STAYWELL

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WELLBEING MAPPING FRAME

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Innovative Web Approach for Advancing and Sustaining VET Learners' Wellbeing and Mental Health

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Contents

FOREWORD

THE NEED

The problem of wellbeing has been recently brought to the forefront of the agenda for improving quality of VET in Europe. There is a growing recognition that for teaching and learning to be effective, students should have high levels of wellbeing (OECD, 2018). The latest research, however, proves that students' wellbeing is an issue of concern.

The WHO Europe estimates that there is a high and increasing rate of mental and behavioural health problems (depression, anxiety, excessive irritability, frustration) among 15-19-yearolds at population level, with some of the highest suicide rates in the world, which makes self-harm cases in this age group an important public health problem in Europe (WHO, 2018).

The European Mental Health Action Plan, endorsed by all 53 Member States of the WHO European Region, recognizes the importance of resilience for young people's mental wellbeing as an essential determinant of mental health later in life. This is further addressed in the European Child & Adolescent Health Strategy 2015–2020, which highlights the need to strengthen protective factors in schools, homes and local communities and improve the quality of mental health care for children and adolescents.

It is a well-researched issue that VET systems tend to attract more students from social risk groups. This requires additional attention on wellbeing promotion in VET institutions due to higher rates of disruptive behaviour, poor student engagement and low motivation for learning. However, EU VET providers report limited capacity to provide effective support to students experiencing mild to moderate levels of psychological distress due to adverse fiscal, familial, social, and school situations. What could prevent them from mental distress and risk behaviours is social-emotional learning (OECD, 2019), which has been shown to improve VET learners' social-emotional functioning and academic performance. Yet, for the majority of them, building social-emotional skills remains a matter of luck, depending on whether this is a priority for their teacher and school (Study on Social & Emotional Skills, OECD, 2018).

PROJECT STAYWELL AIM AND OBJECTIVES

StayWell project is an Erasmus+ Strategic Partnership project for cooperation for innovation and the exchange of good practices, which sets the overall aim to develop an innovative web learning approach for advancing and sustaining VET learners' wellbeing and mental health through the acquisition of social-emotional skills that would help them study effectively, master their life and enter the job market.

The specific project objectives are:

- To provide VET learners, teachers and community with a thorough understanding of the factors affecting and skills favouring students' wellbeing through the development of a pioneering 4-pillar mapping frame of wellbeing;
- To foster VET learners to get aware, verify and continuously improve their level of psychological, cognitive, social and physical wellbeing through the development of a new to date approach for self-reflect upon the skills, which could help them improve their wellbeing and mental health;
- To boost and sustain VET learners' wellbeing skills through the creation of a virtual challenge-based learning environment to promote wellbeing practices at school;
- To enrich VET teachers' pedagogical approaches related to challenge-based learning and wellbeing promotion in the classroom through the elaboration of a full-cycle navigation tool to support them in the application, adaptation and transferability of the project innovative web approach.

STayWell project will result in raising the issue about the importance of tackling students' health risk behaviours in VET schools, thus contributing to the creation of a favourable environment in Europe for developing, nurturing and sustaining VET learners' wellbeing.

THE CONSORTIUM

StayWell consortium comprises 7 partner organizations from 6 countries, all of them with vast experience and expertise in the field of VET wellbeing and mental health:

Partner	Country		Organisation
P1	Lithuania	VIKO	Vilniaus kolegija/University of Applied Sciences
P2	Lithuania	PSP	Psichikos sveikatos perspektyvos/ Mental Health Perspectives
P3	UK	Foyle	Foyle International Ltd.
P4	Turkey	DPU	Kütahya Dumlupınar University
P5	Bulgaria	ECQ	European Center for Quality Ltd.
P6	Greece	AKMI	The Institute of Vocational Training AKMI
P7	Slovenia	YHO	The International Youth Health Organization

INTRODUCTION TO O1 METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH

The Wellbeing Mapping Frame (O1) is a methodological document guiding the development of the Wellbeing Skillbox and the Digital Wellbeing Lab. It represents a four-pillar frame mapping the factors that affect VET learners' wellbeing interlined with the skills that need to be developed in order to improve both students' actual states and achievements (functioning) and the freedom they have (capabilities) to pursue what they value in life.

The development of the Wellbeing Mapping Frame was preceded by:

- Desk Research into VET Learners' Wellbeing - All partners did a desk research in order to identify: a) key factors influencing VET learners' wellbeing and b) specific skills, which could support students' wellbeing;

- Online Survey among VET Learners - Following desk research results, a questionnaire for survey among VET learners was developed, based on the self-report method used in psychology. Survey results from 292 participants allowed for selecting 15 most needed skills that can boost and sustain VET learners' odds of wellbeing and mental health;

- Focus Group Interviews with Project Stakeholders - Focus groups with 52 participants were further conducted to gather qualitative data related to: validating the survey findings (triggers, supports, skill set); gaining deeper insights into the problem of VET learners' wellbeing; brainstorming suggestions for creating protective environment in VET schools and undertaking school-wide actions related to wellbeing. Interviews were conducted in each partner country with secondary VET leaders, teachers, psychologists, representatives of organizations involved in mental health and wellbeing promotion.

Based on the findings from the preliminary undertaken activities, the conceptual model of the Frame steps on the environmental and individual approaches to wellbeing, considering VET learners' wellbeing as the result of interactions among four distinct, but closely related domains:

psychological	**cognitive**
social	**physical**

Each dimension can be considered both as an outcome and as an enabling condition with respect to the other dimensions, and ultimately with students' overall quality of life (OECD, 2017).

For the purposes of the project, a **broad spectrum of factors (individual and contextual**) associated with the four dimensions (pillars) of wellbeing was explored and explicated in the Frame.

Psychological factors, which put students' wellbeing **at risk** are trauma, disaster or other overwhelming events; schoolwork-related anxiety; emotional instability/ emotional dysregulation. The **protective factors** here include sense of belonging to school.

Factors diminishing students' **social functioning and capabilities** are: poor teacher-student relationships, low family socio-economic status, bullying & cyber bullying. **Protective factors** are non-discrimination and acceptance of diversity, healthy romantic relationships and a sense of belonging on social media.

Cognitive determinants that may **hinder** students' wellbeing are: low level of engagement with learning and adolescent egocentrism. **On the contrary**, adequate cognitive load and mental health literacy (non-stigmatization of mental health and wellbeing) will allow for functioning well in the present and the future.

Factors affecting **physical wellbeing** may refer to low physical activity, bad eating habits, sleep deprivation and health status of students. A balanced diet, proper sleep, proper personal hygiene and participation in sport activities are among the key protective factors to improving physical health, which is strongly connected to mental health.

After mapping all factors that are considered to mainly affect VET learners' wellbeing, specific skills, which could improve students' wellbeing and mental health, were linked with the factors.

Most research evidence shows that mental health and wellbeing of students can be promoted through strengthening of their **core life skills** (Center on the Developing Child at Harvard University, 2016; WHO, 2014), including:

personal skills
(e.g. self-awareness, flexibility, coping with emotions, time and stress management);

high-order reasoning skills
(e.g. critical thinking, ability to confront ideas from various perspectives);

interpersonal skills
(e.g. communication, collaboration, conflict management, empathy);

happiness skills
(e.g. resilience, positive outlook, gratitude, generosity, revival, perseverance).

As a result, the Wellbeing Mapping Frame is considered to be a pioneering 4-pillar approach, which facilitates a richer, shared understanding of the cognitive, emotional, social and physical capabilities and environmental triggers & supports affecting VET learners' wellbeing and mental health.

The Wellbeing Mapping Frame represents a complex model for the development of a new to date web tool to measure, track and improve the four domains of VET learners' wellbeing (02 Wellbeing Skillbox and O3 Digital Wellbeing Lab).

THE FOUR-PILLAR MAPPING FRAME

The StayWell Mapping Frame is structured in 4 main pillars each of them corresponding to the four dimensions of wellbeing: psychological, social, cognitive and physical.

Psychological wellbeing

The ability to practice stress-management and relaxation techniques, be resilient, boost self-love, and generate the emotions that lead to good feelings. It includes the freedom to make own decisions, an awareness of one's strengths and weaknesses, a sense of purpose or meaning in life, satisfaction or happiness with oneself.

Social wellbeing

The ability to communicate, develop and sustain meaningful positive relationships and regular contact with other people – family, friends, neighbours and co-workers, that helps individuals overcome loneliness. This allows them to feel authentic and valued, and provides a sense of connectedness and belonging.

Cognitive wellbeing

The ability to clearly think, learn, and remember. It is an important component of brain health which refers to brain function such as attention, learning, memory, language and executive function. Cognitive wellbeing is associated with achievement and success, how information is processed and judgements are made, informed by motivation and persistence to achieve and is important for attaining knowledge and experiencing positive learning.

Physical wellbeing

The ability to maintain a healthy quality of life that allows individuals to get the most out of their daily activities without physical limitations, bodily pain and physical stress. It includes taking care of ones' bodies and recognizing that their daily habits and behaviours have a significant impact on the overall health, wellbeing and quality of life.

For each of the four domains of wellbeing the Mapping Frame identifies protective and risk factors affecting the VET learners' wellbeing. These factors are further correlated with specific skills that could help students increase their wellbeing and mental health.

Based on the desk research, online survey and focus group activities conducted in all partner countries (LT, SI, GR, TR, BG, UK) there were outlined **18 key factors** in the 4 domains of wellbeing, which protect or hinder VET learners' wellbeing and **15 core skills** that could support students' wellbeing and mental health.

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Psychological

Protective Factor:
Sense of belonging to school

Skills:
1. self-awareness
2. coping with emotions
3. flexibility/ adaptability
4. resilience
5. positive outlook

Risk Factor:
Schoolwork-related anxiety

Skills:
1. self-awareness
2. stress management
3. resilience

Risk Factor:
Trauma, disaster or other overwhelming events

Skills:
1. self-awareness
2. stress management
3. resilience

Risk Factor:
Emotional instability/ Emotional dysregulation

Skills:
1. stress management
2. coping with emotions
3. anger and conflict management

Social

Protective Factor:
Non-discrimination and acceptance of diversity

Skills:
1. self-awareness
2. flexibility/ adaptability
3. empathy
4. problem-solving

Risk Factor:
Poor teacher-student relationships

Skills:
1. self-awareness
2. flexibility/ adaptability
3. communication
4. empathy
5. problem-solving

Protective Factor:
Healthy romantic relationships

Skills:
1. self-awareness
2. coping with emotions
3. communication
4. anger and conflict management
5. empathy
6. positive outlook

Risk Factor:
Bullying & cyber bullying

Skills:
1. anger and conflict management
2. empathy
3. social media literacy
4. problem-solving
5. resilience

Protective Factor:
Sense of belonging on social media

Skills:
1. communication
2. social media literacy

Risk Factor:
Low family socio-economic status

Skills:
1. stress management
2. flexibility/ adaptability
3. resilience

Cognitive

Protective Factor: **Adequate cognitive load** Skills: **1. autonomous learning** **2. decision-making**	Risk Factor: **Low level of engagement with learning** Skills: **1. self-motivation**
Protective Factor: **Mental health literacy (non-stigmatization of mental health and wellbeing)** Skills: **1. mental health and wellbeing literacy**	Risk Factor: **Adolescent egocentrism** Skills: **1. self-awareness** **2. empathy**

Physical

Protective Factor: **Participation in sport activities** Skills**:** **1. self-motivation** **2. mental health and wellbeing literacy**	Risk Factor: **Sleep deprivation** Skills: **1. mental health and wellbeing literacy**
Protective Factor: **Proper personal hygiene** Skills: **1. self-awareness** **2. mental health and wellbeing literacy**	Risk Factor: **Disordered eating** Skills: **1. mental health and wellbeing literacy**

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Description of factors supporting and hindering VET learners' wellbeing and mental health

Table A below contains all 18 factors that StayWell consortium considers of primary importance for supporting and/or hindering VET learners' wellbeing and mental health. Each of the four dimensions (pillars) of wellbeing has a set of protective and risk factors, whose impact on adolescents' wellbeing and mental health is comprehensively explained.
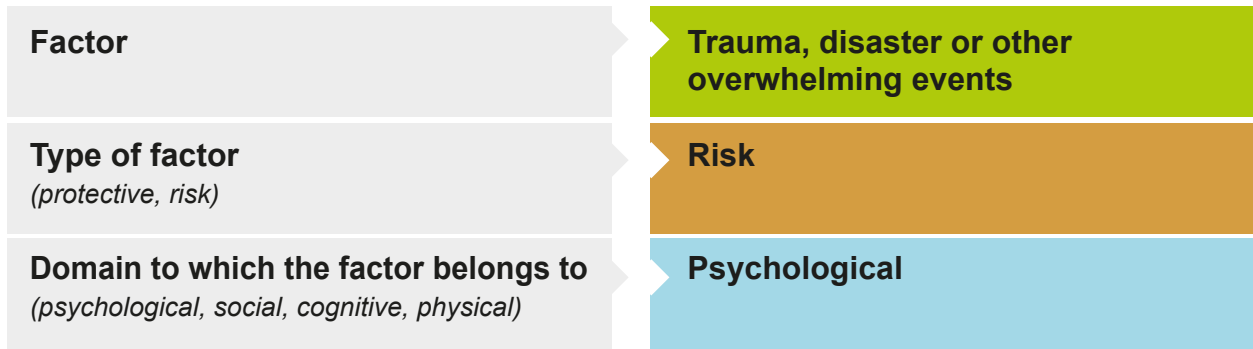
Table A

Factor	Sense of belonging to school
Type of factor (protective, risk)	Protective
Domain to which the factor belongs to (psychological, social, cognitive, physical)	Psychological

Detailed description of the factor

Sense of belonging is crucial for the functional development of adolescents. For most teenagers, school constitutes the most important part of their lives.

School engagement is correlated with positive emotions at school. Positive emotions support many positive qualities, such as creativity, cognitive skills, attention, awareness, problem solving, coping with stress, productivity, and efficiency.

In this sense, school engagement improves academic achievement, reduces stress and dissatisfaction, and prevents school dropouts. When adolescents feel that other people at school care for them, this fosters their sense of belonging in schools. Students with a higher level of school engagement have lower rates of risky behaviours, such as smoking, substance use, depression, suicidal thoughts, aggression and early sexual experience.
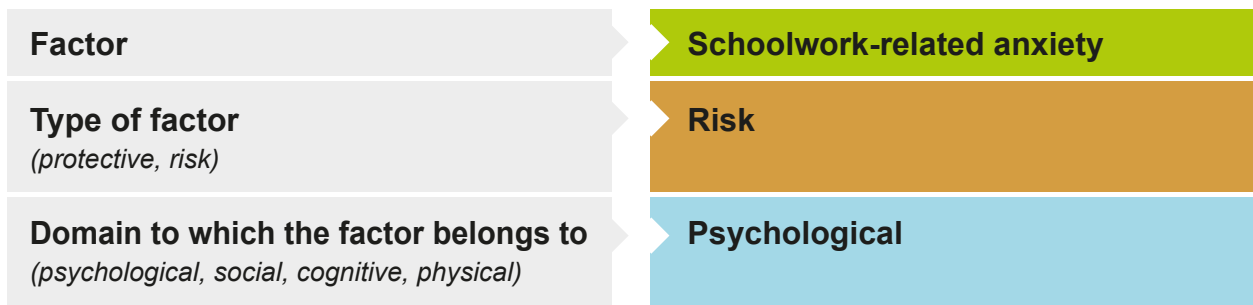
Factor	Trauma, disaster or other overwhelming events
Type of factor *(protective, risk)*	**Risk**
Domain to which the factor belongs to *(psychological, social, cognitive, physical)*	**Psychological**

Detailed description of the factor

Childhood trauma, disaster or other overwhelming events influence physical, mental and emotional health later in adulthood and can shorten life expectancy. They can also result in difficulties in affect regulation, self-concept and relationships/ attachments.

Understanding the emotions and normal responses that follow a disaster or other traumatic event and supporting students in developing coping mechanisms (or teaching them how to develop such mechanisms) to recover emotionally from such a disaster can help students manage their feelings, thoughts and behaviors, and overcome any psychological disorders and mental health issues that may have appeared as a result of such events.

Factor	**Schoolwork-related anxiety**
Type of factor *(protective, risk)*	**Risk**
Domain to which the factor belongs to *(psychological, social, cognitive, physical)*	**Psychological**

Detailed description of the factor

The anxiety related to school tasks and tests, along with the pressure to get higher marks and the concern about receiving poor grades, is one of the sources of stress most often cited by school-age children and adolescents. Students who suffer from anxiety are more likely to perform poorly, be frequently absent from school, and drop out of school altogether. Excessive levels of anxiety can also negatively affect students' social and emotional development and sense of self-worth, it prompts students to use chemical substances to reduce stress.

The quality of student-teacher relations and the classroom environment can greatly enhance students' resilience, motivation and confidence about schoolwork. Teachers should work with students to build their self-efficacy and self-confidence by communicating clear, concrete and realistic expectations for performance.

Factor	Emotional instability/ Emotional dysregulation
Type of factor (protective, risk)	**Risk**
Domain to which the factor belongs to (psychological, social, cognitive, physical)	**Psychological**

Detailed description of the factor

Emotional instability is the degree to which emotions fluctuate over time, whereas emotion dysregulation is defined as the inability to consciously monitor and regulate emotions.

Environmental and biological changes in adolescence bring new and intense emotional experiences that might need further effort to regulate them. In addition to these changes, adolescence itself is characterized by higher levels of emotional instability than adulthood.

Teens with unstable emotions may lose interest in their hobbies or academic pursuits. Emotional instability can also cause loss of appetite or unusual or prolonged sleeping habits.

Emotional dysregulation problems, on the other hand, may lead to depression, anxiety, and problem behaviour among adolescents.

Learning to cope with and manage emotional ups and downs independently is one of the big jobs of adolescence. And teachers play an important role in helping adolescents to develop these important life skills.

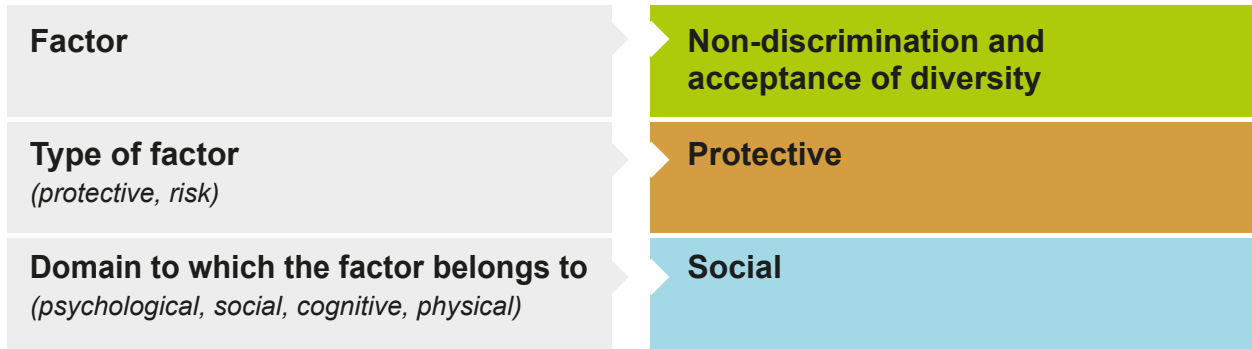| Factor	Healthy romantic relationships
Type of factor (protective, risk)	**Protective**
Domain to which the factor belongs to (psychological, social, cognitive, physical)	**Social**

Detailed description of the factor

Romantic relationships constitute a new dimension in the adolescent's social life, but little attention so far has been paid to their importance in wellbeing.

Healthy romantic relationships play an increasingly important role in the social development of adolescents, especially in the change from early adolescence to late adolescence. Romantic involvement, the quality of the relationship or the positive sexually related experiences within a romantic relationship have a strong potential to promote lower rates of alienation and isolation, a better self-image and future expectations, higher levels of self-esteem, and a greater level of commitment in later relationships.

Acquiring skills for coping and managing romantic relationships in adolescence period may prevent young people from experiencing violence within the couple, substance use, poor school performance or internalizing and externalizing behaviours. On the contrary, it will help adolescents to maintain healthy, close, trusting relationships based on empathy which will further result in higher rates of life development and positive interpersonal relationships.

Factor	Non-discrimination and acceptance of diversity
Type of factor *(protective, risk)*	**Protective**
Domain to which the factor belongs to *(psychological, social, cognitive, physical)*	**Social**

Detailed description of the factor

Discrimination of adolescents by their peers may be invoked by a variety of characteristics, such as age, gender, body image, race, disability, cultural background, sexual orientation, skin colour, socioeconomic status or religion. Adolescents who are exposed to frequent and multiple discrimination report poor mental and physical health. Discriminated adolescents also feet less socially competent in peer relationships, which can result in social isolation.

Teaching adolescents to respect diversity involves understanding and valuing the different experiences, backgrounds, customs, opinions, points of view, genders, and preferences, and it's good to talk to teens regularly about the importance of being accepting of others. Helping adolescents become open-minded about differences can build their mental flexibility, problem-solving abilities, and sense of tolerance.

Factor	Poor teacher-student relationships
Type of factor *(protective, risk)*	**Risk**
Domain to which the factor belongs to *(psychological, social, cognitive, physical)*	**Social**
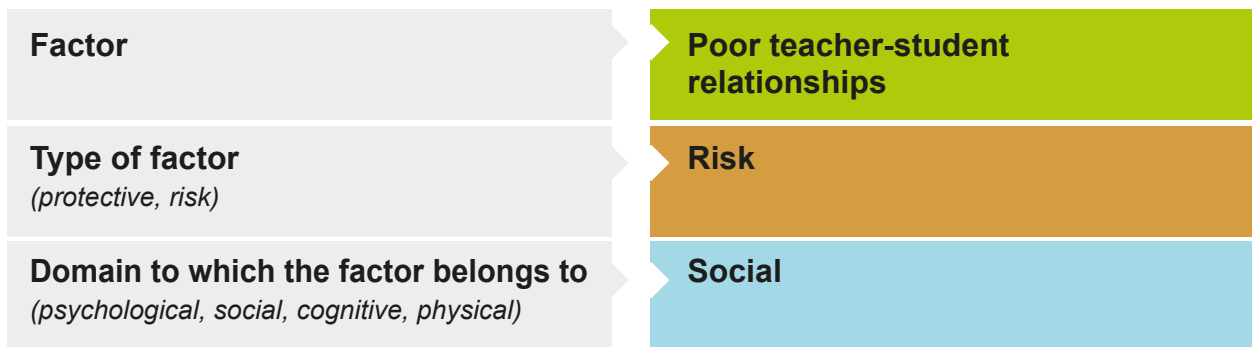
Detailed description of the factor

Poor teacher-student relationships can lead to chronic stress, which can raise adolescents' risk of social, emotional, and mental health problems.

Personality, family backgrounds, thought processes, learning styles, priorities, maturity levels and academic goals influence each student's ability to learn and connect with educators. Teachers are wise to view each student as an individual who deserves one-on-one attention and specialized, focused instruction whenever possible.

Students who have strong teacher-student relationships have higher academic achievement and more positive social-emotional adjustment than their peers with student-teacher relationship problems.

Factor	Low family socio-economic status
Type of factor *(protective, risk)*	**Risk**
Domain to which the factor belongs to *(psychological, social, cognitive, physical)*	**Social**
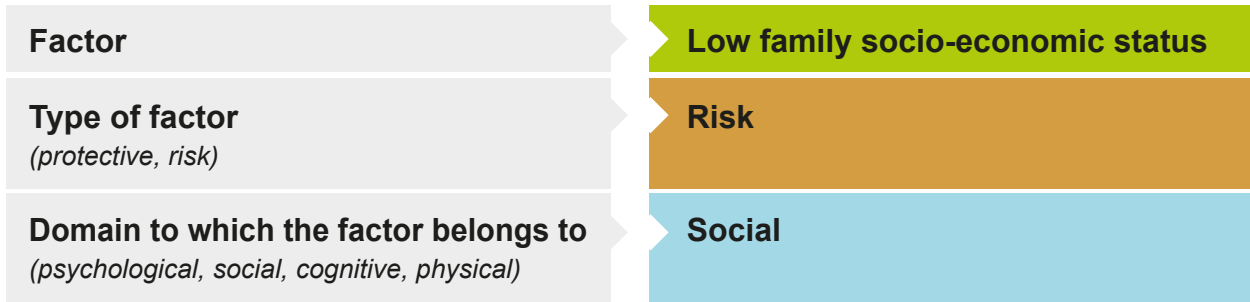
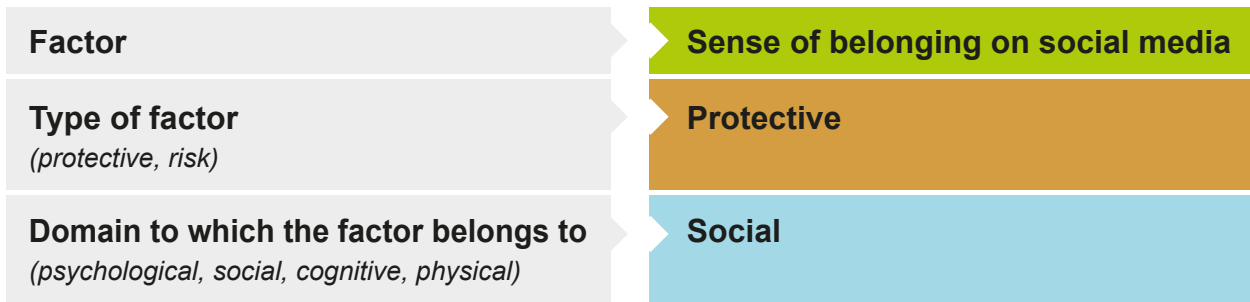## Detailed description of the factor

The main settings that influence the way adolescents grow up include families, neighbourhoods and schools. The quality of these settings and whether they are supportive and nurturing or dangerous and destructive has a profound influence on adolescents' chances for leading successful adult lives. Family socio-economic status is perhaps the single most important factor in determining the quality of these settings.

The life chances of adolescents depend heavily on the resources of the family that they are born into (family income, parents' education and occupation, household occupancy level and housing quality/tenure). Young people who grow up in low-income households are more likely to suffer from mental illness, have contact with the justice system, experience educational failure and have behavioural problems rather than

adolescents from more affluent families.

Also, adolescents growing up in families under economic stress may be poorly supervised and often gain autonomy too early. Unsupervised adolescents are more likely to smoke cigarettes, drink alcohol, use drugs, report depressed mood, engage in risky behaviours and delinquency, early sexual activity and pregnancy.

To avoid/diminish deleterious consequences for the cognitive functioning, socialization, physical health, emotional functioning, and academic achievement of adolescents who have been raised in families with low socio-economic status, these adolescents should be taught to develop core life skills, which will help them manage their personal and social life successfully, increase their quality of life and overall satisfaction.
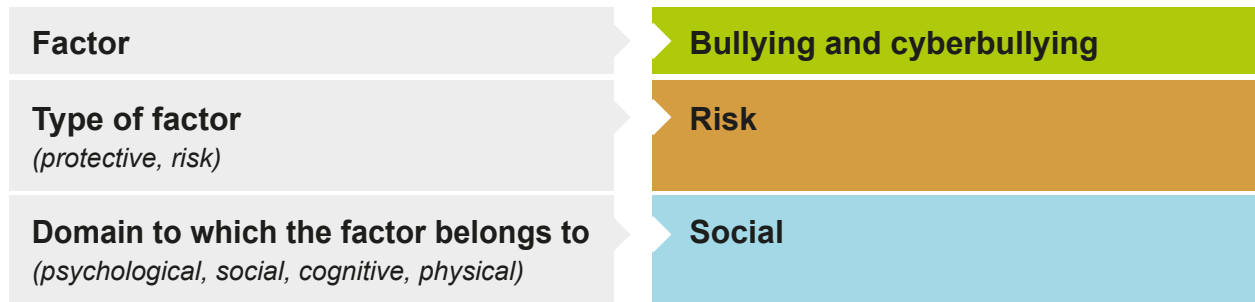
Factor	Sense of belonging on social media
Type of factor *(protective, risk)*	**Protective**
Domain to which the factor belongs to *(psychological, social, cognitive, physical)*	**Social**

Detailed description of the factor

Use of social media has quickly become part of everyday life, particularly for adolescents who grow up in this age of technology. Social media plays an important role in the construction and negotiation of adolescents' identity, where they can hang out with peers and explore the boundaries of their identities, with parents being mostly absent. Hence, social media provides a forum for teens to practice skills related to identity development. These include self-presentation and self-disclosure—sharing their opinions, beliefs, and preferences. On the one hand, online communication can positively affect

perceptions of social integration, broaden friendship groups, and experience connectedness. However, same technologies can threaten sense of belonging and cause social isolation, cyberostracism, and social disconnection.

Helping teens to gain the skills and self-knowledge to effectively control their sense of belonging on social media will lower the risks of tech addiction, chronic stress, anxiety, depression and low self-esteem among adolescents.
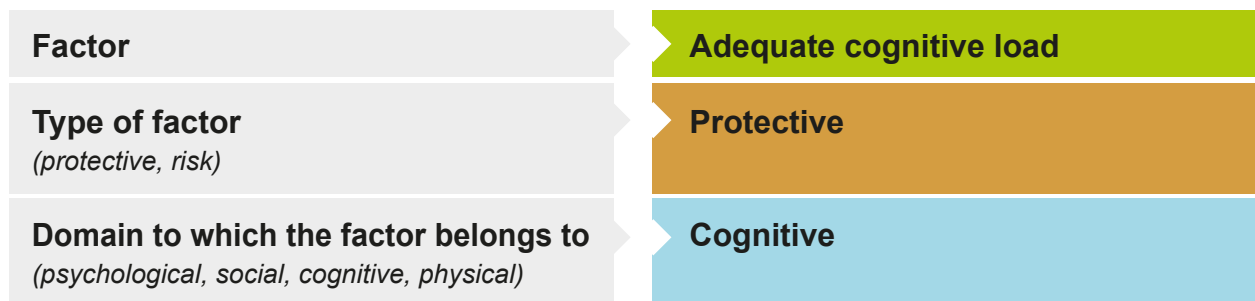
Factor	Bullying and cyberbullying
Type of factor *(protective, risk)*	**Risk**
Domain to which the factor belongs to *(psychological, social, cognitive, physical)*	**Social**

Detailed description of the factor

Bullying and cyberbullying affect adolescents' psychological wellbeing and psychosocial functioning. Bullying might include aggressive behaviours toward a peer to harm the victim psychologically, verbally, socially, or physically. Both, being the victim and the perpetrator of bullying should be considered as problem areas.

Most teens experience cyberbullying or online victimization during their lives due to the increasing rate of social media use among adolescents. Cyberbullying exerts negative effects on many aspects of young people's lives, including personal privacy invasion and psychological disorders. The influence of cyberbullying may be worse than traditional bullying as perpetrators can act anonymously and connect easily with adolescents at any time. In comparison with traditional victims, those bullied online show greater levels of depression, anxiety and loneliness. Self-esteem problems and school absenteeism have also proven to be related to cyberbullying.

In order to keep adolescents safe from bullying and cyberbullying they need to be trained at developing specific social, high-order reasoning and happiness skills, which will foster adolescents' school engagement and increase their overall life satisfaction.

Factor	Adequate cognitive load
Type of factor *(protective, risk)*	**Protective**
Domain to which the factor belongs to *(psychological, social, cognitive, physical)*	**Cognitive**

Detailed description of the factor

Adequate cognitive load is one of the factors that can contribute to cognitive wellbeing, which is important for knowledge attainment and positive learning experience.

Cognitive load indicates the amount of information that working memory can hold at one time. During learning, new information is held in working memory until it is processed and passed on to the long-term memory. However, when too much new information is presented at once or when too complicated information is presented without reference to what has already been learnt, working memory gets overloaded and most of the incoming information gets lost, which finally results in poor learning.

By using appropriate instructional methods and techniques, which will nurture students' autonomy, decision-making and initiative-taking skills, teachers can ensure adequate cognitive load and more effective learning by their students. This would further support the creation of an effective learning environment that would contribute to better academic performance of students and better cognitive wellbeing.

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Factor	Low level of engagement with learning
Type of factor (protective, risk)	**Risk**
Domain to which the factor belongs to (psychological, social, cognitive, physical)	**Cognitive**

Detailed description of the factor

Student engagement with learning implies students' active involvement in academic activities that can be evidenced by the degree of attention, curiosity, interest, optimism, and passion that students show when they are learning. Higher levels of engagement (such as dedication and vigour) are positively associated with better academic performance and higher levels of wellbeing.

On the contrary, lower levels of engagement can be related to poor academic motivation, boredom, unchallenging learning activities or too high expectations. It can also be related to social factors, such as poor relationships with other students, teachers or parents. Mitigating the risk of low student engagement with learning would require teachers to create a positive and productive learning environment, in which every student – irrespective of their learning ability or background – could learn, develop and achieve good results.

Factor	Mental health literacy (non-stigmatization of mental health and wellbeing)
Type of factor (protective, risk)	**Protective**
Domain to which the factor belongs to (psychological, social, cognitive, physical)	**Cognitive**

Detailed description of the factor

Majority of mental disorders have first onset during adolescence or early adulthood, when there is a lack of any knowledge about mental health. Poor mental health literacy (MHL) might not enable adolescents to recognise signs of distress in themselves or others, which reduces help-seeking behaviour. This further enhances stigma towards mental health problems in the general public.

The lack of understanding and information on mental health issues prevents adolescents from dealing with mental health issues they might be going through. Mental health problems in adolescence that remain untreated can extend into adulthood and mental health conditions, which in turn can lead to both physical and mental health impairments in adulthood.

To improve MHL successfully, adolescents should be taught to: 1) recognize mental disorders; 2) be aware of mental health information, risk factors and causes of mental disorders; and 3) be able to take appropriate help-seeking.

Factor	Adolescent egocentrism
Type of factor *(protective, risk)*	Risk
Domain to which the factor belongs to *(psychological, social, cognitive, physical)*	Cognitive

Detailed description of the factor

Adolescent egocentrism is another important psychosocial and cognitive aspect of adolescence period. It is used to describe the phenomenon of adolescents' inability to distinguish between their perception of what others think about them and how people see them in reality. Also, adolescents are convicted that they are special, and they should be the constant focus of others' attention.

During adolescence, egocentrism is regarded to be associated with pubertal changes and important developmental tasks, such as the acquisition of new mental capacities, the process of separation from parents, and the formation of individuality. In this sense, egocentrism may be at the root of a wide variety of typical adolescent behaviours and disturbances: heightened self-consciousness, wish for aloneness and privacy, shyness, daydreaming, preoccupation with appearance, attention-getting behaviour, tendency to conform to peer group norms, engagement in delinquent acts, risk-taking behaviour (e.g., use of substances, reckless driving, sexual intercourse without contraception).
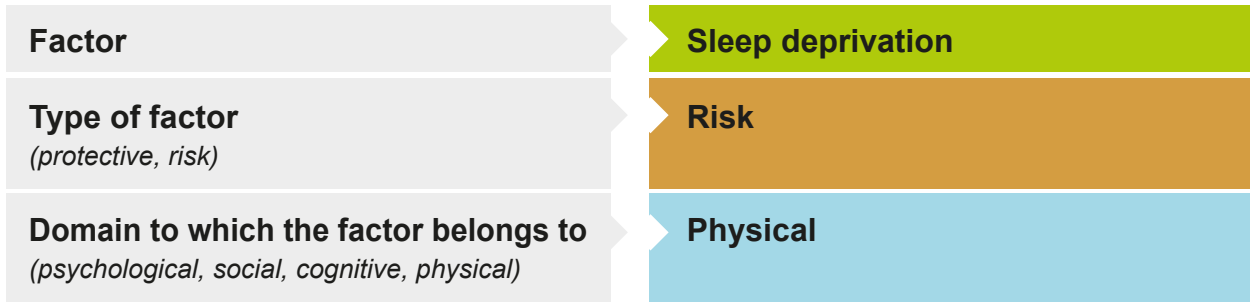
Teachers can help adolescents to deal with their egocentrism by developing a greater sense of self-awareness, capacity for reflection and self-control, positive self-esteem and skills of social cooperation and mutual aid. Teachers can further support students become aware of conflicts in their beliefs, and teach them to use their peers as "teachers in their own right".

Factor	Participation in sport activities (particularly team sports)
Type of factor *(protective, risk)*	Protective
Domain to which the factor belongs to *(psychological, social, cognitive, physical)*	Physical

Detailed description of the factor

Participation in sport activities among adolescents is positively related to their physical, social and emotional wellbeing, irrespectively of gender, social background or health status. Among the health benefits of team sports are sense of belonging, social network, and social interaction among others. There is seen to have also a strong correlation between participation of adolescents in team sports and the level of their self-esteem and life satisfaction. Team sport participation reduces chances of psychological distress and increases psychosocial maturity and social competence. Sport participation may also help students to achieve better academic outcomes and avoid risky behaviours, such as alcohol or drug taking, that may negatively affect their wellbeing.
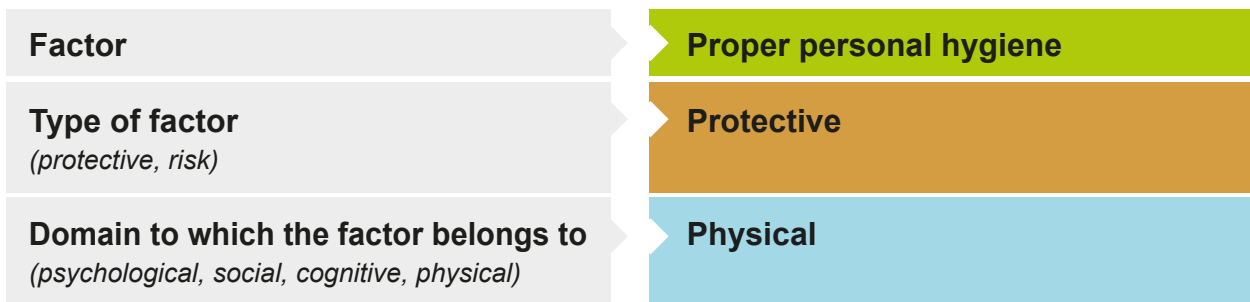
Factor	Sleep deprivation
Type of factor (protective, risk)	Risk
Domain to which the factor belongs to (psychological, social, cognitive, physical)	Physical

Detailed description of the factor

Sleep deprivation is a risk factor that has negative impact on the wellbeing of adolescents. It may lead to poorer concentration, lower academic performance, anxiety, depression and even suicide. While students of all ages may suffer from insufficient sleeping, the most negative effects are found among teenagers due to profound biological and psychosocial changes happening in adolescence.

Teens' sleeping patterns may be disrupted by: intensive use of social media, TV, videogames; heavy homework loads; out-of-school activities that push study time to later hours; using caffeine or nicotine. Among the treatment methods are: doing physical activity during the day; allowing time for short naps; creating bedtime routine; avoiding exposure to electronic devices before going to bed; avoiding late snacks.

The relationship between sleep and wellbeing in adolescence is reciprocal: sleep deprivation is associated with poorer mental health, while improving sleep hygiene of young people with depression and anxiety can have a significant impact on their wellbeing.
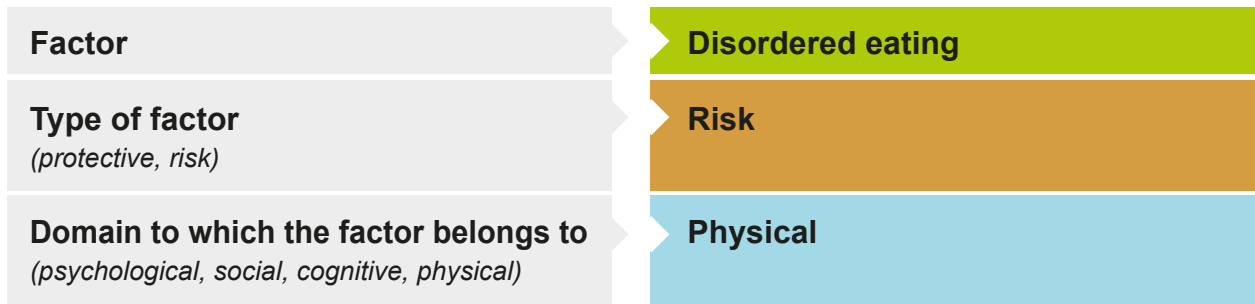
Factor	Proper personal hygiene
Type of factor (protective, risk)	Protective
Domain to which the factor belongs to (psychological, social, cognitive, physical)	Physical

Detailed description of the factor

Personal hygiene habits are crucial for adolescents' health and wellbeing. However, many teens tend to blow off important tasks of everyday life that they see as boring.

It is essential to guide adolescents about the importance of personal hygiene and their puberty changes while they are in their adolescence period. Patience and perseverance will help them develop a reliable routine of healthy hygiene.

Proper personal hygiene will allow them to stay comfortable while being around with people. This could boost a teen's confidence, self-esteem, and motivates them to lead a healthy lifestyle. It also helps them adjust to the social norms of adulthood, where hygiene is a part of one's personality.

Factor	Disordered eating
Type of factor (protective, risk)	**Risk**
Domain to which the factor belongs to (psychological, social, cognitive, physical)	**Physical**

Detailed description of the factor

Disordered eating is a broad term that includes all kinds of unhealthy eating related behavioural traits, such as preoccupations with body, food restriction, and/or binge eating. Disordered eating behaviours and dieting are prevalent in adolescence and can have harmful consequences, including increased risk for weight gain, obesity, and eating disorders in adolescents.

Teachers can provide adolescents with support for healthful eating and physical activity behaviours that can be implemented on a long-term basis, and can help them steer away from the use of unhealthy weight control practices.

STAYWELL

Description of skills supporting and sustaining VET learners' wellbeing and mental health

The 15 specific skills that would support and sustain VET learners' wellbeing and mental health, which were identified with the desk research, online survey and focus group activities conducted in all partner countries (LT, SI, GR, TR, BG, UK), are classified in four main groups:

Personal skills	Interpersonal skills	High-order skills	Happiness skills
1. self-awareness 2. self-motivation 3. stress-management 4. coping with emotions 5. flexibility/ adaptability	1. anger and conflict management 2. communication 3. empathy	1. autonomous learning 2. decision-making 3. problem solving 4. social media literacy 5. mental health and wellbeing literacy	1. positive outlook 2. resilience

Table B presents the 15 core skills interlined with the protective and risk factors to VET learners' wellbeing and mental health. It provides a detailed description of each skill and how to develop it.

Table B

Skill	Self-awareness
Type of skill	Personal skill

Description of the skill

Self-awareness involves being aware of different aspects of the self, including traits, behaviours, and feelings. Essentially, it is a psychological state in which oneself becomes the focus of attention.

While self-awareness is something that is central to who we are, it is not something that we are acutely focused on at every moment of every day. Instead, self-awareness becomes woven into the fabric of who we are and emerges at different points depending on the situation and our personality.

How to develop this skill?

Self-awareness develops systematically from birth through the life time. It relates to the development of the self-image, which is a crucial psychological structure gained in adolescence. A favourable self-image is associated with an open communication with people important to teens and help defining their identity.

Adolescents are likely to be in the mindset of trying to figure out who they are as they continue to expand their mental and physical capabilities. Questioning what they want for their life, why they are feeling the way they do, what makes them unique, and if others like them are standard questions that teenagers, especially those in high school, start to reflect on.

Once they begin to get answers, they begin to start revelling in self-awareness that could be a key factor in their future endeavours. Living in such a busy world can keep adolescents from processing all the necessary information and skills they need to understand for self-reflection. To become self-aware means that a teenager would better recognize how their characteristics will benefit them, the way their values define them, and the manner their beliefs can influence their goals. When a teen is becoming more independent, it is important they are self-aware to plan for their future, figure out what their emotions mean, and to make good decisions. The increased self-awareness will lead to the achievement of realistic goals by adolescents which will help professional and personal maturity by establishing values and moral principles.

Factor to which the skill is associated

Sense of belonging to school	Non-discrimination and acceptance of diversity
Trauma, disaster or other overwhelming events	Healthy romantic relationships
Schoolwork-related anxiety	Adolescent egocentrism
Poor teacher-student relationships	Proper personal hygiene

Skill	**Self-motivation**
Type of skill	**Personal skill**

Description of the skill

Self-motivation is the ability to drive the inner self to take initiative and action in order to pursue goals and complete tasks.

Being self-motivated is a critical skill for life. It's an integral part of achieving goals, feeling fulfilled, moving up the career ladder and experiencing greater personal satisfaction.

How to develop this skill?

Not many adolescents believe in themselves. In the midst of difficulties, younger people lose hope and turn to give up dreams and hopes. Some were born and grew up with a sense of self-indulgence and never see anything good in life. Others were born and grew with confidence believing that they are unshakeable irrespective of the environment they have found themselves. These people carry life as a "win-win" situation. Nevertheless, self-belief is to be cultivated. For those who do not grow with it, can have it re-cultivated later in life. Those who might have lost it in the process of development due to some bad external forces that have struck them, still stands a second chance.

Possessing a strong sense of self-motivation doesn't just make adolescents better equipped for excelling in the classroom. Motivation creates in young people the feeling that their life is worth living and they can achieve remarkable things.

The better students understand the benefits that result from harnessing a strong sense of self-motivation, the more likely they'll be to make the necessary changes to incorporate those skills into their daily behaviour. Here come the roles of the teachers, parents and educational managers to undertake actions for increasing adolescents' self-motivation to achieve higher academic results and personal fulfilment.

Factor to which the skill is associated

Low level of engagement with learning	Participation in sport activities

Skill	Stress management
Type of skill	Personal skill

Description of the skill

Stress management is the ability of an individual to control stress level by practicing self-care, relaxation and also imparting some techniques to handle stress when it occurs.

How to develop this skill?

Teenagers, like adults, may experience stress every day and can benefit from learning stress management skills. Most teens experience more stress when they perceive a situation as dangerous, difficult, or painful and they do not have the resources to cope with it. Some sources of stress for teens include: school demands and frustrations; negative thoughts or feelings about themselves; changes in their bodies; problems with friends and/or peers at school; unsafe living environment/neighbourhood; separation or divorce of parents; chronic illness or severe problems in the family; death of a loved one; moving or changing schools; taking on too many activities or having too high expectations; family financial problems, etc.

Some teens become overloaded with stress. When this happens, it can lead to anxiety, withdrawal, aggression, physical illness, or poor coping skills such as drug and/or alcohol use.

Stress inevitably impacts academic performance, attendance and behavior. Therefore, teachers need to be aware of the stress their students are experiencing in the classroom as well as in their personal lives. Although teachers have little control of what happens outside the classroom, they can provide the support and help students may need to handle these stressful times. By understanding how stress affects learning, teachers can help build their student's emotional resilience as well as activate their highest levels of cognition.

Factor to which the skill is associated

Trauma, disaster or other overwhelming events	Emotional instability/ emotional dysregulation
Schoolwork-related anxiety	Low family socio-economic status

Skill	Coping with emotions
Type of skill	Personal skill

Description of the skill

The skill of coping with emotions encompasses ability to recognise one's own emotions, understand their causes and then to take action to regulate those emotions – either by solving original problem or calming themselves through different ways including relaxation techniques, cognitive restructuring, etc. This can maintain individual wellbeing and improve interpersonal functioning.

How to develop this skill?

The principal way to develop this skill is to analyse cases where strong emotional response was experienced, also listing various calming techniques that are helpful for particular individual, debunking the myths about emotions and their regulation and encouraging the acceptance and understanding the meaning of various emotions.

Intense emotions like anger or sadness can have negative effects on adolescents' health if they are not able to respond appropriately. Sometimes adolescents find it difficult to let themselves know what they are feeling, or perhaps they simply don't know how to identify their feelings. Emotions can cloud the big picture, and when teens succumb to their emotions, they may lose perspective on what is real. Moreover, teens are often faced with things that are beyond their control, and this can result in anxiety, which is based in fear. What cannot be controlled may produce fear. The ability to discern what can be controlled and what cannot be controlled is important, and teens may find it beneficial to learn how to discern and then let go of what cannot be controlled. Doing so requires teens to learn to be mindful and intentional in processing their feelings and also to learn how to self-soothe. Also, adolescents need to find appropriate ways to express their feelings, negative and positive. Feelings must be released somehow, and the key for teens is to find ways to express them using techniques that will not harm them or anyone else. This will help adolescents handle effectively their emotions.

Factor to which the skill is associated

Sense of belonging to school	Healthy romantic relationships
Emotional instability/ emotional dysregulation	

Skill	Flexibility/ adaptability
Type of skill	Personal skill

Description of the skill

Flexibility and Adaptability go hand-in-hand with one another. Flexibility is the idea that one's plans can change very quickly, sometimes with notice and sometimes without. Adaptability is the ability to adapt to change.

How to develop this skill?

Adolescence is associated with quickly changing environmental demands which require excellent adaptive skills and high cognitive flexibility.

Cognitive flexibility reflects how adolescents approach new challenges, tasks, and problems each day — and the healthy mindset with which they overcome obstacles. Cognitive shifting can help adolescents in various life situations:

- **The ability to adapt** quickly to new situations.
- **The patience to tolerate changes** and accept them as the new normal.
- **The ability to see things** from multiple points of view and understand where people are coming from.
- **The mental strength to move** from one activity to another instead of focusing intently on one task or challenge.

Cognitive flexibility is part of people's nature, but it can also be learned. More importantly, it can also be taught to students who are very rigid in their thinking and in their views of the world. Students who exhibit strength in cognitive flexibility and can handle transitions easily, can shift between subjects and tasks in stride, and may have success in tasks that require them to apply learning in one arena to problem solving in another context.

Factor to which the skill is associated

Sense of belonging to school	Non-discrimination and acceptance of diversity
Poor teacher-student relationships	Low family socio-economic status

Skill	Anger and conflict management
Type of skill	Interpersonal skill

Description of the skill

Anger and conflict management is the skill set and concepts for understanding how to prevent, manage, and resolve competing needs and interests without resorting to violence.

How to develop this skill?

For adolescents, immaturity and the quest for independence and autonomy make conflict resolution particularly difficult. As a result, adolescents may resort to violence as a means of resolving conflicts.

Because injury is the leading cause of death in adolescents, and because adolescents account for one-third of violent crime arrests, it is crucial to help adolescents develop nonviolent methods of conflict resolution. School-based programs can teach conflict resolution and anger management skills and thus empower adolescents. Male adolescents may be the most effective target audience for these programs, as they engage in more conflict than females and are more likely to be involved with gangs. Programs that involve one-on-one interactions and include the adolescents' own teachers have been shown to be the most effective.

Factor to which the skill is associated

Emotional instability/ emotional dysregulation	Bullying and cyberbullying
Healthy romantic relationships	

Skill	Communication
Type of skill	Interpersonal skill

Description of the skill

Communication is the act of transferring thoughts, information, emotions and ideas through gestures, voice, symbols, signs and expressions from one person to another. There are several types of communication:

- **Verbal communication**, also called oral communication, refers to expressing one's ideas, knowledge and feelings in speech, adapting them to the audience and situation to ensure good comprehension and attention.

- **Nonverbal communication** is the transmission of messages or signals through a nonverbal platform such as eye contact, facial expressions, gestures, posture, and the distance between two individuals.

- **Written communication** refers to expressing one's ideas, knowledge and feelings in writing, in any form, e.g. an email, a memo, a report, a Facebook post, a Tweet, a contract, etc.

- **Interpersonal communication** is the ability to interact positively with other persons through empathetic listening and through clear, assertive expression of what one thinks and/or feels, by verbal and non-verbal means.

How to develop this skill?

Communication skills can be developed and improved through: active listening; practicing; speaking clearly and pronouncing words correctly; providing and receiving constructive feedback;
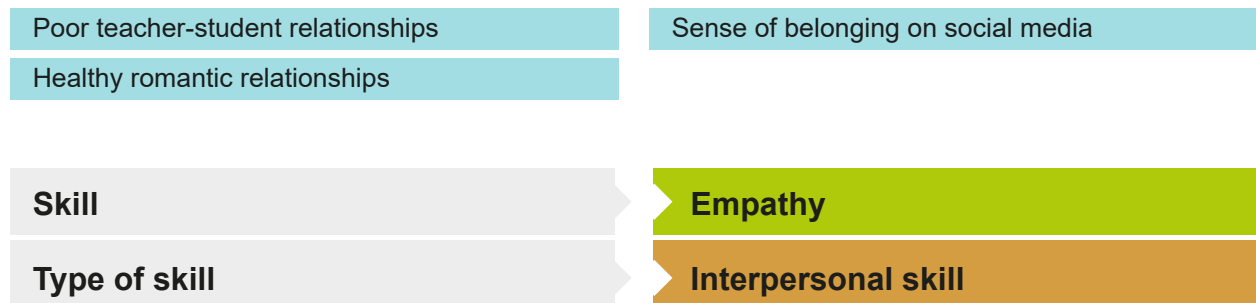
being confident and assertive, while still respecting the rights, needs and wants of others; being empathic - identifying and understanding others' emotions; being mindful with your body language and having good interpretation of others' body language; simplifying the complex; showing open-mindedness; practicing patience.

Communication skills are important to help teenagers get through the challenges they face. Communication becomes effective when teenagers and other people understand each other in similar ways. There are barriers in communication but the most important thing is to accept the differences and do something about them. Teaching teens communication skills is not just the role of parents but also of training providers. The aim of effective communication skills training is to avoid misunderstanding and conflict. Through this, other skills can be used effectively. Moreover, teenagers will be successful in academics, relationships and even in business. Teaching teens communication skills is a continuous process so parents and training providers should work together.

Factor to which the skill is associated

Poor teacher-student relationships	Sense of belonging on social media
Healthy romantic relationships	

Skill	Empathy
Type of skill	Interpersonal skill

Description of the skill

Empathy is the ability to place yourself within the inner landscape of another person. It's an experience of connection with another that takes into account the other's thoughts and emotions.

There are three types of empathy:

1. Cognitive empathy – This is the ability to see the perspective of others, which facilitates problem solving and avoids relational conflict.

2. Affective empathy – This is the ability to recognize and respond to the feelings of others.

3. Empathetic Concern – This type of empathy not only includes recognizing the emotions of another, but also feeling in tune with those emotions and feeling or showing appropriate concern if those feelings are negative or painful.

All three types of empathy work together and combined help a person have healthier, more fulfilling relationships.

How to develop this skill?

Empathy is a social skill that begins at birth. Children learn about themselves through the relationships they have with others. Both positive and negative interactions with their environment, siblings, friends, and parents help to shape a child's ability to be empathetic. Yet, as a child develops through adolescence and into adulthood, empathy becomes an essential skill for healthy relationships, success in the workplace, and even the relationship with oneself.

Most adolescents are typically not focused on others, and if they are, they're wondering what others are thinking about them. However, some experts believe that a focus on the self combined with lacking teen empathy can contribute to the following issues: bullying, teasing, cheating, lack of integrity, mental health issues. When a teen lacks empathy, they lack the ability to think about how their actions can impact others. They may lack the ability to think about others when making important life decisions.

Empathy skills would help teens regulate their emotions, improve their listening skills and strengthen their ability to tolerate conflict. If teachers can help develop teen empathy, they'll be facilitating teens' self-esteem, mental health, healthy relationships, and emotional wellbeing.

Factor to which the skill is associated

Poor teacher-student relationships	Bullying and cyberbullying
Non-discrimination and acceptance of diversity	Adolescent egocentrism
Healthy romantic relationships	

Skill	**Autonomous learning**
Type of skill	**High-order reasoning skill**

Description of the skill

Autonomous learning is the capacity of an individual to direct his/her learning. It indicates the extent to which learners take charge of their own learning, make their own decisions about what to do without being instructed to do so.

Autonomous learning is based on the abilities to: set learning goals; identify resources to help achieve learning goals; apply appropriate learning strategies; evaluate the outcomes of learning. These abilities should be supported by confidence to take responsibility for one's own learning and to persist in the face of difficulties.

How to develop this skill?

The development of this skill can be supported by teachers who practice non-directive coaching – the approach designed to help students to take charge of their own learning. In this approach, a teacher acts as a "critical friend" who helps the learner to understand his/her learning needs, set objectives and find a path for achieving them. The teacher does not instruct the learner; instead, he/she gives the learner space to develop and test their own learning strategies.

Factor to which the skill is associated

Adequate cognitive load

Skill	**Decision-making**
Type of skill	**High-order reasoning skill**

Description of the skill

This skill is defined as choosing the best course of action, following a systematic process and assuming responsibility for the scope and consequences of the option taken.

How to develop this skill?

The development of this skill is preconditioned by a number of other skills, such as analytical, systematic and critical thinking and problem solving. It is positively associated with the individual's capacities for innovation, objectives-based management, leadership, self-motivation, and ethical commitment.

VET graduates are expected to and are often trained to be able to take appropriate decisions in a variety of professional contexts and fields. However, the skill of decision-making goes beyond well-defined professional problems. It includes a crosscutting ability to take decisions in any new, unforeseen situation. The ability to take decisions in

unknown contexts is important, because the rapid technological, scientific and social change will make every graduate confront situations which they have not studies at school. Therefore, the development of this skill should encompass decision-making in well-defined field-specific situations, as well as in unforeseen ones. It can be effectively integrated in any group-learning task. By working in groups, students learn to recognize diversity in the views of their peers, communicate their personal values, appreciate the trade-offs they and other students face, distinguish between what is important to themselves (their own values) and what is known about the consequences of the various alternatives (factual information, available from external sources).

Factor to which the skill is associated

Adequate cognitive load

Skill	Problem-solving
Type of skill	High-order reasoning skill

Description of the skill

Problem-solving can be defined as the act of defining a problem; determining the cause of the problem; identifying, prioritizing, and selecting alternatives for a solution, and implementing a solution.

Problem solving involves a cognitive activity that involves both divergent and creative thinking processes (as in the brainstorming phase) and convergent thinking processes (when it is required to evaluate in a rational way the various hypotheses and to choose the most suitable and feasible solution). The problem-solving process is therefore inseparably linked to the metacognitive skills of executive control of the task, such as self-monitoring and self-regulation, and tends to develop them.

How to develop this skill?

Problems that don't go away can take a toll on adolescents' wellbeing. Left unsolved, a small problem can become a big problem. Problem solving skills are essential to be able to navigate the complex teenage years, and will be needed throughout life. By developing problem solving skills adolescents will be empowered to: sort out conflicts; be independent; achieve challenging goals; make decisions on their own; better perform at school; have more satisfying relationships with peers; have higher self-esteem; achieve higher life satisfaction.

Effective problem-solving skills seems to be essential for professional and social success. The ability to solve problems can stop small issues from escalating into big ones, and can therefore have an important impact on adolescents' mental health and wellbeing. Providing students with effective problem-solving skills and techniques will be helpful in avoiding conflict with others both at school and in their everyday lives. It will also strengthen students' empathy skills and help them in analysing another person's intentions with a positive attitude.

Factor to which the skill is associated

Poor teacher-student relationships

Non-discrimination and acceptance of diversity

Bullying and cyberbullying

Skill	Social media literacy
Type of skill	High-order reasoning skill

Description of the skill

Social media literacy is the ability to acquaint, adopt, and productively and critically use social media technology in any given setting.

How to develop this skill?

As social media is part of all adolescents' daily lives, it is very important for them to know how to use it and access information safely. Learning social media literacy at school is hugely imperative so adolescents can reap the positive benefits of these platforms in the most responsible way. Teens must be taught not only how to utilise these platforms correctly but how to recognise the dangers that come with being active in an unimaginably overpopulated world. With over 1 billion users on Facebook, nearly as many Twitter profiles active and over 30 million people using Instagram daily, adolescents need to be taught the skills to find, create and consume digital media mindfully and appropriately address digital challenges.

Factor to which the skill is associated

Sense of belonging on social media	Bullying and cyberbullying

Skill	Mental health and wellbeing literacy
Type of skill	High-order reasoning skill

Description of the skill

Mental health literacy is defined as understanding how to obtain and maintain positive mental health; understanding mental health problems and their treatments; decreasing stigma related to mental health problems; and enhancing help-seeking efficacy.

Wellbeing literacy is defined as a capability that promotes freedom to choose what wellbeing means to a person and how it can be maximised with the help of language and knowledge. It allows individuals to option what to do in the environmental conditions surrounding them.

How to develop this skill?

Mental health and wellbeing literacy skill is dependent on a variety of internal and external conditions, such as person's attributes (genetics, physiology and personality) and social, educational and physical environments. The capability model of wellbeing literacy, proposes the development of five components (knowledge, vocabulary, comprehending and composing language, context sensitivity and right intentionality) that interact with internal and external environmental conditions. The capability levels reached depend on the relationship between these factors.

Half of the lifetime diagnosable mental health disorders begin by the age of 14 years. This increases to three fourths by 24 years of age. Hence, mental health literacy promotion in adolescents has major implications for early identification, prevention and/ or intervention of mental health issues.

Factor to which the skill is associated

Mental health literacy (non-stigmatization of mental health and wellbeing)	Sleep deprivation
Participation in sport activities	Proper personal hygiene
	Disordered eating

Skill	Positive outlook
Type of skill	Happiness skill

Description of the skill

A positive outlook/ attitude towards oneself and life is related to optimism, which in turn is associated with a sense of self-confidence, better coping with stress and stronger resilience. Optimism protects and enhances mental health and health-related lifestyle changes.

How to develop this skill?

Adolescent optimism is associated with a wide variety of wellbeing and positive health outcomes, including mental and physical health, motivation to health-related lifestyle change, perception of social support, and school performance. Positive attitude towards life and self, in general, is an important cognitive component of optimism. Knowledge about the relationship between positive attitude and health behaviours, such as physical activity, social relations with family, peers, and neighbours, and school performance should be taken into consideration while designing health promotion programs for adolescents. The increase in adolescents' positive attitude could be expected after combining initiatives to promote physical activity and interpersonal communication competences development in pupils' friendly school and supportive neighbourhood environments.

Factor to which the skill is associated

Sense of belonging to school	Healthy romantic relationships

STAYWELL

Skill	**Resilience**
Type of skill	**Happiness skill**

Description of the skill

Resiliency represents the personality characteristics allowing individuals to effectively cope with stress, promoting flexibility, persistent adaptation, tolerance of failures, motivation and remedial action in difficult situations. People characterized by a high level of resilience are more positively adapted to life; they have higher self-esteem and self-efficacy.

How to develop this skill?

Adolescence is usually a tricky phase of life when every individual experience changes physically, psychologically, and emotionally. This developmental phase is critical as an experience may remain for the rest of one's life. Some teens are more resilient than others, with certain limits. While growing up during this phase of life, most adolescents have to face certain risk factors. These risk factors sometimes have negative impact on the normal psychological development, and are associated with vulnerability, problematic behaviours, and mental health issues. These can result in further risk-taking, aggression, failure in school, teen pregnancy, substance abuse, violence, delinquency, anti-social behaviour, etc. These risk factors have the potential to endanger the psychological and biological development of young people.

Developing resilience in adolescents facilitates them in promoting self-respect and self-confidence. Also, resilience makes them better problem solvers as part of surviving and adapting to adversities through a collaborative approach.

Factor to which the skill is associated

Sense of belonging to school	Low family socio-economic status
Trauma, disaster or other overwhelming events	Bullying and cyberbullying
Schoolwork-related anxiety	

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APPENDICES

StayWell survey report

Report objective:	According to 6 national survey findings, to specify learners mental health and wellbeing skills with insights into the problem of VET learners' wellbeing.

1. BASIC INFORMATION

1.1	*Partners reports: 6*
1.2	*Number of schools participating in survey*: 7 -LT, 4-BG, 2-TR,4-GR,4-SI, 3-UK **Total number: 24**
1.3	*Number of learners participating in survey*: 34-LT, 39-BG, 62-TR; 67-GR; 45-SI, 45-UK **Total number: 292**

2. DEMOGRAPHICS

2.1   **Learners:**

Age	Number
13 -15	55
16 -18	117
19 -21	77
22 – 24	12
25-27	8
28- 30	2
31-more	21

2.2

Gender	Number
Female	146
Male	146

2.3

Country of residence:
Lithuania Bulgaria Turkey Greece Slovenia UK Republic of Ireland

2.4

Different Cities / Towns of residence in numbers:
Lithuania: 8 Bulgaria: 6 Turkey: 9 Slovenia 1 UK: 6 Greece 7 **Total: 37**

35

2.5. **Learners, according to the type of institution**

School type	Number
basic vocational school	61
vocational (profiled)	69
high/secondary school	1
technical secondary school (technical college)	27
post-secondary school	6
vocational college	2
vocational training	126
other	

3. CONCLUSIONS AND COMMENTS

*According to partners country reports conclusions, these **5 skills should be excluded** from the core skills:*

GRATITUDE *(4 times)*

ACHIEVEMENT ORIENTATION *(4 times)*

SELF REGULATION *(3 times)*

POSITIVE OUTLOOK *(3 times)*

ASSERTIVENESS *(3 times)*

These 15 skills are the most needed to boost and sustain VET learners' odds of wellbeing and mental health:

PERSONAL SKILLS

3.1	SELF-AWARENESS	Sense of belonging at school Trauma Non-discrimination and acceptance of diversity Adolescent egocentrism
3.2	COPING WITH EMOTION	Sense of belonging at school Romantic relationships
3.3	FLEXIBILITY / ADAPTABILITY	Student-teacher relationship Belonging at school
3.4	SELF-MOTIVATION	Engagement in learning: Participation in sports activities:
3.5	STRESS MANAGEMENT	Schoolwork-related anxiety

INTERPERSONAL SKILLS

3.6	COMMUNICATION	Healthy romantic relationships + Student-teacher relationship
3.7	EMPATHY	Poor teacher-student relationship + Adolescent egocentrism Non-discrimination and acceptance of diversity
3.8	ANGER AND CONFLICT MANAGEMENT	Bullying Healthy romantic relationships Emotional instability

HIGH ORDER REASONING

3.9	PROBLEM SOLVING	Bullying + teacher-student relationships
3.10	MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING LITERACY	Sleep deprivation Disordered eating
3.11	SOCIAL MEDIA LITERACY	Sense of belonging on social media Cyberbullying
3.12	AUTONOMOUS LEARNING	Adequate cognitive load
3.13	DECISION MAKING	Adequate cognitive load

HAPINESS SKILLS		
3.14	RESILIENCE	Trauma Schoolwork-related anxiety/ general Bullying + Sense of belonging at school
3.15	PERSEVERENCE	Participation in sports activities Low level of engagement with learning

Biggest issues, mentioned by 3 or more partners, which have to be discussed with stakeholders in the interviews:

PERSEVERENCE (3 times)

ANGER AND CONFLICT MANAGEMENT (3 times)

COPING WITH EMOTION (3 times)

MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING LITERACY (4 times: Sleep deprivation and Disordered eating.)

STRESS MANAGEMENT (3 times)

StayWell focus groups report

Report objectives:	To collect qualitative data related to: • *Validating* VET learners survey results (triggers, supports, skills); • *Gaining deeper insights into the problem* of well-being for VET learners; • Brainstorming *suggestions for creating a protective environment* in VET schools and implementing school-wide policies related to well-being.

1. BASIC INFORMATION

1.1	*Partners reports: 6*
1.2	Number of Stakeholders in countries: Lithuania: 8, Bulgaria: 10, Turkey: 10, Slovenia 8, UK: 8, Greece 8.
1.3	Total number of Stakeholders: 52 (Female – 42, Male – 10).
1.4	Interviews were organized in May and June 2021
1.5	Interviews were conducted per country with secondary VET leaders, teachers, psychologists, representatives of organizations involved in mental health and wellbeing promotion.

2. COMMENTS AND CONCLUSIONS

Learners' mental health and wellbeing literacy issues. 1. What are your observations about the effects of learners' lack of sleep on the learning process. How do you suggest learners do to address this issue?	
Conclusions	Lack of sleep was validated as big issue by experts in all 6 countries.

Learners' mental health and wellbeing literacy issues. 2. What are your observations about the impact of eating disorders on learners' well-being. How do you suggest learners do to address this issue?	
Conclusions	All experts agree that eating disorders will negatively impact learner's mental health and well-being, but level of this issue is different in focus groups involved schools. Eating disorders was validated as issue by experts in all 6 countries and more related with girls.

Learners' anger and conflict management. 3. How do you assess learners' ability to control their emotions when they experience conflict or anger?	
Conclusions	Learners' ability to control their emotions varies widely from learner to learner, from country to country, some monitor their learners and their ability to cope with levels of stress and pressure, others, that learners hardly control their emotions when confront conflicts. In some country's discouragement is more common than anger, some observed that the conflict situations are used as an opportunity for bullying. **But**, on the whole the issue with the Learners' anger and conflict management exits and it is validated.

Problems with learners' perseverance.
4. How would you rate the level of learner engagement in all learning and other activities: from beginning to successful completion (e.g., sports, projects, etc.)?

Conclusions	Learners' perseverance differs and it depends on a lot of circumstances, such as interest, motivation, students' good attitude, on the atmosphere that is created and the way of interaction with the teacher. Some mentioned as the perseverance is not at a high level, but some points out that learner engagement has become difficult, others that students stay in their own world, the interaction between teachers and students weakens, there is no communication where they can talk and understand each other. Problems with learners' perseverance exist, but the level in all countries differs a lot.

Learners' problems in coping with emotions.
5. Do you see any difficulties in terms of emotional support for learners in school that their sense of belonging is strengthened?

Conclusions	Formally school psychologist is present in all schools and each class has its own head class teacher. In one country all surveyed noted that there has never been as much focus on learners mental health as there is today, but the main problem is that learners refuse emotional support provided by school staff before even trying it (experts say in another country). Experts note that students often do not approach school staff due to privacy concerns. However, it was stated that in the same school, an active teacher changed the face of the school with the activities he carried out in previous years, and the students actively and lovingly participated in the activities. Learners' problems in coping with emotions exist, despite a lot of efforts from teachers and school staff in all countries.

Problems in learners cope with stress.
6. How do you suggest reducing learners' anxiety related to schoolwork?

Conclusions	Experts from all countries mostly agree on supportive/impeding factors for learners' well-being and mental health. As an example, supportive are: • Microclimate, sense of community and safety, respectful behaviour, traditions, social problem solving. • Positive environment which does not tolerate bullying. • Learners' relationships with teachers and classmates. • Emotional support, personal support. • Effective interaction with parents. • Creativity in the educational process. • Strengthening innovative teaching methods. • Strengthening teamwork by assigning group tasks or projects • Etc. Impending factors: • Negative school community attitudes towards diversity (e.g. towards people experiencing mental health problems, people with unique appearance, behaviour or beliefs). • Online learning. Very relevant during these times. Not everyone is capable of learning independently. • High workload and stress due to learning in an electronic environment. • Biological/hormonal issues of age groups. • Different cultural background. • Unstable family environment. • Etc.