

Health Education expectations: secondary

Mental wellbeing

- How to talk about their emotions accurately and sensitively, using appropriate vocabulary
- That happiness is linked to being connected to others
- How to recognise the early signs of mental wellbeing concerns
- Common types of mental ill health (e.g. anxiety and depression)
- How to critically evaluate when something they do or are involved in has a positive or negative effect on their own or others' mental health
- The benefits and importance of physical exercise, time outdoors, community participation and voluntary and service-based activities on mental wellbeing and happiness

Internet safety and harms

- The similarities and differences between the online world and the physical world, including: the impact of unhealthy or obsessive comparison with others online (including through setting unrealistic expectations for body image or how people may curate a specific image of their life online); over-reliance on online relationships including social media; the risks related to online gambling including the accumulation of debt; how advertising and information is targeted at them; and how to be a discerning consumer of information online
- How to identify harmful behaviours online (including bullying, abuse or harassment) and how to report, or find support, if they have been affected by those behaviours

Physical health and fitness

- The positive associations between physical activity and promotion of mental wellbeing, including as an approach to combat stress
- The characteristics and evidence of what constitutes a healthy lifestyle and maintaining a healthy weight (including the links between an inactive lifestyle and ill health, such as cancer and cardiovascular ill health)
- About the science relating to blood, organ and stem cell donation

Healthy eating

- How to maintain healthy eating and the links between a poor diet and health risks, including tooth decay and cancer

Drugs, alcohol and tobacco

- The facts about legal and illegal drugs and their associated risks, including the link to serious mental health conditions
- The law relating to the supply and possession of illegal substances
- The physical and psychological risks associated with alcohol consumption and what constitutes low risk alcohol consumption in adulthood
- The physical and psychological consequences of addiction, including alcohol dependency
- Awareness of the dangers of drugs which are prescribed but still present serious health risks
- The facts about the harms from smoking tobacco (particularly the risk to lung cancer), the benefits of quitting and how to access support to do so

Health and prevention

- About personal hygiene, germs (including bacteria and viruses), how they are spread, treatment and prevention of infection, and about antibiotics
- About dental health and the benefits of good oral hygiene and dental flossing, including healthy eating and regular check-ups at the dentist
- In late secondary, the benefits of regular self-examination and screening
- The facts and science relating to immunisation and vaccination
- The importance of sufficient good quality sleep for good health and how a lack of sleep can affect weight, mood and ability to learn

Basic first aid

- Basic treatment for common injuries
- Life-saving skills, including how to administer CPR (best taught after 12 years old)
- The purpose of defibrillators and when one might be needed

Changing adolescent bodies

- Key facts about puberty, the changing adolescent body and menstrual wellbeing
- The main changes which take place in males and females, and the implications for emotional and physical health

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