

6. Well-Being-Bien-être: Dana Puia Morel / Stephanie Buus

WELL-BEING WORKING GROUP ACTIVITY REPORT 2022

In 2022, the APEEE well-being and mental health Working Group (WWG) continued to work on its goal of creating an environment where pupils are well and flourish. Its objectives were to identify **well-being and mental health** issues that Nursery, Primary and Secondary students were facing, and to design and implement actions that could be put in place to alleviate those issues.

The WWG is still governed by the following Principles: 1) **Mental health and socio-emotional education** are important, and the Covid-19 pandemic has brought this to the forefront, with a general rise in anxiety and depression levels among students; 2) A **Whole-School Approach** is critical to the success of all interventions; 3) **Visibility** can break down the stigma surrounding mental health; and 4) **Prevention** can reduce the number of interventions in the long-term.

The work of the WWG also takes into account the following **indicators of well-being**: being aware of one's thoughts, feelings and behaviour; being confident, active and responsible for one's actions; being respected, valued, and resilient (having the capacity to cope and asking for help); being connected and having positive relationships and interactions.

In 2022, the WWG continued to join forces with **School Well-Being Working Group**, made up of the Assistant Deputy Directors, the school psychologists, as well as student representatives from the Pupils' Committee (CdE). Some of the discussions focused on the possibility to mobilize resources to conduct a pupils well-being survey during the 2022-2023 school year.

Several brainstorming sessions took place throughout the year to explore possible interventions in the form of **workshops**. The topics proposed were issues of developmental importance for each particular age group. For example, the focus can be 'autonomy' for Nursery pupils, 'my body and your body' for P1, social skills (empathy, being kind) for P2, expressing emotions and managing anxiety for P3, friendship and conflict resolution for P4, and body changes and internet safety for P5. For lower Secondary, some of the proposed themes are 'social skills', 'time management' and 'peer mentoring' for S1, 'values and beliefs', 'gender' and 'health' for S2, and 'understanding anxiety', 'self-image' and 'sexuality' for S3. For the upper Secondary, some of the topics can be: 'managing time and anxiety', 'resilience' for S4, 'addictions', 'healthy

sleep', 'relationships and sexuality' for S5, 'leadership', 'career orientation' and 'time management' for S6, and 'leadership' and 'succeeding in university' for S7.

In order to have a more significant impact, the WWG is working to pool together existing 'well-being stakeholders' and resources within our school and between the European Schools. Further, the WWG has taken action to utilize with more frequency the expertise of existing organizations (in Belgium as well as the entire EU) that already offer mental health and well-being support services for youth. Specifically, the WWG has created a running 'contact inventory' of all such national and EU organizations for future use by the APEEE and the school, and has initiated contact with the *Centre de Prévention du Suicide*, and *Centrum ter Preventie van Zelfdoding*.

In particular, the WWG has worked closely with the **Community Help Service**: [CHS - Community Help Service \(chsbelgium.org\)](https://chsbelgium.org). Two psychotherapists from CHS offered a half-day workshop to the School Well-being Working Group and student representatives from S3 and S4. The workshop focused on important elements of well-being and mental health, possible influencers, thinking habits, behaviors, as well as actions one could take to improve well-being. The learnings from this workshop are now serving as a basis for well-being workshops to be delivered during the 2022-2023 school year.

The WWG has also offered individual support to parents on a case by case basis, when needs arose.

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