

# STAFF TRAINING EXERCISES

The following are some exercises for use with staff when preparing to deliver the DEAL programme. Exercises can be used as part of an inset/training day. You may wish to invite external agencies in to help provide expertise or local information.

## Aims

- \* To introduce staff to the DEAL programme and teaching materials
- \* To identify any fears or concerns they might have about delivering emotional health
- \* To think about how people provide opportunities for emotional health to be taught and caught and whole school links with emotional health and wellbeing.

## Resources



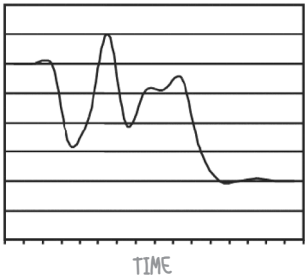


- \* Powerpoint presentation about DEAL
- \* DVD section 1 'Introduction to the programme'
- \* Photocopy: Factsheet on emotional health for staff
- \* Photocopy: Copies of DEAL lesson plans
- \* Flip chart, paper and pens

Samaritans provides a number of training courses including Communication Skills, WorkLife balance and Suicide awareness. For further information visit [www.samaritans.org](http://www.samaritans.org)

## Timing

The training exercises in this section take approximately 2 hours. Where less time is available, it is recommended to show the DVD and talk through the materials with staff and discuss any issues that might arise.

# STAFF TRAINING EXERCISES

DEAL: Staff training activities	Time
<p><b>Participant preparation before the session if possible:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✿ To read through the fact sheet on emotional health for background information.</li> <li>✿ To look through the DEAL lesson plans which they are likely to be delivering.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Welcome &amp; Introduction</b></p> <p>Introduce the format and aims of the session. Highlight how this fits into teaching and learning and other emotional health initiatives within the school.</p>	<p>5 mins</p> 
<p><b>Exercise: Understanding emotional health: Timeline</b></p> <p>This exercise is to get participants thinking about their own emotional health, and to reflect on how it feels to talk about something personal in a group setting. The activity is taken from the Emotional Health Awareness lesson in DEAL.</p> <p>Each participant should be given a piece of blank paper and asked to draw a graph of how they have felt over the past 6 months.</p> <p>Demonstrate this on the board first. If they can't remember some prompting may help – was there an important anniversary, did you go on holiday etc. Stress that this is an individual activity, and participants do not need to share with others, nor do they need to label their graph. If anyone does not feel comfortable filling in the graph they should not feel pressured to.</p> <div data-bbox="616 914 1115 1208" style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 10px; margin: 10px 0;">  </div> <p><b>Ask</b> the group what the shape of their graph was. There is likely to be a huge variety. <b>Explain:</b> This is an exercise we use with students to highlight that it is normal to have ups and downs. Some people experience these more than others, either because of what happens to them in their life, or because some people have personalities that seek stability, whilst others may prefer the passion of highs and lows. Emotional health is both your ability to balance your emotions day to day, and also the ability or resilience to come back up from the lows in life.</p> <p>Discuss how it felt to do the graph and reflect how it might feel exposing for students to do this activity. Highlight that all of the DEAL lessons encourage teachers to use ground rules in a class and to name where students can go for support before and after the lessons.</p>	<p>15 mins</p> 
<p><b>Introducing the DEAL Programme</b></p> <p>Go through the DEAL teaching materials and plan how materials will be used as you would normally with your staff team. There is a powerpoint presentation to use if appropriate for the group.</p>	<p>25 mins</p> 

## **Exercise: Best case/ Worst case scenarios.**

The purpose of this exercise is to identify and collectively address any worries staff might have about teaching emotional health to young people. Even experienced teachers can have worries about teaching this topic.

DEAL has been written to also be used by non-specialist teachers but you may want to use this exercise as the basis for planning how less confident staff can be supported, for example buddying with a more confident colleague or inviting some external expertise.

Show the DEAL DVD part 1 – 'Introduction to the programme'.

If the group feels confident about delivering the materials you may just want to discuss any issues arising from the DVD.

### **For less confident participants, the following exercise might be useful.**

Divide the group into pairs and give each two sheets of paper. On one sheet they should draw or describe their worst case scenario. On another sheet they should describe their best case scenario.

Ask each pair to share with the group. After they have described their worst case scenario, ask other participants to come up with techniques or solutions they can think of to deal with this situation, or a source of information where they could find out more.

20 mins



30 mins



# EMOTIONAL HEALTH FACTSHEET FOR STAFF

## Exercise: Building an emotionally healthy culture

In pairs or small groups, draw the emotional health graph for how the emotional health of the school community has been over the past 2 years. This time ask them to label the graph with what happened.

Ask people to hold up their graphs and discuss what has come out of this.

People are likely to have different opinions on this, depending upon their role, differing expectations and experience, and their own wellbeing during this time. Make sure people feel all opinions are valid. Explore any negative perceptions and list barriers or problems on a flipchart.

Next thoughtstorm what could be done to improve the situation, making staff/parents/students feel safe, confident, well, belonging and a positive sense of purpose. You may want to split the solutions into low resource and high resource.

Finally summarise the responses and ask people to take away one action from the list which they can take responsibility for.

10 mins



10 mins



## Close

Summarise the action points and thank people for taking part. Remember to signpost them to other resources they can look at and support that is available for them as individuals should it be needed.

5 mins



## TOTAL TIME

2 hours

## What is emotional health?

- ✿ Most young people have developed fairly sophisticated techniques for sustaining their mental and emotional wellbeing at times of stress. However limited life experience means that they have limited strategies for coping with major life events.
- ✿ Over 60% of teenage boys and 40% of girls admit to having no idea what to do when someone else becomes emotional and over half find it difficult to express their own feelings – sticking to the facts when they talk about their problems.
- ✿ A lack of positive coping strategies can lead to problems with health, behaviour, and achievement both in and out of school. Young people who do not mix well socially are between two and three times more likely to experience depressive symptoms, compared with peers who have confiding relationships.
- ✿ 10 per cent of teenagers aged 15 and 16 years old have deliberately self-injured, and each year there are around 19,000 suicide attempts by UK adolescents.
- ✿ Emotional and social competence have been shown to be more influential than cognitive abilities for personal, career and scholastic success. Developing knowledge, attitudes and skills in this area can improve educational and life chances as well as improving health. Young people themselves see the value of this. When asked how they would like to improve themselves, young people chose self confidence, assertiveness, and dealing with anger as top of their list.

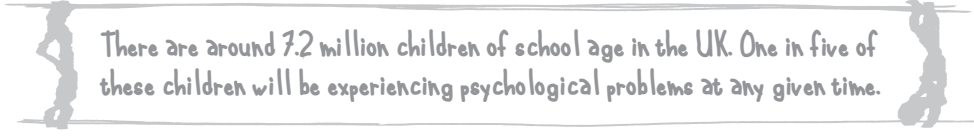
## Staff have emotional health needs too

- ✿ Work-related stress is the main health and safety concern in four out of five UK schools. If unnoticed, stress can lead progressively to a decrease in performance, health injury and long-term absence from work.
- ✿ In a survey of head teachers by the National Association of Head Teachers in May 2000, 40% of respondents reported having visited their doctor with a stress-related problem in the previous year. 20% considered that they drank too much and 15% believed they were alcoholics. 25% suffered from serious stress related health problems including hypertension, insomnia, depression and gastrointestinal disorders.
- ✿ A report into the scale of occupational stress in 2000 found that the groups in the UK reporting high stress (in order) were teaching, nursing, management, professionals, other education and welfare, road transport and security. In all these groups at least one in five reported high stress. For teachers it was two in five.
- ✿ Research by the Association of Teachers and Lecturers on 300 secondary school teachers, showed that abuse at the hands of pupils had left 46% taking anti depressants or facing long lay-offs from school through stress. One in seven (14%) said they had suffered actual bodily harm from pupils.

# EMOTIONAL HEALTH FACTSHEET FOR STAFF

## Part of a whole school approach to emotional health and wellbeing

Emotional health is developed throughout a person's lifetime. From the day we are born we learn to communicate, and we manage feelings, develop empathy and social skills which equip us to gain positive enjoyment from life and give us resilience to get through the difficult times.



There are around 7.2 million children of school age in the UK. One in five of these children will be experiencing psychological problems at any given time.

Much of this emotional learning is done in schools, and takes place in the playground as well as in lesson time, from peers as well as from staff. By developing the skills and knowledge of both students and staff, and being there to support them to deal with issues like bullying, exam stress, self-harm and suicide, we can make a difference to the whole school community.



School teachers are considered the second most important influence in the lives of young people; top of the list are their parents.

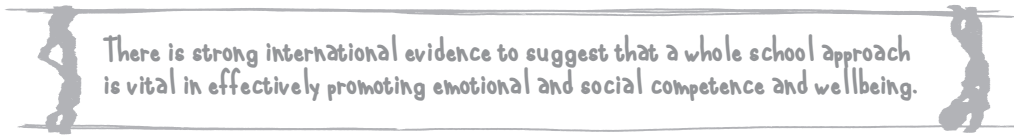
The responsibility for teaching young people about emotional health often falls on class teachers, school nurses or form tutors. Most teachers agree this is an important subject, yet only 37% feel well equipped to educate students about it. They feel they don't have the expertise to answer student questions and are afraid of 'opening a can of worms,' bringing out personal issues which they do not feel equipped to deal with.



Emotional health promotion should not rely on information alone but should involve the development of student skills and behaviours that are reinforced in the wider community.

All staff play a key role in modelling emotional literacy and positive behaviours. Administrators, catering staff and teaching assistants listen and support students in an informal way every day. As well as dealing with challenging students, staff must manage relationships with parents, colleagues, governors and members of the community, and respond to ever changing demands of the education system.

How effectively people are able to cope with these situations may depend on their emotional literacy, for example their use of empathy and listening skills. Staff too need to be given opportunities to develop and feel supported.



There is strong international evidence to suggest that a whole school approach is vital in effectively promoting emotional and social competence and wellbeing.