

# MINDOUT

The Re-development of the MindOut Programme: Promoting  
Mental Wellbeing in Post-Primary Schools

Miss Katherine Dowling, Dr. Aleisha Clarke, Ms. Anne Sheridan and  
Professor Margaret Barry



# Background of MindOut

MindOut is a universal programme first developed in 2004 to support the social, emotional and mental well-being of young people aged 15-18 years old in Irish post-primary schools through the SPHE curriculum.

Over the past ten years, the MindOut programme has been implemented and evaluated in post-primary schools across Ireland. It has also been adapted to suit the needs of the out-of-school sector and has further been evaluated in this setting.



# Mental Health Promotion

Worldwide, mental health difficulties affect approximately 20% of the child and adolescent population (Amnesty International, 2011).

According to findings from *My World Survey* (2012), a majority of mental health problems among young Irish people emerge in early adolescence and peak in late teens (Dooley & Fitzgerald, 2012).

Previous research in mental health promotion among the adolescent population suggests that the most successful interventions are those which focus on strengthening social and emotional competencies and skills rather than targeting specific problem behaviours (Jessor et al., 2003; Weare & Gray, 2003; Barry and Jenkins, 2007; Tennant et al., 2008; Weare & Nind, 2011).

Social and emotional learning (SEL) is the process of developing these skills so they can act as protective factors against the underlying causes of problem behaviours and mental health difficulties.

There is a substantial amount of international evidence which indicates that social and emotional wellbeing programmes, when implemented effectively in schools, can produce long-term benefits (Clarke et al., 2015; Barry et al., 2013; Weare and Nind, 2011; Durlak et al., 2011; Jane-Llopis et al., 2005; Wells et al., 2003; Greenberg et al., 2001).

# SEL: Collaborative for Academic, Social and Emotional Learning (CASEL)

## SEL's Social & Emotional Learning Framework:

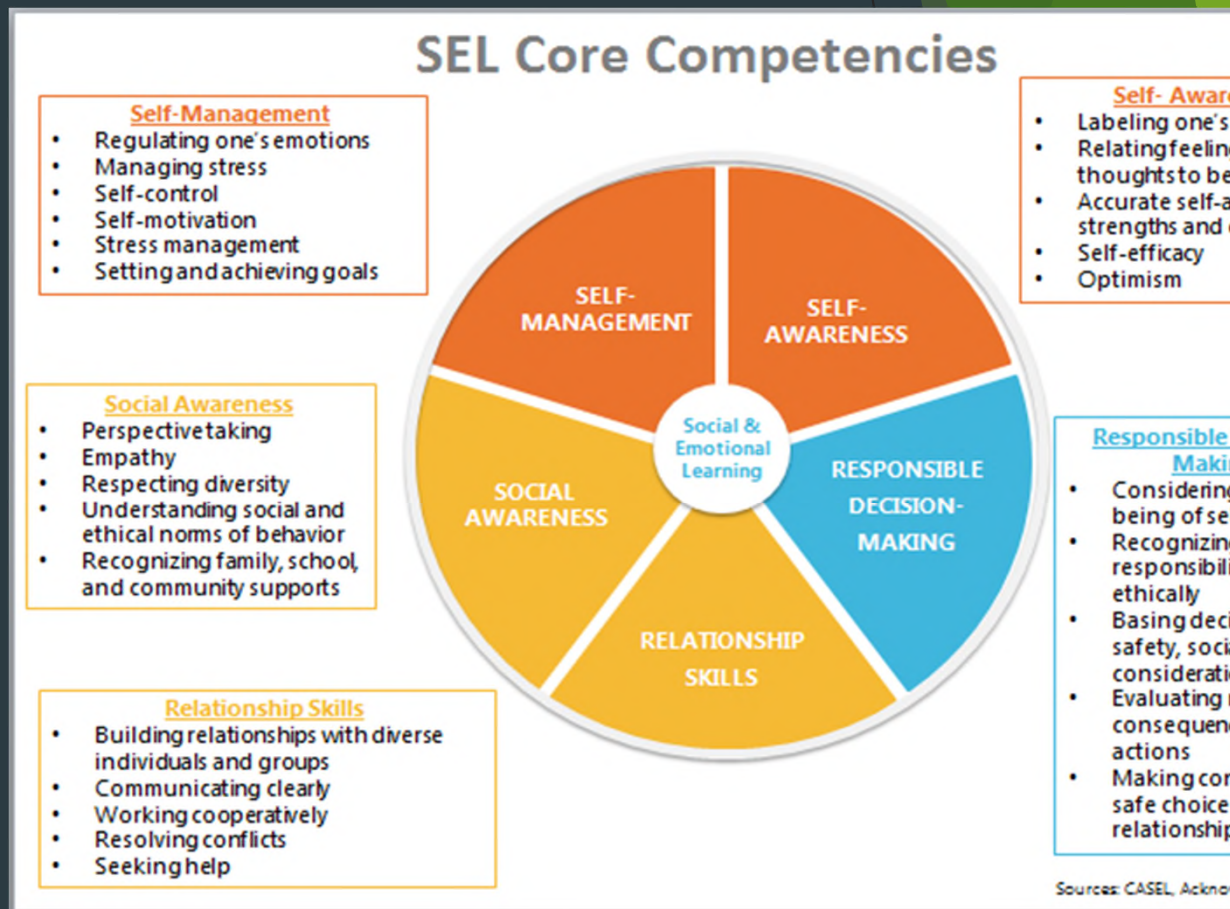
Self-awareness

Self-management

Social-awareness

Relationship skills

Responsible decision-making



# What does the Evidence Tell Us?

## Key Characteristics for Effective EL Programmes:

Teaching skills and competence enhancement.

Interactive teaching methods.

Positive mental health rather than prevention of mental disorders.

Well-defined goals

Provision of explicit teacher guidelines

Embedding skill development within whole school approach

Clarke et al., 2015

## SAFE Criteria:

- (i)** Sequenced activities that are led in a coordinated, connected way to the development of skills;
- (ii)** Active forms of learning;
- (iii)** Focused on developing one or more skills;
- (iv)** Explicit about targeting specific skills.

Durlak et al., 2011

# What does the Evidence Tell Us?

Support for Social and Emotional Learning:

Improved attitudes towards school

Positive school behaviours

Improved outcomes on school drop-out and  
absenteeism

Enhanced school performance

CASEL, 2003

Durlak et al., (2011) Systematic Review (207  
interventions):

11% improvement in achievement tests

25% improvement in social and emotional  
skills

10% decrease in misbehaviour, anxiety and  
depression.

\*\*Positive outcomes were increased when  
programmes were delivered by school staff

# Sources of Development

1. Review of Existing Resources
2. Working Group
3. Consultations with young people



# Review of Existing Resources





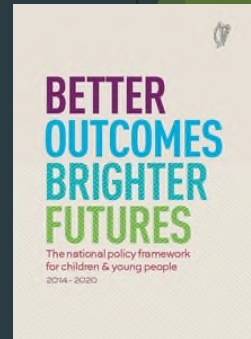
# view of Existing Resources

*Wellbeing for Post- Primary Schools Guidelines* (2013), recognises the school as an education setting for promoting social and emotional wellbeing . The guidelines highlight the importance of taking a whole-school approach to achieve successful implementation (DES, HSE, DoH, 2013).

national suicide prevention strategy, *Connecting for Life* identifies the need to support the mental health and wellbeing of young people as a priority group and encourages schools to deliver SPHE programmes including mental health at senior cycle (Department of Health, 2015).

*Better Outcomes Brighter Futures* policy framework in Ireland recognises that the school setting plays a vital role in helping to protect young people's mental health and wellbeing (DCYA, 2014).

*Health Promoting Schools (HPS)* acknowledges all dimensions of health are interconnected and that they influence, and are influenced by the school environment (Department of Health, 2015).



# Working Group

Establishing a Working Group

National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS)

Headstrong

Health Service Executive

Teachers & Counsellors (Donegal Education and Training Board)

Researchers (NUIG)



# orking Group

- ▶ 1. Content
- ▶ 2. Teaching Strategies
- ▶ 3. Language
- ▶ 4. Timing
- ▶ 5. Whole-school strategies



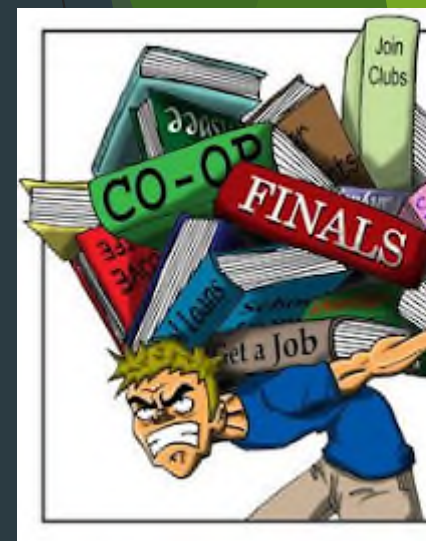
# Consultations with Young People (Students)

## Top themes for inclusion

- Relationships
- Mental Health
- Bullying/Cyberbullying
- School
- Pressure from others
- Feelings

## Suggestions for Development

- Increase in different teaching activities
- Programme delivery
- Programme structure
- Content/Scenarios
- Programme value



## Participants:

N= 55

(Leinster, Connacht and  
Ulster)

# Consultations with Young People (SpunOut)

Purpose of consultation:

Development of scenarios

Review draft of programme

Participants:

=7 (4 males/3 females)

Dublin, Wexford, Tipperary, Galway)



# MindOut sessions:

- Session 1: Minding your Mental Wellbeing
- Session 2: Dealing with your Emotions
- Session 3: Thoughts, Feelings, Actions
- Session 4: Coping with Challenges
- Session 5: Support from Others
- Session 6: Walking in Someone Else's Shoes
- Session 7: Communicating & Managing Conflict
- Session 8: Managing Online Behaviours
- Session 9: Help-Seeking
- Session 10: Problem-solving & Decision-making
- Session 11: Happiness and Wellbeing
- Session 12: Review



# Overview of Revised MindOut Programme

: Improve the overall social and emotional wellbeing of Irish adolescents and enable them to deal more effectively with the challenges of life.

## Target Population:

Universal

School-based programme

Secondary students 15-18 years old

Males/females

## Programme Content:

- Weekly delivery (12 weeks) during one class period (35 min)
- Learning materials: Teacher's manual, PowerPoint slides, Worksheets, Whole-school resource
- Teaching Methods: Discussion, brainstorm, group work, games, videos, presentations, scenarios, reflection
- Theoretical Framework: CASEL's SEL Framework
- Practice at Home activities
- Links to Additional Resources

# How does MindOut Measure Up?

## Key Characteristics for Effective SEL Programmes:

Teaching skills and competence enhancement. ✓

Interactive teaching methods. ✓

Positive mental health rather than prevention of mental disorders. ✓

Well-defined goals ✓

Provision of explicit teacher guidelines ✓

***Embedding skill development within whole school approach*** ✓



# Future Steps: Implementation.... Effective Programmes are Not Enough.

teachers deliver programme  
PO's trained to train the teachers (1 day)  
core Implementation team (HPO's)  
structured manual & PPT slides  
successful Pilot completed



# Future Steps: Evaluation

specific aims of the study are to:

- ) Determine if the programme has significant effects on young peoples' social emotional, academic and mental wellbeing outcomes
- i) Examine the process of implementation in order to determine the conditions that need to be created to achieve successful outcomes in the school setting.

Teachers & Students

*Outcome:* Standardised Measures

(i) Social & Emotional Skills (ii) overall mental wellbeing (iii) academic achievement

*Process:* Focus groups, classroom observations, weekly reports, participatory group workshops.



# Acknowledgements

- ▶ The research team would like to acknowledge the specialist input of Ms. Anne Sheridan, mental health promotion/ suicide prevention resource officer (HSE) to the revision the MindOut programme and the contribution of the project Working Group members to the re-development of the programme materials. We also wish to thank the young people, teachers and schools who participated in the consultations and whose contributions supported the revision of this programme. The authors also acknowledge the input of Ms. Karen McCrohan, a Master's student in the Discipline of Health Promotion, who assisted in the student consultations and data collection.

mnesty International and Children's Rights Alliance (2011). Children's Mental Health Coalition Background Paper. Amnesty International, Dublin.

arry, M.M. and Jenkins R. (2007). Implementing Mental Health Promotion. Churchill Livingstone, Elsevier: Oxford.

yrne, M. (2005). The development and evaluation of a mental health promotion programme for post-primary schools. Unpublished Master's dissertation. National University of Ireland Galway.

yrne, M., Barry, M.M. & Sheridan, A. (2004a) Implementation of a school-based mental health promotion programme in Ireland. *International Journal of Mental Health Promotion*, 6 (1), 17-25

yrne, M., Barry, M.M. & Sheridan, A. (2004b) MindOut: The development and evaluation of a mental health promotion programme for post-primary schools in Ireland. In *Mental Health Promotion: Case Studies from Countries*. (Eds.) Maxena, S. and Garrison, P.J. pages 50-53. World Federation for Mental Health and the World Health Organisation.

yrne, M., Barry, M.M., Nic Gabhainn, S. & Newell, J (2005). The Development and Evaluation of a Mental Health Promotion Programme for Post-Primary Schools in Ireland. In Jensen, B.B. & Clift, S. (Eds) *The Health Promoting School*: International

Collaborative for Academic, Social and Emotional Learning (2015). *CASEL guide: Effective social and emotional learning programs – Middle and high school edition*. Chicago, IL: Author.

Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning. (2004). *Creating connections for student success: The CASEL 2003 annual report*. Chicago, IL: Author.

Clarke, A.M., Morreale, S., Field, C.A., Hussein, Y., & Barry, M.M. (2015). What works in enhancing social and emotional skills development during childhood and adolescence? A review of the evidence on the effectiveness of school-based and out-of-school programmes in the UK. A report produced by the World Health Organization Collaborating Centre for Health Promotion Research, National University of Ireland Galway.

Department of Children and Youth Affairs (2014). *Better Outcomes, Brighter Futures: The National Policy Framework for Children and Young People 2014-2020*, Dublin.

Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (2009) *Building resilience: Social & emotional learning materials*. Youth Research Centre, Melbourne Graduate School of Education, University of Melbourne

Department of Education and Skills; Health Service Executive; Department of Health interdepartmental sub-group. (2013) *Well-being in post primary schools: Guidelines for mental health promotion and suicide prevention*.

Department of Education and Skills; Health Service Executive & Department of Health, Dublin

Department of Health, Health Service Executive, National Office for Suicide Prevention (2015). *Connecting for Life: Ireland's National Strategy to Reduce Suicide 2015-2020*. Department of Health, Dublin.

Dooley, B. & Fitzgerald, A. (2012). *My World Survey: National Study of Youth Mental Health in Ireland*. Headstrong and UCD School of Psychology.

Durlak, J. A. (1995). *School-based prevention programs for children and adolescents*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Durlak, J. & Wells, A. (1997) Primary prevention mental health programs for children and adolescents: a meta-analytic review. *American Journal of Community Psychology*, 25 (2) 115-52.

Durlak, J.A., Weissberg, R.P., Dymneci, A.B., Taylor, R.D. & Schellinger, K.B. (2011). The impact of enhancing students' social and emotional learning: A meta-analysis of school-based universal interventions. *Child Development*, 82(1), 405-432.

Health Service Executive (2015). *Schools for Health in Ireland: Framework for Developing a Health Promoting School: Post-Primary*. Health Service Executive & Department of Education & Skills.

McCrohan, K. (2015). *A Consultation with Young People on the MindOut Programme*. Unpublished Master's dissertation. National University of Ireland Galway.

National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (2011). *Social, Personal & Health Education, Curriculum Framework*. Dublin, NCCA.

Weare, K. & Gray, G. (2003) *What works in developing children's emotional and social competence and wellbeing?* London: DfES Research Report 456

Weare, K. & Nind, M. (2011). Mental health promotion and problem prevention in schools: What does the evidence say? *Health Promotion International*, 26, 29-69.

Wells, J., Barlow, J. & Stewart-Brown, S. (2003). A systematic review of universal approaches to mental health promotion in schools. *Health Education*, 103(4), 197-220.

World Health Organisation. (1986). *Ottawa Charter for health promotion*. Geneva: World Health Organisation.

THANK YOU 😊

QUESTIONS??