

# Basic issues regarding psychological health promotion

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#### Abstract

The World Health Organization (WHO, 2001) defines positive psychological health as "well-being in which individuals become aware of their own capabilities, are able to deal with the stress of everyday life, work productively, and act for their community." Another definition (MHSchools) says "... feeling, thinking and interacting with others in a way that helps the individual enjoy life and deal effectively with challenges." So the concept of positive psychological health is more than just the absence of psychological illness. An individual enjoying such health is able to recognize and use their own possibilities, enjoy life and cope with situations that challenge them. Positive psychological health can also be understood as the ability / ability of an individual to perceive, understand and interpret his environment, to adapt / change when it is needed, and to communicate with others.

Keywords:

Psychological health determinants of psychological health promotion of psychological health concept of psychological health

# **1** Introduction

The World Health Organization (WHO, 2001) defines positive psychological health as "well-being in which individuals become aware of their own capabilities, are able to deal with the stress of everyday life, work productively, and act for their community." Another definition (MHSchools) says "... feeling, thinking and interacting with others in a way that helps the individual enjoy life and deal effectively with challenges." So the concept of positive psychological health is more than just the absence of psychological illness. An individual enjoying such health is able to recognize and use their own possibilities, enjoy life and cope with situations that challenge them. Positive psychological health can also be understood as the ability / ability of an individual to perceive, understand and interpret his environment, to adapt / change when it is needed, and to communicate with others.

Such well-being enables us to deal with everyday situations successfully, contributes to the effective functioning of individuals, families, communities and the whole of society. An individual with positive psychological health is more able to "think and act on the basis of their own decisions, which contributes to their emotional and physical development" (Deci and Ryan, 2007). Such well-being has been shown to reduce absenteeism in the workplace and at school. Psychological health determinants can be divided into the following four categories (Lehtinen, 2008):

- 1. Individual factors and experiences (emotions, actions, identity, self-esteem, coping and adaptive skills, autonomy, other personal resources, physical health).
- 2. Cultural factors (social values, rules governing social interaction, social criteria of health and psychological illness, the stigma of psychological illness, tolerance of differences).
- 3. Social interactions (in the personal, family sphere, learning environment, work or local community, leisure time activities).
- 4. Structure and social resources (social, organizational, employment policy, educational, home, economic resources).

These determinants can play both a protective role and risk factors for psychological health (Barry and Jenkins, 2007). Protective factors strengthen positive psychological health and reduce the possibility of developing psychological disorders. In contrast, risk factors increase the likelihood of psychological health



problems. Both operate at different levels - personal, family, local community and on a macro scale, i.e. in society (Table 1).

	Protective factors	Risk factors
Individual level	Positive self-perception	Low self-esteem
	Ability to cope	Insufficient coping skills
	Bond with family	Insecure family bond in childhood
	Social skills	Low self-efficacy
	Good physical health	Physical and intellectual disability
Level of social interaction	Positive attachment, relationships with others	Violence and abuse
	Supportive family / parents	Separation and loss of parents
	Communication skills	Rejection by peers
	Supporting social bonds	Social isolation
	A sense of social belonging	
Level of structure and social	Safe neighbourhood	Dangerous area
resources	A rich environment	Poverty and homelessness
	Economic security	Economic uncertainty
	Employment	Unemployment
	Positive school experiences	School failures
Level of cultural factors	Acceptance of cultural diversity	Discrimination on grounds of
		social group or culture
	Efforts to assimilate various	Poor integration of
	representatives cultures	representatives of different
		cultures
	Diversity tolerance	Stigmatization of psychological disorders

Positive feelings alone are not enough to ensure good psychological health (even because they can be triggered by taking drugs or alcohol (Huppert, 2007). People with good psychological health typically have the following characteristics / skills (Lehtinen, 2008):

- a sense of well-being and satisfaction;
- the ability to enjoy life, laugh, have fun;
- the ability to deal with stressful events in life and the ability to face adversity;
- participating fully in everyday life by taking meaningful actions and establishing positive relationships;
- the ability to face and undergo changes, develop, experience a whole range of feelings;
- a sense of balance in life (e.g. between loneliness and sociability, work and play, activity and rest);
- the ability to meet their needs in various areas: mind, body, spirit, creativity;
- intellectual development and health;
- the ability to care for others;
- confidence, high self-esteem.

# 2 PHP conception

Psychological health is an integral component of human health in general. They are shaped by the interaction between biological, psychological, social and environmental factors. The goal of PHP is to achieve positive psychological health and improve the quality of human life by focusing on modifiable determinants of this health, i.e. those that can be improved for the better. PHP can be implemented at the individual, group, community or habitat level where people live. Since the 1950s, the school has been recognized as one of the habitats convenient for implementing health promotion and health education. School attendance is compulsory in most countries. Students often spend more than six hours a day in this place for more than 180 days a year.



Therefore, the place of learning creates excellent conditions for undertaking initiatives promoting positive psychological health.

WHO (1998) emphasizes the essence of school as a place for human socialization and implementation of health promotion activities. Schools play an important role in: (1) promoting psychological health, (2) preventing health problems.

Levels at which psychological health can be promoted in the school setting can be divided into the following three categories (Barry and Jenkins, 2007):

- school class level activities developing appropriate life skills and social competences based on a specific school class curriculum
- involvement of the whole school focused on influencing individual classes, but also on changing the social climate and ethos in the whole school; this approach requires the involvement of parents and the entire school community in general to create a supportive environment
- actions to take specific problems especially indicated for students with an increased risk of psychological health problems, aimed at strengthening their skills in preventing / dealing with them

The initiative to establish the Health Promoting Schools Program (WHO / EC / Council of Europe) is attributed to the Ottawa Charter (WHO, 1986). This program is based on the approach to the entire school community (the Whole School Approach), so we are dealing here with a holistic approach.

WHO defines a "school promoting health" as one in which "all members of its community work together to provide students with an environment that promotes health and protects them from threats."

The Whole School Approach concept engages the ethos and school environment, curricula, families and the local community. Weare K. (2000) describes the Whole School Approach as a holistic, complex strategy in the school habitat that strengthens the psychological, emotional and social health of all involved partners (i.e. students, teachers and parents). Important elements of this approach are positive relationships between students - school staff, education / staff development, clearly defined rules / principles of the institution's functioning, teamwork, focusing on skills, attitudes and values, active involvement of parents, local community and key partners (offices, organization) from the school environment. The most important principles of the school promoting health (Weare, 2000).

RELATIONS - Mutual support of students and teachers as a prerequisite for success

GASAGING - Possibility to participate in joint discussion / resolution of issues important for staff and students AUTONOMY - Having an adequate level of freedom and independence adapted to the age and maturity of the persons involved

BRIGHTNESS OF THE PRINCIPLES - Units have clarity about the rules and values, awareness of what is required of them and what others are expected to understand their roles.

Psychological health promotion is the responsibility of all school staff, as they play an important role in shaping the emotional well-being of children / young people and their social development. Therefore, PHP leaders can be teachers, school psychologists, pedagogues, nurses, service workers (e.g. administration), as well as other members of the school community.

Their effectiveness will depend on how well they are doing in group work, sharing knowledge / experience and power, monitoring progress, solving problems and tackling changing requirements / circumstances.

Teachers play a particularly important role in PHP. They should be a positive example for students, be aware of the problems they can potentially experience, and be able to manage them so that, if necessary, they can use existing resources to solve a specific problem. Teachers are often the first to recognize that a student's behaviour has changed and, if necessary, consult professionals with appropriate knowledge and experience to help the child.

In a health promoting school, not only the psychological health of students, but all the staff employed there is taken care of. For these people, school is a workplace that can be seen as unfavourable (where, for example, they become victims of aggression). Therefore, school staff should have access to resources that will allow them to deepen knowledge about their own, their colleagues and students' psychological burdens and develop skills to solve these problems.



## 2.1 PHP benefits

Early years of life have a key impact on psychological health. Man intensively develops then in the psychological, social and physical sphere. Wellbeing in childhood creates a strong, good basis for positive psychological health in adolescence. A healthy start in life improves later functioning at school, helps develop good relationships with peers, promotes easier social networking, and improves self-confidence in using these skills constructively. This process is often called "social and emotional learning". Thus, good psychological health in childhood is a prerequisite for optimal psychological development, building proper social relations, effective learning, the ability to take care of yourself and good physical health in later years of life, in adulthood (ProMenPol, 2009).

During adolescence, there is an increased risk of developing psychological health problems. It is a period of attending school, making friendships, building relationships with parents and other family members, and building your own identity. Growing up is an extremely important period during which an individual undergoes major changes in the biological, psychological, social and cognitive sphere. These years of life are often associated with feelings of being lost, sadness, changes in emotions and moods.

Variable sensitivity, new thoughts and feelings - alone and in combination with new behaviours / experiences (e.g. conflicts with parents, siblings or peers) can pose a threat to psychological health. Particularly strong factor, which often depends on the psychological condition and emotions of a young person, are relationships with peers. Sometimes, he takes risky behaviours to attract attention and gain approval from his colleagues. Such situations can lead to numerous adverse consequences also for psychological health. Therefore, young people both in childhood and adolescence (13-18 years old) need support (Pro-MenPol, 2009).

The school is one of the key habitats that can stimulate the positive development of a young person and respond to his psychological health problems. A positive school climate improves mood, feelings of happiness, a sense of belonging, the young person's ability to cope with changes, challenges and stress. In addition, educational challenges and an appropriate level of school achievement strengthen the student's self-esteem and confidence. A positive school climate is associated with a reduced risk of such potential negative school situations, such as bullying, harassment and truancy. In addition, it reduces the whole range of negative feelings such as fear, anxiety, depression and loss of motivation.

PHP should focus on creating and strengthening the factors that underlie psychological health. This applies to the formation of a sense of coherence, optimism, effective communication, mutually satisfying relationships. It is extremely important to develop and implement programs that focus on strengthening positive health and competence, rather than solely on the elimination / reduction of psychological illness / problems. This approach helps counteract the phenomenon of labelling (i.e. the stigma associated with participation in intervention on psychological illness) and promotes the idea of positive psychological health in a more productive way. Students must have the confidence that the school is a safe place that cares for them, where their needs for support, experience of respect and friendship are met, and where they can get help in a crisis situation to solve problems. In such a situation, students develop a sense of belonging to school, it is perceived as a safe place and one in which support can be obtained. Important factors to promote a positive psychosocial climate at school are outlined below:

- Cooperation and active learning
- Support atmosphere
- Prohibition of physical aggression
- Zero tolerance principle for persecution and discrimination
- Supporting and appreciating creativity
- Integrating school and home life by involving parents
- Promoting participation in decision making / equal access to decision making

## 2.2 Ethical issues in PHP

Ethical principles (even those related to the protection of personal data) vary from country to country. It is therefore important that PHP implementers recognize the specifics of this type of solution in their country. PHP at school means working with minors. Therefore, for some projects, PHP implementers may need the consent of students' parents / guardians. This requires providing them with full information on the objectives, methods, anticipated benefits, potential limitations and all costs (understood in a broad sense, e.g. time spent) that are



associated with participation in a given program. If any problems occur during the implementation phase, all parties involved must be informed efficiently / quickly. Students must have the right to refuse participation as well as the option of withdrawing from the program they have joined. All personal data collected in the program should be kept confidential. Remember to store / store them securely.

It is extremely important that people working with children in the psychological health promotion program have adequate preparation for this (so that they can, among others, face and solve identified problems, properly motivate to act, create positive, supporting relationships), and if necessary count on professional support. Staff training should be documented and supplemented on a regular basis. In the event of ethical problems, staff should be given the opportunity to consult with relevant professionals.

# 3 Shaping the right climate at school

Schools that are successful in PHP promote positive relationships between students and between students and school staff. They awaken in their community a sense of community, identification and belonging to school. In addition, they shape the climate in which the school community can safely discuss psychological health problems, where individual members are not stigmatized.

Creating the right climate at school requires:

- building relationships in which people care about others (i.e. offer support, listen, guarantee a sense of trust)
- formulating ambitious, but achievable expectations, goals of action
- ensuring participation (i.e. appropriate segregation of duties, building a sense of community in action)

# 3.1 Identifying the needs of the school community

Analysis of the needs in the field of psychological health at school is used to collect information that allows to understand if and what type of intervention is needed and what resources the school needs and which is available to implement such an undertaking.

The methods by which this information is collected differ, among others depending on the target group (younger children, teenage students, parents or teachers).

One or more of the following sample methods can be used in the needs analysis:

- face-to-face interviews with students, parents or school staff,
- telephone interviews conducted e.g. by members of the PHP program team,
- direct interviews conducted by students with their parents / guardians, e.g. as part of homework,
- collecting data on the basis of printed questionnaires, e.g. in a school newspaper.
- the advantage of direct methods especially is that they favour establishing relationships and building trust around the subject of PHP among potential contractors and addressees of such pro-health ventures.

The needs analysis must be organized to collect the most necessary, practical and true information. It is helpful to collect data on a cyclical basis, e.g. in an annual system, which allows you to observe trends over time. During the diagnostic phase it is worth (MindMatters, 2010):

- look at the strengths and weaknesses of the school climate, the actions taken there, the solutions used, the prevailing principles, etc.;
- involve the widest possible group of key partners of the school environment (i.e. teachers, parents, students) to identify the essence of the problem, needs, possibilities and resources;
- involve the entire PHP team and representatives of potential recipients of such activities in the development of diagnostic tools (e.g. surveys, interview questionnaires, focus group interview scenarios);
- carry out a pilot of the built tools to check whether they are accepted, understandable, practical, are used to collect actually the data for which they were built;
- train people responsible for collecting data (if needed);
- ensure the anonymity and confidentiality of information collected,



- analyse the information gathered, summarize it and present the results of this work to all interested groups.

If the team of PHP implementers decides to act holistically, i.e. adopt the Whole School Approach, then the diagnostic phase should relate to the areas indicated below (MindMatters, 2010).

- School policies and activities in the area of health
- Curricula
- School organization, ethos and environment
- Cooperation, relationships with key partners (including parents or healthcare professionals)

A condition of success: a good plan for the PHP program

After a well-conducted diagnostic phase, the next three steps are the development of the PHP program plan, its implementation and evaluation.

## 3.2 Preparation of the PHP program plan

A detailed plan will help in the proper, professional course of the program. In addition, it will ensure that the various actors involved have a shared understanding of what will happen, awareness of their roles and responsibilities under the program, and insight into existing resources.

The development of a good PHP program plan requires, among others determination on the basis of data obtained in the diagnostic phase of achievable, measurable and understandable goals (with the possibility of dividing long-term goals into several with a shorter deadline), assigning tasks and methods of action to them.

In detail, it is about:

- clarification of the target group (s);
- determination of expected benefits;
- formulation of long- and short-term goals;
- assigning objectives to activities that will serve their achievement;
- establishing methods / tools for the implementation of individual tasks;
- determining success rates.

When planning goals, tasks and methods of their implementation, one should always remember about the target group. They must be adapted to its needs and capabilities. At the stage of building a plan, it is worth thinking about how you can involve her in individual activities, as well as try to anticipate all potential barriers in reaching her.

At the stage of developing methods for implementing individual activities, the correct selection of PHP tools is extremely important. Program organizers should ensure a high standard of such tools and be sure that they are used appropriately (if necessary, training of persons using them and / or use the experience, opinions of professionals who have previously used them).

Good program management also means making the plan more precise. It involves, among others on:

- determining and assigning resources (including financial) necessary to undertake the planned activities;
- selecting persons responsible for the implementation of individual tasks;
- developing a schedule of activities.

As for resources, it is worth trying to make the most of the existing ones (this allows you to reduce costs and place the program in the school environment as much as possible).

It is worth that individual activities of this stage of the PHP program and its effects are properly documented. At the end it is worth communicating its results to all interested entities.

#### 3.3 Implementation of the PHP program plan

At this stage, it is particularly recommended:

- first ensure that all necessary resources are available in sufficient quantity;



- conduct a meeting of those involved in implementing the plan to ensure that everything is well organized and everyone is aware of their role in the whole undertaking;
- ensure appropriate marketing of the program among the target group (s);
- create a friendly atmosphere at school around the program;
- implement individual actions according to plan.

## 3.4 Evaluation

One of its elements is process monitoring, i.e. the evaluation of the program. It consists in verifying by the program implementers during the implementation that the activities are being carried out according to the schedule, if not why, whether they are pursuing the objectives of the program, as well as what they think about the project of its contractor and recipient. This form of evaluation should be prepared in parallel with the construction of the PHP program plan and adapted to it, it requires the development of quantitative and qualitative monitoring indicators. The conclusions of this form of evaluation should be developed, discussed and used by program implementers on an ongoing basis to introduce the necessary

changes in the implemented undertaking.

The second form of evaluation is verification of the effects (results) after the program is completed. Her task is to answer the question "Were the activities successful?" More specifically, it is about verifying, for example, whether a selected goal has been achieved, planned activities have been carried out, as well as analyzing the effects and costs incurred to achieve these effects.

PHP programs in schools are most often successful if they involve the entire school community and partners outside the institution, relate to changes in the school's culture and its material environment, involve the acquisition / improvement of knowledge and specific skills in a given field by their participants, last one school year or longer. A school promoting psychological health should implement programs to support both students and staff.

# 4 Implementing initiatives in the field of psychological health promotion

#### 4.1 Individual and organizational influences

Psychological health promotion can be understood as an innovative process in which individuals are encouraged to make healthy choices. In this process, the school environment is organized to support and promote psychological health. This process goes beyond shaping healthy beliefs or expanding students' knowledge of psychological health issues.

Psychological health promotion initiatives change the structure and dynamics of school life. This process is an intervention in the social system - new roles and structures are created that help shape the values, norms and beliefs that promote psychological health. Usually, the changes also include the sphere of school management so that psychological health promotion and appropriate procedures can be included in the decision-making system (Commins, Elias, 1991; Grossmann, Scalla, 1993). It also means a change in the relationship between students, school staff and parents, both at the individual and group level.

This means that the quality of psychological health promotion depends mainly on organizational factors and also the competences of those who implement such activities. In fact, these two factors translate into effective implementation of health promotion activities. Therefore, it is so that even well-prepared staff to carry out health promotion will not be successful if they work in a facility that organisationally supports its activities. In the opposite situation - if there is no prepared staff in the supporting organization - also health promotion activities will not be successful.

Each school psachological health promotion program has three phases (Commins, Elias, 1991):

Adaptation - when a school organization learns to innovate Implementation - when the process is tried and tested Institutionalization - when the process becomes standard practice



All these phases indicate the importance of organizational influence and translate into the pace and quality of psychological health promotion processes. The key issue here is the distribution of duties among employees already employed at the school. The selection of team members to implement the program should be based on commitment to psychological health promotion and the ability to implement such programs. It is important to appoint the right leader who will be responsible for project planning, implementation and evaluation. Mechanical or informal implementation of health promotion programs can have a negative effect and cause psychological health issues to be marginalized. Therefore, it is not worth pursuing this approach unless it is inevitable.

A good example of psychological health promotion at school is the ZERO program prepared by the Behavioral Research Center of the University of Stavanger (Norway). This program is a comprehensive solution aimed at reducing peer aggression at school. Unlike many other student-oriented individuals (Smith, Pepler, Rugby, 2004), this program extends its impact to the entire school organization. This approach emphasizes the shared commitment of school leaders, staff of parents and students themselves, and not just young people directly involved in bullying (Roland, 1999).

#### 4.2 Identifying the needs in psychological health promotion

The project team must identify the needs of recipients (e.g. teenagers) in the field of psychological health promotion (Patron et al., 1999). To do this, it is possible to use traditional research methods, e.g. questionnaire surveys among teachers, pupils or their parents. It should be clearly emphasized that it is not enough to examine the needs of students and to ignore the needs of teachers or parents in the area of health promotion. These groups have an impact on the factors affecting the psychological health of students and their positive role is also conditioned by their own well-being and psychological health. It is worth undertaking a diagnosis of needs, because as many as 12% of all children experience psychological health problems and 20-30% may exhibit behavioural disorders that in half of this group meet clinical criteria (Finney, 2006). Unfortunately, it is often pointed out that the offer in the field of supporting the psychological health of young people is much narrower than the needs (Paternite, Johnson, 2005).

These aspects are discussed in more detail in chapter 1.5. It is also extremely important not to use only one method to assess needs, e.g. a survey. It is also worth remembering that all the methods of collecting data have their pros and cons. Awareness of such restrictions will help to avoid a misdiagnosis of needs, which usually leads to failure in the implemented program.

It should also be mentioned that the needs do not have to relate only to the topic or content of the program. You should also analyse the ways in which the program is implemented, e.g. preferences regarding educational methods.

Negligence in the scope of needs analysis may lead to the fact that the program will be implemented in accordance with the deep belief and good will of contractors and at the same time will not meet the needs of recipients.

#### 4.3 Support for psychological health promotion activities

Psychological health promotion requires appropriate competence and training in some cases.

For example, such a need will arise for programs that cover specific problems such as eating disorders or violence at school. That means in some cases. Seeking the support of students' parents or guardians is obvious - they should always be aware of the goals and practical solutions in the field of psychological health promotion at school.

Higher education institutions can also provide support - both at the planning and implementation stages of the programs (Pyżalski, Roland, 2011). A good example of such collaboration is the Zero program of the University of Stavanger, mentioned earlier. In this program, schools try to solve the problem of peer violence and abnormal peer relationships. Before starting these activities, university lecturers run a series of workshops during which school employees acquire the competences necessary for the comprehensive implementation of the program at school. Then the program

the one (containing both preventive and intervention elements) is implemented. During the entire program, the teachers implementing it constantly evaluate the effects and the whole process, and cooperate with each other and with the parents of the students. It should be emphasized, however, that the entire program is geared to supporting the competences of school staff, rather than carrying out activities for students. Teachers can,



however, always benefit from counselling whenever problems arise related to program implementation. Sometimes support can be provided by private entities dealing with health promotion or public health - here also, in the case of grants implemented by these institutions, their services are free for schools.

In some cases, staff have limited knowledge of specific problems (e.g. cyberbullying or program implementation methodologies (e.g. evaluation). In such situations, it is worth using the help of other entities. There are many institutions that have such support for schools inscribed in their activities In any situation, it is important that team members know why external support is used and how they are to cooperate with representatives of external organizations. On the other hand, those who provide external support must know psychological. Supporting institutions can be centres for health promotion, medical, consulting, etc. In some cases support may be provided not by institutional entities, but by individual professionals working in the areas outlined above.

#### 4.4 Dissemination of the idea of psychological health promotion

When we deal with the communication and dissemination of the idea of psychological health promotion, we usually refer to several different contexts at the same time - depending on the characteristics of the group of people that we want to involve. This process is crucial, because even the best planned program will not be effective if it is not understood and accepted by key groups (students, parents and teachers).

It is very important to get the students and their parents involved. At the same time, when engaging students, it should be remembered that the subject of psychological health usually concerns very delicate matters - that is why it is important to build an atmosphere of trust.

Young people, especially during adolescence, want to be heard. This means that one-way communication will not work when young people are simply informed about "important problems". It is very important for young people to know that participation in a psychological health promotion program has many benefits. These benefits must be adapted to the development period in which young people find themselves. As many people use new technologies for communication (e.g. the Internet), it is important that this channel is also included in the communication. What's more, the new media enables not only two-sided, but also multi-sided (network) communication, which, as indicated earlier, meets the needs of young people.

On the other hand, it is worth remembering during the program about messages addressed to adults (parents and teachers). One way to promote psychological health is to highlight its relationship with school success - as psychological and behavioural disorders pose a serious barrier to effective learning (Paternite and Johnston, 2004). Assuming that school success is important for both parents and teachers - this aspect should be particularly emphasized in psychological health promotion programs. Psychological health promotion programs also translate into better professional fulfilment of teachers' roles and help build positive relationships with students.

To sum up - the entire communication process in psychological health promotion projects must be structured in such a way that the messages are tailored to the needs of the recipients they are targeted at.

#### 4.5 Individual and social skills

Literature emphasizes the importance of appreciating all members of the work health promotion team (Paternite and Johnston, 2004). Unfortunately, this approach is difficult to accept for many psychological health professionals as their education promoted a rather hierarchical approach pointing to the expert-professional model (Paternite and Johnston, 2004). This is often a real problem regarding cooperation between an external specialist and teachers from a particular institution. Therefore, communication between professionals working in one team seems to be the basic factor of success.

What's more, good interpersonal and social skills are crucial for conducting effective activities in the area of promoting psychological health of adolescents. This is important in the context of attachment theory (Bowlby), which is often used. Additionally, good interpersonal skills are an essential condition for effective promotion of psychological health of adolescents.

This means that no good psychological health promotion program can succeed without good interpersonal relationships with students. In fact, the positive relationships themselves support psychological health.

To change the social environment in a way that is healthy for young people, it's worth taking care of your own psychological health. Someone who experiences severe occupational stress cannot effectively support the psychological health of others, and may even sometimes have a negative impact. The latest research of Polish



teachers (N = 1214) showed that teachers strongly experiencing burnout tended to be more directive and less supportive of communication with their students (Pyżalski, Merecz, 2010). Therefore, it seems that the ability to cope with professional stress is one of the key competences of people implementing psychological health promotion programs.

In general, the personal and social competences of a person implementing health promotion programs are the same competencies that a good teacher must have.

All the issues mentioned above are particularly important for the project leader - as the person who plays the key role. It essentially requires two areas of competence. First of all, he must have knowledge about the promotion of psychological health in the formulation of the program objectives, its structure and correct methodology for running the program, including in the field of evaluation. Secondly, such a person must have social and organizational skills that will allow him to "advertise" the program, arouse and maintain the interest of participants and performers, resolve conflicts and plan tasks so that the resources planned for them are enough.

# 4.6 Training in the promotion of psychological health

It is widely accepted that the average teacher has too little knowledge to be an educator in the field of psychological health (Finney, 2006, p. 22).

Appropriate training in this area should cover the following issues:

- Developing knowledge about the development of young people
- Communicating with children and young people
- Diagnostic skills in the field of psychological health problems
- Dealing with "difficult" children
- Building high self-esteem in children
- Risk reduction and strengthening of immunity (Finney, 2006)

The key stage in creating a psychological health promotion program is to prepare the members of the implementation team to carry out their tasks. Such training should include aspects such as knowledge of the concept, principles and phases of the psychological health promotion program, applicable strategies and tools, and measurement of its effects. Such training should be associated with the first phase of the program, i.e. Analysis of needs and building a program implementation plan (Korzeniowska, 1999). Depending on the topic of the program, further training should include other more specific issues.

One of the recommended ways is to organize training so that team members can learn from themselves within their competence.

In order for the training to be effective, it is always worth asking the following questions:

- To what extent have the defined training objectives been achieved?
- Have the learners achieved their goals and to what extent?
- To what extent will the acquired knowledge prove beneficial for the whole school, in particular as regards the implementation of the health promotion program?
- Will the learners be able to put the new knowledge into practice?

In general - satisfaction with the training has a strong impact on the quality of implementation of the psychological health promotion program.

## 4.7 Evaluation of effects and continuous improvement of the program

The easiest way is to observe the activities of people implementing the program and use the results of observations to modify it. For example, it may turn out that some of the previously planned educational methods are ineffective. To introduce such an approach, from the very beginning, a critical approach should be encouraged to all those involved in the program, indicating that such an approach can improve the quality of the program.



Of course, this will not happen without planning the time and method of collecting and analysing such opinions.

It is worth acting in the way outlined here, because it causes that any wrong solutions are quickly modified. Participants in the project also feel that this project is "their property" and not an external initiative.

# 5 Roles in psychological health promotion programs

## 5.1 The health promotion program is an interdisciplinary undertaking

Practice shows that creating a new structure within the organization of the school works best. An element of such action is the creation of a team that will get the name and functioning principles. The team's goal is to implement the program at school. This team must have clear relationships with other organizational structures within the school. In Polish conditions, the situation works best when the head of the team is the school head. This gives the program prestige and makes it easier to meet the formal requirements of the program.

The composition of the team is key to its effectiveness. There are various criteria to consider here.

First of all, the ideal size of the team is 4-9 people (a three-person team often acts in a "confrontational" way and in groups larger than 9 people it is difficult to get the constant involvement of all members) (Doliński, 2004).

The second important aspect is the involvement of all those people and school structures that deal with student health. The potential list includes teachers, educators, psychologists, medical staff, etc. The ideal situation is when the team includes not only those who formally deal with students' health, but also those who have the appropriate competencies to act as a member of such a team.

It is also important to involve people capable of cooperating in a team who are able to work creatively on solutions, skilfully solve conflicts, etc.

Team involvement is very important, especially for programs for adolescents. You can also include people from outside the institution - they usually play the role of experts or performers of specific tasks in the implementation of the program.

## 5.2 Key roles in the psychological health program

Typical roles assumed by team members go hand in hand with tasks that must be accomplished under the program. The table below presents typical roles with descriptions.

e .	
Expert	A person who has technical knowledge how to
	implement a health promotion program. Her role is
	to advise on planning and improving the program
Decision maker	A person who formally makes key decisions as to the
	scope and timing of implementation of individual
	elements of the program. Her presence in the team
	means that the time between the decision and its
	implementation does not extend
Implementer	A person who directly carries out program tasks, e.g.
	an educator.
Person initiating the program	A person whose tasks involve planning and initiating
	the program.
The person responsible for marketing the program	A person who encourages others to participate in or
	support the program. Its task is to communicate with
	recipients and other people, e.g. parents of students
	and contact with the media. Her work requires
	external contacts with both media representatives
	and other institutions that can support the program.
Evaluator	The person responsible for evaluating the effects and
	course of the program.



Table 2: Roles performed by team members implementing the psychological health promotion program

There are no clear guidelines as to who should perform specific roles - it may depend on the legislation in individual countries, experience and organization of a particular institution or the needs of a given program. Some of the roles listed in each country may have different names or be combined. It should be remembered that excessive fragmentation of roles and their formalization can have a negative impact on the quality of team work. The deciding person, as mentioned earlier, is usually the school head who is responsible for most of the formal decisions in the institution. In turn, the role of an expert is assumed by a public health specialist / health promoter or educator - not necessarily with typically medical education. It can be, for example, a specialist in sexual disorders, a psychiatrist, a policeman, etc. In some cases, a school psychologist or teacher has appropriate qualifications in this regard.

## 5.3 Specific knowledge and skills

The knowledge and skills of team members are complementary. At the same time, there is an area of knowledge that all team members must have, regardless of the role they play.

- Psychological health promotion concepts
- The nature of psychological health and psychological illness
- Benefits of promoting psychological health
- Methodology for implementing health promotion
- Legal and ethical aspects of psychological health promotion
- Positive psychological health

These six aspects are the basis for the proper functioning of team members - they must of course be extended to specific knowledge related to specific topics of the program.

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