

EVALUATION TOOL 23:	THE WARWICK-EDINBURGH MENTAL WELL-BEING SCALE		
OVERVIEW:	<p>The Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Well-being Scale</p> <p>WEMWBS is a 14-point scale in which individuals respond to questions about their thoughts and feelings. Researchers are then able to measure an individual's mental well-being.</p> <p>Mental well-being relates to a person's psychological functioning, life-satisfaction and ability to develop and maintain mutually benefiting relationships. Psychological well-being includes the ability to maintain a sense of autonomy, self-acceptance, personal growth, purpose in life and self-esteem. Staying mentally healthy is more than treating or preventing mental illness.</p> <p>The Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Well-being Scale (WEMWBS) comprises 14 items that relate to an individual's state of mental well-being (thoughts and feelings) in the previous two weeks. Responses are made on a 5-point scale, ranging from 'none of the time' to 'all of the time'. Each item is worded positively and together they cover most, but not all, attributes of mental well-being. Areas not covered include spirituality or purpose in life. These were deemed to extend beyond the general population's current understanding of mental well-being and their inclusion was thought likely to increase non-response.</p> <p>WEMWBS aims to measure mental well-being itself and not the determinants of mental well-being, which include resilience, skills in relationship, conflict management and problem solving, as well as socioeconomic factors such as poverty, domestic violence, bullying, unemployment, stigma, racism and other forms of social exclusion.</p> <p>Initial validation using student populations was followed up by the inclusion of WEMWBS in two national Scottish surveys in 2006 and 2008. Data analyses showed that WEMWBS performed equally well in the general population as in student groups. NHS Health Scotland then commissioned Warwick and Edinburgh Universities to test the suitability of using WEMWBS with children aged 13 to 16. This work was carried out in six schools in Scotland and England between March 2008 and October 2009. The main recommendation is that WEMWBS is suitable for use at a population level to measure mental well-being in teenagers amongst those aged 13 years and over.</p> <p>Whilst the use of the Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Well-being Scale is welcomed and it is free to use, it is copyrighted to NHS Health Scotland and the Universities of Warwick and Edinburgh. Permission is required for use. Dr Hendramoorthy Maheswaran (Hendy) (H.Maheswaran@warwick.ac.uk) at the University of Warwick, is maintaining a register of use and is the person to contact when seeking such permission and for answers to questions on using the Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Well-being Scale.</p>		
WHAT YOU WILL NEED:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A copy of the self-assessment sheet for each person • Pens 	PREPARATION:	None.
PROCESS:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Explore the idea of mental well-being with the group. 2. Ask them what well-being might look and feel like, ask them what a lack of well-being might look and feel like. Come up with a list of words that break down the idea of well-being further. 3. Explain that you are going to do this questionnaire at the start and the end of the programme to see how much the programme helps develop their well-being – it's a measure of the programme not of them. 4. Explain how to fill in the form and leave the young people to fill it in, or read the questions one at a time, or scribe for the young people. 5. Use the form as a coaching tool and talk through their answers with them. 6. Repeat the exercise at the end of the programme. 		

ANALYSIS:	Compare the scores and come up with a quantitative score for the distance travelled for each young person and the group overall.		
STRENGTHS:	An empirical, robust, quantitative test of mental well-being	WEAKNESSES:	It only gives you scores, and does not provide any information about why the person is experiencing life as they are.