



School Mental Health Training



**World Health
Organization**

REGIONAL OFFICE FOR THE **Eastern Mediterranean**

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Lecture 7

Referring children in schools

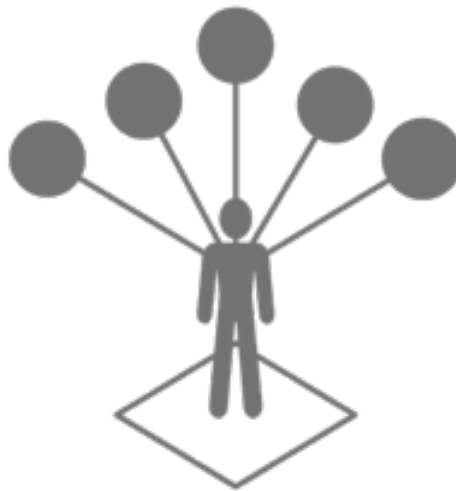




Learning objectives



**recognize when to refer
a student to a mental
health professional**



**understand the different
roles mental health
professionals play in a
school setting**



**consider
privacy and
confidentiality**



Exercise 1



Please divide yourself
into groups of 4–5

Take 10 minutes to discuss the following topic



When should educators refer a student to a **mental health specialist**

Have a representative report back to the larger group

When to refer to a specialist for evaluation and treatment

- When behaviours/symptoms are **getting worse** rather than better
- When behaviours/symptoms are **negatively impacting** the child's functioning at home or school
- When symptoms are **severe** or **distressing**
- When there is **risk or danger** towards self or others
- When interventions in the classroom alone are **not enough**
- When **in doubt** it is always better to get a consultation






Some general behaviours and symptoms that may warrant a referral

- A sudden drop in scores or academic performance
- Sudden withdrawal or isolation from peers
- Being too emotional or quick to anger
- Frequently getting into fights or defiance
- Pervasive sadness and crying
- Exhibiting bizarre behaviour like responding to things that are not there
- Becoming mute or disengaged





Some general behaviours and symptoms that may warrant a referral

- Truancy
- Appearing tired or sleepy in class on a consistent basis
- Repetitive behaviour
- Self-injurious behaviour (e.g. cutting, head banging)
- Frequently leaving the class due to pains and aches that do not appear on weekends or holidays
- Significant changes in weight



Roles and responsibilities within school in regard to mental health

Everyone has a role to play in **promoting mental health** and providing **a safe and emotionally healthy environment**

School staff should work very closely with families and if a child is in need of referral the family should be consulted first and provide consent



Roles and responsibilities within school in regard to mental health

- Teachers
- Parents
- Social workers
- Child and adolescent psychiatrists
- Psychologists
- Occupational therapists
- Physical therapists
- School nurses
- Speech-language pathologists
- Community leaders





Privacy and confidentiality

Parameters of privacy and confidentiality should be clearly delineated to the family

The child and family also need to be told if there are safety issues such as a child wanting to harm himself/herself or others, and informed that staff will need to take appropriate actions to **ensure everyone's safety**





Thank you

