wellbeing of LGBTIQ+ young people.</p>	<p><i>School staff will:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Have increased knowledge of the current research on mental health needs of LGBTIQ+ young people</li> <li>- Examine the impact of social determinants of health and minority stress on LGBTIQ+ young people’s mental health and wellbeing</li> <li>- Become more familiar with LGBTIQ+ terminology and language and how to use appropriate language when supporting LGBTIQ+ young people</li> <li>- Explore attitudes relating to LGBTIQ+ issues and challenges</li> <li>- Develop and apply strategies for creating LGBTIQ+ safe and supportive environments in schools and building resilience of LGBTIQ+ young people.</li> </ul>	<p>Mar 2025</p>

<sup>1</sup> 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

Programme area	Description and approach	Learning outcomes	Available from...
<b>Trauma-informed approaches for school staff</b> <i>(developed and delivered in partnership with NEPS)</i>	A 1hr live webinar for school staff to increase their knowledge about trauma and its impact, consider the relationship between stress and trauma and explore a whole school approach to trauma informed practice.	<i>School staff will:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Have increased knowledge about trauma and stress and how it impacts students' lives.</li> <li>- Consider trauma and the stress factor from a whole school perspective.</li> <li>- Know how to use a trauma-informed lens at a whole school and class level to reduce stressors and build resilience for all including students with additional needs and those affected by trauma and adversity.</li> <li>- Gain greater knowledge about the range of training and resources provided by NEPS on trauma-informed practice in schools.</li> </ul>	Apr 2025
<b>Self-compassion as a strategy for self-care for school staff</b>	A 1hr training webinar introducing compassion-focused approaches for supporting one's own wellbeing and self-care and strategies to apply practical evidence-based compassionate approaches in relation to self-care. <i>(Designed to complement other self-care supports for school staff offered by OIDE/Spectrum Life)</i>	<i>School staff will:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Understand compassion-focused approaches for supporting one's own wellbeing and self-care, based on the work of Paul Gilbert.</li> <li>- Apply practical evidence-based compassionate approaches in relation to their own self-care.</li> <li>- Reflect on and plan for future actions for applying the learning to promote sustainable self-care.</li> </ul>	May 2025
<b>Body image and creating a body-confident school environment</b>	A 1hr training webinar for all school staff.	<i>School staff will:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Have increased knowledge about the body image concerns that students may experience</li> <li>- Gain strategies to help students develop a kinder relationship with themselves and their bodies.</li> <li>- Identify ways to foster and contribute to a positive school environment that promotes body confidence and supports students' wellbeing and learning.</li> </ul>	Sept 2025

## Classroom-based programmes and sessions for students

**Aim:** Train teachers to deliver classroom-based programmes, which will provide learning opportunities for students that promote mental health and wellbeing.

Programme area	Description and approach	Learning outcomes	Available from...
<b>Take Action! Programme</b>	<p>A 13-week, teacher-led Gaisce programme for Transition Year students, delivered in the classroom, to increase understanding about mental health, build mental health literacy and skills support students to promote mental health within their school community.</p> <p><b>Teachers complete a 1hr self-directed eLearning course to access the classroom materials.</b></p>	<p><i>Students will:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Have a greater understanding of mental health and wellbeing, including developing mental health literacy, exploring what can hurt and help their mental health and how to seek help for their mental health.</li> <li>- Develop skills associated with maintaining good mental health and wellbeing, particularly in relation to managing emotions, developing good sleep and exercise routines, healthy friendships and goal setting</li> <li>- Develop strategies to promote mental health awareness within their school community, using the 5-a-day for mental health framework.</li> </ul>	Jan 2025
<b>Let's Talk Sure Why Not?</b>	<p>4 teacher-led classroom-based sessions for 3rd year junior cycle students to promote and support student mental health and wellbeing.</p> <p><b>Teachers complete a 1hr self-directed eLearning course to access the classroom materials.</b></p>	<p><i>Students will:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Develop their understanding of mental health and wellbeing</li> <li>- Learn strategies to mind their own mental health</li> <li>- Explore how and where to seek help if/when they need to.</li> </ul>	Feb 2025



Programme area	Description and approach	Learning outcomes	Available from...
<b>Managing Exam Stress</b>	4 teacher-led classroom-based sessions for junior and senior cycle students to help them to understand and develop strategies to manage exam stress. <b>Teachers complete a 1hr self-directed eLearning course to access the classroom materials.</b>	<i>Students will:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Explore the nature of stress as a normal human experience</li> <li>- Consider the importance of balancing their stress levels during exam time</li> <li>- Develop strategies for managing their stress levels before and during exam time</li> <li>- Explore a range of case scenarios relating to managing exam stress, particularly at junior cycle</li> <li>- Be more aware of help-seeking options if exam stress starts to become unmanageable.</li> </ul>	Feb 2025
<b>Innovate for Wellbeing</b> (Developed and delivered in partnership with Young Social Innovators)	A 10-week teacher-led curriculum-based student voice programme for transition year students. <b>Teachers complete a 2hr self-directed eLearning course + 2hrs live online training to access the classroom-based materials.</b>	<i>Students will:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Develop their understanding of mental health, and the importance of their voice in mental health promotion in schools, including how participation can support their own mental health.</li> <li>- Explore the needs of their school community in relation to mental health and select an issue to focus on.</li> <li>- Develop a range of solutions that can address this need and select the most appropriate one.</li> </ul>	Mar 2025
<b>One Good Friend</b>	4 teacher-led classroom-based sessions which provide senior cycle students with the opportunity to develop their knowledge, confidence and skills in supporting a friend's mental health and wellbeing. <b>Teachers complete a 1hr self-directed eLearning course to access the classroom materials.</b>	<i>Students will:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Increase their mental health literacy</li> <li>- Increase their feelings of confidence in initiating support for a friend's mental health</li> <li>- Develop their knowledge, understanding and skills in order to best respond to and support a friend's needs</li> <li>- Increase their understanding of boundaries and the importance of looking after their own mental health if/when supporting a friend.</li> </ul>	Sept 2025





Programme area	Description and approach	Learning outcomes	Available from...
<p><b>Peer Education Programme</b></p>	<p>A classroom-based training programme for senior cycle students to train them to deliver a mental health and wellbeing workshop for junior cycle students. <b>Teachers complete a 90minute self-directed eLearning course + 2x2hr live online training workshops.</b></p>	<p><i>Students will:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Understand the important role that peer educators can play in supporting mental health and wellbeing in schools</li> <li>- Develop an understanding of key concepts and messages they will deliver in the peer-delivered workshop i.e.               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ability to describe and define mental health</li> <li>- Share strategies for how peers can mind their own mental health during times of change</li> <li>- Outline where young people can seek help if and when they need to</li> <li>- Develop their skills of public speaking and presenting in preparation for delivering peer workshops to junior cycle classes.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>Sept 2025</p>

## Training masterclasses and resources for Student Support Teams (SSTs)

**Aim:** Provide training and support for Student Support Teams to build their capacity to raise awareness of positive mental health and wellbeing and provide them with strategies and approaches to actively seek and respond to the voice of young people and parents/guardians in relation to wellbeing and mental health in schools.

Programme area	Description and approach	Learning outcomes	Available from...
<b>Best practice and evidence-based approaches for mental health promotion in schools</b>	1hr live online masterclass for SSTs (clinician led) introducing best practice approaches for implementing a whole-school approach to mental health and wellbeing and evidence-based approaches for responding to the mental health needs of young people in school (co-delivered with key external experts).	<p><i>Student Support Teams will:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Have a greater understanding of best practice approaches for implementing a whole-school approach to mental health and wellbeing.</li> <li>- Identify opportunities and plan for how they will implement these approaches in practice (translating theory to practice)</li> <li>- Build their competence and confidence in responding to the mental health needs of students in school.</li> </ul>	Feb 2025
<b>Maximising student voice for mental health and wellbeing in schools</b>	1.5hr live online masterclass for SSTs on best practice for seeking and responding to the voice of young people in relation to wellbeing and mental health in schools.	<p><i>Student Support Teams will:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Have a greater understanding of the importance of involving young people in decision-making processes related to mental health and wellbeing in schools.</li> <li>- Be able to apply the principles of the national participation framework, such as creating a safe and inclusive space for young people to express their views and involving them in all stages of decision-making.</li> <li>- Become familiar with effective strategies for seeking and responding to student voice and engaging and involving young people in Student Support Team decision-making processes.</li> <li>- Develop skills to facilitate meaningful and inclusive consultations with young people and identify ways to incorporate their views and feedback in the development and implementation of wellbeing initiatives in schools.</li> </ul>	Mar 2025

Programme area	Description and approach	Learning outcomes	Available from...
<b>Supporting trauma-informed practice in schools (developed and delivered in partnership with NEPS)</b>	<p>A 1hr live masterclass for Student Support Teams which will take a 'deeper dive' into the concept of trauma-informed practice and explore how to support a young person who may have experienced trauma.</p> <p><i>Note: It is essential the members of SSTs firstly <b>complete the NEPS eLearning training on Introducing a Trauma Informed Approach, The Stress Factor, Getting the Balance Right</b><sup>2</sup> (see link to eLearning in footnote).</i></p>	<p><i>Student Support Teams will:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Have increased knowledge about trauma.</li> <li>- Support school staff to build resilience for all including students but especially those affected by trauma and adversity.</li> <li>- Know how to use a trauma-informed lens in their practice when working with individual students affected by diversity and trauma.</li> <li>- Use practical school-based, trauma-informed approaches to promote safety and connection for young people.</li> </ul>	Apr 2025
<b>Relationships as the foundation for mental health and wellbeing in schools</b>	<p>1hr live online masterclass for SSTs (clinician led) exploring the importance of relationships as the foundation for positive mental health and wellbeing in schools.</p>	<p><i>Student Support Teams will:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Enhance their own relational skills through interactive exercises focusing on mental health and wellbeing.</li> <li>- Learn practical evidence-informed strategies for enhancing protective factors (and managing risk factors) within the school environment.</li> </ul>	Sept 2025
<b>Developing compassionate schools</b>	<p>1hr live online masterclass for SSTs (clinician led) on strategies for developing compassionate schools and overcoming the effects of self-criticism.</p>	<p><i>Student Support Teams will:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Gain a greater knowledge of compassion-based approaches.</li> <li>- Reflect on and plan for implementing strategies informed by compassion-based approaches, trauma informed practice, and systemic and relational practices.</li> </ul>	Oct 2025

<sup>2</sup> [Introducing a Trauma Informed Approach: The Stress Factor, Getting the Balance Right A NEPS e-Learning course for schools](#)

Programme area	Description and approach	Learning outcomes	Available from...
<p><b>Interactive, multi-media toolkit for SSTs focused on the most common issues relating to student mental health and wellbeing</b></p>	<p>Interactive, multi-media toolkit exploring the most common issues relating to student mental health such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Anxiety, exam stress, physical exercise and sleep; promoting positive body image and self-esteem; trauma-informed schools; supporting the mental health of neurodivergent students; articles, guidance and strategies for supporting mental health and wellbeing in the school community.</li> </ul>	<p><i>Student Support Teams will:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Develop a greater understanding of a range of the most common mental health issues arising for students, warning signs and risk and protective factors.</li> <li>- Learn evidence-based strategies that can be implemented by school staff, specific to each of these issues, to promote student mental health and wellbeing.</li> <li>- Appreciate the importance of supportive relationships as the key to promoting mental health and wellbeing.</li> <li>- Have a greater awareness of the importance of whole school approaches to wellbeing and mental health promotion.</li> </ul>	<p>Sept 2025</p>
<p><b>Relational and compassionate approaches to responding to parents concerned about their child's mental health and wellbeing</b></p>	<p>1hr live online masterclass for SSTs (clinician led) on relational and compassionate-based approaches for responding to parents who are distressed /concerned about their child's mental health and wellbeing.</p>	<p><i>Student Support Teams will:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Have a greater understanding of relational and compassionate approaches to responding to parents/guardians concerned about their child's mental health and wellbeing.</li> <li>- Consider how best to support parents / guardians to promote wellbeing and mental health in collaboration with their school.</li> <li>- Learn practical strategies for responding to concerned or distressed parents, informed by Jigsaw clinician experience.</li> </ul>	<p>Nov 2025</p>

Programme area	Description and approach	Learning outcomes	Available from...
<p><b>Seminar series for Student Support Teams (county-based)</b></p>	<p><b>In-person seminars to further enhance training and support for Student Support Teams.</b> These seminars will build further on/focus more in-depth on themes either (i) addressed in previous masterclasses, (ii) presenting issues addressed in the interactive toolkit or (iii) issues identified by SST members in feedback provided via masterclasses and other engagement with the NEART Programme staff.</p>	<p><i>Student Support Teams will:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Have greater knowledge about key mental health issues impacting on students as a result of a 'deeper dive' into presenting issues.</li> <li>- Engage in reflective practice as a means of translating mental health theory and evidence into practice, with a view to applying practical strategies and approaches to promote and support mental health and wellbeing in their school.</li> <li>- Have the opportunity for reflective practice and to share learning with colleagues in a supportive learning environment.</li> </ul>	<p>Oct 2025 onwards</p>



## Supports and psychoeducation for parents/guardians

**Aim:** Provide training and support for Student Support Teams to build their capacity to raise awareness of positive mental health and wellbeing and enhance their capacity to actively seek and respond to the voice of young people and parents/guardians in relation to wellbeing and mental health in schools.

Programme area	Description and approach	Learning outcomes	Available from...
<b>Psychoeducation for parents/guardians</b>	Includes a <i>podcast series</i> and online <i>webinars</i> to increase knowledge and build their confidence on the promotion of wellbeing and mental health. Also included are approaches for minding their own mental health and strategies for supporting the mental health and wellbeing of young people as parents. A range of external experts will co-deliver the webinars and participate in the podcasts.	<p><i>Parents/guardians will:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Become more informed about a range of mental health issues impacting on the mental health and wellbeing of young people.</li> <li>- Have greater knowledge about strategies they can use to support the mental health and wellbeing of their young people.</li> <li>- Be equipped with approaches for minding their own mental health and be able to apply these in their day-to-day lives.</li> </ul>	Feb 2025 onwards
<b>Maximising parent/guardian engagement in relation to mental health and wellbeing in schools</b>	Schools will be provided with an interactive toolkit to enhance parent/carer involvement and engagement in promoting wellbeing and mental health in the school setting.	<p><i>Schools will:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Have greater knowledge about best practice approaches to involving and engaging parents/guardians in promoting wellbeing and mental health in the school community.</li> <li>- Have access to a comprehensive toolkit, informed by the voice of parents/guardians, which will provide them with strategies, tools, resources and a framework for enhancing parent involvement in mental health in schools.</li> </ul>	Sept 2025



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