



ProWell

**Protecting the mental wellbeing of our children
during and after public health emergencies**

May 2022

An Ecosystem Mapping and Methodological Framework: Mental health of children and young adults in public health emergencies - Results of Intellectual Outcome 1

Research findings of the ProWell project revealed that teachers in the EU are not adequately trained to support children's mental health during public health emergencies like the Covid-19 pandemic. Teachers reported that they need mental health training programmes that will help them: identify mental health symptoms in children, recognise signs of abuse, acknowledge common mental health problems during emergencies (like depression and anxiety), learn how to build communication skills, receive practical guidance on how to support children and adolescents in emergencies and promote their wellbeing using digital tools.

In the first 10 months of the project implementation (01.03.2021 – 31.10.2021), the project consortium achieved (i) a mapping of the existing training opportunities for teachers, (ii) a desk-based literature review and (iii) focus groups with teachers and other educators in all partner countries to identify teachers' needs on mental health education. Although the mapping revealed 174 mental health training programs implemented in Europe, teachers reported that they are not sufficiently trained to support children and adolescents during public health emergencies. Results from 14 focus groups the project conducted with teachers and other educators in 7 countries (France, Germany, Italy, Spain, Croatia, Greece and Cyprus) showed that the Covid-19 pandemic has caused significant mental health challenges among students and teachers need specialised training to acknowledge at risk students, learn how best to support them and understand when to refer them to specialised services. Completing this milestone is an important achievement for the consortium as it will guide the next steps and help us complete the project objectives. The ProWell project will develop an innovative digital training guide, tailor made to teachers' needs, that will be publicly available and will help them increase their knowledge, skills and competencies in promoting mental health of students during public health emergencies.

Pro-WELL training curriculum and content

Intellectual Output 2 involves the creation, development and evaluation of a curriculum package. This includes various learning modules as well as working materials and tools. These are primarily used to train teachers and other educators, such as sports coaches, recreational group leaders, child care workers and kindergarten teachers. The content of each learning module is based on the results of Intellectual Output 1. Before we started developing the curriculum, a methodology was created as a guide. This was especially important to ensure the quality of the joint work of the consortium.

This methodology describes the core elements of the curriculum and outlines the methods and processes used. The subsequent curriculum package will include the training manual as well as case studies, exercises, a glossary, and reading materials on each topic. The ultimate goal of the training developed is to provide teachers and other educators with the opportunity to train and build digital literacy skills on issues related to supporting children's mental health during public health emergencies.

All partners began working on IO2 as early as last November. The first task was to develop a draft methodological framework for the training curriculum. Subsequently, the development of the content of the individual modules began. By the end of June 2022, all modules should be available in the final version.

Figure 1 shows the planned modules and the partners responsible for each.

Module 1 Promoting communication skills between teachers and students/parents (OSENGO, France)	Module 2 Recognizing mental health difficulties of children and adolescents relevant to health emergencies and crisis situations (Ivo Pilar, Croatia - Polibienestar, Spain)	Module 3 Preventing and Coping with mental health difficulties of children/adolescents relevant to health emergency crisis (Tages Onlus, Italy – TU Dresden, Germany)	Module 4 Learning how to organize and implement mental health interventions at the school setting (Prolepsis, Greece – Tages Onlus, Italy)	Module 5 Promoting teachers' mental health and well-being (Polibienestar, Spain – TU Dresden, Germany)	Module 6 Digital literacy and the effect media had on mental health created by health emergency crisis (CSI, Cyprus – TU Dresden, Germany)	Module 7 General concepts of referral for mental health issues – including country specific information's (TU Dresden, Germany)
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Fig. 1 Planned training modules of ProWell's e-learning platform.

The expected impact of this output includes capacity and skill building and knowledge transfer to support children during and after health emergencies. The output of IO2 is a comprehensive, peer-reviewed training program that is available in a form suitable for further use. The modules are developed, evaluated, and peer-reviewed by a geographically diverse consortium, making them easily transferable to different contexts and EU countries and targeting a wide range of professionals and organizations - public or civil society - working in the field. The innovation and added value of the curriculum developed for the project is that it provides much-needed scientific knowledge on as the impact of public health emergencies on children's mental health. Additionally, also it provides the target audience modules and information to enhance their digital skills as the modules are delivered remotely and through electronic means.

2nd partners meeting

The second partners meeting took place on the 15th and 16th of November 2021, with the main goal to discuss and agree on the content and methodology of the training curriculum based on the presentation of the findings of the research activities conducted in Intellectual Output 1. During the meeting, the specific contents for each training module were comprehensively discussed.

Also, further development of specific modules was assigned to one or more partners based on their expertise. It should be mentioned that this meeting was planned to take place in Athens, Greece, under the leadership of Prolepsis. Based on an initial review of the situation in partner countries, the restrictions in regard to the pandemic and the internal regulations of partners organisation regarding travelling, it was decided to transform it to a virtual event. Thus, it took place online, under the organisation of Prolepsis Institute. Partners presented and discussed all items on the agenda, giving special emphasis on the decisions regarding the Modules to be developed as part of the ProWell.

Training and upon conclusion were satisfied with the discussions and decisions reached.

THE PARTNERSHIP

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