



Module 1: Understanding Mental Health

Conceptual Knowledge:

- Everyone has mental health
- Mental health is more than a positive mood (all emotions are part of mental health)
- It is important to use appropriate words to describe our emotions, to regulate and cope
- Mental health has a wide range of states, including no distress, mental distress (aka stress), mental health problems and mental disorders

Procedural Knowledge:

- To be able to define and describe mental health
- To apply appropriate words to describe different emotions, and their intensity
- To distinguish different states of mental health associated with different life events and situations

3. Subject Specific Guidelines

3.1 Rationale

The aim of the Personal Wellness Curriculum for grades 6-8 is to enable students to make well-informed, health-enhancing choices; to develop behaviours that contribute to the well-being of themselves and others; and to plan for the future. Health education is integral to EECD's mission and provides students with the knowledge, skills, attitudes and experiences needed to become successful learners and healthy adults.

The Personal Wellness Curriculum incorporates outcomes from the formally separate Health curriculum and the Personal Development and Career Planning curriculum. Health and wellness education encourage students to manage their own well-being and make well-informed, health-enhancing choices and develop behaviours that contribute to the well-being of themselves and others. Students learn how to: communicate effectively; be resilient; identify and minimize risk; develop strategies for coping with adversity; as well as, access and use support, for themselves and others. They develop an understanding of the attitudes and values that impact well-being, such as respect, care and concern for others. They recognize and explore career options and opportunities and commit to lifelong learning.

The [New Brunswick's Wellness Strategy](#) 2014-2021 provides a framework that will enable any community, school, workplace, organization, family or individual to identify how goals, activities, or mandates are supported by improved wellness and can contribute to enhancing wellness within the province.

The New Brunswick Wellness Strategy supports action on all dimensions of wellness and determinants of health, encourages a comprehensive approach and focuses on inclusiveness and equity. The renewed framework also promotes using a mental fitness approach to wellness, which is critical to motivation and engagement.

As defined in New Brunswick's Wellness Strategy, wellness is "the optimal state of health and well-being of individuals and groups. It is the ability of people and communities to reach their fullest potential, both in terms of health and fulfillment of purpose. The active pursuit of good health and the removal of personal and societal barriers to healthy living are key elements to achieving wellness."





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Positive Mental Health

Positive mental health is an essential component of overall health and can be developed by supporting individual resilience, creating supportive environments and addressing the influence of the broader determinants of mental health (Morrison and Peterson, 2013). Children today are experiencing more stress and anxiety than ever before and therefore special attention has been given to this particular dimension of wellness.

According to Morrison and Peterson (2013), the literature on positive mental health approaches include a range of key concepts that describe the nature and characteristics of promising perspectives and practices for the promotion of mental wellness among children. These positive mental health themes include social emotional learning, positive development, protective factors and resiliency, diversity, acceptance and understanding of student mental health needs, connectedness, strength-based perspectives, mental fitness and self-efficacy. Many of these themes have been addressed in the Personal Wellness curriculum.

Mental Fitness

GCO 2	Students will apply the knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary to develop and maintain positive mental health.
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SCO 8.2.1	Students will evaluate behaviours/environments that help foster positive mental health and build resilience.
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Module 2: The Stigma of Mental/Neurodevelopmental Disorders

Conceptual Knowledge:

- Mental/neurodevelopmental disorders are common (1 in 5 of us will experience a disorder in our lifetime)
- Anyone can have a mental disorder
- Stigma involves negative thoughts, feelings and behaviours towards mental disorders and their treatments

Procedural Knowledge:

- Each person can be appreciated as a unique individual, instead of judged by a label
- By better understanding the stigma of mental disorders, we can reduce the impact

Mental Fitness	
GCO 2 Students will apply the knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary to develop and maintain positive mental health.	
SCO 6.2.1 Students will describe strategies to maintain positive mental health.	
<p>Concepts and Content</p> <p>Positive Mental Health (e.g., ability to enjoy life, work through life challenges, emotional and spiritual well-being, equity, respect for cultures, dignity within social environments)</p> <p>Indicators of Poor Mental Health (e.g., persistent sadness, feelings of overwhelm, feeling consistently unlike oneself, constant feelings of isolation)</p> <p>Mental Fitness Needs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relatedness (e.g., welcome those around you, have positive interactions, use check-ins) • Competency (e.g., recognize your strengths, use your strengths, build confidence) • Autonomy (e.g., express your voice, have your voice heard, be able to make choices, learn how to say yes and no to things, work with partners, teams etc.) <p>Ways to Develop Mental Fitness</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual strengths (e.g., use strengths, gifts and talents) • Self-awareness and reflection • Social supports (e.g., get involved with community organizations and reach out to caring adults) • Voice (e.g., express needs, wants, and opinions) <p>Sources of Stress (e.g., food insecurity, responsibilities, requests from parents and friends, discuss student concerns)</p> <p>Positive Mental Health Strategies (e.g., physical activity, doing activities you enjoy, healthy relationships, mindfulness, gratitude practice, autonomy support, spending time in nature, spiritual</p>	<p>I Can Exemplars:</p> <p>I can define <i>positive mental health</i>.</p> <p>I can discuss ways to improve mental fitness.</p> <p>I can describe strategies to manage stress.</p> <p>I can identify the connection between career development and positive mental health.</p> <p>I can discuss where to get support to improve mental health (e.g., call 211).</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote personal safety (e.g., physical, emotional, online) <p>DECIDE Model (e.g., decision making models can be used across all contexts of life, for big and small decisions, for safety prevention or otherwise, 'not making a decision' can be more harmful)</p> <p>D – Define the decision to be made E – Explore your options C – Consider the consequences I – Identify your values D – Decide and act E – Evaluate the results</p> <p>Seeking Support (e.g. safe adult, online reporting tools, community resources)</p> <p>Decision-making (e.g., define refusal skills)</p>	<p>I can use a decision-making model when presented with various situations.</p> <p>I can list where to get support in their community for various needs.</p>



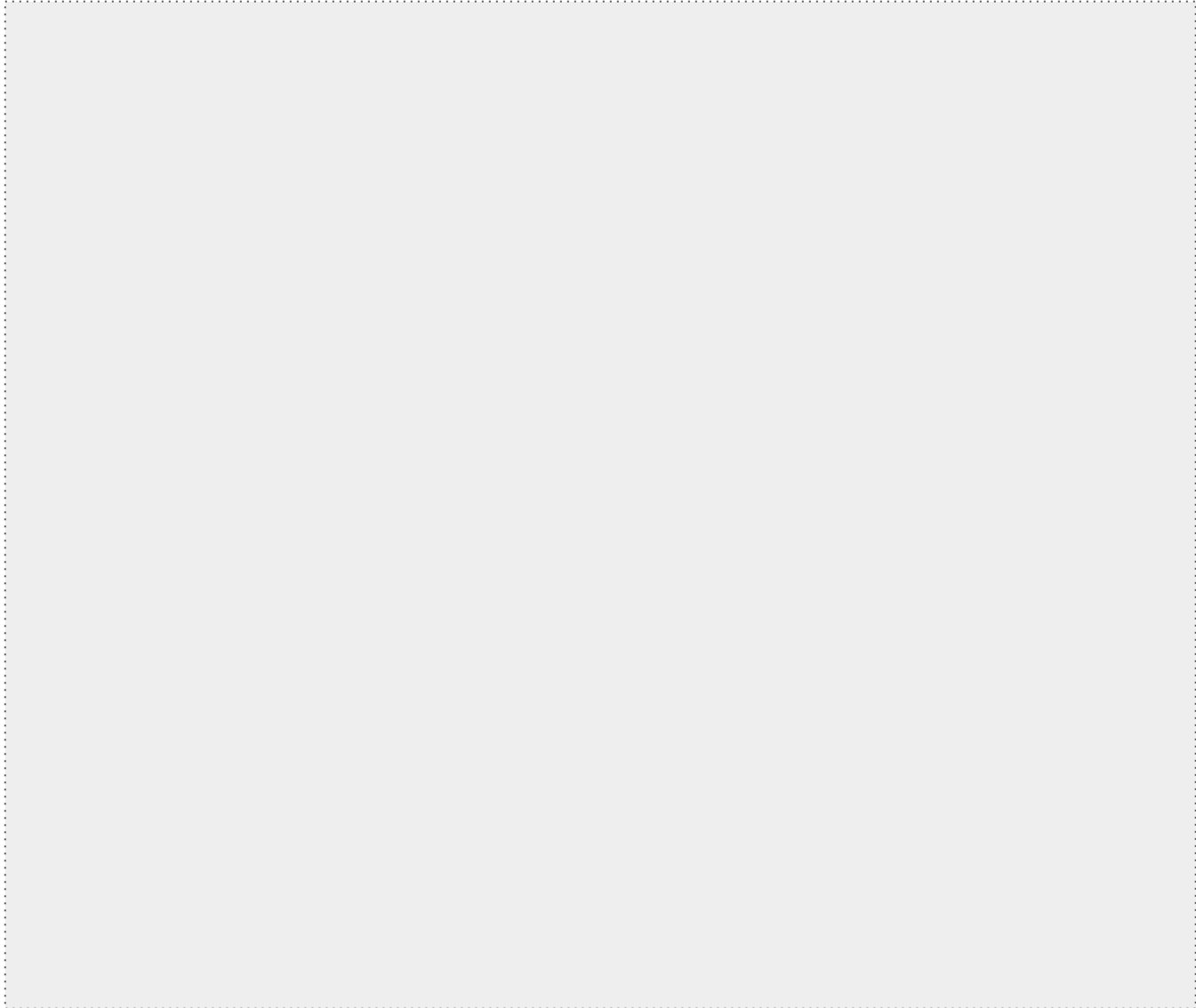
Module 3: Mental Health and the Brain

Conceptual Knowledge:

- Our thoughts, feelings, behaviours and reactions are linked with the brain
- The brain and the body are connected
- Mental health is a component of overall health
- The brain changes over time

Procedural Knowledge:

- Explain how the brain and body are connected
- Identify basic parts of the brain and their functions
- Describe ways that the brain adapts to the environment and changes over time





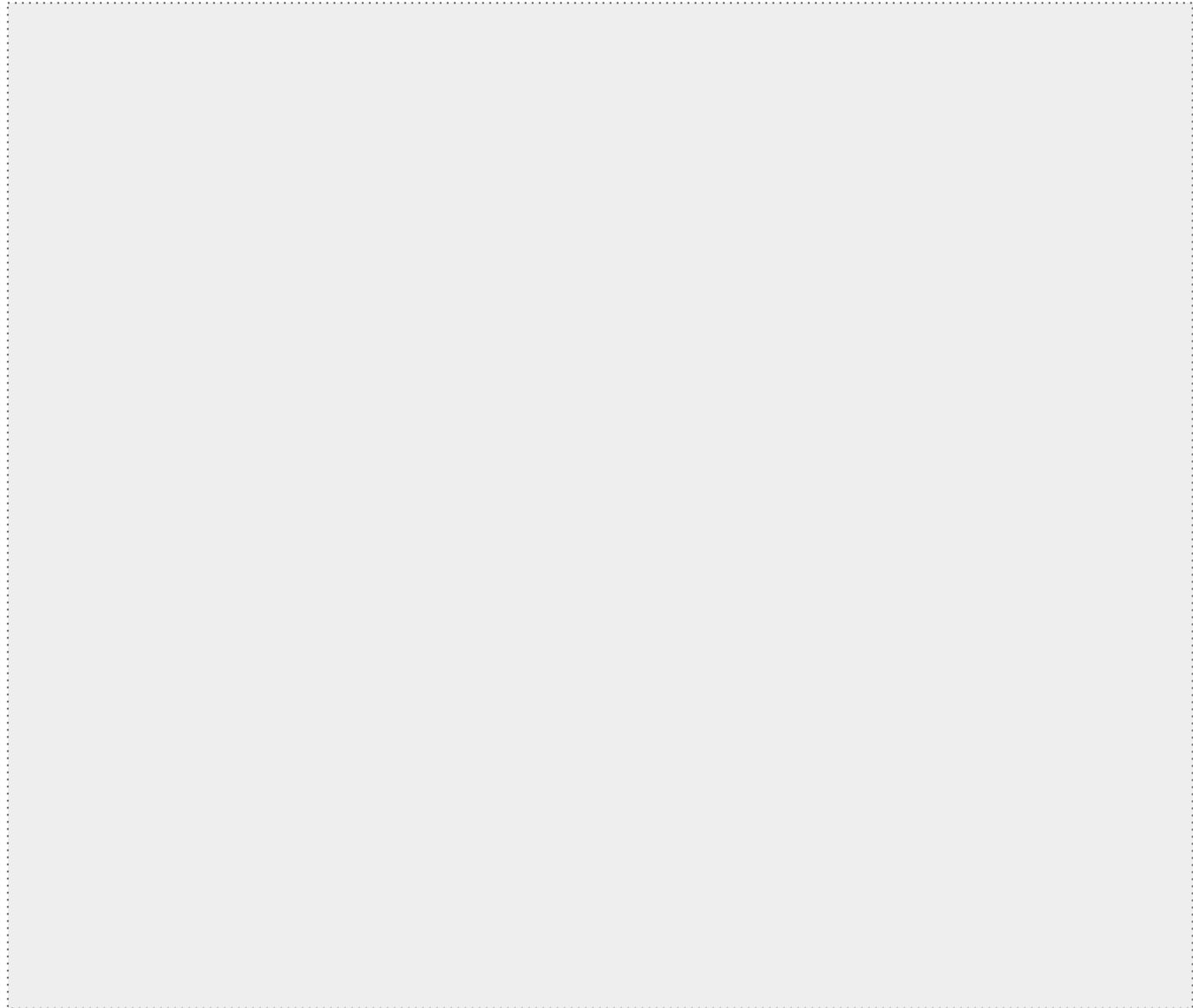
Module 4: Common Mental/Neurodevelopmental Disorders

Conceptual Knowledge:

- All mental disorders reflect difficulties in thoughts, emotions, behaviours and signalling
- The sooner people receive proper treatment and support, the better the outcomes

Procedural Knowledge:

- To distinguish between expected life challenges and mental / neurodevelopmental disorders
- To demonstrate an understanding of common mental / neurodevelopmental disorders affecting children
- To identify ways that people with mental disorders can live a fulfilling life with appropriate treatments





Module 5: Helping Self and Helping Others

Conceptual Knowledge:

- Everyone has mental health that can be supported and promoted
- There are many people who can provide support for mental health problems and mental disorders
- Getting help early for yourself and others increases positive mental health outcomes

Procedural Knowledge:

- To understand that mental health can be supported in various ways
- To learn to seek help from reliable sources when needed
- To know how to ask for help in an effective manner

Wellness

As stated in New Brunswick’s Wellness Strategy, “wellness is the optimal state of health and well-being of individuals and groups. It is the ability of people and communities to reach their fullest potential, both in terms of health and fulfillment of purpose. The active pursuit of good health and the removal of personal and societal barriers to healthy living are key elements to achieving wellness.”

Wellness is a balanced state of emotional, intellectual, physical, social, environmental, occupational, and spiritual well-being that enables students to reach their full potential in the school community. Personal wellness occurs with commitment to lifestyle choices based on healthy attitudes and actions.

Under this domain, students gain the knowledge necessary for developing and maintaining a healthy and safe lifestyle. Topics include healthy eating, healthy personal habits, and benefits of physical activity, decision-making and misuse of substances.

Mental Fitness

GCO 2	Students will apply the knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary to develop and maintain positive mental health.
SCO 7.2.1	Students will analyze the impact of mental health on well-being.
SCO 7.2.2	Students will analyze how decision-making impacts personal wellness.
SCO 7.2.3	Students will describe the five components of financial literacy.



Module 6: Getting Mentally Healthy

Conceptual Knowledge:

- Coping with stress appropriately can help us build new skills and increase resilience
- The brain and body are connected
- What is good for physical health is good for mental health
- Positive lifestyle choices can enhance our mental health

Procedural Knowledge:

- To understand that we need some stress to perform well
- To learn that stress can be managed
- To recognize the brain-body connection related to the stress response
- To develop strategies to promote strong mental health

3.2 Course Description

The Personal Wellness curriculum addresses the physical, mental/intellectual, emotional, social, spiritual, environmental and occupational dimensions of health as identified in the New Brunswick Wellness Strategy (2014). This course is designed to motivate and assist students to maintain and improve their health, reduce health-risk behaviors and gain a better understanding of themselves. In essence, it involves learning about the habits, behaviors, interactions and decisions related to living well and planning for the future. It is personal in nature and involves such topics like healthy eating, physical activity, healthy growth and development, personal safety, emotions, appreciation for diversity, relationships, strengths and personal qualities, and the world of work. The Personal Wellness Curriculum 6-8 intentionally incorporates career development outcomes. Career development can have a significant impact on one’s wellbeing and mental health. To be most effective career development is found throughout all curriculum K-12.

SCO 6.1.2 Students will describe factors that influence food, substance, and screen time use and misuse.

Concepts and Content

Influences (e.g., peers, social media, cultural norms, traditions, addiction, use and misuse of substances, food, or screen time)

Use and Misuse

- Define
- Behaviours that lead to addiction

Strategies to Cope with Daily Stressors

- Stress management (e.g., do something enjoyable, physical activity, mindfulness)
- Positive mental health strategies (e.g., talk to a person you trust, take part in a hobby, develop a strength or talent)
- Learn how to manage emotions (e.g., calming strategies such as count to ten, walk away)
- Taking healthy risks (e.g., try a leadership role, join a new club, volunteer)

I Can Exemplars:

I can explain the difference between use and misuse.

I can identify how marketing can influence choices.

I can give examples of positive and negative peer pressure.

I can demonstrate decision-making and refusal skills to deal with pressures in various scenarios.

I can discuss behaviours that could lead to addiction.

I can give examples of healthy coping strategies for stressors.

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