



# Wellbeing toolkit – Part 1: Kick-starter activities

Age range: 14-16, 16-19

 **BARCLAYS** | LifeSkills

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# Why wellbeing?

Just like our physical health, mental wellbeing is something we all have and must look after. As educators, supporting young people's mental wellbeing is crucial in helping them on their journey to successful futures. The right support can equip students with the skills to help the early intervention and prevention of mental health issues in later life.

This is particularly the case regarding the move from education to the world of work, which can be a challenging period of change. Mental wellbeing can have a clear impact on employability too; research shows that even before the pandemic, individuals with mental health conditions were 20% less likely to be employed than those without<sup>1</sup>.

Supporting young people's mental wellbeing and challenging the stigmas that often surround it are clearly crucial in helping them thrive in the future workforce – so, what can be done, and is being done, to address it?

<sup>1</sup> Fitter Minds, Fitter Jobs: From Awareness to Change in Integrated Mental Health, Skills and Work Policy, OECD 2021



# Working together to drive change

LifeSkills has developed this toolkit with support from the mental health anti-stigma and discrimination campaign, Time to Change, run by the partner charities Mind and Rethink Mental Illness.

Barclays alongside over 1000 businesses have signed the Time to Change Employer Pledge, a commitment to remove stigma and encourage conversation surrounding mental health in the workplace.

**time to change**

let's end mental health discrimination

**Time to Change's Employer Pledge supports organisations develop a culture where employees feel able to talk openly about their mental health problems and be supported. This includes embedding the following seven principles in the workplace:**

1. Demonstrate senior buy in
2. Demonstrate accountability and recruit employee champions
3. Raise awareness of mental health
4. Policies to address mental health in the workplace
5. Ask your employees to share their personal experiences of mental health problems
6. Equip line managers to have conversations about mental health
7. Provide information about mental health and signpost to support services

By signing the Time to Change Employers Pledge, organisations demonstrate a commitment to changing the way we all think and act about mental health in the workplace. Since signing the Employer Pledge, 95% of employers said it had a positive impact on their organisation.

Together Time to Change's pledged organisations employ over 2 million employees. Check out the Employer pledge map to see who has pledged near you, and find them on Twitter [@TimetoChange](#).

# About LifeSkills wellbeing resources



This toolkit is designed to help young people understand the significance of mental wellbeing to their future success and career prospects. It aims to enable students to gain knowledge and skills that help develop, manage and maintain positive mental wellbeing as they move through school into further education, or the world of work.

Part 2 of the toolkit features case studies and practical activities, based on real life situations, for you to try with your students.





# Introduction

The following ice-breakers can be used either standalone or one after the other to give students a well-rounded introduction to wellbeing and help them make a self-assessment of their own current wellbeing.

Wellbeing icebreaker	Time	Age	
True or false quiz	5-10 mins	14-16	
Discussion: What is wellbeing?	15-20 mins	14-16	16-19
Stress bucket challenge	5-10 mins	14-16	16-19
Self assessment activity	10-15 mins	14-16	16-19



14-16

# True or false quiz

Ask students the following questions to test their knowledge of mental wellbeing:

Question	True	False
Not everyone has mental health		✗
Employers can have an influence on an individual's sense of wellbeing in the way they run a workplace	✓	
There are ways you can help yourself feel better if you're feeling down	✓	
One in four of us will ask for help with our mental wellbeing at some time	✓	
People with mental health problems can't overcome their challenges		✗
You shouldn't seek help if you're struggling with your mental wellbeing		✗
Looking after yourself is important for your wellbeing	✓	
An employer should support employees with their wellbeing	✓	
Communication is not important for mental wellbeing		✗
Feeling supported is important for good mental wellbeing	✓	

Compare scores at the end and ask students how they found the quiz with a few discussion-led questions:

Which questions did they find challenging?

Did any of the answers surprise them?

What are the top 2-3 things they've learnt?

Adapted from Time to Change Mental Health KS4 PSHE Quiz True or False.

14-16 16-19

# Discussion: What is wellbeing?

Use the following discussion starters to explore students' existing understanding of wellbeing. Examples and additional detail have been provided as prompts. Students' responses can be used as a baseline by which to gauge existing knowledge, skills and understanding around mental wellbeing to aid their planning, choice and focus of the session activities that follow.

Discussion prompt	Example responses and key information
1. What words come to mind when people use the term 'wellbeing'?	<p>Student responses might use definitions related to health or feelings/emotions. Generic responses might include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How someone might think or feel in or about themselves</li> <li>• A general sense of how someone thinks and feels in and about their life</li> <li>• Someone's overall feelings of mental and physical health</li> <li>• The sense generated by the combination of physical, social, intellectual and emotional factors</li> </ul> <p>Share some different official definitions of wellbeing, as prompts.</p>
2. With what do we associate people's wellbeing?	<p>Ensure students understand that overall wellbeing includes physical and mental health; both have equal importance and one can affect the other.</p>
3. What kinds of things make people feel good – physically, emotionally, socially, intellectually?	<p>Responses will vary according to the group, but could include friends/family, exercise, rest and sleep, food, pets, hobbies etc.</p>

14-16 16-19

# Discussion: What is wellbeing?

Discussion prompt	Example responses and key information
4. What can people do to maintain a positive sense of wellbeing, both physical and mental?	Ensure students understand the importance of exercise/activity, healthy eating, sleep and rest. See also the 'stress bucket' diagram <a href="#">here</a> .
5. How might people feel when their overall wellbeing is at its best?	Highlight physical as well as emotional responses. Emphasise how people's thoughts, feelings and behaviours at school, home and work can be affected by their sense of wellbeing.
6. What kinds of things can affect a positive sense of wellbeing, or throw it off balance?	Highlight the effects of relationships, academic, financial or work-related stress and how life changes can affect wellbeing. Highlight how wellbeing can also be affected by how people manage and cope with particular situations such as change or pressure.
7. How might someone think, feel or behave if their sense of wellbeing is adversely affected?	Ensure responses focus on physical responses as well as emotions and feelings, for example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Physical: stomach ache, 'butterflies', headache, other general aches and pains, tiredness and fatigue, lack of energy, noticeable weight gain or loss</li> <li>Emotional: sadness, lack of motivation, negative thought processes, anxiety, irritability, anger, impatience, irrational thoughts and behaviours</li> </ul>



14-16 16-19

# Discussion: What is wellbeing?

Discussion prompt	Example responses and key information
8. What might affect people's wellbeing at home or at work?	Ensure responses include the effect of relationships on our self-confidence and self-regard. See also the 'stress bucket' diagram <a href="#">here</a> .
9. How might wellbeing be affected at times of transition and change, such as moving on from school, or starting work?	Highlight responses that might be similar to 8 above. Similarly, highlight that for some people, change and transition may be beneficial for their wellbeing.
10. Is wellbeing something that people need to learn how to 'tune into' only at certain times, or is it something we can help develop and nurture over a period of time?	Ensure that there is an understanding that both are true – we can learn how to spot initial signs that a positive sense of wellbeing is under threat, but we can also develop ways in to manage situations and improve our sense of wellbeing generally throughout our lives.
11. How might learning skills for maintaining positive wellbeing at an early age benefit people later in life?	Emphasise that skills learned in one context at an early age can be applied to different contexts as they get older e.g. learning how to manage exam pressure through timemanagement can help lessen the pressure of extra work-related responsibilities.

14-16 16-19

# Stress bucket challenge

Show students the diagram on the next slide. Ask if any of them has seen this before and/or knows what it represents.

Explain that this 'stress bucket' diagram is designed to show that there are events or experiences which cause stress, but there are also actions you can take to release this stress and re-balance your sense of wellbeing.

Highlight that some of the words on the bucket have been left blank. Challenge students to come up with some suggestions of what could be filled in. For older or more advanced groups, you can also ask them to suggest examples of these challenges in real life.

## For example:

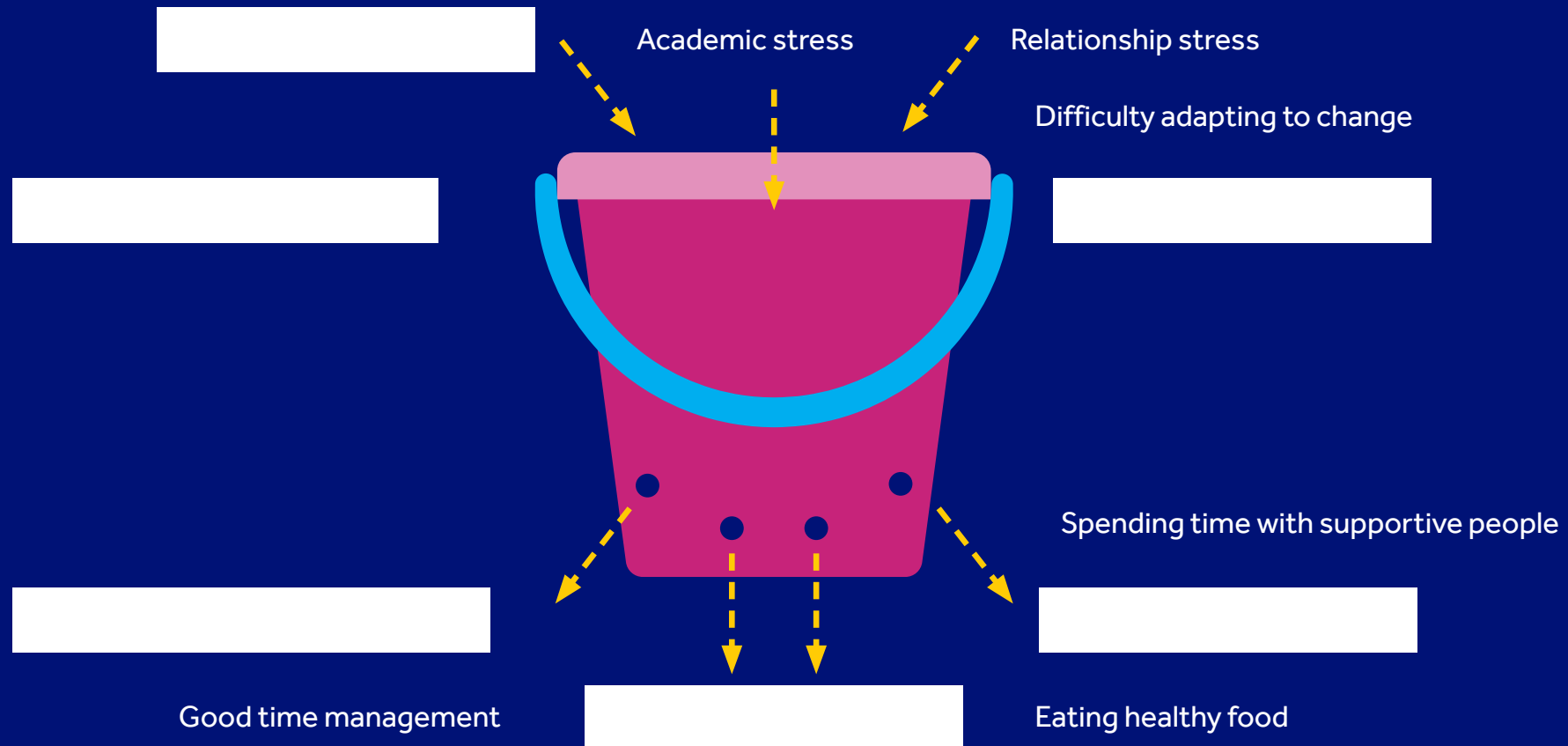
- Academic worries e.g. exams, studying for job qualifications
- Applications e.g. university, new job
- Adapting to change e.g. starting a new job or course
- Relationship stress e.g. building relationships with colleagues, classmates

Finally, reveal the continuing slide which shows the stress bucket with all the fields completed. Compare students' answers and discuss any that were different.



14-16 16-19

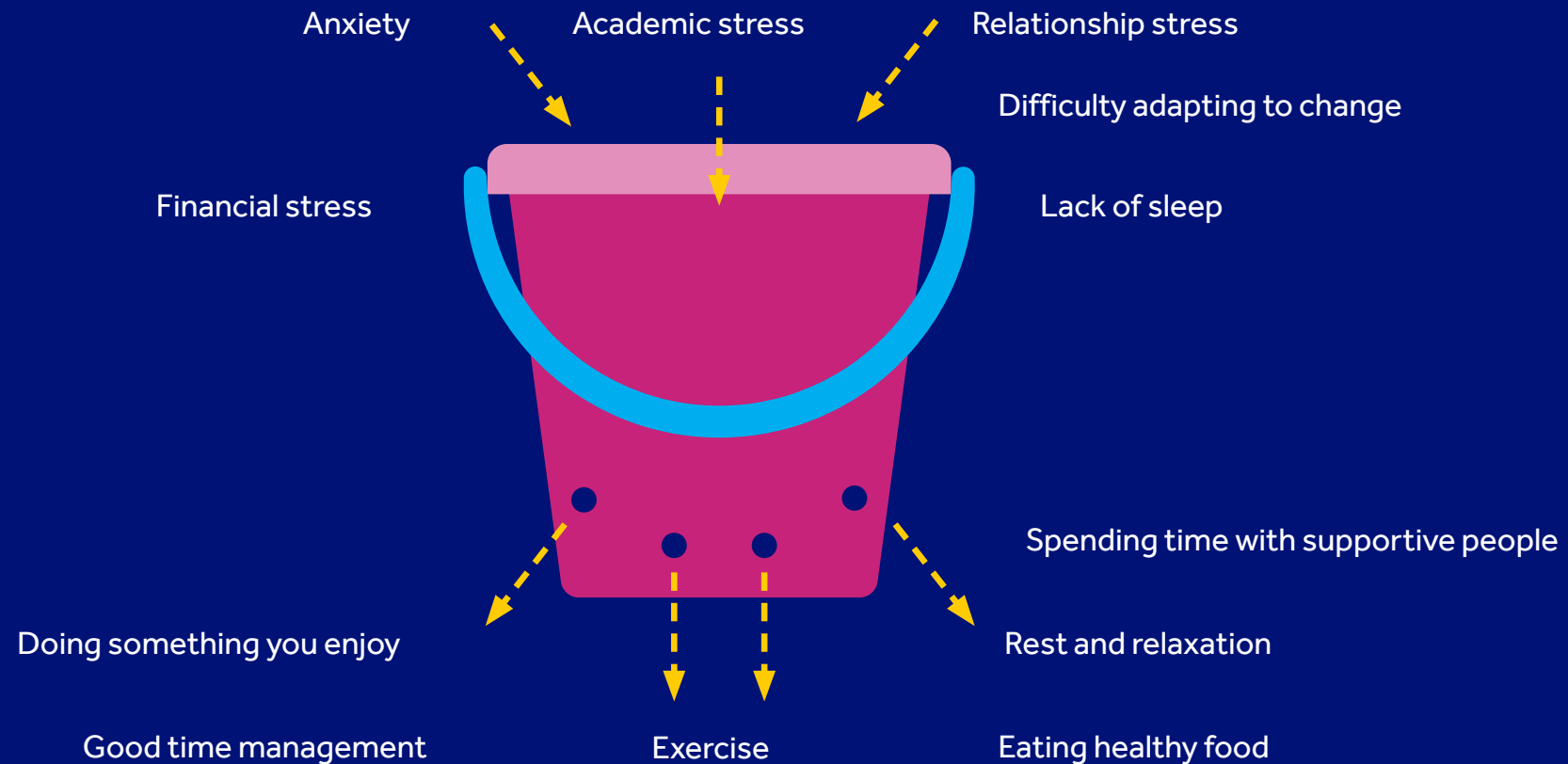
# The stress bucket challenge – fill in the blanks



14-16

16-19

# The stress bucket challenge – answers revealed





14-16 16-19

# Self-assessment activity

This activity enables students to measure their existing skills and knowledge in relation to their own wellbeing. They should carry out the assessment individually, then return to it after finishing a session or the overall topic. This will help them evaluate whether their understanding has progressed, or whether they need to develop their learning further.

You can also use the assessment to help with their planning, but students should not be asked to share their results unless they wish to.

Print and hand out copies of the self-assessment table on the following slide.



14-16 16-19

# Self-assessment

Circle the number to rate your level of knowledge, understanding and skills about your mental wellbeing. Then do it again after the session to see if these have developed and improved, or if you need to know more. **1 is the lowest level, 5 is the highest.**

Learning outcomes		Low				High
When I'm under extra pressure, I can manage it in a healthy, positive and productive way	Before the session	1	2	3	4	5
	After the session	1	2	3	4	5
I can identify and confidently communicate my strengths, qualities and abilities on job or course applications	Before the session	1	2	3	4	5
	After the session	1	2	3	4	5
I can use feedback to develop and improve	Before the session	1	2	3	4	5
	After the session	1	2	3	4	5
I can support others and build positive new relationships	Before the session	1	2	3	4	5
	After the session	1	2	3	4	5
When I feel 'first day nerves', I can find ways to feel calm and in control	Before the session	1	2	3	4	5
	After the session	1	2	3	4	5

# Further support

The list on the next slide gives information about national organisations which provide advice, support and guidance for professionals or young people about mental health and wellbeing. Please ensure you check the suitability of websites before sharing them with students.

You should also include information about school-based support, such as pastoral staff, behaviour and learning support and school nurses and counsellors. Signpost specific staff if appropriate.

List any local support services or charities that might be accessed by students. Often there is a range of charities and other local services that can be accessed freely or at very low cost.

**When providing sources of further support to students, it is advisable to include:**

- What it is
- Who it is suitable for
- How to access it
- What happens when it is accessed



# Signposting: National organisations

<a href="#"><u>Time to Change</u></a>	Aims to change the way people think and act about mental health problems. Produces a range of resources and research documents for use in schools.
<a href="#"><u>Mind</u></a>	Provides advice and support to empower anyone experiencing a mental health problem. Mind also campaigns to help improve services, raise awareness and promote understanding.
<a href="#"><u>Rethink Mental Illness</u></a>	A charity that improves the lives of people severely affected by mental illness through local groups and services, expert information and training and successful campaigning.
<a href="#"><u>YoungMinds</u></a>	Provides mental health support, guidance and information for young people and professionals working with them.
<a href="#"><u>Mental Health Foundation</u></a>	Provides information, guidance and resources on all aspects of managing mental health at home, at school and in the workplace.
<a href="#"><u>Action for Happiness</u></a>	Focuses particularly on wellbeing and how to lead a happier life. Its Ten Keys to Happier Living is also available as an app.
<a href="#"><u>Place2Be</u></a>	Place2Be is a children's mental health charity with over 25 years' experience working with pupils, families and staff in UK schools. They provide mental health support in schools through one-to-one and group counselling using tried and tested methods backed by research.
<a href="#"><u>Ripple Suicide Prevention Charity</u></a>	Ripple is a free browser extension that triggers when a student searches for harmful online content relating to self-harm or suicide. The tool signposts to mental health support services accompanied with messages of hope and encouragement to keep safe.
<a href="#"><u>Samaritans</u></a>	If you're going through a tough time, you can talk to Samaritans free – day or night, 365 days a year.