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Module Title
Integrative Mental Health Programs

Sub-unit 3.1: Integrative Mental Health Programs

Chapters:

1. Whole-School Approaches
2. Case Studies and Best Practices of Successful Programs
3. Continuation and sustainability

1. Whole-School Approaches to Mental Well-Being

Recommendations and Guidelines based on:

Simões, C., Caravita, S., & Cefai, C. (2021). Analytical Report. European Union. https://www.um.edu.mt/library/oar/handle/123456789/101739

Mental Health in Schools

- Schools play a critical role in fostering mental health during developmental years.

- Prioritizing mental well-being ensures better academic, social, and emotional outcomes.

- A whole-school approach creates inclusive, supportive environments for all.

Key Components of a Whole-School Approach

- **Systemic Implementation**: Integrating mental health into school culture and policies.

- **Collaborative Effort**: Involving students, staff, parents, and the community.

- **Equity-Focused**: Addressing the needs of marginalized and vulnerable groups.

- **Sustainability**: Ensuring initiatives are maintained and evolve over time.

Recommendations Overview

1. **Make** Mental Health a Core Educational Goal

2. **Integrate** Mental Health into the Curriculum

3. **Measure** School Success Holistically

4. **Adopt** a Whole-School Approach

5. **Promote** Belonging and Connectedness

6. **Encourage** Participation from All Stakeholders

7. **Develop** and Implement a Mental Health Curriculum

Mental Health as a Core Educational Goal

- **Embed** mental health and well-being into educational priorities.

- **Align** with EU initiatives like the European Education Area 2025.

- **Address** stigma and promote inclusivity through a consistent framework.

Integration into the Curriculum

- **Include** social-emotional learning, resilience, and mental health literacy.

- **Use** inclusive, collaborative teaching practices that connect mental health with academic success.

- **Train** teachers to model emotional competence.

Whole-School Engagement

- **Mobilize** resources across the school community for universal and targeted interventions.

- **Embed** mental health into school culture and ethos.

- **Address** barriers such as bullying, unfair treatment, and academic pressure.

Belonging and Connectedness

- **Foster** a respectful, caring environment for students and staff.

- **Encourage** strong, supportive relationships to reduce stress and prevent burnout.

- **Create** spaces for students and staff to thrive emotionally.

Participation and Collaboration

- **Use** a bottom-up approach with input from students, parents, and the community.

- **Tailor** interventions to local cultural and contextual needs.

- **Empower** students through co-design and implementation of programs.

Developing a Mental Health Curriculum

- **Teach** mental health literacy and resilience from early years through high school.

- **Adapt** to the needs of each school and local context.

- **Collaborate** with academic institutions for evidence-based programs.

Vulnerable and Marginalized Groups

- **Focus** on students from low-SES, migrant backgrounds, or trauma survivors.

- **Implement** selective interventions like mentoring and extracurricular programs.

- **Ensure** inclusive settings to avoid stigma.

Tackling Bullying

- **Implement** whole-school anti-bullying interventions.

- **Involve** students, staff, and parents in designing solutions.

- **Address** systemic group dynamics and individual experiences of bullying.

Supporting Teachers and Adults

- **Provide** training for teachers on mental health promotion and relational pedagogy.

- **Offer** support systems for teachers to manage stress and maintain well-being.

- **Empower** parents with education and support to care for their well-being.

Strengthening Evidence-Based Practices

- **Invest** in rigorous research to identify effective interventions.

- **Focus** on European-specific evidence to guide schools.

- **Ensure** cost-effectiveness and scalability of successful programs.

Conclusion

Transforming Education for Mental Health

Mental health promotion requires **systemic change** in education systems.

Collaboration, **participation**, and **evidence-based approaches** are key.

By fostering **supportive environments**, schools can ensure lasting positive impacts on students, staff and communities

2. Successful case studies and best practices

Contents:

- Implementing a whole-school approach through Positive Education
- Student-Led Mental Health Promotion: A Case Study and Guide

Implementing a whole-school approach through Positive Education

Based on: ***The Geelong Grammar School Applied Model for Positive Education*** by Erin Hoare, David Bott, Justin Robinson

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Introduction

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The Need for Positive Mental Health:	Mental health promotion involves reducing psychopathology and enhancing well-being. Early intervention during childhood and adolescence is crucial for lifelong benefits.
Schools as Optimal Settings:	Unique environments with large-scale reach and pre-existing structures. Whole-school approaches address the complexity of educational systems.
The GGS Model for Positive Education:	Framework based on the PERMA model, expanded to include positive health. Aims to promote mental health at all school levels (students, staff, policies, ethos). Incorporates 4 Processes: Learn it, Live it, Teach it, Embed it.
Study Goals:	Document the GGS implementation framework. Identify barriers and propose solutions for better implementation. Highlight implications for practice and research in school-based mental health.

Positive Education

- Combines Character strength, resilience and well-being to help individuals flourish

- Encompasses psychosocial skills and broader concepts like meaning, purpose and physical health

- Was initiated at Geelong Grammar School (GGS)

- Built on Seligman's PERMA model [1], adding positive health to emphasize mind-body connections

[1]: https://positivepsychology.com/perma-model
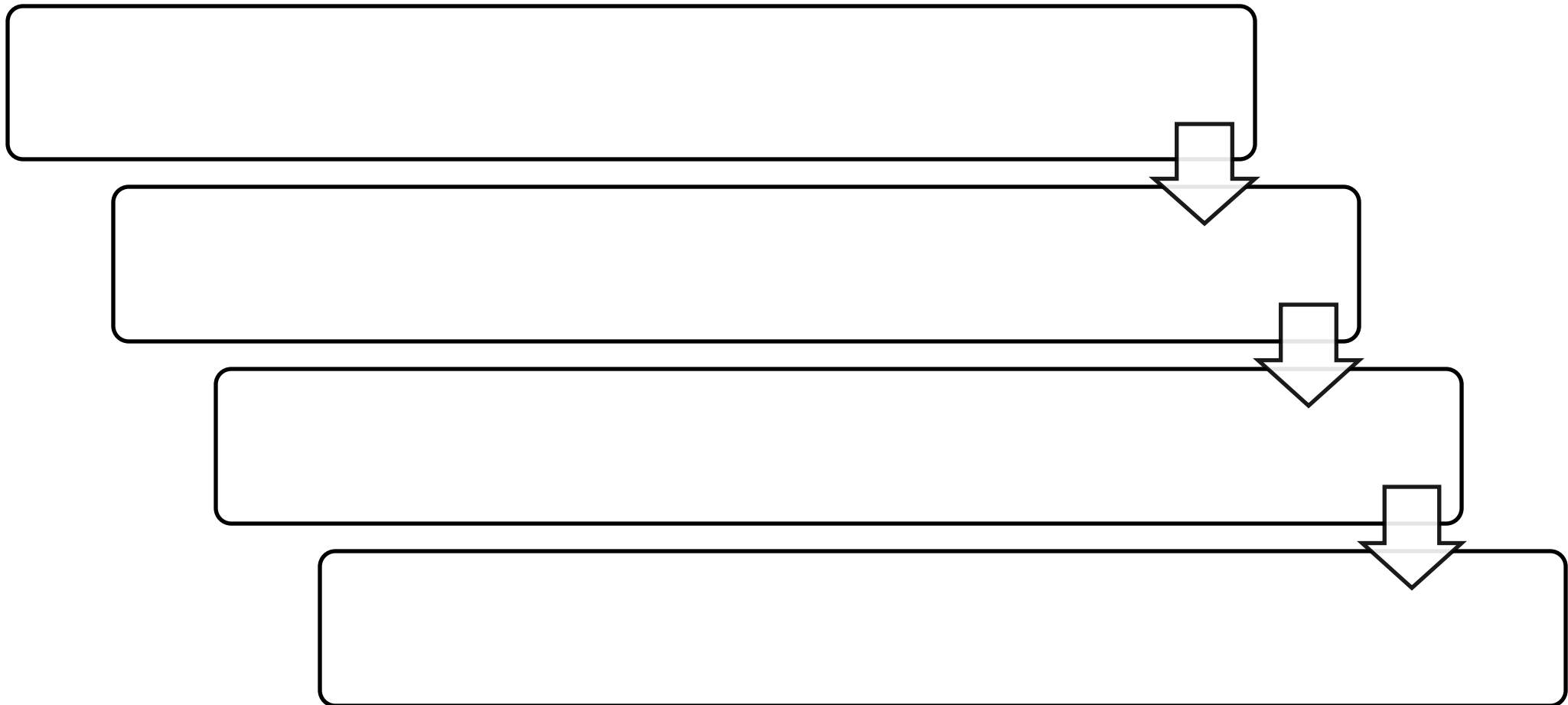
The GGS Model for Positive Education

- A framework developed over five years to integrate six domains of well-being:
  - **P**ositive emotions,
  - **E**ngagement,
  - **R**elationships,
  - **M**eaning,
  - **A**ccomplishment
  - **H**ealth.

- Focuses on character strengths as a foundation for flourishing.

- Continues evolving through evaluation and emerging evidence.

Implementation Framework

Positive Education

Learn it
Building Foundations for Positive Education

- Purpose:
  - Introduce the science of well-being to the school community
  - Focus on key domains: Positive emotions, engagement, purpose, relationships, accomplishment and health

- Strategies for Schools:
  - Build staff capacity through advanced training or in-house sessions
  - Use cost-effective resources: online materials, readings, and guest speakers
  - Share well-being concepts via newsletters, communications, and partnerships

Outcome: Equip the school with the knowledge to foster well-being and support Positive Education tailored to their unique context.

Live it
Embodying Positive Education

- Purpose:
  - Encourage individuals to apply Positive Education princiuples in daily life
  - Focus on mindfulness, gratitude, healthy lifestyles, strong relationships, and meaningful contributions

- Examples of Practice:
  - Mindfulness exercises at the start of lessons
  - Students and staff exploring and sharing well-being strategies
  - Evidence-based teaching methods, like process praise, to foster growth mindset

- Collaborative Development:
  - Foster student-staff partnerships to design and refine initiatives
  - Encourage proactive engagement in well-being practices by all community members

- Alignment with Frameworks:
  - **CASEL**: Adults model well-being traits they aim to inspire in students
  - **HPS**: Staff health promotion and role modeling support sustainable change

Teach it

Delivering Positive Education

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Explicit Teaching

- Timetabled lessons (Years 5–10) and activities starting in kindergarten (e.g., growth mindset).

- Modules cover well-being domains: Resiliency, hope, engagement, relationships, optimism, and strengths.

- Pos Ed focus days and pastoral care sessions co-developed with students.

Implicit Teaching

- Integrate Pos Ed concepts into existing curriculum areas.

- Examples:
  - **Math**: Growth mindset surveys in statistics lessons.
  - **Literature**: Analyzing characters' emotions and behaviors.
  - **Class** interactions: Encouraging gratitude and process praise.

Embed it
Integrating Positive Education into School Culture

Wellbeing Metrics: Collect and analyze data to refine and enhance Positvie Education Practices

Policy Alignment: Update policies to reflect wellbeing principles (e.g. descipline policy renamed to *Kindness, Forgiveness and Reparation Policy*)

School-wide Integration:

- Strength-based staff development programs
- Inclusive language in communications with parents
- Documentation of relationship management

"Embedding Pos Ed bridges teaching and culture, creating a lasting impact."

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Conclusion

Transforming School Wellbeing with a Positive Education Approach

1. **Holistic Approach:**

   - Positive Education integrates wellbeing into school culture through learning, living, teaching, and embedding principles

2. **Sustainable Impact:**

   - A whole-school approach ensures lasting change for students, staff and the broader community

3. **Framework Alignment:**

   - Aligns with leading frameworks like CASEL, HPS and MindMatters to support evidence-based, practical implementation

4. **Key Insight:**

   - Tailoring Positive Education to a school's unique needs and culture is essential for success

Student-Led Mental Health Promotion: A Case Study

How the student-led Initiative Began

- Initial Motivation:
  - Whole-school awareness of students' mental health needs emerged during academic pressures, societal unrest, and the COVID-19 pandemic.
  - Gaps in existing mental health measures prompted action, leading to a student-led initiative.

- Key Focus of the Study:
  - How students became active agents in mental health promotion.
  - The transformation of the school's approach and its long-term institutional impact.

Phases of Implementation and Change

- **Initiation Stage:**
  - Students identified mental health gaps and proposed the initiative.
  - Early advocacy and support from peers and faculty.

- **Transformation Stage:**
  - Integration of mental health awareness into the school culture.
  - Shift in student identity as active agents of change.

- **Institutionalization Stage:**
  - The initiative became part of the school's ongoing approach to mental health.
  - Policies were updated to reflect the school's commitment to student mental health, such as the "Kindness, Forgiveness and Reparation" policy.

The Initiation Stage

Recognizing the Need for Change

- **Identifying Stressors:**
  - Academix pressures, social unrest and COVID-19 were the primary stressors among students.
  - Students felt existing support systems were ineffective due to barriers like preferences for peer support and teacher limitations.

- **Barriers to Existing Suppport Systems:**
  - Students preferred confiding in peers for empathy and solidarity over adults.
  - Teachers' preconceptions and lack of training hindered effective communication
  - Immediate referral to social workers led to reluctance in seeking help.

- **Action Taken:**
  - Students and teachers jointly endorsed the importance of addressing mental health needs.
  - Students volunteered as gatekeepers to bridge the gap.

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The Transformation Stage

Creating a Proactive Mental Health Initiative

- **Student Initiatives:**
    - Development of an Instagram account for mental health tips and updates.
    - Creation of an anonymous online platform for sharing stress and problems.
    - Activities designed outside school hours for a relaxed and informal approach.
- **Key Developments in Students:**
    - Gained sensitivities to peers' needs and growth in teamwork and management skills.
    - Negotiated solutions with advisors (e.g. balancing anonymity with safety)
    - Adopted a sense of ownership as leaders, shifting from passive recipients to acitve change-makers.
- **Teacher Mindset Transformation:**
    - Teachers stepped back into facilitative roles, empowering student decision-making.
    - Observing student growth inspired trust and a renewed understanding of mental health needs.

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The Institutionalization Stage

From Initiative to Institution

- **Long-Term Impact on Students:**
  - The inititative grew into sustained programs: mental health ambassadors, peer mentoring, and community outreach (e.g. videos for the elderly).
  - Students became co-leaders in mental health promotion.
- **School-Wide Structural Changes:**
  - Mental Health education integrated into the regular school schedule.
  - Formation of a Health Education Team to address both physical and mental health.
  - Staff development included teacher-focused mental health resources and training.
- **Paradigm Shift:**
  - Shift from top-down approaches to student-centered leadership and whole-school integration.

Overcoming Barriers to Success
Challenges and Solutions

Barriers

- **Individual**:
  - Students' initial lack of leadership experience,
  - teacher preconceptions,
  - fear of stigmatization

- **Systemic**:
  - Lack of resources,
  - reluctance to adopt new methods,
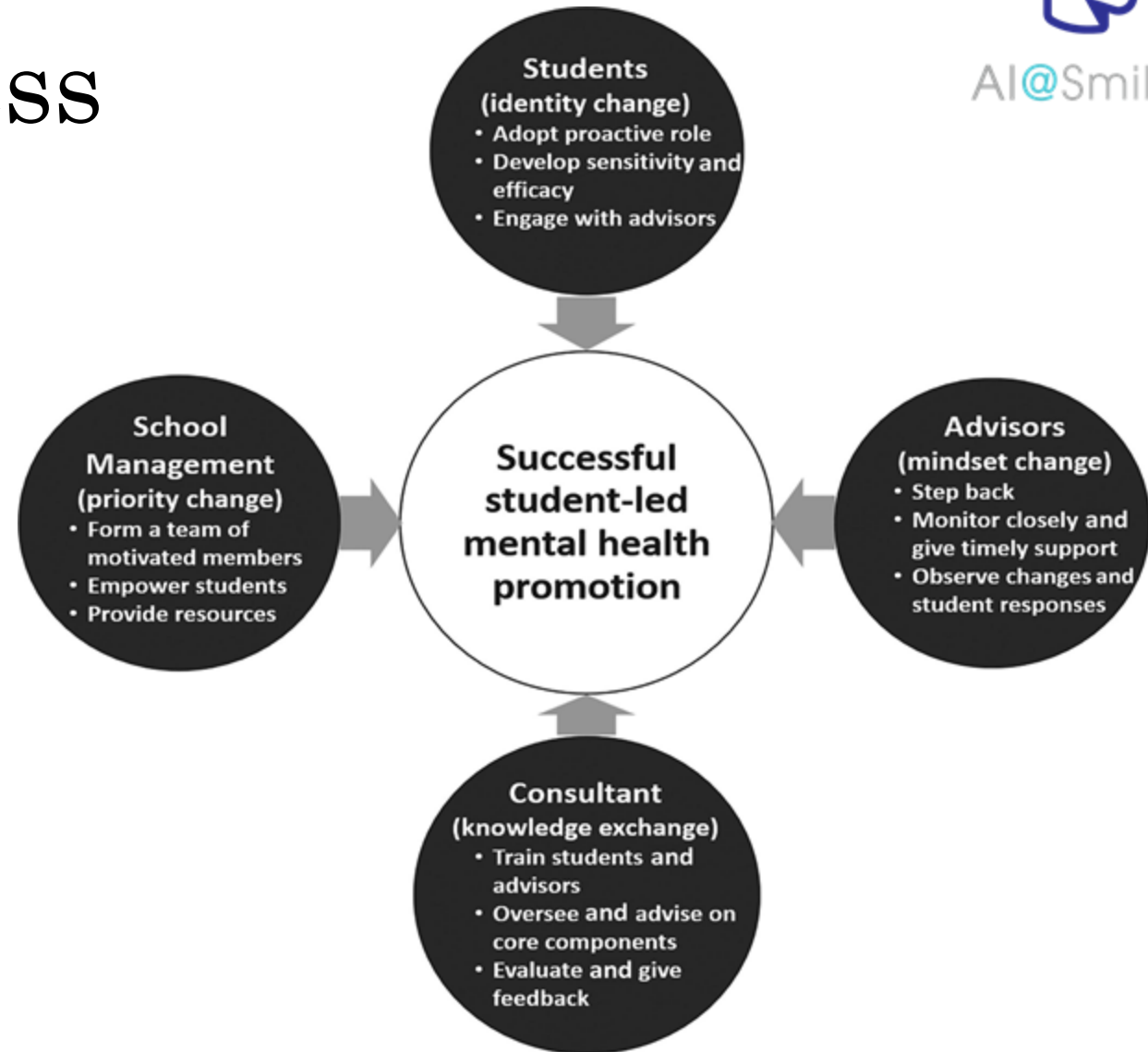 - hierarchical decision-making structures

Solutions

- Leadership training and mentorship for students.

- Collaborative problem-solving between students and advisors.

- School management support for scaling up initiatives.

Keys to success

Elements contributing to the success of a student-led approach to mental health promotion:

Best practices for Student-Led Mental Health Initiatives

Lessons Learned

- **Student Empowerment:**
  - Provide leadership opportunities and ensure **their** voices shape the initiative.
  - Equip students with tools and resources for effective peer support.

- **Collaborative Culture:**
  - Encourage open dialogue between students, staff and external experts.
  - Value and respect student input in decision-making.

- **Sustained Support:**
  - Institutionalize successful initiatives to ensure longevity.
  - Continuously assess and adapt to evolving mental health needs.

Transformational Impact
Building a Mental Health-Focused School Community

- **For Students:**
  - Increased self-efficacy and leadership skills.
  - Reduced stigma around mental health and improved peer support.

- **For Teachers:**
  - Greater understanding of student needs and renewed empathy.
  - Adoption of roles as facilitators and collaborators.

- **For the School:**
  - Stengthened whole-school culture of care and inclusivity.
  - Integration of mental health as a core component of education.

Conclusion

Empowering Students for Mental Health Leadership

➢ Student-led initiatives can drive meaningful change when combined with supportive structures.

➢ Collaboration and mindset shifts are vital for long-term success.

Empower students as leaders in mental health promotion to build a caring and resilient school community

3. Continuation and Sustainability

Chapters:
1. Tools and Methodologies for Sustaining Mental Health Programs
2. Securing Funding Streams for Sustainability
   ● Application Process
3. Conclusion

Objectives

- Understand tools and methodologies for sustaining mental health programs on the long shot.
- Explore funding opportunities to ensure program longevity.
- Learn about application processes for securing EU funding.

Chapter 1: Tools and Methodologies for Sustaining Mental Health Programs

A) Comprehensive Training and Professional Development:
- Equipping educators with the necessary skills to implement and sustain mental health programs is fundamental.
- Training should encompass evidence-based practices, early identification of mental health issues, and intervention strategies.
- Ongoing professional development ensures that teachers remain informed about the latest research and methodologies, fostering a proactive approach to student mental health.
- For instance, the Mental Health Professional Online Development (MHPOD) program offers web-based training tools designed to enhance the capabilities of the mental health workforce, including educators (Ftanou et al., 2014).

Chapter 1: Tools and Methodologies for Sustaining Mental Health Programs

B) Integration into School Policies and Curriculum:
- Embedding mental health initiatives within the school's policies and curriculum promotes a holistic approach to student well-being.
- This integration ensures that mental health education becomes a consistent and normalized component of the educational experience, facilitating early intervention and support.
- The World Health Organization's "Mental Health in Schools: A Manual" provides practical guidance for educators to support the mental health needs of their students, emphasizing the importance of policy integration (World Health Organization, 2021).

Chapter 1: Tools and Methodologies for Sustaining Mental Health Programs

C) Collaborative Networks and Community Engagement:
- Establishing partnerships with mental health professionals, community organizations, and families creates a support network that enhances the sustainability of mental health programs.
- Such collaborations enable the sharing of resources, expertise, and best practices, fostering a comprehensive support system for students.
- The "Allyship at School" program exemplifies this approach by training teachers, students, and parents to build alliances that promote emotional and mental health within the school environment (EPALE, 2023).

Chapter 1: Tools and Methodologies for Sustaining Mental Health Programs

D) Regular Evaluation and Feedback Mechanisms:

- Implementing continuous assessment strategies allows educators to monitor the effectiveness of mental health programs and make necessary adjustments.
- Feedback from students, parents, and staff provides valuable insights into the program's impact and areas for improvement, ensuring its relevance and efficacy over time.
- The "PROMEHS – Promoting Mental Health at Schools" project, co-funded by the Erasmus+ programme, emphasizes the importance of ongoing evaluation in addressing mental health challenges in educational settings (European School Education Platform, 2023).

Chapter 2: Securing Funding Streams for Sustainability

Important note: *Access to adequate funding is essential for the initiation and continuation of mental health programs in schools. The European Union offers several funding opportunities aimed at supporting educational initiatives, including those focused on mental health.*

Chapter 2: Securing Funding Streams for Sustainability

A.1) Erasmus+ Programme: Erasmus+ is the EU's program dedicated to education, training, youth, and sport, with an estimated budget of €26.2 billion for 2021-2027. It provides opportunities for organizations to apply for funding under various key actions, including projects that promote mental health in educational settings. The 2025 Erasmus+ call for proposals, opened on 19 November 2024, offers nearly €5 billion in funding, supporting mobility and cooperation opportunities for learners, educators, and organizations (European Commission, 2024).

Chapter 2: Securing Funding Streams for Sustainability

A.2) Application Process: To access Erasmus+ funding, schools and educational organizations must develop comprehensive project proposals that align with the program's objectives. The application process involves identifying relevant calls for proposals, preparing detailed project plans, and demonstrating the potential impact and sustainability of the proposed initiatives. Guidance on the application procedure is available through the Erasmus+ Programme Guide and the EU Funding & Tenders Portal (European Commission, 2024).

- Erasmus+ Programme guide: https://erasmus-plus.ec.europa.eu/erasmus-programme-guide
- Erasmus+/ESC Webgate: https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/
- Funding & Tender Portal: https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/portal/screen/home

Chapter 2: Securing Funding Streams for Sustainability

B) Additional EU Funding Opportunities: Beyond Erasmus+, the EU offers various funding streams for education and training projects. The European Commission's website provides a comprehensive list of funding opportunities, including grants for projects that aim to enhance mental health support in schools (European Commission, 2024).

Other relevant programme may be: Citizens, Equality, Rights and Values Programme (CERV), Creative Europe, Horizon Europe.

Chapter 2: Securing Funding Streams for Sustainability

C) National and Regional Funding Sources: In addition to EU-level funding, schools should explore national and regional grants and subsidies dedicated to educational and mental health initiatives.

Engaging with local authorities and government agencies can uncover additional financial support tailored to specific community needs.

Chapter 3: Conclusion

- The sustainability of school-based mental health programs hinges on the **provision of appropriate tools and methodologies for educators**, alongside the strategic acquisition of funding.
- **Comprehensive training, policy integration, collaborative networks, and regular evaluations** equip teachers to maintain and enhance mental health initiatives effectively.
- Simultaneously, leveraging **funding opportunities**, particularly through EU programs like Erasmus+, ensures the financial viability of these essential services.
- By adopting a **proactive and informed approach**, educational institutions can create enduring mental health support systems that benefit both students and educators.

References for 3. Continuation and Sustainability

- EPALE. (2023). Allyship at School: Program for Alliances in the School for Mental Health (SMILES Project). Retrieved from Epale
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Glossary (Max 2 slides)

Two-Three columns style like the following

Term

Explanation

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Bibliography

Here we add all the additional resources, articles, videos etc.

The format must follow **Harvard Referencing System** as follows:

1. General Rules

   In-text citations: These appear within the text of your document.

   Reference list: This appears at the end of your document and provides full details of all sources cited in-text.

2. In-text Citations

In-text citations include the author's surname and the year of publication. Page numbers should be included for direct quotes.

Examples:

Paraphrasing: (Author, Year)

• The results were conclusive (Smith, 2020).

Direct quote: (Author, Year, p. Page number)

• "The results were conclusive" (Smith, 2020, p. 15

Articles:

•   Example: Jones, A. (2019) 'Economic theories in modern economics', Journal of Economic Studies, 15(2), pp. 123-134.

Websites:

•   Example: Brown, L. (2018) Understanding Climate Change. Available at: www.climatechangeinfo.com (Accessed: 15 July 2023).

Further reading

Here we add all the additional resources, articles, videos etc. for the learner

1. Title – Small description – Approx time – Link (if applicable)
2. Title – Small description – Approx time – Link (if applicable)
3. Title – Small description – Approx time – Link (if applicable)
4. Title – Small description – Approx time – Link (if applicable)

Thank you!
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