

CONNECT

**Inclusive open schooling
with engaging and
future-oriented science**



BEST PRACTICE

Description for the website:

Title: " Participatory Research for Mental Health Promotion"

Promoting mental health in schools is an urgent necessity. Data from numerous studies confirm that there has been an increase in mental health disorders among young people. Furthermore, it is also described that there is a disconnection between the academic world and society, resulting in ignorance and distrust regarding the usefulness of science in resolving societal issues. In the case of students, there is a belief that science is not for them.

The Guidance Department of CDP Juan XXIII Chana in Granada has implemented an educational project called "Healthy Minds", within its Tutorial Action Plan, which involves participatory research with an Open Schooling approach, where the students themselves become active agents in promoting mental health. The implementation has been carried out within the framework of the European project CONNECT.

We have conducted this project with 6 class groups from 1st and 3rd year of Secondary Education (180 students and their families). Each group has worked through the sessions designed by Healthy minds, and we have implemented an action plan with various activities based on the identified mental health needs.

Firstly, we delved into the concept of health by analysing the definition proposed by the World Health Organization (WHO). Through this, we discovered that there are different types of health, not only physical but also social and mental. We analysed what they had in common and found that emotional well-being was the common term. At this point, the students identified risk and protective factors for mental health, based on which they prioritized the ones they considered most important to design and implement an action plan. Students proposed to create an "Emotional Kit" as a solution. They have suggested a set of tools to protect themselves in risky situations and promote emotional well-being. Finally, they reflected on the learning process and the impact on mental health promotion. Throughout the process, teachers and families have been involved, allowing for collaborative design of solutions.

Among the results and impact of Healthy Minds in our educational community, we can highlight a greater awareness among students of the need to focus on mental health and their ability to contribute to solving a problem that affects them through participatory research. The self-organization of students has also been promoted, and there has been a greater commitment from the school institution to improve mental health promotion. The school will start working on creating a physical space that promotes emotional well-being, which will be called the "Emotional Classroom". Additionally, the Guidance Department will design interdisciplinary activities to promote students' well-being in collaboration with the "Healthy habits and lifestyle" program already allocated at the school.





Select the most representative photo of your practice (it will be public and published under an open license to represent the practice).





| ABOUT THE CONNECT INSTITUTION that supported the school | |
|--|--|
| ORGANIZATION | IRSI (SENTINEL SCHOOLS) |
| COUNTRY | SPAIN |
| Name of the contact person | LAIA VIVES |
| Period of implementation | Start date: 1/ 03/23 Final date: 31/ 05/23 |
| ABOUT THE TEACHERS INTERVIEWED | |
| EDUCATIONAL CENTER | CDP Juan XXIII de Chana |
| TEACHERS (name and surname) (for certificates of inspiring practices) | Víctor Molinero |
| GENRE | Male |
| AREA (Science, Physics, Chemistry, Biology, ...) | Tutoring sessions |
| How many sessions have you implemented the CONNECT Education resource for? | 10 |
| Title of the educational resource used | Healthy Minds |
| Curriculum vitae | |
| ABOUT TEACHERS' STUDENTS | |
| Course | 1 st and 3 rd of ESO |
| Age | 13 and 15 |
| Total number of participating students | 180 |
| Total number of students who have completed the activities | 180 |
| SCIENTISTS INVOLVED: | |
| Name | Laia Vives and Rosina Malagrida |
| Field | Participatory Research, Mental Health |

QUESTIONNAIRE

01. How did you use the participatory research resources provided by the Living Lab for Health? Were they clear and understandable? Did you modify them to suit your class/subject/curriculum group? If so, can you briefly describe what you did in the modified sessions?

We have conducted this project with 6 class groups from 1st and 3rd year of Secondary Education (180 students and their families). Each group has worked through the sessions designed by “Healthy Minds”, and we have implemented an action plan with various activities based on the identified mental health needs. Throughout the process, teachers and families have been involved, allowing for collaborative design of solutions.

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At this point, we developed a focus group where the students identified risk and protective factors for mental health, based on which they prioritized the ones they considered most important to design and implement an action plan.





Students proposed to create an "Emotional Kit" as a solution. They have suggested a set of tools to protect themselves in risky situations and promote emotional well-being. Finally, they reflected on the learning process and the impact on mental health promotion.

02. Did the students use the resources provided in the Student Guide? Do you have a final product of the implementation (or can you describe it) of participatory research?

Yes. During the design of the action plan, they have been inspired by the activities from the repository.

Do you have any examples of what students have prepared?

Among the results and impacts of Healthy Minds in our educational community, we can highlight:

Increased awareness among the students regarding the importance of prioritizing mental health.

Promotion of students' ability to actively contribute to addressing issues that affect them through participatory research and self-organization.

Heightened commitment from the school institution to enhance mental health promotion:

The school will initiate efforts to create a dedicated physical space known as the "Emotional Classroom," designed to foster emotional well-being.

The Guidance Department will collaborate with the existing "Healthy Habits and Lifestyle" program at the school to design interdisciplinary activities aimed at promoting student well-being.

Image? Poster? Video clip?

(Add an image if possible)





Emotional Well-Being Classroom

Víctor Molinero Barranco
Departamento de Orientación, Colegio J23 – Chana, Granada, Spain



Introduction

Promoting mental health in schools is an urgent necessity. Data from numerous studies confirm that there has been an increase in mental health disorders among young people. Furthermore, it is also described that there is a disconnection between the academic world and society, resulting in ignorance and distrust regarding the usefulness of science in resolving societal issues. **In the case of students, there is a belief that science is not for them.**

The Guidance Department of CDP Juan XXIII Chana in Granada has implemented an educational project called “Healthy Minds”, within its Tutorial Action Plan, which involves **participatory research with an Open Schooling approach**, where the students themselves become active agents in promoting mental health. The implementation has been carried out within the framework of the European project CONNECT.

Objectives

- Increase awareness and consciousness regarding mental health.
- Empower students as active agents in promoting mental well-being.
- Implement an educational project for participatory research to address the challenges faced by the educational community.

Methodology

We have conducted this project with **6 class groups from 1st and 3rd year of Secondary Education (180 students and their families)**. Each group has worked through the sessions designed by “Healthy Minds”, and we have implemented an action plan with various activities based on the identified mental health needs. Throughout the process, **teachers and families have been involved**, allowing for collaborative design of solutions.

1. Care

Firstly, we delved into the **concept of health** by analysing the definition proposed by the World Health Organization (WHO). Through this, we **discovered that there are different types of health**, not only physical but also social and mental. We analysed what they had in common and found that **emotional well-being was the common term**.



Work session with one of the School groups

2. Know

At this point, we developed a focus groups where the students **identified risk and protective factors for mental health**, based on which they prioritized the ones they considered most important to design and implement an action plan.

3. Do

Students proposed to create an “**Emotional Kit**” as a solution. They have suggested a set of tools to protect themselves in risky situations and promote emotional well-being. Finally, they reflected on the learning process and the impact on mental health promotion.

Results

Among the results and impacts of Healthy Minds in our educational community, we can highlight:

- Increased awareness among the students regarding the **importance of prioritizing mental health**.
- Promotion of students' ability to actively **contribute to addressing issues that affect them through participatory research** and self-organization.
- Heightened **commitment from the school institution** to enhance mental health promotion:
 - The school will initiate efforts to create a dedicated physical space known as the “**Emotional Classroom**,” designed to foster emotional well-being.
 - The Guidance Department will collaborate with the existing “Healthy Habits and Lifestyle” program at the school to **design interdisciplinary activities aimed at promoting student well-being**.



Students working on risk and protective factors



Presentation of the Project

Conclusions

The Healthy Minds project has had a significant impact on improving mental health promotion in our educational institution. The implemented participatory research has allowed for a deeper understanding of the concept of mental health and a thorough analysis of the influencing factors. Each class group has been able to prioritize their specific needs and create an action plan to address them. These action plans have converged into the creation of the “Emotional Kit”. Furthermore, the process has enabled students to recognize that science can be a pathway to solving their everyday problems, while enhancing their scientific and civic participation skills. Lastly, we highly commend the commitment of the educational institution to the project and the achieved results, as they signify a change in how student mental health promotion is approached within the school.

Bibliography

- Living Lab for Health at IrsiCaixa, Escoles Sentinella & “la Caixa” Foundation. **CONNECT “Healthy Minds” Teaching Guide, 2022.** <https://connect-eu.exus.co.uk/2023/06/29/healthy-minds/>





03. Do you think participatory research is a process that responds to your needs as a teacher?

*Fes clic per introduir text*The Healthy Minds project has had a significant impact on improving mental health promotion in our educational institution. The implemented participatory research has allowed for a deeper understanding of the concept of mental health and a thorough analysis of the influencing factors. Each class group has been able to prioritize their specific needs and create an action plan to address them. These action plans have converged into the creation of the “Emotional Kit”. Furthermore, the process has enabled students to recognize that science can be a pathway to solving their everyday problems, while enhancing their scientific and civic participation skills. Lastly, we highly commend the commitment of the educational institution to the project and the achieved results, as they signify a change in how student mental health promotion is approached within the school.

04. Were the resources easy to use?

Yes.

Do you have any specific issues related to materials, procedures, resume pressure:

Click to enter text

05. Do you think participatory research was beneficial for students?

Absolutely. Among others, I would remark the following three accomplished objectives:

- Increase awareness and consciousness regarding mental health.
- Empower students as active agents in promoting mental well-being.
- Implement an educational project for participatory research to address the challenges faced by the educational community.

It describes student achievements during participatory research related to:

| | |
|-----------|---|
| KNOWLEDGE | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What is mental health and how to promote it. |
| SKILLS | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identifying risk and protective factors for mental health. Designing and implementing activities with peers. Team work. |
| ATTITUDES | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Awareness for mental health. Proactivity in addressing their own needs. |





06. What were the challenges for students to put participatory research into practice?

There were many sessions and that made it a bit difficult to follow-up.

Main challenges for students (select all necessary):

- Difficult...
- Long...
- Bored...
- Other (please specify): ...

07. What activities were best suited to the curriculum? Do you think there were obvious ties to the curriculum currently set by the Department of Education?

What helped students achieve learning goals:

...

08. What activities did not fit well with the curriculum?

Write anything that can be done differently or avoided:

...

