

STAFF TRAINING SESSION



The following are some exercises for staff to use in preparation for using the DEAL (Developing Emotional Awareness and Listening) resources. These exercises can be used as part of an INSET/training day. You may wish to invite in volunteers from your local Samaritans branch to support you in using the resources. You can contact us at education@samaritans.org to ask about this.

The aim of the staff training sessions are to learn:

- About DEAL is and its components.
- What emotional health is.
- The importance of exploring issues of emotional health with young people.
- How to create a safe environment for learning about emotional health.
- How DEAL sessions can fit in within the school curriculum and meet the needs of students.
- Strategies to help overcome concerns about teaching emotional health related topics.
- Facts and information about young people and emotional health.
- To consider attitudes towards mental/emotional health.
- How to use the DEAL resources.

The training materials are divided into four sessions as listed below. Each one is designed to last approximately 30 minutes. The training can be delivered in one session that should take about two and half hours. They are designed for staff to use as part of an INSET day or a staff meeting.

1. Introduction to DEAL
2. What is emotional health and why teach it?
3. Creating a safe learning environment
4. Planning DEAL sessions



DEAL

Developing Emotional Awareness and Listening



SAMARITANS



Session 1: Introduction to DEAL

Aims

- To know about the DEAL resources
- To consider the importance of Emotional Health education.

Resources

- 🕒 An introduction to “DEAL for staff” slides.

Activity

Explain to the group that DEAL is a Samaritans resource that is designed to support teachers to help students to:

- 🕒 Develop effective communication skills, be able to listen, support others and ask for support for themselves if needed.
- 🕒 Develop awareness of their own emotional health and that of others, and understand what can affect their emotional health and what they can do to maintain positive emotional health.
- 🕒 Develop the skills to express emotions effectively and appropriately. Learn different positive ways to cope with life’s challenges.
- 🕒 Recognise that everyone experiences difficult times and that there is always a way through these times.
- 🕒 Understand the benefits of talking.

Go through the slides using the attached notes. The quiz helps to give some statistical evidence as to why we need to be thinking about including DEAL in the classroom.

It would be useful to follow straight on with the next activity in the same session if possible.



DEAL

Developing Emotional Awareness and Listening



SAMARITANS



Session 2: What is emotional health?

Aims

- To understand what emotional health is
- To consider why we need to include it in the curriculum.

Resources

- Resilience video clip (from DEAL website)
- large pieces of flip chart paper
- a copy (or have available online) of the DEAL session [What is emotional health?](#)
- pens
- statements (below)
- DEAL staff training activity slides

Activity A: Understanding emotional health

Go to slide 2. Where do we stand?

- Ask all staff to imagine a continuum line across the classroom. At one end is 'strongly disagree', and the other end is 'strongly agree'. You can label the walls if it helps.
- Read out each statement below and ask staff to stand in the place that reflects how they feel. After each statement you can ask staff to volunteer to share why they are standing where they are, and then invite others to agree or share a different view. Staff should be encouraged to think about the benefits of learning about emotional health in the curriculum and to explore their personal views about this (but bear in mind that everyone will have different experiences and opinions).

It is important that ground rules are set and followed, so that everyone feels safe to express their views.

Statements:

- If students are able to express their feelings, they are calmer and can concentrate better.
- Learning how to cope with difficult experiences is a fundamental life skill.
- Listening skills can help you become a successful employee.
- Students are here to learn, not to talk about how they feel.
- We should only be teaching emotional health to the few that really need it. Depression is just having a bad day.
- Young people cannot learn if they are unable to express how they feel.
- Aggression and violence are often a result of poor emotional health.
- Resilience is a state of mind – it cannot be taught.
- Young people need to learn facts, not social skills.
- Teachers should not be asked to cover such issues with young people.
- If students do not learn coping strategies, they may end up with long term mental health issues.
- Teachers who have mental health issues cannot teach about wellbeing to students.
- Suicide prevention is not the responsibility of schools.
- Add some of your own if you wish!





Go to slide 3. Share the following definition of emotional health:

Emotional health is about how we think and feel. It is about our sense of wellbeing, our ability to cope with life events and our ability to acknowledge our own emotions, as well as those of others. Emotional health means that we can find ways of keeping our life in balance. It's not about feeling happy or good all the time.

Discuss this with the whole group. Is everyone happy with that definition? Any comments?

Activity B: How does emotional health affect learning?

- Go to slide 4. Ask staff to work in pairs and think of ten things that negatively affect students' ability to learn at school. Allow a few minutes for this.
- Go to slide 5. Ask them to repeat this for ten things that help students concentrate, learn and achieve at school.
- Now ask each pair to go through both of their lists and underline all the answers that they think relate to emotional health or wellbeing. Feed these back and record them on flipchart paper so everyone can see.

Activity C: What is emotional health?

Go to slide 6.

- In groups of three or four, ask participants to draw an outline of a person who is 'healthy' on a large piece of paper. Ask them to draw and write around the body to describe what that person does, looks like, likes to do, thinks, feels and how they behave. Allow at least ten minutes for this.
- Then ask each group to highlight those characteristics that they think are to do with emotional health. They could colour code one: colour for physical health and one for emotional health. Feedback and discuss. Is there a difference between emotional and physical health, if so what is it?
- Ask the groups to consider whether they, as adults, would describe these things in the same way that teenagers would. Can they select the three most important things that contribute towards positive emotional health? Go from group to group, asking them to feed back their thoughts and ideas. Ask the group to consider (but not share) something that they are very good at doing that contributes towards their emotional health, and something that they could consider doing more, or less of, that would have a positive effect on their emotional health.
- Are there any other questions about any of these issues? These could be recorded to discuss at the next session. An anonymous system could be offered for staff to ask questions or raise issues, such as a suggestion box.
- Make sure that the emotional health of staff is also considered. Staff should be reminded of the relevant policies and procedures that exist to support them, and where they can access support, both within the school and from external organisations, such as Samaritans. Your local Samaritans branch can provide contact details and information to hand out to staff.

Emotional health is a key concept in DEAL, so we strongly suggest that both teachers and students are introduced to this idea before they use sessions on other topics in DEAL. It is particularly important that they have understood emotional health before they work with difficult or sensitive issues. It is useful to start with the core lessons on emotional health. **Give out DEAL Lesson plan** "What is emotional health?" Allow some time to have a look at this lesson and discuss.

Reflection

Questions to pose to the group, for personal reflection, to consider, maybe share or take away to think about how the learning from the session applies to their practice and implementation of the DEAL resources: How do I feel about including emotional health in my lessons? What will I change as a result of this information?



DEAL

Developing Emotional Awareness and Listening



SAMARITANS



Session 3: Creating a safe learning environment

Aims

- To know how to create a safe and positive learning environment
- To consider the need for ground rules.

Resources

- sticky notes
- teachers notes
- theme overview handouts
- DEAL 'What if...' prompt sheet
- 'What if...' questions
- copy of your school/college/group safeguarding police and child protection policy (for reference if needed)

Activity A: Creating a safe learning environment

- **Remind the group of the Samaritans definition of emotional health (slide 3). Go to slide 7.** Ask the participants to think about the themes that are covered in DEAL using the theme overviews as a starting point. These are about emotional health, coping strategies, difficult feelings, asking for help and developing listening skills. Use the handout if needed. Many of the activities ask students to share their thoughts and ideas and cover some issues that may affect anyone in the classroom.
- Tell the participants to imagine that they are a student sitting in a PSHE (or equivalent) lesson and the subject of difficult feelings is being introduced. Ask them to write down on the post-it notes any concerns or fears they would have about being part of these lessons (these same concerns and fears would probably also apply to the teacher), eg I'm scared that I'll be asked about my personal life, what if I get upset? Explain that no one will be asked to read out their own ideas but that you will be collecting them in and sharing the ideas recorded later in the session. Collect in the sticky notes or slips of paper and put to one side.

When teaching and learning about ourselves, in PSHE or any other curriculum subject, we need to create a safe and positive climate where it is ok for students to talk and share ideas. What can we do to enable this to happen?

- **Go to slide 8.** In groups of three or four, ask participants to list three 'rules' that they would like to set so that the session feels safe and comfortable to take part in. Allow a few minutes, then collect ideas from groups and record on a board. Merge similar responses. When everyone's contribution has been recorded, ask if there is anything else anyone would like to add, or that they are concerned about.
- **Agree that these are the ground rules that you will follow for these training sessions.** Look at each post-it from the previous activity in turn, read it aloud and ask if the concern would be overcome by having these new ground rules in place? If yes, put to one side, if no then put back in a pile. You will come back to these.

Most concerns about taking part in these sessions would be addressed by having ground rules for everyone to agree on. It has been shown that people engage more readily when they have ownership of the rules that have been set.



DEAL

Developing Emotional Awareness and Listening



SAMARITANS



Activity B: Teacher's notes

- 🕒 Look at the DEAL teachers' notes – Page 2: Delivering DEAL activities
- 🕒 Allow time for everyone to read through and for discussion if there is anything that they don't agree with or are unsure of. Take some time to ensure any questions are answered.
- 🕒 Go back to the pile of concerns that have not been addressed and talk through each issue with the group. What would help a person thinking or feeling this? Share ideas and agree on what could help. Make sure that every concern has been addressed. There may be some you need to investigate to find out the information for the next session.

Reflection

What else do I need to know so that I feel comfortable addressing emotional health in the classroom? What can I do in the classroom to make sure it feels safe for everyone?

Activity C: 'What ifs?'

- 🕒 In pairs or small groups, ask staff to think about any fears or concerns a teacher may have about using the DEAL material with young people?
- 🕒 Give out slips of paper to each group and ask them to complete the sentence 'What if...' with something they could imagine being a difficult situation or something that they would not know how to handle. Now ask each group to pass their slips to the group to their left. Add in some of the 'what ifs' provided on the handout if needed.
- 🕒 Now allow some time for the groups to work through one 'what if' at a time and come up with a solution or answer to the concern. What would their response be?
- 🕒 Go around the room and ask participants to feed back their responses and discuss these as a group. Can everyone agree on what to do? Does the school have policies that cover all of the situations? Record key suggestions so that these can be used to form a prompt sheet to support staff when using DEAL. If needed, refer and include the prompt sheet from Samaritans.
- 🕒 Gather and summarise agreed responses and procedures. If you are not sure of any of the issues that have come up, or how to deal with them, you can 'park' them and agree to seek further information to come back to the staff in a follow up session.
- 🕒 This session should enable staff to see that with ground rules and policies in place and sensitive handling of the sessions, the worst case scenarios should be prevented or can be responded to appropriately.

Reflection

What is something I feel more confident about now? If there is something else I still feel unsure about, what can I do about this?



Session 4: Planning to use DEAL sessions

Aims

- Becoming familiar with DEAL
- Plan relevant and appropriate DEAL sessions into the school curriculum.

Resources

- 🕒 DEAL – online on computers or print out various sessions
- 🕒 Each year group or department have their curriculum planning outlines available.

Activity A: Planning DEAL sessions

- 🕒 Ask staff to work online to have a look at a couple of sessions. You can allocate different sessions to each pair, or ask them to choose a couple of lessons that interest them.
- 🕒 Allow enough time to get an idea of what the session is about. Ask pairs to feed back what they liked about the session.
- 🕒 Divide staff into departments, year groups or teams to consider where/how DEAL session can fit into the curriculum?
- 🕒 **Ask each group to consider:**
 - What do we know about our students' needs?
 - What is priority for learning from DEAL for each year group?
 - What is relevant and can be planned into the curriculum to create a spiral framework?

Reflection

How do I feel about using the DEAL materials?



STAFF TRAINING SESSION



'What if...' prompt sheet

What if a young person discloses a very difficult personal situation during a small group activity and someone else in the group comes and tells you?

Response: It's important to reassure the young person who has talked to you. How are they feeling about this? Talk privately to them and make sure that they feel supported and they have some idea how to support the person who opened up.

Talk to the rest of the group privately and check that they are OK with what was discussed. Remind them that they have been trusted with this information and give them ideas on how they might be able to support their peer. Make sure they know that they can talk about any concerns in the future if they need to, and where they can go for support.

Talk to the young person who disclosed privately and tell them that someone was concerned about them. Let them know that if you have serious concerns for their safety, or if they are at risk of harm, you will need to report it to someone to keep them safe – but if that happened, they would be informed every step of the way. Ask them if there is anything they need to talk about. Allow the young person to control the conversation without digging for information. Use phrases such as “do you want to tell me more about that?” or “it sounds like things are difficult for you at the moment – would you like to talk to me about what is happening?” Don't feel you have to give advice. Reassure them that you care and that you are there to help, and that you are there for them if they need to talk.

If you need help to support a young person, speak to someone in school about this. As a staff member ensure that everyone knows who is available to support you both in school and support agencies that support your organisation. You may also want to call Samaritans if you are feeling upset, worried or distressed about anything you have heard, contact us for free 116 123.

What if someone brings up suicide in a lesson and says they know someone who took their own life?

Response: Respond by saying that you are sorry to hear that and that it must have been a very sad time for them. Don't feel concerned that someone has mentioned suicide. It's a sign that they feel safe to talk about this and it can lead to a very helpful and healthy discussion. Research shows that talking about suicide does not increase suicidal intention in young people. Do not talk about methods of suicide, or talk about suicide in a way that glamorises or romanticises suicide or presents it as a reasonable solution to a problem. This would include talking about celebrities who have died by suicide. Talking about suicide statistics of young people is also not helpful as it can normalise suicide as an option. A teenager might think, 'if such a high number are dying by suicide, this must be an acceptable and normal way of coping with my problems.'

It can be helpful to remind students that suicide is a permanent solution to a temporary problem, that suicide is final, that it puts an end to the possibility that things can get better and it leaves behind devastation on many levels. Talking about suicide in an open and honest way can help to prevent it. You can talk about someone who has died by suicide by remembering the good things that they have achieved, sensitively focus on their life achievements and the wastefulness of their death.



DEAL

Developing Emotional Awareness and Listening



SAMARITANS



You can remind students that there is always someone to talk to, no matter whether their problem seems big or small, or even if they don't know what to say but are feeling down. Refer students to support both in and out of school. Make sure that you get the support you need too.

What if I get upset when teaching about something that affects me?

Response: The message we want to give to all young people is that it is OK to not feel happy. This applies to you too. If you feel unable to continue a lesson, then send a student to find a member of staff to cover for you. If you feel able to, explain to the students that you are feeling upset. They don't need to know why, but this also shows them that adults experience difficult feelings too, and have to find ways to cope with these.

What if I don't know the answer to something the students ask?

Response: That's ok, be honest and say that you don't know. Say that you are glad they have asked and that you will find out the information that they need.

What if someone asks me if I have had a mental illness or another tricky personal question in class?

Response: Remind the class that we have agreed ground rules about sharing personal information so that everyone feels able to talk openly and feels safe in lessons. Tell them that it is nice that they are interested in you and that maybe the subject that they have brought up is something that you can all talk about together in class without anyone needing to share personal experiences.

What if someone shares that are they are feeling suicidal or that they are self harming in class?

Response: Be sensitive, thank them for sharing the information and say that you are sorry to hear that and that you would like to talk to them after the lesson to ensure that they have the help that they need. Remind the class of ground rules and that you expect them to be sensitive about the information that has been shared with them. Talk to the student afterwards and offer to listen and support them and tell them that you are glad that they have talked about this. You can find out more about responding to suicidal students through ASSIST training. Your Trust or authority may also provide guidance, policies and training on this subject (see resources for more details). Ensure that the student feels ownership of any referrals and reports that you make, and that they are involved in anything that happens next according to your school policy. The student should feel in control and most importantly, able to talk. Keep the communication and listening going. Tell them there is hope and that talking about how they are feeling can help them to begin to sort out what is happening and decide what to do.

You may need to talk to the rest of the class who are probably feeling very concerned about the student. You can all share ideas about how to support the student and can let the group know that they can talk to you or other available staff about their concerns at any time. Emphasise the strength it took to talk about something so personal, this was a brave thing to do. remind the class to treat one another respectfully. As a teacher you will need to talk to the Safeguarding Officer or child protection officer in your setting to then ensure that the young person is referred for relevant support and help. If the student has actively made plans, or you have any concern that they will try to take their own life, you must take action.

For most of these 'what if' questions, having sound, agreed ground rules in place can really help provide a robust response. If an issue arises that is not addressed in your ground rules, then this is an opportunity to revisit the rules and adapt them to meet new arising issues.

DEAL

Developing Emotional Awareness and Listening



SAMARITANS

STAFF TRAINING SESSION



DEAL activities

DEAL activities include:

- Talking about myths and facts around self harm.
- Considering who is in my support network.
- Learning about different ways of coping with stress.
- Identifying why people don't talk about some things.
- Learning how to ask for support.
- Learning how to overcome barriers to seeking help.
- Considering the importance of telling someone if you're struggling with your feelings.
- Understanding what depression is.
- Understanding what can affect our emotional health.
- Learning about causes of frustration and aggression.
- Considering hopefulness and optimism.
- Identifying personal skills and strengths.
- Learning how to support a friend.
- Recognising when someone may need support.
- Considering that everyone reacts and responds to challenges differently.
- Understanding what can affect our ability to cope.
- Learning that help is available.
- Learning when and how help can be accessed.
- Considering the risks when asking for support.
- Learning to express feelings.
- Learning to recognise feelings.



STAFF TRAINING SESSION



HAND OUT

Statements

If students are able to express their feelings, they are calmer and can concentrate better

Learning how to cope with difficult experiences is a fundamental life skill

Listening skills can help you become a successful employee

Students are here to learn, not to talk about how they feel

We should only be teaching emotional health to the few that really need it

Depression is just having a bad day

Young people cannot learn if they are unable to express how they feel

Aggression and violence are often a result of poor emotional health

Resilience is a state of mind – it cannot be taught

Young people need to learn facts, not social skills

Teachers should not be asked to cover such issues with young people

If students do not learn coping strategies, they may end up with long term mental health issues

Teachers who have mental health issues cannot teach about wellbeing

Suicide prevention is not the responsibility of schools

DEAL

Developing Emotional Awareness and Listening



SAMARITANS

STAFF TRAINING SESSION



HAND OUT

'What if...' questions

A young person discloses a very difficult personal situation during a small group activity and someone else in the group comes and tells you.

Someone brings up suicide in a lesson and says they know someone who took their own life.

I get upset when teaching about something that affects me.

I don't know the answer to something the students ask.

Someone asks me if I have had a mental illness or another tricky personal question in class.

Someone shares that they are feeling suicidal or that they are self harming in class.

DEAL

Developing Emotional Awareness and Listening



SAMARITANS