



PROMOTING MENTAL HEALTH AND WELL-BEING IN SCHOOL

A Guide for Teachers



PROMOTING MENTAL HEALTH AND WELL-BEING IN SCHOOL

A GUIDE FOR TEACHERS

विद्यया ऽ मृतमश्नुते



एन सी ई आर टी
NCERT

Manodarpan Cell

Department of Educational Psychology and Foundations of Education

राष्ट्रीय शैक्षिक अनुसंधान और प्रशिक्षण परिषद्

NATIONAL COUNCIL OF EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH AND TRAINING

**13283- PROMOTING MENTAL HEALTH AND
WELL-BEING IN SCHOOL — A GUIDE FOR TEACHERS**

ISBN 978-93-5292-619-0

First Edition

October 2024 Kartika 1946

PD 1T BS

**© National Council of Educational
Research and Training, 2024**

₹ 165.00

*Printed on 80 GSM paper with NCERT
watermark*

Published at the Publication Division
by the Secretary, National Council of
Educational Research and Training, Sri
Aurobindo Marg, New Delhi 110 016 and
printed at Gita Offset Printers (P) Ltd.,
C-90, Okhla Industrial Area, Phase-I,
New Delhi 110 020

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

- ❑ No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system or transmitted, in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise without the prior permission of the publisher.
- ❑ This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade, be lent, re-sold, hired out or otherwise disposed of without the publisher's consent, in any form of binding or cover other than that in which it is published.
- ❑ The correct price of this publication is the price printed on this page. Any revised price indicated by a rubber stamp or by a sticker or by any other means is incorrect and should be unacceptable.

**OFFICES OF THE PUBLICATION
DIVISION, NCERT**

NCERT Campus
Sri Aurobindo Marg
New Delhi 110 016 Phone : 011-26562708

108, 100 Feet Road
Hosdakere Halli Extension
Banashankari III Stage
Bengaluru 560 085 Phone : 080-26725740

Navjivan Trust Building
P.O.Navjivan
Ahmedabad 380 014 Phone : 079-27541446

CWC Campus
Opp. Dhankal Bus Stop
Panihati
Kolkata 700 114 Phone : 033-25530454

CWC Complex
Maligaon
Guwahati 781 021 Phone : 0361-2674869

Publication Team

Head, Publication Division : *M. V. Srinivasan*

Chief Editor : *Bijnan Sutar*

Chief Production Officer (In Charge) : *Jahan Lal*

Chief Business Manager : *Amitabh Kumar*

Assistant Production Officer : *Om Prakash*

FOREWORD

The years spent in school represent a phase of intellectual and personal growth with mental well-being as a key aspect of this journey. Students' capacity to fully engage with their academic endeavours, effectively manage stress, and cultivate meaningful relationships is a mark of a holistically developed individual. As students undergo developmental changes and grow academically, the provision of adequate guidance and timely support becomes paramount in enhancing their overall well-being. Conversely, the absence of such support can present challenges and may potentially contribute to mental health related concerns. It is imperative for key stakeholders in the school education to be well-prepared to address the concerns related to mental health and well-being. Teachers have a pivotal role in effectively managing and responding to the diverse mental health needs of students. Therefore, it is essential to empower teachers with the necessary resources and knowledge to enhance their sensitivity, understanding, and competencies in fostering a supportive environment.

The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, emphasizes inclusive and learner-centred education, where teachers play a central role in providing a caring and supportive environment. With a holistic approach to development, the policy encourages Teachers to focus on socio-emotional learning as a critical aspect of any student's holistic development. The National Curriculum Framework for School Education (NCF-SE), 2023 takes forward this vision and has included Guidance and Counselling, as one of its cross-cutting themes to focus on each student's needs of learning, health, and well-being. The Framework places the responsibility of promoting mental well-being among students on teachers and school principals, along with counsellors and states that a system of guidance and counselling will help these stakeholders in meeting various needs of students, including mental health and well-being (Part B, section 5.1, 5.3). It also mentions building their capacity as a guide and counsellor to enable them to function effectively (Part B, section 5.3).

Manodarpan, an initiative by the Ministry of Education, Government of India under the 'Atmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan' was envisioned to provide psychosocial support for mental health and well-being to students, parents and teachers. Manodarpan Cell, set up in NCERT as part of this initiative, has been conducting various activities to promote mental well-being in schools across the country. It regularly organises conferences, summit, orientations and workshops to build the capacity of school teachers, administrators and counsellors. The Cell also organises live interactive sessions 'Sahyog' with practicing counselors and 'Paricharcha' webinars with experts in the field of mental health and education, to promote awareness and address mental health concerns of students along with supporting teachers and parents.

Another significant contribution in this direction is the document 'Promoting Mental Health and Well-Being in School- A Guide for Teachers', which is intended to serve as a practical and user-friendly resource for teachers, helping them to be better prepared to recognize and respond to the diverse mental health concerns of students. The content is presented in a manner to facilitate self-reflection by teachers of their practices in classrooms and utilize their observation skills in this direction.

I wish to express appreciation for the team of Manodarpan Cell, DEPFE, NCERT, for bringing a concise yet comprehensive material for teachers to guide them in taking measures for handling mental health concerns as a preventive step towards students' well-being.

Dinesh Prasad Saklani
Director
National Council of Educational
Research and Training

New Delhi
28th August, 2024

PREFACE

'Promoting Mental Health and Well-Being in School- A Guide for Teachers' aims to support the vision of the National Education Policy (NEP), 2020 by empowering teachers to enhance and strengthen their well-being promoting skills and capacities. The NEP, 2020 recognises that teachers have immense potential and power to influence and shape future generations. Teachers are the bedrock of the school ecosystem. As the core of teaching-learning process, their knowledge enrichment and skill enhancement is a priority. It is in this light that this document aims to enable them to conduct and facilitate classroom interaction with an increased sensitivity and understanding towards nurturing the mental well-being of students.

Teachers have an ability to nurture, protect and assist students. They need resources to support students experiencing difficulties or dealing with challenging situations which not only affect their learning but also adversely impacts their mental well-being. The content of this Guide familiarises the teachers with varying classroom scenarios delineating observable behavioural indicators to recognise signs of student experiencing distress that affects their mental well-being and overall wellness. The document is carefully designed to include several suggestive and easy-to-practice strategies and activities, while giving ample space and time for personal reflections.

This Guide for Teachers is a product of a thorough review process both internally as well as through external consultations with experts from the field of education including school administrators, teachers, teacher-counsellors and school counsellors. Using the developmental approach, the Guide attempts to orient teachers towards mental health and well-being related concerns among students from the Foundational stage up until the Secondary stage. Conceived as a concise yet comprehensive supportive reading material, it seeks to reinforce knowledge and skill enhancement of teachers so that they are able to effectively deal with mental health concerns of students. This is taking forward the vision of NEP 2020 to move towards holistic development of students and building a promotive school climate of well-being.

We hope that by engaging with this document, teachers feel empowered to better manage concerns related to mental well-being among the student community.

Anjum Sibia
*Dean of Academics &
Head, DEPF*
National Council of Educational
Research and Training

ABOUT THE DOCUMENT

This document has been prepared to assist school teachers in promoting well-being among students through early identification, intervention and support for their mental health. With a holistic view towards well-being, the document advocates for a proactive and preventive approach to mental health concerns. It emphasizes the importance of nurturing a positive school climate, conducive to student's holistic development.

The document covers mental health concerns commonly observed among school students. It aims to equip school teachers with the ability to recognize these concerns in students. Keeping this in view, the observable, behavioural indicators are such as may be seen in students in school setup. The document also suggests strategies for providing appropriate support to student in classroom and school. Additionally, it covers specific focus areas that can support the students in overcoming these concerns, providing suggestion for activities which teachers can conduct in the classroom to address these concerns effectively. Each focus area is complemented by activities that cater to students at different educational stages. The activities suggested are for students across all stages of education. The document also follows a developmental approach for concerns covered, starting with concerns such as separation anxiety, that are generally seen in younger students, gradually progressing towards concerns observed more commonly in older students, such as concerns related to body image and gender identity. The indicators provided are representative of the stages at which these concerns commonly appear.

Teachers do not need to set apart specific time to implement the suggestions given in the guide. These are to be integrated in everyday classroom interactions. This, in turn, will also support them to build a trusting and nurturing relationship with their students, having a lasting impact on school engagement.

If the teacher plans to implement any strategies to extend support to a student, then parents of the student need be informed about it. Teacher need to also discuss the strategy with parents to create supportive environment at home.

While teachers are encouraged to utilize the strategies to support students in their classrooms, if a student's concerns are frequent or intense, it is recommended to involve the school counsellor or Principal. Parent should be informed and suggested to seek help of professionals wherever necessary (if school counsellor is not available).

CONTRIBUTORS

DEVELOPMENT TEAM

Anjum Sibia, *Professor, Dean (Academic), Head DEPFEE and In-charge, Manodarpan Cell, NCERT*

Sushmita Chakraborty, *Assistant Professor, DEPFEE and Member Manodarpan Cell, NCERT*

Ruchi Shukla, *Assistant Professor, DEPFEE and Member Manodarpan Cell, NCERT*

Shweta Lakhera, *Senior Consultant, Manodarpan Cell, NCERT*

REVIEW TEAM

Prabhat Kumar Mishra, *Professor, DEPFEE, NCERT*

Madhu Bala Singh, *Retd. Principal, KV, New Delhi*

Shalini Prasad, *Vice Principal, Ambience Public School, New Delhi*

Mohammad Tahir, *Teacher-Counsellor, JNV, Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh*

Naresh Kumar, *Teacher-Counsellor, JNV, Jalandhar, Punjab*

Vidushi Dixit, *Counsellor, KV, Noida, Uttar Pradesh*

Tripti Sharma, *Teacher-Counsellor, KV, Dehradun, Uttarakhand*

Sanchita Srivastava, *Counsellor, DoE, New Delhi*

Shubham Prajapati, *Counsellor, DoE, New Delhi*

Rupangi Kukreja, *Counsellor, Salwan Public School, Gurugram*

We gratefully acknowledge the contributions and efforts made by the Manodarpan team members, Junior Project Fellows Rashmi Choudhary, Aparna Joshi, Umer Ali Bin Murakib P.K. and Areesha Tanya, Senior Research Associates Charu Saxena and Guruprit Kaur, and Consultant Manleen Bawa. We are also thankful to all the faculty members of the Department for their valuable suggestions in the meetings held from time to time. The contributions of soumma Chandra, Editor (Contractual), Vivek Mandal, DTP Operator (Contractual) and Surender Kumar In-Charge, DTP Cell, Publication Division are also acknowledge in giving this document its final shape.

CONTENTS

	<i>Foreword</i>	III
	<i>Preface</i>	V
	<i>About the Document</i>	VII
I.	Introduction	1
II.	Addressing Common Mental Health Concerns among School Students	3
	1. Concerns Related to Attachment and Separation Anxiety	5
	2. Concerns Related to Thumb-Sucking and Enuresis (Bedwetting)	8
	3. Communication Related Concerns	12
	4. Concerns Related to Hyperactivity	14
	5. Concerns Related to Behaviour and Conduct	16
	6. Concerns Related to Sadness	20
	7. Concerns Related to Anxiety	24
	8. Concerns Related to Specific Learning Disabilities	26
	9. Concerns Related to Excessive Use of Digital Technology	29
	10. Concerns Related to Substance Use	32
	11. Concerns Related to Body Image	35
	12. Concerns Related to Gender Identity	38
	13. Concerns Related to Self-harm and Suicide	40
	14. Concerns Related to Autism	44
	15. Concerns Related to Intellectual Disability (ID)	47
III.	Parent and Community Involvement	50
	Ecosystem of Positive Mental Well-being for Students	53
	<i>References</i>	54

I. Introduction

Childhood and adolescence are crucial periods that lay the foundation for an individual's growth and development across their lifespan. The experiences during this period leave a profound impact on learning, behaviour and well-being. While positive experiences and a nurturing environment can promote holistic development, difficult life situations and experiences may lead to mental health concerns in life. Holistic development, involving comprehensive growth across biological, cognitive, and socio-emotional spheres, plays a key role during these formative years. The National Education Policy (NEP), 2020 recognises the importance of holistic development, laying emphasis that the purpose of any education system is not only to foster academic learning but also socio-emotional capacities.

Schools are important settings where children spend a significant time of their growing up years. These are also setups that not only impart education, but also contribute significantly towards an all-round development of the student. When children experience positive mental health and well-being, they are more likely to actively engage with their surroundings, forming the basis for effective learning and problem-solving. Within the school, a teacher is the most impactful stakeholder by the virtue of their proximity and frequency of interaction with students. This gives them the opportunity to realise the goals of holistic development by extending support, guidance, and encouragement to students, thus creating a safe and nurturing learning environment. The role teachers can play in nurturing overall development of students is also highlighted by the NEP, 2020, "Teachers will also focus on socio-emotional learning - a critical aspect of any student's holistic development" (Para 5.14, NEP, 2020)

The school years are marked by various transitions, especially from childhood to adolescence, emphasising the need for supporting student mental well-being. Along with physical changes, students also experience the desire for autonomy, the pressure to conform to peers and meet up to the expectations of their family and the school. These changes can be overwhelming for the students, especially when they are not equipped with the skills to cope with the changes. On occasions, when the students are unable to cope with these changes, in the absence of a support system, they may feel isolated, worsening their mental health concerns. Families, schools and the community at large are pivotal in providing students with the necessary support and the resources to promote their mental well-being.

While the role of all stakeholders is equally important in promoting the well-being of students in school, teachers can play an important role in identifying and attending to any change in behaviour. Teachers are inherently engaged in facilitating student well-being as a part of their responsibilities. This involves creating an enabling classroom environment conducive to learning and well-being, and building skills and abilities of students to cope with difficulties. On the other hand, it also involves teachers to have an understanding about recognising signs of discomfort or unease among students and providing appropriate support early on, directly and through collaboration with other stakeholders including the

principal, other teachers, parents, school staff, students and the community at large.

As teachers engage with students in teaching-learning, an empathetic and encouraging approach enables students by strengthening the bond. At the same time, being observant of any apparent changes in the usual behaviours or actions of any student can help the teacher in recognising the signs of discomfort. A proactive approach in class in identifying and addressing the concern of the growing child will go a long way in prevention of mental health related concerns.

An eight-year-old student was sad as his friend had not been coming to class for many days and wondered if the friend had left the school. His interactions with classmates became limited and participation in classroom activities also decreased. He was often seen sitting alone during lunch break.

The class teacher noticed this and tried to make the student feel comfortable in the classroom. She would acknowledge the student every day with a warm smile. The teacher would also sometimes engage in brief conversations by asking simple things like how the student was, what activities he enjoys or how he spent the weekend/holiday. Whenever possible, the teacher conducted classroom activities and sports that the student enjoyed in groups, where she paired the student with classmates who were more caring and friendly.

This helped the student interact with classmates and slowly make new friends. As the teacher praised the student's efforts in homework or classroom activities, his interest increased and he started to actively engage in classroom discussions and other curricular activities.

What actions of the teacher do you think helped the student in adjusting to the situation?

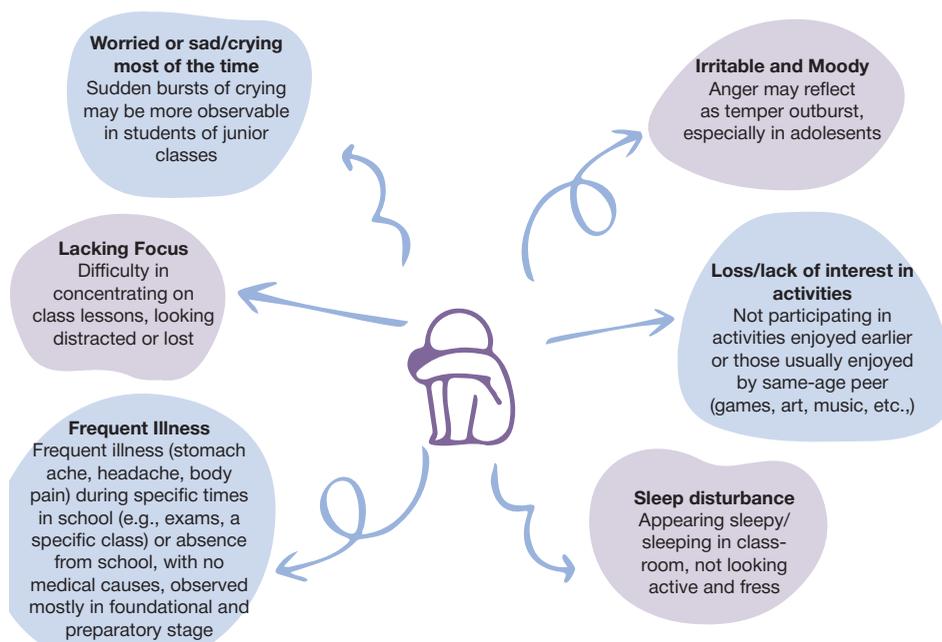
II. Addressing Common Mental Health Concerns among School Students

We all encounter difficult situations occasionally and are able to find solutions to most of them. However, situations or changes that make us feel pressured, overwhelmed, or difficult to cope with, can lead to stress. Stress is a common experience among all age groups. In moderation, it serves as a source of motivation, often helping us to prepare well for situations that seem difficult, such as exams or a competition. However, when the stress is present for a longer duration, it is known to have negative impact on our mental and physical health.

In students of Foundational and Preparatory Stages, stress is often seen as resulting from new or unexpected situations. Changes in everyday routine, periods of transitions such as, from one class or school to another, separation from a peer, parent, friends or any loved person, arrival of new siblings, dealing with dominating or aggressive peers or evaluations, such as, exams or competitions can all be stressful. Unsafe immediate environment, including frequent quarrels or violence at home or in the neighbourhood, or non-supportive school atmosphere are all such situations that cause distress and impact the emotional well-being at an early age.

Recognising the signs of Stress

Students, especially those who are younger, are often not able to understand and express the feeling of stress. It may be expressed through sudden changes in behaviour or actions such as:



As students reach higher educational stages, they are in the process of establishing their identity, including their values and beliefs, separate from their parents and family. This process of achieving a personal identity may, on occasions, result in conflict with the parents and family. This period is also accompanied by

the pressure to comply to peers and societal norms, relationships with friends taking prominence, desire for independence, emerging responsibilities and expectations, increased pressure of academic and career choices and parental/school expectations for academic performance. This is further exacerbated by the physical and emotional changes in adolescence due to puberty that impact one's perception of self and their confidence. All these can contribute to experiencing of stress by adolescents.

Sometimes when the stress lasts for a longer duration, with lack of necessary skills among students for coping, it leads to mental health concerns such as withdrawal, aggressive behaviour, anxiety and depression. They may also adopt unhealthy ways to cope with stress (e.g. avoiding the problem, over or under eating, isolating from others, excessive screen time, substance abuse, etc.). As a result, the personal, social and academic spheres of the student get affected.

It is important to help students find ways to deal with the causes of stress in a healthy manner. Some of the ways through which teachers can support students in coping with stress are:

Observation and Support

- Being observant of any sudden changes in behavior in student
- Discussing individually to know the cause
- Offering relevant support for stress, informing parents whenever necessary

Regular Communication

- Having brief discussions regularly with students to know how they are
- Assuring students they can reach out to you for help.

Relaxation Activities

- Keeping approx. 5 mins daily before classes start/end to practice relaxation with students (sitting comfortably, closing eyes and taking deep breaths for some time)
- Encouraging students to take up Yoga and physical activities

Problem Solving

- Developing students' problem-solving skills
- For example, through project work giving feedback on students' response to problems, encouraging discussion and collaboration in classroom

Nurturing Life skills

- Discovering opportunities during classroom interactions to enhance life skills like adaptability, communication, relationship building, critical thinking and empathy

Positive Classroom Environment

- Focusing on individual abilities of each student
- Avoiding comparison among students
- Building peer support
- Encouraging sharing and seeking help

As all individuals encounter stressful situations at some point in their lives, it is crucial to develop skills to manage and overcome these challenges effectively. Stress, when not resolved timely, can lead to mental health concerns. The following section covers some prevalent mental health concerns among school students across different stages of education. It aims to help school teachers in recognising these concerns and the strategies for supporting student mental well-being.

1. Concerns Related to Attachment and Separation Anxiety

Issues related to attachment may involve becoming overly dependent on someone or being withdrawn, experiencing difficulties in forming relationships such as friendships, staying connected to family, etc. Some students may face difficulties in forming and maintaining emotional attachments. This can affect their ability to express emotions, develop trust and build meaningful relationships.



Separation Anxiety is the presence of excessive anxiety due to separation from home or attached person. It is an attachment behaviour among infants which is part of age-appropriate development among young children and gradually decreases as a child grows up. It becomes a concern if it starts interfering with the everyday routine of the child such as attending school, playing with friends, etc.



Let Us Know About Some of the Indicators

Attachment Issues	Separation Anxiety
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Withdrawn from activities with limited or no response to social interactions, refusing to join peers in games, etc.Difficulty making friends or avoiding closenessLack of affection or warmth towards others such as peers or teachersDifficulty regulating emotions, easily angered <p>OR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">No reluctance in approaching and interacting with unfamiliar people.Behaviour that violates social boundaries or norms such as being over friendly with unfamiliar people, not recognizing personal space of others such as peers and teachers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Exhibiting extreme distress or throwing tantrums when they are left at school.Frequent complaints of stomach aches, nausea, headaches, etc., when separation from attachment figure is anticipated (e.g., when the person is about to leave after dropping off the student) or after the separation has occurred.Frequent absence from or refusal to go to school as reported by Parent/ Caregiver, without any specific reasonAppearing very clingy to the parent/ caregiver

Suggested Strategies and Activities for Supporting Students

For concerns related to attachment:

- ▶ Develop and strengthen a positive relationship with the student through care, support and being approachable.
- ▶ Encourage peer engagement through activities of interest, initially with one peer. The frequency of engagement and number of peers can be increased gradually.
- ▶ Provide opportunity for the student to be paired with classmates, who can model appropriate social skills, reinforce demonstration of

Let us think of the ways in which a teacher can create a safe and nurturing environment for students experiencing issues related to attachment or separation anxiety?

positive social skills through praise. For e.g., - ‘I noticed how you shared your pencil and eraser with your classmate. That was very kind.’

- ▶ Give the student option of making choices whenever possible. It provides a sense of control and through it, sense of safety.
- ▶ Help the students, especially younger ones, in identifying their emotions. You can use an emotion chart that shows faces depicting different emotions and ask the student to point to how they are feeling. Label the emotion for them and show them healthy ways to express their emotions.
- ▶ For students who do not understand social boundaries, help the student to recognize inappropriate social interactions (for e.g. - bring attention to inappropriate comments when they occur). Address this with the student separately.

For separation anxiety:

- ▶ Make the classroom environment predictable, secure, friendly and comfortable.
- ▶ Offer students, especially those in foundational stage, activities/toys/games of their interest when they arrive in school, to make them comfortable in classroom setup and look forward to school.
- ▶ Incorporating routines in class schedule such as brief relaxation time, art-based activities towards the end of day, or ‘Good-bye’ time before school gets over. Conducting these activities at the beginning or end of every day will develop a sense of readiness to make the shift from home to school and school to home.
- ▶ Along with this, teacher can share the class schedule for the day every morning before classes begin, to prepare the students.
- ▶ Activities such as silent sitting i.e., closing their eyes and thinking about what they would do at home to help the child connect with home bridge the gap between home and school.

Activities

Focus Area (Stage)	Fostering Engagement in Classroom
Foundational (Classes 1 & 2)	<p>The aim is to increase the engagement of students with peers and develop their interest in the classroom and school.</p> <p>Occasionally including brief “Story time” through various means such as picture books, role plays, videos, puppet shows, etc.</p>
Preparatory (Classes 3 to 5)	<p>These stories can address attachment and separation anxiety, encouraging students to share how they feel on specific occasions, such as being separated from the person they are attached to, as well as strategies such as ‘silent sitting’ (refer strategies for separation anxiety) that can be followed by the students.</p>

	<p>For students with attachment issues, stories can focus on expressing how they feel when they are angry, along with opportunities for social interaction.</p> <p>Divide the class into 4-5 groups (adjust as needed based on class size). Provide each group with drawing sheets (1 sheet per group) and a box of colours. Encourage students to collaborate and decide what they want to create on their sheet. Assist them in assigning tasks within the group. Remind students to take turns while drawing, colouring, or painting, and emphasise cooperation. Ensure active participation from all students.</p>
Middle (Classes 6 to 8)	<p>Activities can be assigned to a group of students, where they will have to collaborate and complete a project by dividing the work at different stages (such as collaboratively creating a map, one student can make the structure by drawing the outline, 2nd student may mark/name the countries/states, 3rd and 4th student may colour it).</p> <p>Conduct a relay race with some alterations in the school ground.</p>
Secondary (Classes 9 to 12)	<p>Divide the class into 2 teams. Place a box at the end point of the race path. Place 1 piece of clothing (eg. Apron, shirt, t-shirt) in each box. The first students (from both the teams) run towards the boxes, put on the piece of clothing placed in the box, and run back towards their team, passing on the clothes to the next student in turn. The next student will put on the piece of clothing and run towards the box. On reaching the box they will put the piece of clothing in the box and run towards their team. The play continues until every student has a turn.</p>

Partnerships with School Stakeholders

For students experiencing separation anxiety or attachment related concerns, the parents are also affected. In such cases, assure the parent or caregiver about your efforts to help their child settle in the classroom and communicate with them whenever necessary. Building rapport with the parent also helps the student to trust the teacher, especially younger students who join a new school.

Discussing the strategies being implemented at school with parents can help ensure that similar approaches are followed both at home and at school. This helps to bridge the gap between home and school.

2. Concerns Related to Thumb-Sucking and Enuresis (Bedwetting)

Many concerns prevalent in childhood are typical of developmental phase. However, sometimes their prolonged presence signals deeper emotional or psychological issues.

The infancy stage is marked by children engaging in thumb-sucking as a source of comfort and security. Enuresis (bedwetting), occurs when a child passes urine in their clothes accidentally. Although commonly known as bedwetting, it is not limited to wetting of bed during the night time, but can take place at any time or place, even during school and in class.



Occurrence of thumb-sucking beyond the age of 4 years or bed-wetting beyond the age of 5-6 years when bladder control is typically attained, or with increased frequency and intensity, may be an indicator of stress, anxiety, or other mental health concerns. At the same time, such behaviours beyond the common developmental stages can also contribute to increased stress for the student, especially in social and academic settings.

Let Us Know About Some of the Indicators

Thumb-Sucking	Enuresis (Bedwetting)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student is seen sucking their thumb on most occasions, at different times of the day to the extent it interferes with their participation in classroom activities • Sucking of thumb/finger even when they have already eaten lunch/food or are not hungry 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accidental passing of urine which continues beyond the age of 5-6 years • Noticeable odor of urine from the student • Visible signs of wetness or staining on uniform • Avoiding participating in activities that involve close contact with peers • Lack of self-confidence

Suggested Strategies and Activities for Supporting Students

For Thumb-sucking

- ▶ Acknowledge and appreciate the students separately when they are not indulging in thumb-sucking. For eg- When a teacher notices a student hasn't been thumb-sucking for a while, they can separately tell them later, 'I noticed you did not suck your thumb in the entire duration of class. I'm really proud of you for that.'
- ▶ Do not make the child feel guilty about thumb-sucking by passing negative comments.

Let us reflect on how to support a student who sucks their thumb most of the times, in what ways they could be helped to increase their classroom participation in activities and interaction with peers?

- ▶ Make the child aware in a discreet manner (slight touch on arm/pat on back) when observing them engaging in the behaviour.
- ▶ Most children engage in thumb sucking when they are bored, tired, stressed or hungry and it slowly becomes a habit. Gently divert the attention of the student to another activity requiring use of hand or mouth. For e.g. - ask the student to read a paragraph, pass on something, or engage them in other activities requiring use of limbs.
- ▶ If student sucks their thumb when they are stressed, try to eliminate the source of stress and give them a comforting toy (parent can be requested to send child's toy) to make them feel at ease.

Activities

Focus Area (Stage)	Self-awareness
	The aim is to discourage the habit of thumb-sucking
Foundational (Classes 1 & 2)	Come up with a secret gesture with the child, such as tugging your ear, scratching your nose, etc., as a gentle reminder to disengage the child from thumb-sucking without drawing the attention of the entire class.
Preparatory (Classes 3 to 5)	

For Enuresis (Bedwetting)

- ▶ If a student has enuresis, avoid singling them out by only asking them to use the toilet. Instead, give regular toilet breaks to all class students through general reminder for all.
- ▶ Inform the class that they can request break for using toilet whenever they feel the need for it.
- ▶ Encourage all students, especially those in the foundational and preparatory stages, to use the toilet before engaging in activities that might distract them from their need to go.
- ▶ Encourage actions and behaviours of being kind in the classroom where students do not make fun of other students and are encouraged to be empathetic and understand differences in their body functioning.
- ▶ Create peer support and encourage healthy peer interactions.
- ▶ For student with enuresis, this can result in self-consciousness and lower confidence. Provide with opportunities to participate and lead in activities for boosting their confidence.

Let us think back on any instances where a student appeared uncomfortable or embarrassed due to soiling of their uniform due to urine in school. As a teacher, what steps can be taken in this situation to help the student feel comfortable and supported?

Activities

Focus Area (Stage)	Confidence Building
Foundational (Classes 1 & 2)	<p>The aim is to build confidence in one’s abilities</p> <p>One day prior to the activity, ask the students to learn a poem or a prayer and write it down on a sheet. The next day, collect the sheets from the students and ask them to sit in a circle. The students will recite a poem or prayer they have learnt, one by one. Ask the other students to keep calm and listen carefully. If any child gets stuck in the middle, the teacher can help the student and ask the other students not to laugh.</p> <p>Appreciate every student’s efforts.</p>
Preparatory (Classes 3 to 5)	<p>Storytelling Circle</p> <p>In a comfortable and welcoming space, gather students in a circle to foster equality and inclusion. Explain that each student will have a chance to share a story—whether it’s made-up, personal, or about a favourite toy or pet. Begin by sharing a short, engaging story as the teacher. Then, invite students one by one to share their stories. Initially, group them in smaller sets of 3-4 students to build confidence. Encourage movement and expression, allowing students to act out parts of their stories. After each session, applaud their efforts and offer specific praise. Highlight unique aspects of each story to appreciate individuality. Conduct this activity occasionally to gradually boost students’ confidence.</p>
Middle (Classes 6 to 8)	<p>Conduct a role play</p> <p>In a business communication workshop, two students take turns presenting a proposal. One student exudes confidence, delivering their content with poise and self-assurance. The other student, however, struggles with nervousness, stumbling over their words and avoiding eye contact. The class observes how these contrasting approaches impact the audience’s perception.</p>
Secondary (Classes 9 to 12)	<p>Ask the students to prepare a topic from their syllabus that they will have to present the next day in the class.</p> <p>The next day, remind the students of the previous day role play and then present their topics confidently in front of the class. If a student gets stuck, the peers and the teacher will support the child, rather than laughing, giggling or scolding.</p> <p>Appreciate efforts of all students.</p>

Focus Area (Stage)	Relaxation Activity
Foundational (Classes 1 & 2)	The aim is to help children release stress and anxiety.
Preparatory (Classes 3 to 5)	Conduct a relaxation/ breathing session for the students on the ground.
Middle (Classes 6 to 8)	Ask the students to sit down comfortably, eyes closed and palms placed on their stomach/ abdomen. Tell them to take deep breaths and feel the movement of their abdomen. Ask them to focus on in how their stomach moves out as they slowly breathe in and how it goes in as they slowly breathe out.
Secondary (Classes 9 to 12)	

Partnerships with School Stakeholders

When teacher observes student sucking their thumb, they can ask the parents if they have noticed similar behaviour at home. If the parents confirm these observations, the teacher can discuss with parents for following similar strategies at both school and home, such as encouraging student to practice similar alternative habit in both places.

If the student often passes urine in clothes in school, it is important to discuss it with parents to understand the student's condition, including its severity, factors that trigger it, and any recommended management strategies that the parent knows are effective and have already been working at home. Parents can also be requested to send necessary resources such as extra changes of clothes, wipes, and plastic bags for soiled items.

Parents can be suggested to observe the reasons and situations when the above-mentioned concerns occur at home. This can help teacher and parents in recognising and eliminating the stressful situations that result in these behaviours.

3. Communication Related Concerns

Communication related concerns are observed in student who often faces difficulty in following instructions, is not able to participate in class discussions, hesitates to raise their hand or reply, or speaks in an unclear or disorganised manner, making it hard for classmates and the teacher to understand.



Let Us Know About Some of the Indicators

- Difficulty in understanding or using age-appropriate vocabulary
- Limited knowledge of words and their usage
- Struggling to identify and manipulate individual sounds in words
- Difficulty in expressing their ideas or thoughts
- Unable to understand the intended humour or joke
- Stuttering or pausing frequently

Suggested Strategies and Activities for Supporting Students

- ▶ Encourage students to repeat new words multiple times in different contexts. Break down words into syllables and show them how they are pronounced.
- ▶ Create fun grammar games or activities that focus on specific grammar rules, and provide sentence frames or templates to facilitate learning correct sentence structure.
- ▶ When engaging with the student, talk about topics or objects they are interested in. For instance, if a student loves dinosaurs, incorporate dinosaur-related words or materials into discussions or activities to keep them engaged and motivated to communicate.
- ▶ After the student shares something, briefly summarise what they have said to show that you understand.
- ▶ Ask questions that allow students to express freely, not just a “yes” or “no” response (i.e. open ended questions).
- ▶ If a student has difficulty expressing their needs verbally, provide them with visual symbols/icons to express their needs.
- ▶ Read a storybook to the students and encourage them to enact it in groups. Praise all students for their efforts.
- ▶ Assign group projects or activities that require collaboration, ensuring that all students are included and supported.
- ▶ Address any instances of teasing or bullying through class discussions on empathy.

Think about a student who finds it challenging to communicate their thoughts effectively during presentations or when answering questions in front of the class. How can teacher best support a student with such concerns?

Activities

Focus Area (Stage)	Team Building
	The aim is to build confidence and teamwork in students.
Foundational (Classes 1 & 2)	<p>Divide the students into pairs. Make pairs of animals/fruits/vegetables, and allot the roles to the students. For example, one student is given to be grass and the other is given to be a goat. The grass will prepare an introduction for the goat and the goat will prepare introductory lines for the grass (with the help of parents or teacher). The next day they will describe each other in the class. The students may speak out an introduction or a riddle. In case of a riddle, the whole class will have to guess the character's name.</p> <p>The animal/ fruit/ vegetable may be repeated.</p> <p>Students may get it prepared by their parents. If they are not able to get help from their parents, the teachers will help them.</p>
Preparatory (Classes 3 to 5)	<p>Conduct a role-play by selecting a simple story with engaging characters and dialogues. Assign roles to each child and yourself. Encourage the students to focus on speaking fluently and expressively, modelling these skills in your own narration. Provide constructive feedback to them.</p>
Middle (Classes 6 to 8)	<p>Each student selects their partner. Ask the students to prepare or learn a poem, story, folksong (<i>lokgeet</i>), or any heartfelt prayer in pairs. The next day, students have to recite the prepared or learnt content by taking turns. For example, 1 student starts by reciting a line or singing a stanza/ verse, the partner will follow the next part. The flow of the poem, song, prayer, or story should be maintained.</p>
Secondary (Classes 9 to 12)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ The students may prepare their own poem or story, with their partner, based on any topic they want. ▶ The students may choose to learn a poem from their textbook or from some other source. ▶ In the case of folksong/ <i>lokgeet</i>, favourite song or prayer, singing is preferred.

Partnerships with School Stakeholders

If the student has communication related concerns, discussing it with parents can help in understanding the cause. It can also help in following similar strategies at school and home. If teacher is using visual pictures/symbols, similar set can be shared with parents for using at home.

Parents can be suggested to consider setting aside dedicated time each day to talk with their child. This time can be used to provide the child with right words, encourage them to express themselves, and help build their confidence.

4. Concerns related to Hyperactivity

Many students, especially those in Foundational Stage, find it difficult to sit still for longer durations, wait for their turn in activities or continuously pay attention to what the teacher is saying. This is a part of growing up. However, if a student, when compared to students of same age, has difficulty in maintaining attention and concentration, is hyperactive or impulsive, to the extent that it impacts their everyday activities such as learning, social relationships etc., then the concerns need to be addressed.



Let Us Know About Some of the Indicators

Hyperactivity or impulsivity may be observed through	Inattention may be observed through
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feeling restless, not able to sit still and often running, jumping at inappropriate occasions. • Difficulty playing quietly • Being impatient, difficulty in waiting for turn and interrupting others' activities or conversations • Excessive talking • Answering before completion of question/sentence by another person 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Easily distracted by any disturbance in the environment • Making careless mistakes repeatedly in class work or other activities • Difficulty paying attention to task requiring continuous mental efforts, loses focus soon-homework, play, exam, long conversations, lengthy assignments, etc. • Difficulty in organizing belongings (books, bag, stationary, project etc.) or performing sequential activities. • Often loses books, notebooks, project work, stationery or any other belongings

Suggested Strategies and Activities for Supporting Students

- ▶ For students who struggle with completing classwork, sitting still, or waiting their turn to speak:
 - Praise them when they show these behaviours. For e.g. - “It is great that you were seated in your seat for the entire duration” or “Well done! You completed your classwork”.
 - Teacher can share classroom rules such as ‘No one will get up during class without permission’ before starting of the class.
 - Brief physical activity or meditation can be incorporated in the routine, after assembly before starting of classes.

Let us reflect on the ways a teacher can adopt to support a student who is not able to sit on their seat for long, loses focus easily and seems to be disrupting the class by running around?

- ▶ For students who lose focus easily:
 - Before giving any direction to the student, get their attention (e.g., by mildly tapping on the shoulder).
 - Give simple directions with minimal steps to follow in simple language. Let the student repeat the directions to confirm if they have understood.
 - Similarly, give work in smaller parts, e.g. -4 smaller units instead of the complete chapter. Give breaks in between when one part is completed. Recommend the same to parents for homework.
- ▶ Give the student more time for finishing classwork, tests and exams.
- ▶ A fixed routine can help students understand what they are supposed to do and improve focus. Teacher can help students in making a time table and sticking it on their desk.
- ▶ Assign a peer as partner who can help student in noting homework and class work and submitting them. Teacher can also divide the class into pairs of two students, where both can discuss the lesson taught by teacher and help each other in completing assignments, or other class activities.
- ▶ Students facing difficulty in paying attention or sitting at one place may be seated near the teacher for monitoring their learning. Any distractions such as window, door, passage between two rows in classroom, any other source of disturbance should be avoided while seating students with attention issues.
- ▶ If the student feels the need to move frequently, seating can be in a place at the back of the classroom where movement is possible without distracting the class.

Activities

Focus Area (Stage)	Taking Turns
Foundational (Classes 1 & 2)	<p>The aim is to make students learn to wait for their turn and to release their energy.</p> <p>Take students to the ground. Set 4-5 circles in a path of 50 Metre. The students have to cover this 50 Metre path. The student will start by running and whenever there is a circle the student has to jump in the circle and again start running.</p> <p>Instructions for the Game:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Only one student should cross the path at once. Once this student has completed their path, the other student will start to run.
Preparatory (Classes 3 to 5)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ The teacher will decide the order in which the students will take turns. ▶ The circle marked should be easily visible. ▶ The teacher can use small indicators for start and stop signals.

Focus Area (Stage)	Physical Exercises
Foundational (Classes 1 & 2)	<p>The aim is to channelise the energy of students and thereby also helping them in focusing better and staying active and healthy.</p> <p>Physical exercises that allow rigorous movement can be incorporated during the mornings. An example of such an activity is given below.</p> <p>The activity can be conducted either indoor or outdoor. Students are to be instructed to stand at distance from each other and away from any other objects. They are then instructed to do opposites of the commands.</p>
Preparatory (Classes 3 to 5)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Up, Down, Stop, Go (Opposites) ▶ “Up” — Students squat down ▶ “Down” — Students jump, or stretch up as high as possible ▶ “Stop” — Students do a specific movement in the same spot (e.g., running, hopping, etc. in place) ▶ “Go” — Players freeze ▶ Call out the commands “up,” “down,” “stop,” or “go” one at a time. Practise a few rounds before starting to model the activities as you call them out.

Partnerships with School Stakeholders

Teacher can ask parents if they have noticed similar indicators/ signs at home. If the parents confirm these observations, the teacher can involve school counsellor in discussion with parents to develop strategies for supporting student.

Parents/ care-givers can also be encouraged to establish a routine for home activities, inform the child about it daily, and consistently follow it. This will help the student develop a sense of predictability and focus.

5. Concerns Related to Behaviour and Conduct

Showing defiance, arguing, or becoming aggressive on some occasions is a part of development. However, when a student frequently exhibits disobedient, aggressive, provocative or mean behaviour, or often breaks rules and disrespect the rights of others, including their peers and adults, to an extent which is uncommon for their age and more severe than childish mischief or adolescent rebelliousness, it becomes a concern.



Let Us Know About Some of the Indicators

Conduct related problems may show as	Oppositional behaviour may show as
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Consistently challenging classroom or school rules, eg-skipping school, walking out of class• Arguing with other students• Repeatedly lying• Stealing from others• Disrespecting teachers or other students• Damaging the school property/ vehicles/ classroom chairs, tables etc.• Aggression by initiating physical fights, bullying, doing emotionally or physically hurtful actions• Exhibiting cruelty towards animals, hurting them physically• Risking the safety of others• Lack of remorse after hurting others	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Doing things to annoy or bother others including peers and teachers• Speaking harshly with others• Disobeying and questioning rules of the school/classroom• Blaming others for own misbehavior• Refusing to do any task that the teacher/ any other adult has asked• Excessive arguing or fighting with other peers or adults• Frequent temper tantrums, losing temper easily and very frequently• Seeking revenge when made upset

Suggested Strategies and Activities for Supporting Students

- ▶ Build positive relationship with the student (greeting and acknowledging with a warm smile, assigning classroom responsibilities such as attendance monitor, organizing and distributing activity material etc.)
- ▶ If a student does not obey rules, ask them what should be done instead of instructing them. For example, ask, “What do you think we should do when someone is speaking?” instead of saying, “Don’t talk while I am teaching.”
- ▶ Make non-negotiable rules for the class, not specific to the student, for e.g.- if student is trying to disrupt the class, responding with ‘All questions will be answered at the end of lesson’ or ‘Rule is that notebooks are put back after the class is over’ rather than ‘You must put the copies back at the end of class’
- ▶ Praise the good efforts of the student for overcoming problem behaviour, e.g. avoiding argument, being disciplined in the class etc. eg-‘I appreciate you replied politely to your classmate’.
- ▶ Pick up one/two behaviours to work on and ignore attention seeking actions. Notice the cause of behaviour and what others did as a reaction to it
- ▶ Address actions such as misbehaviour, lying etc., separately with the student.
- ▶ In case of bullying, do not blame or scold the bully, respond respectfully.

Let us reflect on ways in which teacher can support a student who frequently argues with teachers and bullies his peers? What steps can be taken by the teacher to address this and support the student? Who else can be involved to provide support?

Give them the opportunity to speak. Whenever possible, discuss/role-play impact of bullying and how teamwork helps.

- ▶ Make sure bullied students are safe and encouraged to seek help.
- ▶ Set an adequate example before all students by managing your anger, solving frustrating situations, or showing respect to authority figures

Activities

Focus Area (Stage)	Problem Solving
Foundational (Classes 1 & 2)	<p>The aim is to help students find out solution to a problem in an amicable way</p> <p>Read a short story to the class that involves a problem or conflict (e.g., two children fighting over a toy).</p> <p>Pause at the problem and ask the students how they think the characters could solve the problem.</p> <p>Encourage students to share their ideas and discuss different solutions as a class.</p>
Preparatory (Classes 3 to 5)	<p>Divide students into small groups and provide them with a conflict scenario (e.g., two students arguing over who gets to use a particular game during recess). Ask each group to come up with three possible solutions to the conflict and discuss which solution they think would work best.</p>
Middle (Classes 6 to 8)	<p>Human knot:</p> <p>Participants form a close-knit group, standing in a circle facing each other.</p> <p>Each person reaches across the circle to grab the hands of two different people (not the ones directly next to them).</p> <p>The students then have to untangle themselves from the circle without letting go of each other's hands.</p>
Secondary (Classes 9 to 12)	<p>Encourage effective and positive communication among the students while they attempt to find solutions.</p> <p>After the activity, discuss with the students what strategies worked and what did not, and how they felt during the process.</p> <p>Time limits can be set to make the activity more complex and engaging.</p>

Focus Area (Stage)	Promoting Positive Behaviours The aim is to encourage students with positive behaviours and making them aware about the consequences of negative behaviours.
Foundational (Classes 1 & 2)	Encouraging students to model positive behaviours by narrating stories that incorporate positive qualities and behaviours and makes students understand the consequences negative behaviours creates to themselves and those around them.
Preparatory (Classes 3 to 5)	
Middle (Classes 6 to 8)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Narrate incidents from the lives of famous personalities or from recent events where their positive behaviours/ qualities have set an example that students can follow. ▶ Narrate incidents/anecdotes where the negative behaviours have caused significant damages (in different aspects such as physical, emotional, financial, etc.) to other people by highlighting how the careless actions of an individual may cost significant loss/damage to other people and the sufferings that follow.
Secondary (Classes 9 to 12)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Ask some reflective questions to the students: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) “Think of the instances when you have displayed positive and negative behaviour?” (ii) “What did they feel when they displayed positive behaviour?” (iii) “What did they feel when they displayed negative behaviours?” (iv) “How do they feel when people behave positively and negatively with them?”

Partnerships with School Stakeholders

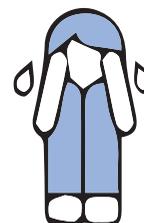
In case of behaviour or conduct related concerns, it is important to communicate with parents. Teacher can discuss student’s behavioural concerns with the parents and know about the strategies followed at home for applying in classroom. Teacher can also share their strategies with parents for similar response to concerning behaviours.

Additionally, teachers can suggest parents to create a positive and supportive home environment by focusing on the student’s strengths and encouraging them, rather than constantly correcting what they are not doing right.

Teacher can involve counsellor for support if they find behaviour of student difficult to manage. If student’s actions are risky or threatening to self or any other individual or property/object, it is important to immediately bring it to the notice of the school administration for further action in this regard.

6. Concerns Related to Sadness

Feeling sad in response to certain life situations such as poor performance on an important test, loss of loved ones and other unfavourable events, is a natural part of the emotional development that children experience. However, when these feelings persist for long periods and interfere with daily routines, such as activities of interest, schoolwork, or social interactions, the depressive behaviours become a cause for concern that requires attention and care.



Let Us Know About Some of the Indicators

- Looking unhappy, worried or anxious
- Frequently crying without an apparent cause
- Appearing socially withdrawn and isolated from peers
- Loss of interest and participation in classroom discussion and activities that the student enjoyed earlier
- Appearing fatigued or low on energy
- Restless or slowed down
- Acting angry or easily irritated, showing destructive tantrums in Foundational and Preparatory Stages
- Frequent and intense mood swings like adults may be seen in middle and secondary stage
- Frequent absence from school
- Finding it harder to stay on task, lose concentration
- Change in academic performance
- Appearing sleepy in classroom
- Visible weight loss or gain
- Expressing feelings of worthlessness (for eg-‘I am useless’), failure (for eg-‘I can never be good at anything’), or hopelessness (for eg-‘Nothing good will happen in my life’)

Suggested Strategies and Activities for Supporting Students

- ▶ Use a warm, supportive and gentle approach with all students
- ▶ Ask the student experiencing sadness separately how they feel. Assure them that they can reach out to you anytime in case they need help.
- ▶ Give the child opportunities to participate in different classroom and group activities. However, do not force them to participate.
- ▶ Encourage peer support by seating or pairing the student with Mano-Mitras/ supportive peers.
- ▶ Have the student start with familiar, previously successful tasks to get going and then move to new and/or more challenging tasks.

Let us think about the strategies that could be implemented by a teacher to support a student who has been appearing sad since the past 2-3 months and has lost interest in class activities?

- ▶ Avoid comparisons of one student with another.
- ▶ Be vigilant for any high-risk or suicidal behaviour. If the child expresses suicidal thoughts or wishes, inform the school authorities and parents immediately.

Activities

Focus Area (Stage)	Classroom participation
Foundational (Classes 1 & 2)	<p>The aim is to encourage students to participate in classroom activities and engage in classroom learning</p> <p>Make the students stand/sit in a circle and place one student in the centre of the circle. The student in the centre has to make the other students laugh, in any way they are able to, eg. tell a joke, act out an animal, make funny faces or voices. The student who laughs first will take the place of the previous student standing/sitting in the centre. The student previously in the centre will now join the circle.</p>
Preparatory (Classes 3 to 5)	<p>The students should not act out each other or make fun of others.</p>
Middle (Classes 6 to 8)	<p>In the classroom, students collaborate in groups of 5-6 to create a new game or modify an existing one, e.g., quizzes based on their syllabus or general awareness. Write down the rules and details on a sheet of paper, nicely written and decorated. The final step involves displaying their game on the classroom board or wall. The activity can be conducted in every classroom and then placed on the main activity board or the wall of the school/corridor, based on the arrangement of the school.</p>
Secondary (Classes 9 to 12)	<p>Note for teachers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Ensure active participation. ▶ Look out for children who are not taking part in the activity and encourage them to choose their group and work with it. ▶ Maintaining respectful and friendly behavior among the students.

Focus Area (Stage)	Relaxation Techniques
	The aim is to help students relax
Foundational (Classes 1 & 2)	Try to inculcate deep-breathing exercises or 5 minutes of meditation practice within the classroom routine. The meditative exercise can be to simply sit in silence with eyes closed with a relaxing music playing softly in the background. This could be done during the class or towards the end.
Preparatory (Classes 3 to 5)	
Middle (Classes 6 to 8)	
Secondary (Classes 9 to 12)	
Focus Area (Stage)	Emotion Identification
	The aim is to encourage students understand their emotions and feelings
Foundational (Classes 1 & 2)	Allocate 2 minutes of the class time, either at the beginning or at the end, for a 'self-check-in' exercise where students can think about, identify, and acknowledge how they are feeling. Ask students to share their reflections on the 'self-check-in' with their seating partners, if they feel comfortable or else write it down in their notebook.
Preparatory (Classes 3 to 5)	
Middle (Classes 6 to 8)	
Secondary (Classes 9 to 12)	
Focus Area (Stage)	Time management
	The aim is to help the students in prioritising their tasks and use their time effectively.
Foundational (Classes 1 & 2)	Ask the students to listen carefully as they will have to think of the moral of the story after the teacher has finished the story. Narrate a story about time management to the students, focusing on what will happen if we manage our time well and what will happen if we don't manage our time and leave on the things for later.
Preparatory (Classes 3 to 5)	Make the students aware about time management. Tell them about the importance of setting smaller, realistic goals and breaking down the tasks into smaller chunks. Now ask the students to write down what daily activities they can do in small parts, i.e., they can do one-by-one. Also ask the students to write their goals for the day.

Middle (Classes 6 to 8)	Ask the students to divide a sheet of paper into 4 halves using a pen or a pencil. In the first column, write down the tasks that are urgent and important for them. In the second column, add the tasks that are important but not urgent. In the third column, add the tasks that are not urgent but important, and in the fourth column, add the tasks that are neither urgent nor important, i.e., they can be done later.
Secondary (Classes 9 to 12)	Now ask the students to reflect upon their daily routine, how much time they spend in those tasks and do they actually require that much of time.

Partnerships with School Stakeholders

Teacher can involve school counsellor in discussions with the parents to understand the causes for student's sadness, strategies being followed at home and develop strategies for providing support. Counsellor's support can be taken further to support the student in managing sadness in school and at home and conducting awareness talks with students about mental health.

Additionally, teacher can suggest parents to involve all family members towards adopting a warm and caring approach at home and reassuring their child that they are always available for support.

If the sadness and depressive behaviour persists for a longer duration or impacts the student's well-being and their educational attainment, and the support extended by teacher and counsellor is not sufficient, it is important to discuss with the school principal for suggesting parent to seek professional help.

7. Concerns related to Anxiety

We often feel uncomfortable, nervous or worry about situations and objects. It can be useful, by helping to protect us from danger or in concentrating on the problem at hand. However, if these worries become excessive, it may lead to feeling anxious. Anxiety is an emotion characterized by feelings of tension and worried thoughts. It can be overwhelming and make it hard to manage daily activities, especially for school students.



Let Us Know About Some of the Indicators

- Appearing worried, nervous, afraid or anxious on most occasions
- Feeling restlessness or unsettled
- Tearful or crying easily
- Often complaining of chest tightness, trouble breathing, or feeling dizzy, sweating stomach aches or headaches
- Facing difficulty in concentration or mind going blank when asked questions
- Sleepy in the classroom, indicating disturbed sleep patterns.
- Displaying excessive worry about completing the allotted task correctly, taking much longer to finish it
- Being clingy to teachers or familiar adults

Suggested Strategies and Activities for Supporting Students

- ▶ Be calm and patient while talking to the student, giving them sufficient time to respond before asking again. If student does not want to speak, allow them to remain quiet but do continue the conversation by thinking aloud.
- ▶ Incorporate relaxation activities in daily classroom routine, especially during busy times like the morning rush or after energetic activities— For e.g., asking students to sit down comfortably in their seats, close their eyes and breath slowly or closing their eyes and listening to calming music.
- ▶ Follow a fixed classroom routine to give students a sense of predictability. Let students know about any changes ahead of time.
- ▶ Incorporate short physical activity breaks into the classroom routine whenever possible, such as stretching exercises, or quick dance sessions.
- ▶ Take students out on nature walks or outdoor activities whenever possible.
- ▶ If a student feels anxious about a particular object or situation (eg-public speaking, exams, social interactions, etc.), ensure the following:
 - Don't force the student to face the situation.
 - Help them by starting at a manageable level and working up from there.

Let us think of classroom situations that make students anxious. What are the indicators that point towards a student being anxious? In what ways can teacher support these students in the given situation?

- E.g.- in case of anxiety due to public speaking, break it into first speaking in front of mirror, then family, next class and finally at the assembly.
- Offer support wherever required. For eg- if student is anxious about exams, help them create a study schedule and guide them about effective study techniques.
 - ▶ For middle and secondary classes, create peer support by making students aware about anxiety (incorporation in lessons as and when possible) and holding discussions on how to support anyone facing it. This will normalize anxiety and build support in times of distress.

Activities

Focus Area (Stage)	Relaxation Techniques
	The aim is to help students manage their anxiety and stress.
Foundational (Classes 1 & 2)	Start or end a class with a short breathing exercise, such as, “balloon breathing” where students raise their arms while taking deep breath and lower them while releasing their breath. This can especially be practised before tests.
Preparatory (Classes 3 to 5)	
Middle (Classes 6 to 8)	Students can be asked to close their eyes and relax for a few minutes by taking slow and deep breaths. A calming music can play softly in the background. This can help them in grounding their feelings. This can especially be practised before tests or presentations.
Secondary (Classes 9 to 12)	
Focus Area (Stage)	Relaxation Techniques
	The aim is to make the students feel relaxed
Foundational (Classes 1 & 2)	Provide drawing sheets, paint brushes and paints to the students and ask them to draw anything they feel that makes them feel happy.
Preparatory (Classes 3 to 5)	
Middle (Classes 6 to 8)	Provide some drawing sheets to the students and ask them to draw out their feelings (what they are feeling currently). Ask the students to think and write down on the sheet what they can do to help themselves and what help do they need from others whomsoever they feel comfortable with, be it their family, friends, teachers. If they are not able to ask for help, ask them to think “why?”.
Secondary (Classes 9 to 12)	

Partnerships with School Stakeholders

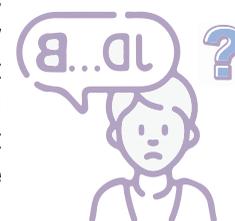
Teacher can involve school counsellor in discussions with the parents to understand the causes for student's anxiety, strategies being followed at home and develop strategies for providing support. Counsellor's support can be taken further to support the student in managing anxiety in school and at home.

Additionally, teacher can suggest parents to establish healthy routines, including regular sleep, balanced nutrition, and physical activity and reassure their child that they are always available for support.

If the anxiety becomes so overwhelming that it impacts the student's well-being and their educational attainment, and the support extended by teacher and counsellor is not sufficient, it is important to discuss with the school administrator for suggesting parent to seek professional help.

8. Concerns Related to Specific Learning Disabilities

The term Specific Learning Disabilities describes specific kinds of difficulties related to learning including difficulty in reading, language and math. For e.g.- A class 4 student who has difficulty with basic math concepts of addition and subtraction, often confuses '6' and '9'; A class 8 student who finds it difficult to read a simple paragraph from the text book, struggling to understand their meaning. However, the overall intelligence and motivation of the child is not affected. Poor academic performance resulting from learning difficulties leads to low esteem and self-doubt in many instances. Lack of necessary academic support further impacts the emotional and overall well-being of the student.



Let Us Know About Some of the Indicators

The common indicators observed in students, when compared to other students of the similar age are:

- Difficulty in reading, writing or performing basic mathematical calculations
- Reading or writing is slow or inaccurate and with lot of efforts
- Difficulty in understanding meaning of what they are reading
- Difficulty with spelling. For e.g., may omit or add consonants or vowels in a word
- Difficulty in writing with multiple grammatical errors or lack of clarity
- Poor mathematical understanding and reasoning difficulty with understanding of numbers, calculation and in applying mathematical facts/concepts to problems.

Suggested Strategies and Activities for Supporting Students

- ▶ While teaching, present the topic in a simple manner, keeping in view understanding ability of each student. Break topic into smaller parts. Regularly check with students, especially those who face difficulty in understanding

the subject and encourage all students to ask when they do not understand any topic.

- ▶ Give the student extra time to complete classwork.
- ▶ Provide students with the choice of not reading out loud if they are not comfortable with it.
- ▶ If student faces difficulty in writing, give student with the option to give oral presentations or audio-visual summaries instead of writing longer texts/ essays whenever possible.
- ▶ Praise all the students by their efforts and not outcomes (the marks obtained).
- ▶ Avoid comparison based on exam scores.
- ▶ Create a classroom environment that encourages focusing on the strengths of the students and promoting them. For e.g., if a student having difficulties with numbers has good drawing skills, provide opportunities for drawing through classroom activities.
- ▶ Encourage collaborative learning through peer support by pairing up students for learning, classwork and homework. For a student who needs extra efforts, pair up a peer who is sensitive and helpful.
- ▶ Ensure that students with Specific Learning Disabilities are provided with the concessions they are entitled to as per the Board school is affiliated to.

Let us reflect on approaches that a teacher can integrate in classroom teaching to support students who face difficulty in understanding a subject?

Activities

Focus Area (Stage)	Study Skills
Foundational (Classes 1 & 2)	<p>The aim is to help students develop study skills</p> <p>Inform students that they will go on an alphabet-hunt to find letters in the classroom.</p> <p>Divide students in smaller groups.</p> <p>Distribute printed alphabets or cards to each group and ask them to look for objects around them that start with their allotted alphabet.</p> <p>Take students on a walk around the classroom/school premises and ask them to identify and write down or mark the objects they find next to the corresponding letter.</p> <p>After 10 minutes gather students together and discuss what they found, asking them to share the name of the objects they found, its spelling and its use.</p> <p>Provide assistance whenever required.</p>

<p>Preparatory (Classes 3 to 5)</p>	<p>Inform students that you will be covering a topic from the syllabus. Direct them to focus on what they think are the key points, main ideas and supporting details.</p>
<p>Middle (Classes 6 to 8)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Encourage use of active listening and avoiding distractions.
<p>Secondary (Classes 9 to 12)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ After you have completed the topic, ask students to make pairs of two and compare notes, fill in any gaps and discuss the differences. ▶ Ask few students to share their summaries with class, discuss the similarities and difference in all ▶ Make students reflect on what they learned about active listening, note-taking, and summarising. ▶ For students of middle stage, teach them to use: structured format e.g.-notes, key points and summary; Abbreviations and symbols etc. to increase writing speed and underlining key information to make it stand out. ▶ Secondary stage students can be encouraged to visualise and represent the information in diagrams, discuss ideas presented in the lecture with peers and combine information from multiple sources to develop a comprehensive understanding of the topic.
<p>Focus Area (Stage)</p>	<p>Goal Setting The aim is to teach students the importance of prioritising their tasks.</p>
<p>Foundational (Classes 1& 2)</p>	<p>In free time, ask the students to prepare a list of items they need for studying and coming to school the next day. Discuss the importance of preparing for the next day in advance and planning what tasks is important and need to be completed first.</p>
<p>Preparatory (Classes 3 to 5)</p>	<p>Facilitate a role-play of 2 students. Student A:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Struggles with prioritising ▶ Not able to complete tasks on time ▶ Desk is messy, and often forgets things. ▶ Feels overwhelmed and stressed
<p>Middle (Classes 6 to 8)</p>	<p>Student B:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Completes all work on time. ▶ Knows where everything is. <p>Let the students discuss the drawbacks not being able to set goals and prioritise. Tell the importance of goal setting to the students and encourage them to follow.</p>

**Secondary
(Classes 9 to 12)**

Facilitate a group discussion on goal setting and areas of life in which it is useful.

Next, ask all students to write their career goal and the steps to achieve it.

Then facilitate discussion in the class.

Partnerships with School Stakeholders

If student has learning related difficulties, teacher can involve special educator or school counsellor in discussions with parents to understand the needs and strengths of the student and develop strategies for providing support.

Parents can also be encouraged to help their child for the following at home:

- Independent functioning for daily activities
- Following a constant routine to stay organised
- Finding a way of studying that the child finds useful, e.g.- Content broken down into smaller parts and shorter time period.

Teacher can involve school administrator/ counsellor and discuss suggesting to parents to get assessment done from a professional.

9. Concerns Related to Excessive Use of Digital Technology

Now-a-days students are constantly exposed to technology in the form of TV, online classes, educational videos, online games and social media. Technology is beneficial in many ways and is an important means of information and interaction. However, over dependency on digital usage such as excessive TV watching, playing online games for longer duration and with strangers, spending too much time on social media, to the extent that it starts interfering with daily activities, can all lead to various physical and mental health concerns.



Let Us Know About Some of the Indicators

- Complaints of frequent headaches, dizziness, eye irritation or vision problems not reported previously
- Caught using gadgets in school or during class
- Frequent absence from school or coming late or missing classes when in school
- Seeming fatigued and easily irritated
- Sleepy during class on most occasions
- Having trouble paying attention and concentrating
- Decline in academic performance

Suggested Strategies and Activities for Supporting Students

- ▶ Occasionally organize activities to arouse interest of students such as drawing, writing, singing, or mind games. Try to make them interesting to develop student’s interest in them.
- ▶ Initiate class discussions on internet and gadgets use, preventing and reporting online bullying, safe online communications, understanding distorted beauty ideals and Internet advertisements, building healthy habits such as physical activities.
- ▶ Encourage student participation in meaningful offline relationships. This is important for supporting each other, feeling belonged, and to be better able to express and understand emotions.

Let us reflect on the ways through which a teacher can help students use technology wisely while also teaching them about its potential risks?

Activities

Focus Area (Stage)	Self-Control
	The aim is to nurture self-control among students while using gadgets.
Foundational (Classes 1 & 2)	Conduct a game called “Simon says” where the students will have to pay attention to your actions and copy what a teacher is doing.
Preparatory (Classes 3 to 5)	<p>This activity has to be conducted in an open space. Ask the students to form a horizontal line.</p> <p>This activity is called “Ready, Set, Go”. The students have to run when the teacher says “Ready, Set, Go”.</p> <p>The teacher will substitute the words for “Go” sometimes, such as “Ready, Set, Guava” “Ready, Set, Gorilla” or anything else the teacher finds will confuse the children. The students have to wait for the right words to run. This will teach them to have a control by resisting the temptation to run and also increase their listening skills.</p>
Middle (Classes 6 to 8)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Facilitate discussions about the impact of excessive digital use. This can help students understand the importance of balance and make more informed decisions about their own digital habits. ▶ Have students set personal goals related to reducing their digital device use. Regularly check in on their progress and celebrate their successes.
Secondary (Classes 9 to 12)	Conduct discussions on strategies and tools students can use to reduce and manage the- use of digital devices.

Focus Area (Stage)	Prioritisation of Tasks
Preparatory (Classes 3 to 5)	The aim is to create awareness in students about the need for prioritising academic/ other important works over gaming/ internet use for leisure purposes. Discuss the importance of prioritising works on the basis of relevance and urgency. Help students make a schedule by prioritising important tasks first.
Middle (Classes 6 to 8)	Facilitate a role-play on a scenario regarding digital/gaming/ internet use- To display a conflict between parents and children: You love playing online multiplayer games/chatting. Your parents ask you to sleep at 10 pm everyday but your friends are only available to play/chat at 11pm. You have been complying to your friends' request and you are close to scoring high in the game. However, your grades have started to decline and you feel sleepy throughout the day.
Secondary (Classes 9 to 12)	Ask some reflective questions to the whole class based on the scenario. Such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ What would you do in this situation? Would you continue to play as much as you are/ cut back on your gaming time/ or take a different approach? ▶ What are the potential risks (cons) of continuing your current gaming habits?

Partnerships with School Stakeholders

Teacher can discuss with parents to understand the causes for student's excessive digital technology use and develop strategies for providing support.

The following can be suggested to parents:

- ▶ Preparing a timetable with the student, with a fixed time for all activities such as homework, outdoor activities and using gadgets.
- ▶ Instead of stopping the child from completely using gadget, which might promote behavioural issues, the time of gadget use can be screened. For example, half an hour for using gadgets, preferably after completion of homework, assignments and outdoor activities.
- ▶ Including an activity of student's interest, such as painting, music, any sports, in routine
- ▶ Set 'Home Rules' for gadget use, such as no gadgets during meals.

The teacher can suggest conducting of awareness sessions for all students on healthy digital technology use to the school principal. Additionally, 30–40-minute group discussions with parents, moderated by the school counsellor, can be suggested to build their understanding of the impacts of excessive internet and gadget use.

10. Concerns Related to Substance Use

Use of addictive substances such as alcohol, tobacco, vapes, etc. among students may range from experimentation i.e. one time use to severe use. Even experimental use poses risks, including accidents, fights, and overdose. Use of these substances also interferes with the development of brain which is actively growing during childhood and adolescence. Thus, regular use of these substances can lead to mental health related concerns, underachievement in school or a substance use disorder.

Let Us Know About Some of the Indicators

- Having sudden changes in mood or behaviour
- Changes in friends and activities
- Neglect of personal hygiene, unkempt appearance
- Engaging in risky behaviour and breaking rules
- Often late or absent from school
- Declined academic performance
- Showing a general lack of interest in activities
- Often distracted and lack of attention
- Increased conflicts and arguments with peers
- Lack of empathy for others
- Dishonest behaviour like lying or stealing classmates' belongings

Suggested Strategies and Activities for Supporting Students

- ▶ It is important to be aware of common items found in classrooms that can potentially be misused (e.g. correction fluid, markers, etc.)
- ▶ Stopping substance use can be difficult for someone who is habitual to using them. Talk to the student separately and assure them about confidentiality.
- ▶ Encourage student to seek help from the school counselor.
- ▶ Keep a supportive approach, be patient with the student.
- ▶ Promote trusting and caring classroom relationships among students through activities that encourage collaboration and mutual respect such as regular class discussions.
- ▶ Give the student tasks involving responsibility. This will help them to see themselves as part of a team and give them a sense of accomplishment.
- ▶ Encourage participation in recreational and physical activities (sports, music, etc.).
- ▶ Hold regular discussions on negative effects of substance use. Encourage students to prepare and perform small skits in groups.

Let us reflect on the ways through which a teacher can ensure that a student found using substances does not feel ashamed/ stigmatized in school?

- ▶ Help students develop assertiveness for overcoming peer pressure through role-play of common scenarios and appropriate response.
- ▶ Talk to students about impulse control and regulating their thoughts and actions. Help them practice awareness of thoughts, pausing to think about the result and using positive self-talk to redirect impulsive urges.

Activities

Focus Area (Stage)	Awareness
Foundational (Classes 1 & 2)	<p>The aim is to create awareness about the impact of drug use on individuals, families, and society.</p> <p>Discuss healthy habits and their importance such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Eating adequate and healthy food on time. ▶ Sleeping early and waking up early. ▶ Engaging in play and activities involving physical movement. <p>Ask them which among these they will try to follow. Praise the students who already are following healthy habits. If they are saying that they would not be able to follow any of these, try to know the reasons that prevent them.</p> <p>Try and find solutions with the students to help them start and maintain these healthy habits.</p>
Preparatory (Classes 3 to 5)	<p>Make them into groups and assign each group with a topic that comes in healthy habits such as sleep, eating, exercise, personal hygiene, etc. Ask each group to find healthy habits associated with these topics and their benefits for a healthy lifestyle.</p>
Middle (Classes 6 to 8)	<p>Facilitate a group discussion or a debate among the students on the topic “Substance use: Effect on physical and mental well-being” The students should also mention the effect of drug and alcohol use on a person’s body organs, such as how it affects heart rate, Lungs, Brain, and other body parts.</p>
Secondary (Classes 9 to 12)	<p>Divide students into groups. Have the students work together to research famous personalities who overcame substance abuse, how it impacted their life and how they overcame it.</p>
Focus Area (Stage)	Coping Skills
	<p>The aim is to develop skills to overcome peer pressure which is an important factor that leads to use of alcohol or other drugs.</p>

<p>Foundational (Classes 1 & 2)</p>	<p>Make the students aware about coping strategies and its importance in daily life situations.</p> <p>Give a match the following activity to the students. In the 1st column write some situations and in the 2nd column write the strategies that can be used for the situations. Ask the students to match both the columns.</p>
<p>Preparatory (Classes 3 to 5)</p>	<p>Divide students into small groups and provide them with a scenario (e.g., A student pressuring another student to cheat during a test, or, to join in on teasing someone.) Ask for volunteers from each group to role-play the situation using appropriate assertive techniques.</p>
<p>Middle (Classes 6 to 8)</p>	<p>Stress the importance of assertive responses, body posture, eye contact, and voice tone.</p>
<p>Secondary (Classes 9 to 12)</p>	<p>Conduct a role play on scenarios such as</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Your younger sibling comes home with a vape/ cigarette/ beedhi and asks what it is (ii) At an outing, a friend lights up a joint and starts to pass it around. <p>For each situation ask the students:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ "What would you do?" and ▶ "Why?" <p>Discuss the possible consequences that might result from not making responsible decisions.</p>
<p>Focus Area (Stage)</p>	<p>Delay of Gratification</p> <p>The aim is to teach self-regulation skills and assertiveness to the students</p>
<p>Foundational (Classes 1 & 2)</p>	<p>Divide the class into groups of 5 students.</p> <p>3 students (A, B, & C) will be pressurising the other 2 students (D, & E) to steal something from a classmate.</p> <p>In scenario 1:</p> <p>The students D & E will easily accept the demands of the students A, B, & C. This will result in their feeling of guilty for being responsible for someone's loss and fear of punishment or of being caught.</p>
<p>Preparatory (Classes 3 to 5)</p>	<p>In scenario 2:</p> <p>Despite the pressure, the students D & E will calmly decline the demands of the students A, B, & C stating their decision firmly but politely. The students A, B, & C initially persists but eventually respects choice of students D & E. The interaction ends amicably, with both maintaining their friendship despite the difference in choices.</p>

Middle (Classes 6 to 8)	Divide the class into groups of 5 students. 3 students (A, B, & C) will be pressurising the other 2 students (D, & E) to bunk the class. In scenario 1: The students D & E will easily accept the demands of the students A, B, & C. In scenario 2:
Secondary (Classes 9 to 12)	Despite the pressure, the students D & E will calmly decline the demands of the students A, B, & C stating their decision firmly but politely. The students A, B, & C initially persists but eventually respects Participant A's choice. The interaction ends amicably, with both maintaining their friendship despite the difference in choices. Ask the students to discuss both the situations (the outcomes of actions in both the scenarios)

Partnerships with School Stakeholders

A collaborative approach involving the school, families and the community is required to prevent substance use among students. If a student is found using substances, it is important to inform the school principal and plan about sharing information with the parent.

Teachers can suggest parents to:

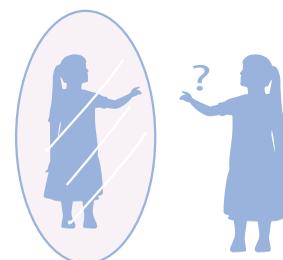
- ▶ Provide an empathetic and understanding space for the student to express themselves and share their concerns.
- ▶ Discuss the risks and consequences of substance use with student at home
- ▶ Promote healthy behaviours for physical and mental well-being such as adequate nutrition, and physical exercises.
- ▶ Help the student replace the addictive behaviour with a positive behaviour such as involvement in sports or artistic activities and channel their energy constructively.

If the concern is affecting the mental well-being of the student along with academic and interpersonal domains, it is important to discuss with the school principal for suggesting parent to seek professional help.

The teacher can suggest conducting of awareness sessions for all students on substance use to the school principal. Additionally, sessions can be organised with parents and the larger community, by the school counsellor, to spread awareness about indicators of substance use and ways to prevent or support students. Community can play an important role in vigilance outside school premises and public places.

11. Concerns Related to Body Image

Concerns related to body image include excessive focus and dissatisfaction with the body's appearance including the shape, weight, attractiveness and other aspects related to appearance. For example, one might think of themselves as too fat, despite others around them telling them otherwise. As children enter adolescence, the physical, cognitive and emotional changes lead to increased focus on own self, which is a normal part of development. However, when preoccupations become serious, they can affect self-esteem and physical and psychological well-being



Let Us Know About Some of the Indicators

- Frequently talking negatively about their appearance related aspects.
- Engaging in appearance-related activities, such as excessive grooming, frequently checking appearance or exercising.
- Avoiding activities that have large gathering such as performing on stage, participation in annual function.
- May be heard comparing themselves to peers, seeking validation from others on appearance.

Suggested Strategies and Activities for Supporting Students

- ▶ If you feel a student may have concerns related to their body image, speak to them separately, respecting their comfort level, and assure them that any information shared will remain confidential.
- ▶ Encourage the student seek support from the school counsellor or confide in a trusted adult.
- ▶ Be sensitive in using body related language, avoid making appearance-related remarks.
- ▶ Introduce students to images that depict diverse physical abilities, body sizes, and outward appearances through reading materials, posters, and presentations.
- ▶ Hold class discussions on diversity in abilities and appearances, focusing on individual strengths. Encourage students to express their views and moderate the discussion wherever required.
- ▶ Create an inclusive classroom environment where students are valued regardless of their looks, academic performance, or extracurricular achievements.
- ▶ Empower students to accept themselves as they are and develop a positive self-concept by focusing on their strengths.
- ▶ Boost the student's confidence by helping them in identifying a skill that they are good at and encouraging them to enhance their skill.
- ▶ Hold brief discussions on food and its significance as 'fuel' for our body (importance of carbohydrates, fats and proteins in a healthy diet). As a class activity, students can

Let us think of the ways in which a teacher can create a positive classroom environment where every student feels valued, safe and is not labelled on the basis of their personality or physical appearance?

be divided into smaller groups to prepare and present a meal plan and the nutrients it contains.

Activities

Focus Area (Stage)	Self-awareness & Self-esteem
	The aim is to develop self-awareness and self-esteem in students.
Foundational (Classes 1 & 2)	Conduct a 'show and tell' session. Ask all students to talk about their hobbies and likes. Praise student for what they do.
Preparatory (Classes 3 to 5)	Ask students to recollect incidents when they have received compliments, awards or recognition for doing something. Ask them what they did that might have made them receive the compliment. Also ask them about incidents where they have done something good and felt sad for not receiving any kind of recognition. Provide genuine compliments and recognition for the good things they have tried/accomplished.
Middle (Classes 6 to 8)	Ask students to write on their strengths and abilities. Ask them to find ways in which they can develop and enhance these strengths and abilities.
Secondary (Classes 9 to 12)	
Focus Area (Stage)	Health Literacy
	The aim is to create awareness about healthy eating and body image related concerns.
Foundational (Classes 1 & 2)	Ask the students to write down what all they like to eat and what they eat daily. Now tell them about the side effects of having junk food.
Preparatory (Classes 3 to 5)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Ask the students to take out a sheet of paper and fold it into thirds. ▶ In the first column, write down the fast foods they eat. ▶ In the second column, write the frequency in which they eat fast food. ▶ In the third column, write the frequency in which they are involved in physical exercise/ activity. ▶ Explain to the students the impact of fast food and physical activity on one's body and mind

Middle (Classes 6 to 8)	Discussion on puberty, body image, eating related concerns and importance of a healthy diet, and how the students feel about these with the class from time to time.
Secondary (Classes 9 to 12)	

Partnerships with School Stakeholders

A collaborative approach involving the school and families is essential to support students form a positive body image. If Teacher feels a student has body image related concerns that are impacting their school engagement, they can discuss this with parents and share the strategies being applied at school.

Teachers can suggest parents to:

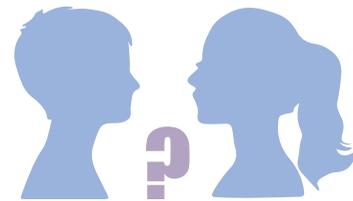
- ▶ Be understanding and approachable. Encourage the student to express themselves and share their concerns.
- ▶ Help the student build self-worth, by teaching them to respect themselves for who they are, not solely based on their physical appearance or characteristics.
- ▶ Refrain from commenting on the student's body or appearance or comparing it with others

The teacher can suggest conducting of awareness sessions for all students on building a positive body image to the school principal. Additionally, parent sessions or workshops can be organised by the school counselor, to help them learn how to promote positive body image and self-esteem in their children.

If the concern is affecting the mental well-being of the student along with academic and interpersonal domains, it is important to discuss with the school principal for suggesting parent to seek professional help.

12. Concerns Related to Gender Identity

As students reach adolescence, the development of their sense of identity takes a centre stage. Gender identity refers to an individual's sense of who they are and how they see and describe themselves in terms of gender, which sometimes does not align with the biological sex they are born with. When there is difference in gender identity and sex of an individual, it can lead to feelings of unease or dissatisfaction. In many instances, it may also make individuals prone to anxiety and low self-esteem. Not being able to fit into the societal concepts can lead to not only social isolation but also bullying. Thus, identifying if student is facing distress due to their gender related identity dissatisfaction and addressing these concerns becomes pertinent to support the student. However, it is important to note that not all students who experience differences in their gender identity and biological sex they were born with may be experiencing distress.



Let Us Know About Some of the Indicators

- Expressing extreme discomfort with their anatomical sex
- Seeming sad or anxious
- Withdrawal from participation in activities
- Isolation from peers
- Decline in academic performance
- Sudden increase in behavioral concerns
- Difficulty concentrating in class

Suggested Strategies and Activities for Supporting Students

- ▶ Let the student know they can talk to you if they need someone to share their distress.
- ▶ Encourage to reach out to the school counsellor.
- ▶ Use language which is gender inclusive in class. E.g. - Saying “Good morning, students” or “Good morning, everyone” instead of using gendered greetings like “Good morning, boys and girls”
- ▶ Focus on individual characteristics rather than gender while assigning tasks.
- ▶ Practice and encourage inclusiveness and gender sensitivity among students through classroom discussions (e.g., giving equal respect to others regardless of their gender). Teachers can also involve school counsellors for conducting such activities.
- ▶ Encourage peer support through group activities
- ▶ Address bullying as a concern by talking to all involved (bully and the bullied) and understanding their reasons. Help the bully understand the impact of their actions.
- ▶ Generate classroom awareness about impacts of bullying due to gender identity concerns through role play. Let students reflect on how they felt when someone misbehaved with them.

Let us reflect on how the prevalent stigmas associated with gender identity affect the impacted students’ mental well-being? What can be taken by the teacher to support the student?

Activities

Focus Area (Stage)	Empathy and Peer Support
	The aim is to develop empathy and problem-solving skills among students
Middle (Classes 6 to 8)	Present the class with a hypothetical problem that a person with a non-traditional gender identity might face (e.g., discrimination, lack of acceptance, etc.). Have the students think about solutions and discuss them in the classroom.
Secondary (Classes 9 to 12)	
Focus Area (Stage)	Breaking Stereotypes and Promoting Inclusion
	The aim is to help students develop an understanding of gender diversity and challenge traditional gender stereotypes by encouraging creative expression and critical discussion

Foundational (Classes 1 & 2)	Have a session by the experts, such as, doctors, gender experts/ counsellors, or Biology teachers to make the students aware about the difference between biological sex and gender.
Preparatory (Classes 3 to 5)	
Middle (Classes 6 to 8)	Make a group of 4 students (who have volunteered or are willing to participate in a role-play) such that the boy will become the female member of the family and the girl will become the male member of the family. For example, 1 girl will become a father and one will become a brother. 1 boy will become mother and the other will play the role of the sister.
Secondary (Classes 9 to 12)	Now, the students will act on a scenario related to general situation that they encounter daily, from the perspective of that gender. After the play the students will discuss their experience of the feelings and challenges they faced.

Partnerships with School Stakeholders

If the teacher notices that the concerns are adversely impacting academic, interpersonal relations and mental well-being of the student, parents can be informed about it after informing the student. Teachers can also suggest the parents consult with the school counsellor in understanding and supporting the student better for dealing with the stress.

Teachers can encourage parents to promote an empathetic and non-judgemental space for the student to express themselves freely. Parents can also be sensitised to accept and support the student regardless of their gender identity and to ensure a safe and understanding environment where the student can thrive.

Additionally, teacher can give suggestions to the school principal for conducting gender sensitization activities at the school level. Families of students and the community can also be involved in such awareness drives to together create a positive environment for the students.

13. Concerns Related to Self-harm and Suicide

Self-harm/ injurious behaviour refers to any purposeful action that causes damage to self, in most cases, without any conscious intention to attempt suicide. An individual attempting self-harm is often in a state of extreme pain and see it as a means to communicate their pain or relieve themselves of it.

Suicide often occurs when an individual, feeling overwhelmed by hopelessness and helplessness, perceives no viable escape from their distress and sees death as the only relief. This state of despair leads them to view suicide as a desperate escape from their suffering.

Let Us Know About Some of the Indicators

- Unexplained injuries like bruises, scratches, presence of cuts or burns etc. on thighs, arms or wrist where they can easily hide.
- Expressing hopelessness ('Nothing will get better') and/or helplessness ('No one can help me')
- Expressing feelings of worthlessness or self-hatred ('I am useless', 'I am ashamed of myself')
- Seeming sad or anxious most of the times
- Withdrawal from participation in school activities enjoyed earlier
- Isolation from peers
- Neglecting personal hygiene and appearance such as uncombed hair
- Decline in academic performance
- Lack of focus in class, becoming forgetful
- Frequent absence from school
- Reckless behaviour, being careless about safety, use of substances (smoking, alcohol, etc.)
- Returning gifts to friends for no reason, Saying goodbye to classmates
- Talking about life being meaningless

Suggested Strategies and Activities for Supporting Students

Self-injury is an indicator of distress and difficulty in coping with the pain that individual is experiencing. Hence, any such attempt to harming the self should not be taken as attention-seeking or manipulative behaviour and must be addressed immediately through care and adequate support.

- ▶ On noticing any signs of self-harm, talk to the student separately. Be calm and warm in your approach.
- ▶ Talk gently and try to understand how they are feeling. Assure you will keep the conversation confidential.
- ▶ Do not express anguish or judgment. Listen to the student calmly.
- ▶ Offer them to sit down and relax. Give water if needed.
- ▶ Suggest the student to talk to anyone the student feels comfortable with (teacher/ school counsellor or any other trusted adult).
- ▶ Notice when a child is stressed or upset and talk to them separately about how they are feeling.
- ▶ Encourage students to reach out to parents, teachers, school counsellor or any other trusted adult if they need help.
- ▶ Build awareness about mental health among students through classroom discussions on managing emotions and overcoming stress. Involve school counsellor for in-depth discussions and awareness sessions with students.
- ▶ Build an open and caring classroom environment, by promoting peer support and empathy.

Let us reflect on the ways a teacher can adopt to support a student who is not able to sit on their seat for long, loses focus easily and seems to be disrupting the class by running around?

Activities

Focus Area (Stage)	Distress Tolerance The aim is to help students build emotional regulation, problem solving, and empathy among students.
Foundational (Classes 1 & 2)	<p>Tell the students a story that incorporates various emotions, such as happiness, sadness, anger, and fear. The story could involve characters facing different challenges or situations that elicit these emotions. As you tell the story, vividly describe the emotions experienced by the characters and how they react to them.</p> <p>Ask the students what emotions the characters experienced in the story and what were their reactions and steps to cope.</p>
Preparatory (Classes 3 to 5)	<p>Share a brief story involving characters facing different challenges or situations evoking emotions like happiness, sadness, anger, and fear. Ask students to reflect on the emotions they noticed in the story and share which ones stood out to them and why. Encourage students to brainstorm additional ways the characters could have coped with their emotions or resolved their problems healthily.</p>
Middle (Classes 6 to 8) Secondary (Classes 9 to 12)	<p>Provide a blank page to students. Instruct the students to not write their name on the page. Give them questions related to distress tolerance, (eg. “Describe a time when you felt overwhelmed and how you manage to cope.”) This will help them identify their emotions and help them cope.</p> <p>Now collect the pages from the students and shuffle them nicely. Randomly distribute the pages among the students and ask them to write “How would you have reacted if you were in the situation written by the other student.” Now collect and keep the sheets on your desk and ask the students to find their sheet and read what is written by the other student. This will help them reflect upon self, develop empathy and find other ways to help them cope.</p>
Focus Area (Stage)	Help Seeking The aim is to develop the ability to help other or seek help from other them.
Foundational (Classes 1 & 2)	<p>Narrate short stories to the students that promote help seeking and helping behavior. Ask the students to share their views on the story.</p>
Preparatory (Classes 3 to 5)	<p>To conduct this activity, the teacher needs to tell the students about help seeking behaviour. Tell the names and designation of help-providers in the school. Explain to them that these are the people whom they can ask for help at school if they feel sad, scared, sick, are injured or they have lost something. Frame some riddles like ‘I can help you if you have fallen over and need first aid. Who am I?’ Ask a student to volunteer to repeat the names of the help providers in the school.</p>

Middle (Classes 6 to 8)	Ask the students to take out a sheet of paper and draw a vertical line such that it divides into 2 halves. Now ask them to draw 1 figure on the left side that represents the person with whom they share their good news and on the other half draw 1 figure representing whom they ask for help. Label the figures. The students have to write the qualities of both the people in the respective figures and how they feel while asking for help and when they receive help. Ask them to reflect on what do they associate themselves with. Teachers can give them question templates as:
Secondary (Classes 9 to 12)	(This cell is merged with the text from the previous row)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ What qualities do I have in common with the above two characters? ▶ Am I open to help others? <p>If any student is comfortable they can show their sheet to the class and tell their experience.</p>

Partnerships with School Stakeholders

A collaborative approach involving the teacher, parent and the school counsellor is necessary to support the student and ensure their well-being.

In case of attempted self-harm, teachers should inform the school principal immediately. Together School principal and teacher can ensure that the concern is communicated to the parents in a sensitive manner ensuring confidentiality.

Teacher can collaborate with the School Counsellor and involve the parents in the process to plan necessary interventions and strategies to help and support the student at home and in school.

Teachers can also suggest parent to strengthen protective factors and reduce factors that might negatively affect the student:

- ▶ Ensure an empathetic and non-judgemental environment at home.
- ▶ Being vigilant and remove any harmful objects from student's reach.
- ▶ Help the student to foster warm relationships with family, friends, classmates, and teachers.
- ▶ Help and motivate the student to develop and pursue their interests and hobbies.
- ▶ Promote health coping mechanisms like journaling, creative outlets like painting, practising yoga or meditation.

Teacher can suggest conducting of awareness sessions for students, their families, school staff, and the community for generating awareness about mental health and self-harm.

14. Concerns Related to Autism

Autism is a neurodevelopmental condition which usually shows in children before 3 years of age and continues throughout lifetime. A student with autism may face difficulty in social communication and interaction with others as well as show restricted and repetitive behaviours and interests. However, autism is a spectrum and each individual may experience the symptoms and their severity differently. With appropriate support and intervention, many children with autism make significant progress in overcoming these difficulties related to social communication and behaviour.

Let Us Know About Some of the Indicators

Social Communication and Interaction	Restrictive or Repetitive Behaviour
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Difficulty interacting or playing with others. • Little or no eye contact while talking. • Difficulties in socio-emotional reciprocity for example, failure to start a conversation or respond to others. • Absence of interest in developing and maintaining relationships like talking to peers, difficulty in making friends. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unusual or repetitive movements, such as hand flapping, spinning, or tapping or repeating words heard earlier without context. • Playing with toys or objects in ways that seem odd or repetitive, e.g. lining the blocks, playing with the wheel of a car. • Following a specific routine, extremely disturbed by any changes to the routine, e.g.- change in seat in classroom, change in everyday classroom routines and activities. • Highly sensitive or has low sensitivity to lights, sound, smell, taste, touch, balancing or movement. For e.g. - closing ears at the increase in sound or going near the source of sound to hear.

Suggested Strategies and Activities for Supporting Students

- ▶ Understanding the needs of the student and providing necessary support, eg- providing with the option to go to a quiet space when feeling overwhelmed, or allotting a sensitive peer with strong communication skills to help with social interactions.
- ▶ Promoting a supportive classroom environment and developing peer support through awareness about autism. Encouraging empathy and inclusion among students.

Let us reflect on the steps that a teacher can take to support a student who faces difficulty interacting with others, has difficulty adjusting to change and is very sensitive to light?

- ▶ Communication:
 - Communication and directions to be based on the student’s ability to speak and understand. For eg- if the student is able to speak in only 3-word sentences, keeping the communication simple and easy to understand with minimal use of words, ‘Sit down’ instead of ‘I would suggest you to sit down on your seat’.
 - Wait and count up to 5 before speaking to the student again. This will allow them the time to process what you said.
 - If student uses and understands minimum words, use picture cards and encourage student to use them for conveying their need. Eg- cards for washroom, water etc.
 - Minimize the use of ‘don’t’ and ‘no.’ Tell the student what to do instead of what not to do. Eg- ‘Please Sit’ instead of ‘Don’t get up from your seat’.
- ▶ Individuals with autism have difficulty adjusting to change, try to avoid sudden changes in classroom routine or inform the student to prepare them for it.
- ▶ Student should be seated in a seat with scope for optimal attention by the teacher and keeping in view the sensory need of the student (eg-avoiding near door if high sensitivity to sound)
- ▶ Try to find out the learning style of the student i.e. if they learn better through visual, auditory, reading or any other mode of teaching and incorporate it in classroom teaching.

Activities

Focus Area (Stage)	Developing Peer Support
Foundational (Classes 1 & 2)	<p>The aim is to create greater connectedness among students</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Divide students into pairs of two. This pairing can be shuffled from time to time. Pair the student with autism with a Mano-Mitra/ sensitive and helpful peer to encourage social interactions (e.g.- while going for assembly, playing on the playground, group activities). The Mano-Mitra/peer can help in developing understanding of social behaviour such as, “We must stand in line and wait for our turn” “Throw the ball, it is your turn now.” “Ask ma’am permission for going to toilet.”)
Preparatory (Classes 3 to 5)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ At the same time form smaller groups of 3-4 students and encourage communication and sharing of stationery etc. during activities such as art and craft. ▶ Conduct an activity, wherein the students will pass a ball to each other without letting the ball fall on the ground. The students with Autism will copy their classmates and act accordingly. Alterations can be made such as the ball can be kicked or tossed, without interruption.

<p>Middle (Classes 6 to 8)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Pair students as buddies to support each other in learning, classwork, homework etc. Students with autism can be paired with Mano-Mitras/supportive peers for required support. Encourage involvement in extracurricular activities, such as dance, music, art or sports activities through these peers. ▶ Tag game: This game can be played in a big hall, auditorium or a playground. Use visual aids to make the students understand the rules of the game or show them a demonstration of the game by getting involved. The person touching the other people is called the tagger and will be called “it”. The “it” can be changed when the tagger touches the other person slightly. The “it” will have to wear a visual marker so that they can be differentiated from the rest of the students. <p>Note: Since the children with autism can sometimes have high or low sensitivity to sensory stimuli such as light, sound, smell, touch, etc., the teachers need give the game instructions keeping this in view, eg-if student is highly sensitive to sound, keeping sounds low while playing the game.</p>
<p>Secondary (Classes 9 to 12)</p>	

Partnerships with School Stakeholders

A collaborative approach involving the teacher, parent, school counsellor and special educator is necessary to develop strategies for supporting the student.

Teacher can suggest parents to communicate with the student using simple words and positive language (‘what to do’ instead of ‘what not to do’).

Parents can be encouraged to prepare the student for activities by using a picture schedule with similar pictures at school and home and avoid changes in everyday routines. The teacher can recommend parents to provide signals and time for students in transition from one activity to the other (for e.g., from learning to eating) or between different situations (like home to school).

Teachers can also collaborate with the school counsellor to understand best strategies to support and enhance the well-being of the student and also involve the parents in the process.

15. Concerns Related to Intellectual Disability (ID)

Students with Intellectual Disability (ID) face difficulties in understanding new or complex information, learning new skills and carrying on everyday activities independently. Their intellectual functioning is below the functioning of general population in that age group (IQ score below 70 as measured by an Intelligence test). However, students with intellectual disability may vary from each other in terms of extent of the disability.

Let Us Know About Some of the Indicators

- Delayed or slow learning
- Delay in abilities of the student including speech, walking, writing or other independent skills such as eating or self-grooming, as compared to peers of their age
- Difficulty in remembering things
- Difficulty in logical thinking or solving a problem
- Behaviour related concerns such as tantrums
- Difficulty in understanding complex instructions and in performing complex tasks that involve performing a sequence of actions.
- Difficulty in social interactions- finding it hard to understand interpersonal communications and in the ability in interacting appropriately to people and situations.

Suggested Strategies and Activities for Supporting Students

- ▶ Use clear and simple language for communication.
- ▶ Support the teaching content with real life examples to help relate easily.
- ▶ Give adequate time for completion of work given in class, encourage student to seek help whenever required. Extend one-on-one support wherever required. Adopt a patient approach.
- ▶ Giving specific praise, for e.g. - 'You have kept notebook in the right place' is more helpful than 'Well done!', acting as feedback for future.
- ▶ Set doable goals for the student, depending on their abilities. However, do not set goals that are either too easy or too difficult to achieve. While setting lower expectations deprives students of opportunity to grow, setting goals beyond individual capability can cause discouragement.
- ▶ Develop peer support, encourage an empathetic and inclusive approach among students. Group activities and discussions provide opportunities for interactions and support. Assign the student with ID to a group with Mano-Mitras/ helpful peers.
- ▶ Encourage participation of the student in extracurricular activities. For e.g.-in special events or assemblies, group activities and games. This will increase

Let us reflect on adaptation that a teacher can make to their teaching methods and classroom environment to support a class 5 student who learns at a slower pace than other students and needs help with tasks such as finishing classwork, eating lunch or other common tasks?

helpfulness for the student with ID and encourage peers to move beyond competition and develop team spirit.

Activities

Focus Area (Stage)	Social Skills
Foundational (Classes 1 & 2)	<p>The aim is to promote healthy interactions among students</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Encouraging group play and activities is helpful for students with intellectual disabilities to develop their social skills. ▶ The teacher can divide students into smaller groups and give each group a page with drawing to colour. Each student can be given 1 specific colour and the group to be directed to pass the sheet among themselves one by one to fill colour. Skills such as waiting for turns, asking others for their colours, sharing can be encouraged by the teacher. Students exhibiting these skills can be praised, for eg- ‘You are very nicely waiting for your turn!’
Preparatory (Classes 3 to 5)	
Middle (Classes 6 to 8)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ The teacher can make use of everyday interactions with the student to practice social skills such as greeting, and initiating interactions. Efforts by the student can be praised, such as ‘I noticed that you greeted me today’. ▶ Stories and videos on social skills topics such as making new friends, dealing with bullies, or encountering new situations can be shared with the larger class. At the end of the story/video, students can be encouraged to reflect on how they can deal with similar situations.
Secondary (Classes 9 to 12)	
Focus Area (Stage)	Collaboration
Foundational (Classes 1 & 2)	<p>The aim of the activity is to enhance collaboration skills.</p> <p>The Blind Drawing</p> <p>Divide the class into 2 halves, such that one student from each group will called the ‘describer’ and the rest will be called the ‘artists’.</p> <p>“Describer,” is given a picture or drawing that the rest of the group cannot see. The Describer must describe the image to the other students, called “Artists,” without using words that directly describe the objects in the picture. Instead, the Describer uses directions (like “above,” “below”) and adjectives (like “large,” “tiny”) to convey the details.</p>
Preparatory (Classes 3 to 5)	<p>The Artists listen to these descriptions and draw what they believe the image looks like based on the given instructions.</p> <p>Once the drawings are completed, the Describer reveals the original picture, and everyone compares it with the drawings. This activity helps improve communication skills by emphasizing the need for clear and effective description, and it encourages collaboration.</p>

<p>Middle (Classes 6 to 8)</p>	<p>Divide the class into groups of 3 members. 1 member of the group will be the traveller, 1 member will be the guide and 1 will be the instructor.</p> <p>Mark a starting and end point of the game track.</p> <p>The guide and the traveller will stand with their backs facing each other and the traveller will be blindfolded.</p> <p>The guide and the instructor will stand facing each other.</p> <p>Steps of the activity:</p>
<p>Secondary (Classes 9 to 12)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ An object will be placed at the end point of the game track. ▶ The instructor will tell the directions to the guide with actions only. ▶ The guide will speak up the directions acted by the instructor to the traveller. ▶ The traveller will follow the directions told by the guide to reach the object. ▶ Once the traveller gets the object they can remove their blindfold. <p>If the traveller has picked up the wrong object, the guide will inform them by following the instructions of the instructor.</p>

Partnerships with School Stakeholders

A collaborative approach involving the teacher, parent, school counsellor and special educator is necessary to develop strategies for supporting the student with ID.

Teacher can suggest parents to communicate with the student in simple and direct language. Parents can be encouraged to provide appropriate levels of assistance to the student with respect to the student's capabilities so as to facilitate the growth and development of their abilities.

Teachers can discuss with School Principal for recommending parents to get an IQ assessment done for the student.

Teachers can also collaborate with the school counsellor to understand best strategies to support and enhance the well-being of the student and also involve the parents in the process.

III. Parent and Community Involvement

Factors Affecting Student Wellbeing

Various factors around children and adolescents play a decisive role in their overall well-being. The quality of relationship and interactions with family, friends and significant others and those with teachers and peers in school have a lasting impact on their development. At the same time, the immediate environment of a child, be it their home, school or neighbourhood also influences their well-being. In turn, these factors are also interconnected and the way these interact with each other also affects the child.

For example, a student whose language of communication at home is the same as that in the classroom will find it easy to interact with teacher and peers. This will increase the student's classroom participation and boost their confidence. At the same time, for a student who speaks a different language at home, the classroom interactions will not be that simple. They may face challenges in understanding the instructions given by the teacher and in communicating with their peers, hindering their classroom participation. It may lead to feelings of isolation, frustration and lower self-confidence. As a result, the student will be less likely to engage actively in classroom discussions and group work.

Thinking about the example shared above, what actions can be taken by the teacher/school to support this student?



Role of School in Student Well-Being

Receiving timely support from the teacher and school can significantly benefit students, helping them overcome various challenges and boosting their confidence, while its absence may lead to feelings of isolation, frustration, and lower self-confidence, hindering their overall learning experience and academic progress. The role of school, and teachers in specific, is important in supporting students reach their optimal development and maintain a state of well-being. Schools that serve as safe and welcoming learning spaces help students develop a sense of belonging. Such spaces are also places where the learning needs of each learner are acknowledged and catered for and all achievements are equally celebrated. Schools also act as a bridge connecting the family and the community, binding them together towards promotion of student well-being across all settings.

Positive and nurturing relationships between the student and the teachers and among the students are essential to the emotional development of the student as it helps them develop many skills and values including core social skills such as building trust and being accountable for one's actions. Students model relationships from teachers by observing the interactions with other teachers and with students. When these relationships are more constructive and collaborative, it sets an excellent example for students to model in their own interpersonal relationships.

Partnerships and collaborations among school, family and community is an important process for learning and development of students. Schools can take a lead in partnering with various stakeholders in the community including alumni, Organisations, Professionals, and representatives of the immediate school community towards promoting students' social, emotional, physical, and intellectual development. Such partnerships provide access to resources, expertise, and support that can be beneficial for students. Engaging with the families is also important and can help in providing a nurturing environment to students at home along with school. The students' family context plays a crucial role in the development of their individual skills.

Involving Parents and Families

The contribution of parents in student well-being is invaluable. Parental involvement helps in improving student's attendance and academic outcomes and positively contributes to the overall school environment. School can involve in regular communications with parents, enabling them to apply effective strategies to enhance the holistic development of the student. When students are able to apply or transfer the skills they learn at school to home or other settings, they would be more interested in investing efforts in those skills.

Parents and families can bridge the gap between school and home for always ensuring a positive and nurturing environment around student by:

- ▶ Fostering open and positive communication with their children, focusing on strengths of their child instead of pointing out what the child cannot do.
- ▶ Helping student follow a balanced routine at home with adequate sleep, nourishment and physical activity.
- ▶ Assuring children that they are always available to discuss concerns and provide support.
- ▶ Participation in school PTMs, other meetings, workshops and activities for mental health awareness and well-being promotion
- ▶ Communicating regularly with school teachers and counselor to maintain a shared understanding of the student's concerns and collaborate to develop consistent strategies and interventions that address the student's needs effectively.
- ▶ Being a positive role model for the student.

Schools can work with parents to make them aware about connectedness, engage them in creating healthy and supportive schools, and reinforce the skills taught at school in their home. Regular communication between school and families can lead to student well-being.

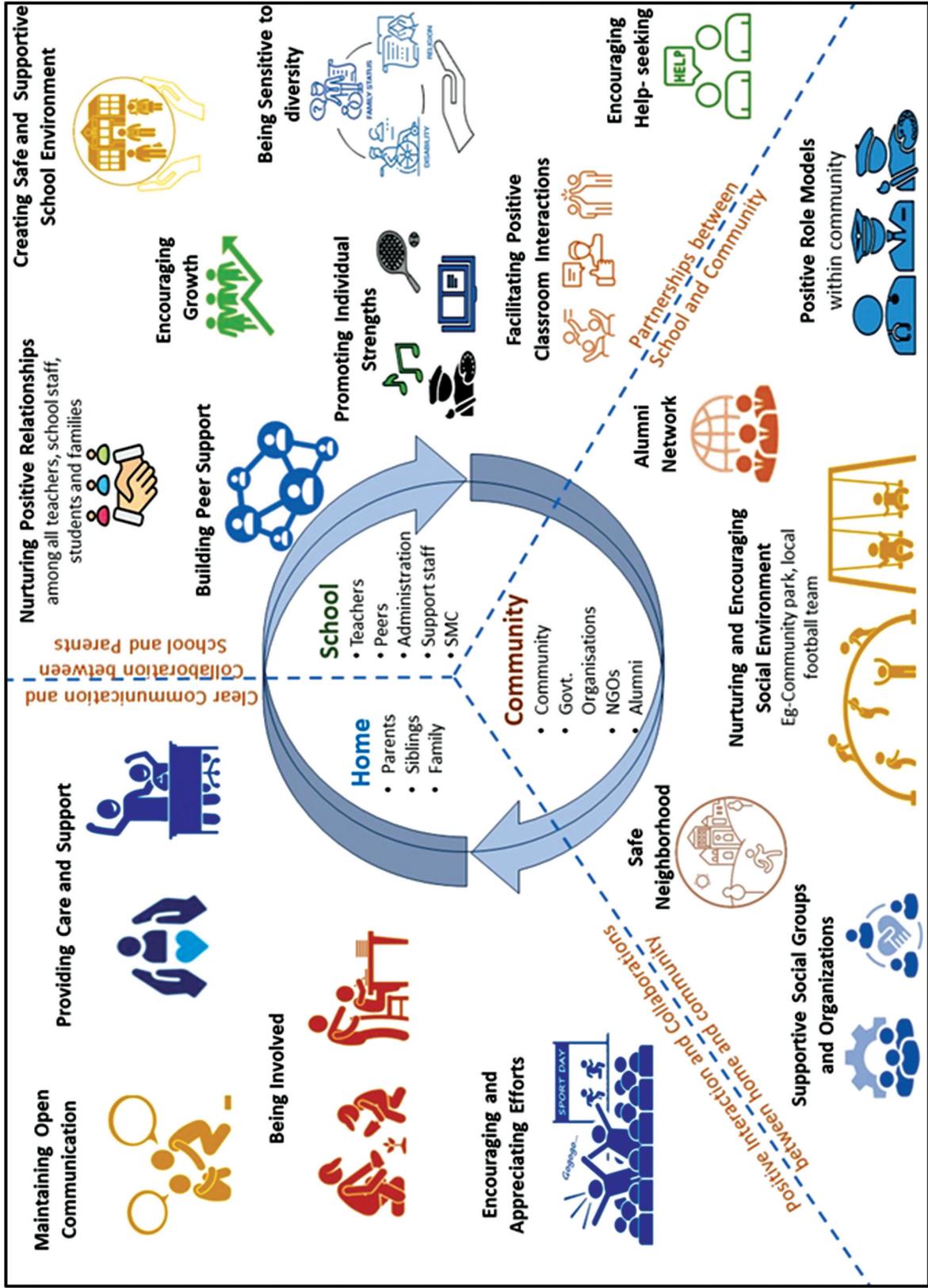
Collaborating with Community

With the shift from joint to nuclear families, the role of community has expanded. Community now needs to play a very active role in observing, monitoring and mentoring of the child in every way. Therefore, its influence on the mental health and dealing with at-risk students cannot be undermined. The involvement has to be at all levels: peripheral (keeping a keen observation on at-risk children), secondary (reporting and liaison with caregivers) and primary (caring and safety of at-risk children).

- ▶ Community can participate by involving in the functioning of schools like the SMCs etc. and also by members volunteering their expertise time and other resources for the support and care of at-risk children.
- ▶ Volunteers and leaders in the community can be invited by school to contribute towards mental health through active engagement in school activities and plans like yoga class, spirituality, ethics and life skills and to reinforce healthy messages and practice.
- ▶ Government Organizations and NGOs (working in the relevant sectors such as health, mental health, safety and welfare sector, and sports, arts and culture etc.) as part of the community can also function as stakeholders in the larger plan to achieve healthy and productive citizenry
- ▶ School Alumni can be involved in providing career guidance and support, awareness campaigns and initiatives to provide relatable role models for students.

The schools, and through them the teachers can take a lead in facilitating interactions with families and community. The role of school administration is key in making provision of resources in terms of time and space for these partnerships. A successful school-family-community partnership supports students' overall well-being.

ECOSYSTEM OF POSITIVE MENTAL WELL-BEING FOR STUDENTS



References

- American Psychiatric Association. (2022). *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* (5th ed., text rev.). <https://doi.org/10.1176/appi.books.9780890425787>
- Fields, B. (2012). Getting the Balance Right: The Challenge of Balancing Praise and Correction for Early School Years Children who Exhibit Oppositional and Defiant Behaviour. *Australasian Journal of Early Childhood*, 37(4), 24–28. <https://doi.org/10.1177/183693911203700404>
- Inchley J, Currie D, Budisavljevic S, Torsheim T, Jåstad A, Cosma A et al. (Ed.) (2020). *Spotlight on adolescent health and well-being. Findings from the 2017/2018 Health Behaviour in School-aged Children (HBSC) survey in Europe and Canada. International report. Volume 1. Key findings.* Copenhagen: WHO Regional Office for Europe
- Loades, M. E., & Mastroyannopoulou, K. (2010). Teachers' recognition of children's mental health problems. *Child and Adolescent Mental Health*, 15(3), 150–156. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1475-3588.2009.00551.x>
- Manodarpan. (2023). *Early Identification and Intervention for Mental Health Concerns in School Going Children and Adolescents: Modular Handbook for Teachers and Allied Stakeholders.* Manodarpan. https://manodarpan.education.gov.in/assets/downloads/moe_mental_health_150124.pdf
- National Alliance on Mental Illness (n.d.). *Early warning signs of mental health concerns.* https://my.nami.org/NAMI/media/NAMInet/Ops-Gov/NAMI_Infographic-know-the-warning-signs-final.pdf
- NCERT. (2023). *Psychology Textbook for Class XI.* New Delhi: NCERT
- The Ministry of Parenting. (n.d.) *Activities for children with ADHD - With an Educational twist.* <https://www.theministryofparenting.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/List-of-activities-with-an-educational-twist-parents-of-children-with-ADHD.pdf> Assessed July, 2024
- Tudge, J. R. H., Merçon-Vargas, E. A., Liang, Y., & Payir, A. (2017). The importance of Urie Bronfenbrenner's bioecological theory for early childhood educators and early childhood education. In L. Cohen & S. Stupiansky (Eds.), *Theories of Early Childhood Education: Developmental, Behaviorist, and Critical* (45–57). New York: Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315641560>
- UNICEF. (2022) *Five Essential Pillars for Promoting and Protecting Mental Health in Schools and Learning Environments: A Briefing Note for National Governments.* <https://www.unicef.org/media/126821/file/Promoting%20and%20protecting%20mental%20health%20in%20schools%20and%20learning%20environments.pdf> Assessed June, 2024
- United Nations Children's Fund. (2021). *The State of the World's Children 2021: On My Mind – Promoting, protecting and caring for children's mental health.* New York: UNICEF

- University of Delaware. (n.d.) Oppositional Defiant Disorder Recommendations for Teachers and for Parents. <https://www.education.udel.edu/wp-content/uploads/2013/01/ODD-011807.pdf> Assessed June, 2024
- World Health Organisation. (2023). Global Accelerated Action for the Health of Adolescents (AA-HA!): Guidance to Support Country Implementation (2nd ed.)
- World Health Organization. (2020). Guidelines on mental health promotive and preventive interventions for adolescents. <https://iris.who.int/bitstream/handle/10665/336864/9789240011854-eng.pdf?sequence=1>
- World Health Organization. Regional Office for the Eastern Mediterranean. (2021). Mental Health in Schools: A Manual. <https://applications.emro.who.int/docs/9789290225652-eng.pdf>

NOTES

13283

विद्यया ऽ मृतमश्नुते



एन सी ई आर टी
NCERT

Manodarpan Cell
Department of Educational Psychology and Foundations of Education
राष्ट्रीय शैक्षिक अनुसंधान और प्रशिक्षण परिषद्
NATIONAL COUNCIL OF EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH AND TRAINING