



School Mental Health Training



**World Health
Organization**

REGIONAL OFFICE FOR THE **Eastern Mediterranean**

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Lecture 5

Mental health-promoting schools 2 (promotion and prevention)





Learning objectives



**behavioural
management
strategies**

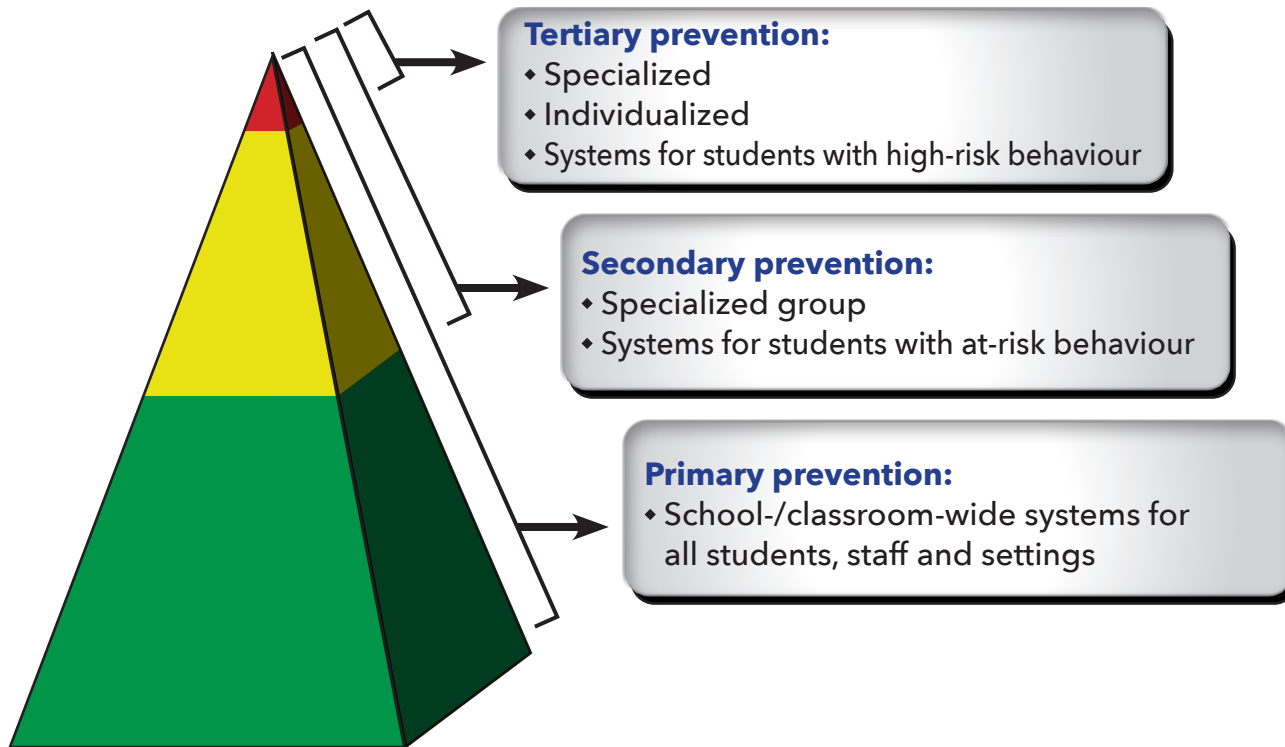


**basics of
counselling**



**introduce techniques
such as circle time and
life skills education**

Prevention is divided into several levels



Behavioural management strategies for schools

Discipline and management of disruptive behaviour

- Discipline is an important part of school life
- Different strategies should be used
- Negative discipline techniques like physical punishment, criticizing or threatening should never be used due to their harmful effects
- Use positive discipline techniques





Exercise 1



Please divide yourself
into groups of four

Take 10 minutes to discuss the following topic

Discuss strategies that can be used in class for **disruptive behaviour**

Have a representative report back to the larger group



Practical steps to manage disruptive behaviour

- Take a **preventative** approach
- Set reasonable and fair limits
- Ignore unacceptable behaviour when appropriate. It is not appropriate to ignore behaviour when a child is causing damage or hurting themselves or others
- Redirect or distract behaviour when possible
- Point out the natural and logical consequences
- Help students develop decision-making skills
- Help students develop alternatives to disruptive behaviours such as doing a productive task





Practical steps to manage disruptive behaviour

- Reward successes during the school day
- Develop with students a multi-step plan to help them wait patiently
- Teach and reinforce **positive strategies** like sharing, negotiation, and cooperation
- Do a countdown for the last several minutes of an activity to help with transitions
- Praise students often for specific things they have done
- When the student resists following direction shift the conversation to student choices and consequences





Practical steps to manage disruptive behaviour

- Set limits against aggression and communicate your expectations clearly
- Be consistent, predictable, and fair
- Teach children to control anger by giving them information about anger and teach them to use words to convey feelings
- If a student becomes oppositional or upset, first recognize the reaction and then invite them to consider alternatives





Remember

- Do not overdo any of the techniques
- Be consistent and systematic
- Do not humiliate or embarrass the student, criticize their personality or family, but rather talk about the behaviour
- Your tone of voice and attitude should remain friendly
- Reinforce desirable behaviour at every opportunity
- Model positive behaviour and show students how you can handle frustration

Basics of counselling

Relationship building	Active listening	Interviewing skills	Observation skills	Providing information
Establishing a relationship based on empathy, trust and respect	Use skills such as maintaining eye contact, appropriate body language, nodding one's head, modulating tone to indicate empathy	Ask open ended questions: "Can you tell me more about.....?" Ask questions in a non-judgmental way Use questions appropriate for the child's age Reflective listening demonstrates the teacher has understood the child's experience	Observe the child's verbal and non-verbal behaviour	Provide factual information and challenge misconceptions

Counselling

Teachers are **not** expected to be trained counsellors and should refer students who need counselling for professional help

However, teachers can use **basic counselling** skills in working with children



Circle time

(sometimes referred to as group thinking time)

Increasingly popular technique used to facilitate students' communication of their feelings and concerns at school



How to implement circle time

A facilitator encourages students to explore issues important to the group (classroom rules, bullying, etc.)

Students should ideally sit in a circle to give the feeling they are in a **safe and equal** environment



Ideally, the group should consist of **no more than 25 students**

How to implement circle time

Rules should be presented by the facilitator

- **Respect** the opinions of others
- Allow each student a chance to participate
- No one should be forced to share their opinion
- Respect each other's **confidentiality**



How to implement circle time

The agenda for each meeting should be defined clearly

Session structure

Beginning: review the rules and present the discussion topic

Middle: key issues are discussed

Closure: counsellor summarizes the discussions



How to implement circle time

The facilitator's role

Actively listen, encourage participation and allow solutions to emerge

For younger children

The facilitator may sit on a small chair or on the floor to be at the same level as students

Discussion topics

Can include identifying feelings, managing emotions, and building self-esteem





Life skills education

An important part of prevention and promotion efforts

Managing conflict

Dealing with authority

Problem solving

Making and keeping friends

Cooperation

Self-awareness

Creative thinking

Decision-making

Critical thinking

Managing stress

Trust

Sharing

Sympathy

Compassion

Sociability

Self-esteem

Planning ahead

Empathy

Dealing with emotions

Assertiveness

Active listening

Respect

Tolerance





Life skills education techniques



- Hear an explanation of the skill in question
- Observation of the skill (modelling)
- Practice the skill in selected situations in a supportive learning environment
- Feedback about individual performance of skill
- Practice of skill facilitated by role-playing in typical scenarios
- Using skills learning tools, e.g. by working through the steps in the decision-making process
- Practice should start with skills learning in non-threatening, low-risk everyday situations and progressively transition to their application in threatening, high-risk situations.
- Important methods used to facilitate life skills learning include group discussion and story-telling





Thank you

