

**ACCESSIBLE REPORT OF  
THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION  
GUIDELINES ON:**



**WELLBEING AND  
MENTAL HEALTH  
AT SCHOOL**

INCLUDING SOME TIPS TO  
HELP YOU TAKE ACTION

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# FOREWORD

Imagine a world where no one struggles with mental health. Sadly, that's not the reality today.

Have you ever had a difficult time with your mental health? In Europe, 13% of children face mental health problems. That's such a big number! It shows how hard mental health can be and why it's so important to talk about it, especially in school, where many children say school pressure affects their wellbeing.

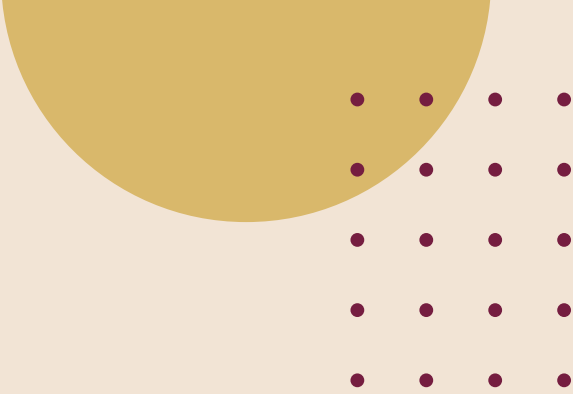
That's why we created this child-friendly document, to help make mental health at school better for everyone. We hope this document inspires and encourages you to take action on improving children's mental health.

Maybe you're wondering who we are? We are the [Eurochild Children's Council \(ECC\)](#), a group of 12 children from all across Europe. We wrote this report **from children, to children, and for children**. But we didn't do it alone! We also involved other children - children participating in the [National Eurochild Forums](#) and the [EU Children's Participation Platform](#) - to make sure this report includes many voices.

We worked hard to make it clear and accessible and now, it's your turn to read it. We hope you enjoy it!



Eurochild Children's Council and Eurochild supporting staff together in Brussels



# INTRODUCTION

For a long time, schools have mostly focused on subjects like maths, reading, and science. But school is more than just learning facts. It's also where children grow, make friends, learn about themselves, and become part of a community.

Wellbeing means feeling safe, cared for, and supported every day. In schools, wellbeing should be just as important as getting good grades. Good schools welcome everyone, respect differences, and help people live peacefully together. When students feel well, they learn better, not just in class, but in life.

Sadly, many children and teenagers in Europe feel more anxious, stressed, or left out at school. Things like bullying, school pressure, or worries about the way they look can affect their wellbeing, and social media often makes it harder.

That's why schools need to care for students' wellbeing in everything they do. This means working with students, teachers, families, and the wider community to create a safe, supportive place for everyone.

In this document, you can find 10 actions you can take to improve mental health and wellbeing at school. By taking action, you can make your school a healthier and happier place for all. At the end, you will also find ideas from around 200 children we consulted, sharing what they want decision-makers to do to make schools better for their mental health and wellbeing.








# ACTION 1:

## Help create a positive school climate where everyone feels safe respected and included

A positive school climate means that everyone feels safe, respected, and included. It helps students learn better, feel happier, and enjoy school more. When adults and students in school are fair and supportive, it helps all children grow and do their best.

### What can you do?

-  Be respectful and kind to everyone. No bullying or violence should be allowed in school;
-  Check on classmates to see how they feel and make sure everyone is comfortable speaking up if they have a problem;
-  Ask trusted adults (like teachers, mentors, or parents) for help when needed;
-  A positive and respectful school environment is a right. Ask for it to be respected;
-  Create or join a student council, where you can:
  - ➔ Ask for positive changes in the school;
  - ➔ Ask the school to offer mental health and wellbeing classes;
  - ➔ Ask for a school psychologist to help those who need support.



**Indicator of  
success**



**At school, students are listened to, wellbeing is part of lessons, there is no violence or bullying, and someone is there to support mental health and wellbeing.**

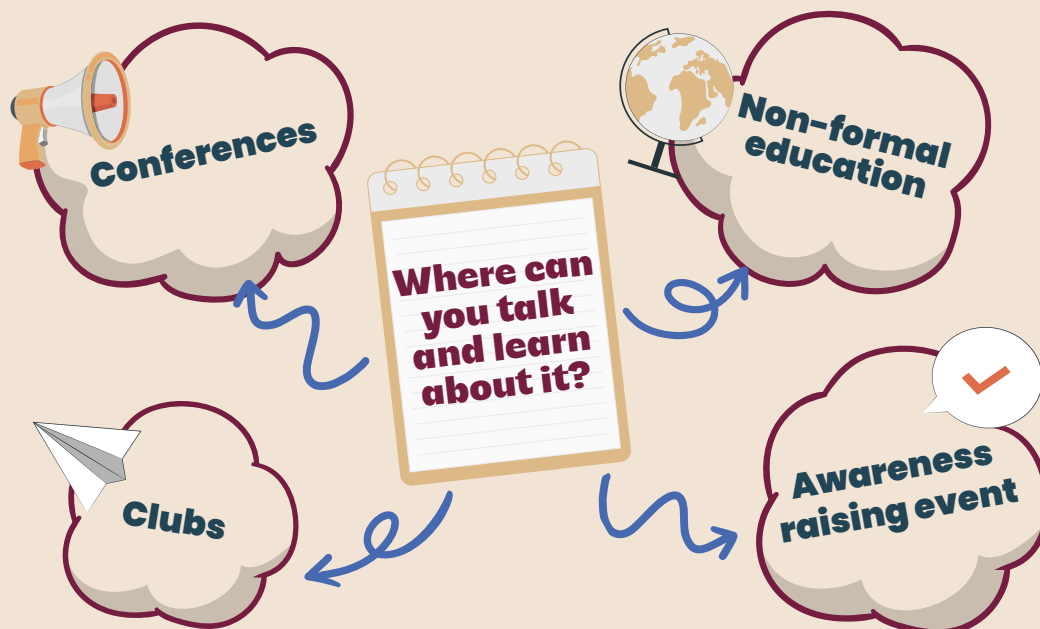
## ACTION 2:

### Ask schools to teach about emotions, relationship and wellbeing from the start of the school system

Social and emotional learning should be a priority in education. Research shows that when students have strong social and emotional skills they do better in school. That's why schools should teach not only academic subjects, but also life skills that help you grow as a person.

#### What can you do?

-  Encourage classmates or student councils to organize mental health days, wellbeing clubs, or awareness raising events about emotions;
-  If you notice that at school, there isn't enough social and emotional learning, like managing feelings and building friendships:
  - Remind teachers or school leaders why it is important;
  - Talk about it with friends or student councils;
  - Suggest to include social and emotional learning in everyday lessons.



**Indicator of success**




At school, social and emotional learning is part of lessons or activities, and students feel supported in their wellbeing.

# ACTION 3:

## Help create partnerships between schools, communities, and institutions to support students' wellbeing

Schools should not only teach subjects, but also offer fun activities to support students to feel safe, healthy, and happy. To do this, schools should work together with communities and institutions (like sport clubs, cultural clubs, etc.), and make sure students know about the fun activities available.

### What can you do?

-  Ask schools to offer fun activities that help everyone feel good and included (like games, art, music, or sports clubs);
-  Suggest creating a council where students, schools, communities and institutions work together to plan those fun activities. This way, you can be part of the decisions too!
-  Encourage schools to involve families in school life and activities. When families join in, it helps everyone understand and support each other better – both in school and at home.



**Indicator of success**





**The school works closely with students, families, communities and institutions. Students know what activities are available and help create them too.**

# ACTION 4:

## Support teacher's mental health and wellbeing

Teachers' mental health and wellbeing matter too! If teachers feel good and supported, they can do their job better and this means a better school experience for everyone. Sadly, teachers can also feel stressed, disrespected, or even bullied, which can affect their motivation and the way they teach. Teachers with poor wellbeing are more likely to quit their job.

### What can you do?

-  Organise activities with teachers to connect with them;
-  Respect teachers' mental health and wellbeing;
-  Understand that teachers have feelings and can also deal with mental health issues;
-  Don't make fun of teachers for their words, actions or how they look.



**Indicator of success**





At school, students respect teachers and everyone works together to build a kind, respectful learning space.

# ACTION 5:

## Work with school leaders to make school more inclusive, supportive and focused on wellbeing

School leaders play a big role in creating a positive school environment. When they care about everyone's wellbeing, the school becomes a better place to learn and grow; for both students and staff. A good school leader makes sure students and teachers feel safe, supported, and listened to. They help create opportunities to learn, grow, and feel part of the school community.

### What can you do?

-  Create or join a student council that shares ideas to make school a better place for everyone;
-  Organise regular meetings between the student council and school leaders to discuss ideas and ensure that all students are informed about what has been discussed;
-  Create a yearly plan of things that the student council wants to do in school and review the plan every year to see what was achieved or not;
-  Make sure all students can suggest ideas to improve school life (via suggestion box, online form, etc.).



**Indicator of success**







**School leaders listen to students' voices, support their ideas, and work with them and staff to make school a safe, caring, and inclusive place.**

# ACTION 6:

## Make school safe from all forms of violence

Even though all children have rights and there are rules to protect them, many still face violence at school. Some children like those with disabilities, migrants, or from minority groups are more at risk. This can affect students and teachers' wellbeing in the school. Violence can happen in different ways, but it can also be prevented. Everyone in schools should work to make sure everyone feels safe and treated with respect.

### What can you do?

-  Understand what violence is and the different forms it takes;
-  Learn how to properly deal with violence;
-  Don't be afraid and speak up if you see it happening;
-  Talk to someone that can help, like teachers or psychologists;
-  Create safe spaces in school to speak up (like the principal office, consultation box);
-  Ask student councils to help raise awareness and prevent violence.

# STOP BULLYING



**Indicator of  
success**





**At school, everyone feels safe and protected,  
and students know who to talk to if something  
happens.**

# ACTION 7:

## Learn how to be online in a safe and healthy way

The online world is a big part of students' lives, especially at school. It can help them learn, stay connected, and be creative. But spending too much time online can also affect students' wellbeing, like how they feel in their body, mind, and relationships with others. That's why it's important to understand both the good and bad sides of being online, and how to use it in a safe and healthy way.

### What can you do?

-  Organise workshops at school about staying safe and healthy online;
-  Take breaks from screens and enjoy real-life activities;
-  Use the online world to learn new things, not just for fun;
-  Join activities that promote wellbeing offline and show healthy screen habits.



**Indicator of  
success**





**Students feel safe and healthy online and know when it's time to disconnect.**

# ACTION 8:

## Ask for more time to rest, play, move and be creative

Every child has the right to rest, play, have fun, and enjoy arts and culture. These activities are not only fun but also help students grow, learn new things, and feel good both physically and mentally. Wellbeing also includes being active, getting enough sleep, and taking care of the body and mind.

### What can you do?

-  Ask school leaders to include time for fun and rest;
-  Ask school leaders to include time for sports and arts;
-  If you notice that at school there are no health classes, ask for them. If there are, join them;
-  Help build a cultural and artistic life at school.



**Indicator of  
success**







**Students have time and spaces to rest, play, move, and express creativity at school.**

# ACTION 9:

## Respect, include and treat everyone equally

To help everyone feel good and safe at school, students should respect each other and accept their differences. When everyone is treated equally and with respect, school is a better place for everyone's wellbeing.

### What can you do?

-  Be kind, respectful, and open to people who are different;
-  Treat everyone equally, no matter their background, identity, beliefs, or abilities;
-  Make sure no one feels left out and invite them to join games, groups, or conversations;
-  Celebrate days and events that honour different cultures and communities;
-  Take part in school clubs, activities, or campaigns that support inclusion and equality;
-  Help create a safe and welcoming space for everyone, especially students from minorities.



**Indicator of  
success**







**Everyone at school feels welcome, safe, and respected, no matter their background, identity, beliefs or abilities.**

# ACTION 10:

## Help students who struggle with mental health get help

Some students face difficult times and might struggle with their mental health. With the right help and understanding, schools can support them on an individual level as well as in groups. No one should feel alone.

### What can you do?

-  Learn more about mental health, even if you don't struggle yourself, it helps build understanding and care;
-  If there are lessons about feelings and mental health, try to learn from them. If there aren't, ask for some!
-  If there is mental health support available, use it. if there isn't, ask for it;
-  Help create safe spaces in school where students can share about how they feel;
-  Be kind and check on classmates; even a small "Are you okay?" can make a big difference;
-  If something feels difficult, talk to someone you trust like a teacher, friends, parents, school nurse, or counselor.



**Indicator of  
success**

**Students know where to get help and feel safe asking for support. Schools have trained staff and safe spaces where mental health is taken seriously and talked about openly.**

# CONCLUSION

Thank you for reading all the way to the end! Now that you know some of the things you can do to help children feel better at school, it's important to remember that adults also need to take action to improve children's mental health and wellbeing at school. For this, they have their own documents to guide them: one for [teachers](#) and one for [politicians](#). You can even share these with your school to make sure everyone knows about them.

Finally, we also asked around 200 children from the [National Eurochild Forums](#) and the [EU Children's Participation Platform](#) what they think politicians should do to help them. They shared many ideas, and while some were different, others were very similar. We grouped these ideas into **five main recommendations** to show the most important actions politicians can take to support children's mental health and wellbeing at school.

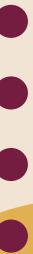
**1. Mental health and wellbeing understanding in schools:** Pay for programmes, created by mental health professionals, that teach students about mental health and emotions, and work to end the stigma around mental health.

**2. Mental health support structures:** Ensure every school has trusted counselors or psychologists, quiet spaces to rest, and safe ways for students to share worries and report abuse.

**3. Teacher training and behavior:** Make sure all teachers receive training on mental health, listening skills, and inclusive classrooms so they can recognise and support children who need help.

**4. School environment and culture:** Support schools in creating positive, welcoming spaces: pay for free extracurricular activities, involve students in school decisions, and prevent bullying, exclusion or hate.

**5. Change school curricula:** Make sure school programs teach life skills and how to manage emotions, not just grades and tests, and reduce homework and tests to help lessen the pressure children face.



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