



# WELLBEING ADVOCATE TOOLKIT

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## SECTION 1

# WHAT IS A WELLBEING ADVOCATE?

## Congratulations on becoming a Wellbeing Advocate!

This new role has been co-created with the **Mental Health Foundation** and students across the UK in order to raise awareness and improve mental health outcomes for students in educational settings.

It's important that you read through this e-book thoroughly as it includes essential information on safeguarding and will help you to prepare properly for your role.

As a **Wellbeing Advocate**, your role is to lead wellbeing and mental health initiatives in your educational setting and connect staff and students.

As well as being a leader of normalising mental health at your institution, you will build skills and gain experience that can enhance your employability.

### SKILLS YOU WILL DEVELOP:

- Planning and organising
- Running workshops and activities
- Public speaking and communication
- Collaborating with others
- Organising logistics

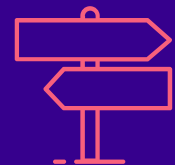
### ADDITIONAL BENEFITS:

- Enhance your CV
- Being part of an innovative approach to supporting students with their mental health
- Making a difference to your community
- Helping others boosts your own wellbeing

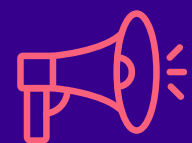
### Key parts of the role



Peer support



Signposting



Raising awareness



Working with staff



# Introduction to Safeguarding

**Safeguarding is about making sure everyone is safe and well at your institution.**

A safeguarding concern is when you are worried about a person's safety, particularly if someone is vulnerable and at risk of harm.

As part of your role, you will be connecting with other students through events, workshops and talks. Although your role does not include any pastoral responsibilities, some students may choose to talk to you about their mental health and any issues or struggles they may be facing. In this role you will be supporting your peers, however, you are not alone in this. Every institution that supports students will follow a safeguarding procedure.

It is not your responsibility to know the safeguarding procedure in depth, however, it is important for you to know who to go to if you have any questions if either yourself or your peers need any extra support.

Before starting the role, a member of staff will explore safeguarding with you.

### GET SUPPORT

It's important that you get support for your own wellbeing when you need to. Hearing about troubling experiences can be stressful and might impact your mental health. Talk to the UOK? project lead or safeguarding lead if you're feeling worried. Remember you are not alone and are a part of a team.

## Boundaries of the role

For your wellbeing, and the wellbeing of your peers, it is important to maintain healthy boundaries. You are not expected to respond to students in a crisis situation or to replace the support provided by qualified healthcare professionals.

### DO:



- Be warm and approachable.
- Treat everyone equally and with empathy.
- Collaborate with your fellow advocates and staff when organising activities.
- Remember, you do not have to be an expert, you do not need to have all the answers.

### DON'T:



- Diagnose anyone.
- React aggressively or judgmentally to other people's opinions.
- Discriminate against anyone in any form.
- Try to solve every problem by yourself.

## WHAT does a Wellbeing Advocate do?

There are 4 key parts of the role: Peer Support, Signposting, Raising Awareness and Working with Staff. Suggested activities for each area are available below. Hopefully this is just a starting point! You can pick and choose what to use from this section to best fit the needs in your educational setting or use it as inspiration for fresh ideas. Please note that all of the prep times are approximate.

### Peer support



As a Wellbeing Advocate you can make a difference by encouraging students to get together and engage in shared activities and events. Peer support involves finding creative and social ways to connect with your peers, create a sense of community and boost wellbeing.

Use the advice in '[Section 3: Running an Activity](#)' to support you with these activities.

#### ACTIVITIES:

Arrange a sporting or creative activity  
e.g. painting, Running, Roller Skating etc.



Prep: 2 - 4 hrs

#### HOW:

You can plan an event based on a theme or topic - that can give students a chance to connect and meet new people, and encourage positivity and self-care.

#### RESOURCES:

Outdoor space/ suitable room, advertising materials, refreshments, appropriate equipment i.e. paints for painting

#### SKILLS DEVELOPED:

Event planning, facilitation, public speaking and creativity/ fitness

#### DURATION :

45 mins to 3 hrs



## SECTION 2: WHAT DOES A WELLBEING ADVOCATE DO?



Prep: 30min- 1hr

### Run a journaling session

**HOW:** You can plan a group journaling session encouraging students to discuss their feelings, meditate and reflect.

**RESOURCES:** Outdoor space/ room, advertising materials, refreshments, pens and paper

**SKILLS DEVELOPED:** Creativity, event planning, facilitation and listening skills

**DURATION:** 15 mins to 1 hr



Prep: 30min - 1 hr

### Create a local map of peaceful, quiet areas for walking etc.

**HOW:** Using your knowledge of the local area (e.g. "Green Chain Walks", local areas of natural beauty) create a map or set of directions that would be great for a wellbeing walk. The direction can be shared or a group walk could be organised.

**RESOURCES:** Printing, pens and paper, outdoor spaces

**SKILLS DEVELOPED:** Public speaking, teamwork, marketing and organising

**DURATION:** 15 mins - 1 hour



Prep: 1 - 2 hrs

### Organise coffee mornings, brunches and lunches

**HOW:** You can arrange social meetups to make connections and create safe and inclusive spaces

**RESOURCES:** Room/ café availability, refreshments, conversations starters

**SKILLS DEVELOPED:** Event planning and communication

**DURATION:** 15 mins to 45 mins



Prep: 30min - 1 hr

### Organise online activities and events - e.g. Netflix Party

**HOW:** You can arrange an online event such as a group watch, or a gaming session. It will be important to set clear ground rules e.g. selecting appropriate/ inclusive films.

**RESOURCES:** Laptop, Zoom/ Teams

**SKILLS DEVELOPED:** Event planning and communication

**DURATION:** 30 mins to 2hrs



# SIGNPOSTING



Signposting involves directing people to places where they can find support for their wellbeing (whether that is a helpline, a service, a club or just general information).

We have also provided some [useful links for help and support](#) in Section 3. **note: add a note that they can choose which ones they want to do**

## ACTIVITIES:



Prep: 30mins - 1hr

### Create Awareness Cards OR stickers

**HOW:** Using the signposting resource, you can produce a handy info card or stickers to share with individuals as and when needed.

**RESOURCES:** Printing

**SKILLS DEVELOPED:** Communication and design



Prep: 1 - 2hrs

### Host a drop-in session

**HOW:** During lunch time, you can distribute resources and offer tips for where students can go to get support for their mental health.

**RESOURCES:** Printing, Liaising with relevant staff for access

**SKILLS DEVELOPED:** Communication and design



Prep: 1 - 2hrs

### Attend a Fair/ Festival/ Tutor Group

**HOW:** Attend an event that is already taking place at your institution where you can share information from a booth/ table and answers questions for students passing by.

**RESOURCES:** Liaising with relevant staff for access

**SKILLS DEVELOPED:** Marketing and promotion



## **RAISING AWARENESS**



Raising awareness about mental health can help to reduce stigma and bring people together so they feel less alone and more understood. It might even be the first time someone has been encouraged to think about their wellbeing.

Use the advice in the [Section 3: Creating Resources](#) to support you with these activities.

### **ACTIVITIES:**

#### **Create Posters**



**Prep: 30mins - 1hr**

- HOW:** You can create posters and place them on social media and around campus. They can be linked to events or simply have wellbeing tips.
- RESOURCES:** Software to create the posters, printing and/ or access to social media platforms.
- SKILLS DEVELOPED:** Communication, design and marketing



#### **Write a diary of the student experience for a blog or newsletter**



**Prep: 30mins - 1hr**

- HOW:** You can share personal stories about mental health (in the form of an article, blog or video), to kickstart conversations and increase awareness.
- RESOURCES:** Liaising with relevant staff for access to blog and/ or newsletter
- SKILLS DEVELOPED:** Writing and public speaking

#### **Create a mindfulness box with prompts and ideas**



**Prep: 30mins - 1hr**

- HOW:** You can create a box and leave it in a communal area. This can contain positive reminders, and tips for relieving stress and relaxing.
- RESOURCES:** Box, stationary, printing and room for planning and creating
- SKILLS DEVELOPED:** Design, advice and guidance, and written communication
- DURATION:** Refresh ideas within box after two weeks



## SECTION 2: WHAT DOES A WELLBEING ADVOCATE DO?



Prep: 1 - 2hrs

### Set up a message wall

**HOW:** Create a message board on campus for anonymous encouraging messages to be posted. You could use a prompt e.g. "when I am struggling with my mental health, something that helps me.....".

**RESOURCES:** Pens, paper, post it notes or stickers

**SKILLS DEVELOPED:** Creativity, giving advice and written communication

**DURATION** You could keep this up, make sure to check it once a week. Or you could use it as a feature at an event and keep it up for the day



Prep: 2 - 4 hrs

### Run an awareness raising event

**HOW:** You can arrange an event on the theme of mental health and wellbeing. Check your information sources and be sensitive to the lived experiences of your peers.

**RESOURCES:** Room/ space booking, refreshments, agenda

**SKILLS DEVELOPED:** Event management, communication and facilitation

**PREP TIME:** 2 hrs to 4 hrs

**DURATION:** 45 mins to 2 hrs

### Event Ideas

- A get together
- A board game night
- Setting up an information stall
- A coffee morning
- An open mic night



All of this guidance can be combined to create an event of your choosing. For instance, for National Stress Awareness Day you could arrange a coffee morning to share top tips on managing stress. This could then be written up as a guide for the student bulletin.

Month	Awareness Campaign	Date*
Sep	<u>World Suicide Prevention Day</u> <u>Youth Mental Health Day</u>	10th 19th
Oct	<u>World Mental Health Day</u>	10th
Nov	<u>National Stress Awareness Day</u>	2nd
Feb	<u>Time to Talk Day</u>	2nd
Mar	<u>Eating Disorders Awareness Week</u> <u>Self Injury Awareness Day</u> <u>World Bipolar Day</u>	Wk 1 1st 30th
Apr	<u>Stress Awareness Month</u>	Apr
May	<u>Mental Health Awareness Week</u>	Wk 3
Jun	<u>Volunteers Week</u>	Wk 1

# WORKING WITH STAFF



Wellbeing Advocates can play a key role in connecting staff and students. The first thing you need to know is who the key staff members are. Note them below:

UOK? Project Lead: \_\_\_\_\_  
Safeguarding lead: \_\_\_\_\_  
Other key staff: \_\_\_\_\_

## ACTIVITIES:



### Connecting staff and students

**HOW:** Invite staff to take part in suitable events that address mental health and wellbeing. You can also ask for their support to keep them going especially when involving unrepresented students e.g. racialised groups, LGBTQIA+ , people with neurodiversity etc.

**RESOURCES:** Members of staff

**SKILLS DEVELOPED:** Communication and mediation

### Make a Movie/Short film



Prep: 1 - 3 hrs

**HOW:** You could make a short film addressing wellbeing and invite staff and students to contribute ideas. This can then be shared with staff to give a firsthand look of the student experience.

**RESOURCES:** Phone or camera and access to editing apps/ software.

**SKILLS DEVELOPED:** Project planning and content creation

### Surveying students for thoughts/concerns



Prep: 30min - 1 hr

**HOW:** Surveying students to find out their biggest concerns at your institution (see Section 3) and feedback to staff.

**RESOURCES:** Pens and paper, or software e.g. Google Forms, Microsoft Forms

**SKILLS DEVELOPED:** Data processing

**DURATION:** Check response rate within 3 days

## HOW to run events and activities

This section contains useful tips, information and resources to support with organising and running activities and events. You should aim to run at least one activity or event a month.

### Creating written resources

The resources you create might be standalone (e.g. a suggestion box), or a part of another activity (e.g. a social media banner). Either way, these tips for creating resources should be a helpful starting point. Before circulating any written resources, make sure they have been approved by the UOK? Project Lead.

#### TONE AND DESIGN



- Is the tone and design appropriate for the audience?
- Ideally the wording should be applicable to as many people as possible. Therefore, sarcasm, "in-jokes", or any other overly casual phrasing should be avoided.

#### SUPPORT

- Consider whether any support is required beyond the Wellbeing Advocate team.
- This could be as simple as requiring access to a noticeboard, or more trickier, like including it in a bulletin to boost the reach.



#### ACCESSIBILITY

- Consider the needs of your audience. Think about practical factors such as font size, colours and spacing.
- Also consider cultural factors such as artwork, voice and language.



#### BUDGET

- You should be able to make your resource for free. However, if a budget is needed plan this ahead of time.
- There are many design apps available for free, like Canva, and you can make use of the institution facilities.



#### TIME & PLACE

- If you have created a physical resource (e.g. poster), is it in the best place for the maximum number of people to see it?
- Keep them up to date - old information can cause confusion
- If it is online resource, can students easily find it or is it being missed?





## Organising events

### BEFORE THE EVENT

Running a successful event requires careful planning so that you feel confident and participants have a good time. These recommendations can be applied to every relevant activity mentioned in this toolkit. Ask yourself these questions:

#### WHAT IS THE PURPOSE?

Is it to raise awareness, bring people together, or something else?

See if you can summarise your event in one sentence. This will help you get a clear idea of the purpose of the event.

#### WHERE IS IT?

Think about how many people are coming, is the venue the right size and is the location accessible for people with different mobility needs? Can you provide accessible versions of any information so everyone can benefit?

Will you need any extra resources i.e. arts and crafts, to run the event?

#### WHEN IS IT?

Agree a reasonable date and duration for the event. Ideally, it will be in a time and place that is convenient for the maximum number of people to attend. How will you publicise the event so people know what is going on? Which staff members do you need to agree this with?

### DURING THE EVENT

#### CREATE THE RIGHT ATMOSPHERE

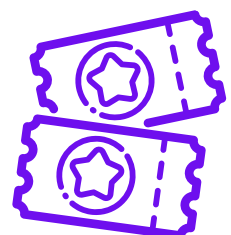
You want participants to feel comfortable. [Icebreakers](#) can help to get people talking (more info further in Section 3).

#### BE AWARE OF THE TIME

Ensure you have access to a clock to keep time and adjust the activity as needed. Have a plan in case the event overruns or finishes early.

#### BE INFORMATIVE

Let students know what mental health support is available and when the next scheduled activity will be.



## SECTION 3: HOW TO RUN EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES



### AFTER THE EVENT

#### SUPPORT EACH OTHER

Review the activity or event. Consider practical elements (did you have enough time, resources, etc.) and wellbeing elements (both your own and other students' wellbeing)

#### THANK YOU

Thank participants and any support staff or partners e.g. cafes for hosting the event.



USE THE QR  
CODE OR  
CLICK HERE  
TO  
ACCESS THE  
SURVEY!

#### GIVE FEEDBACK

Make sure you use the survey provided to let us know how your event went!

## MAKE IT A FUNDRAISER!

In order to continue our vital work at the Mental Health Foundation, we rely on fundraising from our generous supporters. Could you help us?

For example, whether you are organising a [Wear it Green Day](#), a walk, or a quiz night, you could set a small fee or suggested donation for fellow students to take part. You can also get creative with your fundraising by adding a competitive element to your activity.

No matter how much you raise, every donation will help us challenge the mental health stigma so that people and communities can thrive. If you'd like any support with your fundraising, you can get in touch with our friendly events team on [events@mentalhealth.org.uk](mailto:events@mentalhealth.org.uk). They are on hand to offer fundraising tips and advice and can also provide you with fundraising materials such as t-shirts, balloons and collection boxes to make your event as successful as possible.



### PAYING IN YOUR FUNDRAISING

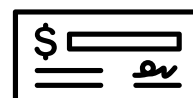
There are a few ways you can pay in your fundraising donations:

You can set up a JustGiving page to collect donations, or go to the Mental Health Foundation's online donation page: [mentalhealth.org.uk/donate](https://mentalhealth.org.uk/donate)

If you'd like us to send you a paying in slip please email [events@mentalhealth.org.uk](mailto:events@mentalhealth.org.uk) and we'll organise this for you.

When sending us your donations, make sure you always bank the money yourself!

Never send cash through the post as it could get lost or stolen.



You can send us a  
cheque payable to  
Mental Health  
Foundation to:

Mental Health Foundation  
Studio 2  
197 Long Lane  
London  
SE1 4PD



### Running an activity



You can run activities to talk about mental health. This section of the guide supports you with that and contains a variety of icebreakers, resources and ideas you can use as inspiration.

### ICEBREAKERS AND ENERGISERS



Icebreakers and energisers are a great way to set the mood for an activity, whether that is to introduce something new or bring the session to a close. There are a number of ideas below as a starting point. Usually you will want to give yourself 5 to 15 minutes for these activities so that they are engaging. Make sure you take part too!

#### Significant places

Everyone has to pin a significant location on a map. Ask if anyone in the group would like to explain why their location is important.

Face to Face: This can be facilitated using sticky notes and a physical map/ globe.

Online: You can replace a physical map with Google Maps.

#### Word clouds

Ask everyone to write three words to describe themselves and add them to a board, invite participants to explain their words. In instances where participants are using the same words to describe themselves, highlight this to find points of similarity and difference within the group.

Face to Face: This can be facilitated using a whiteboard/ interactive board and sticky notes.

Online: This can be facilitated using a Google Jamboard, an interactive poll like Slido or a word art creation tool.

#### This or That

Ask participants a variety of "This or That" questions to promote conversation and learn about preferences within the group. A list of prompts can be found [here](#).



### FIND AN OBJECT

Ask everyone to find objects around them based on set criteria e.g. find an object starting with the same letter as your name, find the smallest/ largest object, find something that represents you, find something with sentimental value. They can then explain what their object is and why they chose it.

Face to Face: Depending on the location and available resources the criteria can be adjusted. Participants can also be told about this activity beforehand and bring in something that fits the criteria.

Online: Participants can find something in their house and show or describe it to the rest of the group. Remind participants to turn off cameras/ mute microphones while they are searching.

### COMMON GROUND

Ask participants to try to find as many things as possible that is true of everyone in the group e.g. we are all in this Teams/ Zoom, we all love to cook, we all like the colour red etc.

### VISUALISATION 1

Ask participants to imagine if something to do with mental health and wellbeing was a person, song, film etc. Which one would it be and why? Ask them to explain their thought process with the rest of the group e.g. if "stress" was an animal, what kind of animal would it be and why?

### VISUALISATION 2

Using a range of images/ media as a prompt, ask participants to select which of the images stands out to them and best represents how they feel about wellbeing?

Face to Face: This can be facilitated by bringing in postcards etc. to promote thoughts and creative thinking.

Online: This can be facilitated using an online media gallery, for instance Google Arts and Culture.



### Mood maps

Ask participants to think about their journey to and from a common location e.g. college. They should focus on the thoughts, feelings, objects and locations that stick out to them the most. They can then map out their journeys highlighting where they feel different emotions, and what triggers these different feelings. It can also be a great way to explore differences and diversity within the group by comparing their approaches. Some participants might create maps of their actual route, others more metaphorical and focussed on their feelings.

### Media Q&A

Using a relevant video/ image i.e. [www.whatsupwitheveryone.com](http://www.whatsupwitheveryone.com) ask the group prompts to promote conversation. Prompts include "What can we learn from the video? Do you relate to the video? How would you change the ending of the video?" etc.

### Themed activities

Activities can also be planned around certain themes, here are two examples. More can be found in the [additional activities handout](#).

### Exploring coping strategies



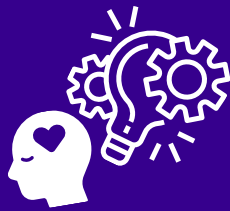
#### Stress bucket

Draw a bucket on a flipchart/ jamboard with taps on either side of the bucket. Explain that water in the bucket represents stress. Ask the group what things in life can increase stress, represented by the water in the bucket e.g. exam stress, difficulties with friends and family, loneliness. Add these to the bucket.

Next explain that we have different ways of addressing our stress. Healthy coping strategies i.e. a good night's sleep, allow us to reduce stress. Unhealthy strategies i.e. binge eating, ultimately make us more stressed. Label one tap healthy and the other one unhealthy, with the unhealthy tap feeding water back into the bucket. Ask the group to add healthy and unhealthy strategies to each tap.







### Exploring Mindfulness



#### Gratitude:

Ask everyone to write whatever comes to mind when they hear the word “gratitude”. Follow this up by asking everyone to write down three things they are grateful for this week. Lastly ask them to connect the words to the things they are grateful. This can be quite visual i.e. they can draw lines from one thing to another in their journals.

### Exploring Mental Health Generally



#### Half-Full/ Half-Empty.

Ask the group to talk about their favourite aspects of college life and see how many they have in common. How do these good parts affect their mental health.

Next ask the group to talk about the parts of college life which they most dislike. Again, see how many they have in common and how they impact their mental health.

### Exploring Body Image



#### Mirror Image

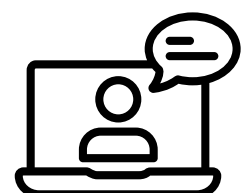
Ask the group to take a piece of paper and tell them that this blank page is a mirror.

Encourage them to write all the things they can “see” in the mirror – encourage them to describe themselves physically as well as their personalities.

Ensure they focus on positive and affirmative descriptions.

### Useful online resources

- Animated Videos on Mental Health: [www.whatsupwitheveryone.com](http://www.whatsupwitheveryone.com)
- Real Stories from Young People with Lived Experience: [www.youngminds.org.uk/young-person/blog/](http://www.youngminds.org.uk/young-person/blog/)
- Virtual Gallery: <https://artsandculture.google.com/time?hl=en&date=1800>
- Conversation Starters and Prompts: <https://conversationstartersworld.com>
- Word Art Creator: <https://wordart.com/>
- Interactive Polls: <https://www.sli.do/> and <https://www.mentimeter.com/>
- Inclusive film list: <https://www.inclusionlist.org/>
- Interactive Quizzes: <https://kahoot.com/>





# HELP AND SUPPORT FOR SIGNPOSTING



## Helplines

[The Mix](#) - Support for under 25s  
Text 'THEMIX' to 85258

[Samaritans](#)

Call at anytime no matter what you are going through. Call free on 116 123

[Papyrus](#)

Support for under 35s experiencing thoughts of suicide  
Call - 0800 068 4141  
Text - 07860 039 967

[Shout](#)

Free, confidential, anonymous text support service. Text 85258.

[Beat Eating Disorders](#)

Support over the phone or webchat available  
0808 801 0677

[Muslim Youth Helpline](#)

Faith and culturally sensitive mental health support  
Call 0808 808 2008

[Mermaids](#) - support for under 20s

Helpline and webchat offering support for transgender and gender diverse young people and their families.  
Call 0808 801 0400

[Switchboard LGBT+](#)

Support and information over the phone and via instant messaging.  
Call 0300 330 0630



## Websites

[Headspace](#)

An app for guided meditation and mindfulness

[Brook](#)

For free and impartial sex and relationship advice

[Reclaim](#)

A charity working with young people from a working class background

[National Debt Line](#)

For free advice on debt

["Drugs and Me"](#) or ["Talk to Frank"](#)

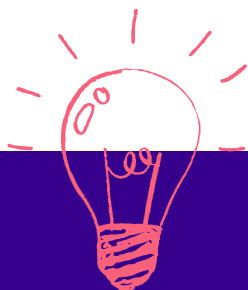
Advice on drugs

[BAATN Network](#)

The home of the largest community of Counsellors and Psychotherapists of Black, African, Asian and Caribbean Heritage in the UK

[Depaul](#)

Support for young people experiencing homelessness



## TOP TIPS

We would also recommend sharing "Our Best Mental Health Tips" which can be found on our [website](#).

## GOOD LUCK!

We hope you are feeling inspired and prepared to start your new role as a wellbeing advocate! Remember, you must participate in safeguarding training with a member of staff at your educational setting before you begin connecting with your peers.

Thank you for playing your part in helping us to achieve our mission. Together: everyone deserves good mental health

## NOTES

# NOTES