

GOOD HEALTH & WELL-BEING

RESOURCE FOR TEACHERS AND FACILITATORS



As language evolves, so do the meanings and impacts of the words we use. This resource encourages critical reflection on terminology and promotes the use of inclusive language that tries not to perpetuate harmful stereotypes, nor disguise or reinforce unequal power relations shaped by historical systems of oppression. Where possible, the language in this document has been updated to align with these principles.

CONCERN
worldwide

Concern Global Citizenship, 2026

Good health and wellbeing is vital for all people, no matter where they live. In Ireland, if we are unwell we can access medical and health services. In many areas of the world, particularly in developing countries, this is not always the case. Goal 3 of the Sustainable Development Goals aims to ensure that all people, at every stage of life, can live healthy lives.

DID YOU KNOW:

By 2030 all members of the United Nations agreed to work toward:

- Ending the epidemics of AIDS, tuberculosis, malaria and neglected tropical diseases and combat hepatitis, water borne diseases, and other communicable diseases.
- Ending preventable deaths of newborns and children under 5 years of age.



WHAT IS HEALTH?

According to the World Health Organisation health is defined as: *a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity*. There are many different types of illnesses and diseases which can affect a person in the short term (such as the flu) or long term (such as cystic fibrosis or HIV). In wealthy countries, most people can access medicines that they need in order to manage, cure or prevent any illnesses. However, this is not possible for many communities in developing countries. This can lead to long term physical consequences, impact mental health or lead to death. It can also drive families into poverty if a member of the family cannot work.



WHAT IS WELLBEING?

Wellbeing is a state of being comfortable, healthy or happy. It comes from a combination of factors such as physical health, emotions, feeling secure or safe and leading a life where a person can feel satisfied. Wellbeing is important for people everywhere as a lack of wellbeing can lead to physical and mental illness. Poverty, hunger, gender inequality and disaster can have a negative impact on wellbeing which, if not addressed, may cause long-term problems for a person.



Discussion points

- What things do you need to be healthy both mentally and physically?
- How can your health be affected by your environment and emotions? Can you think of any examples?

A newborn receives immunization at a satellite clinic in a remote, under-resourced village of Ratandi Taltali, Bangladesh (Saikat Mojumder/Concern Worldwide, 2024).

TEACHER/ FACILITATOR ACTIVITY 1

Global statistics

Use this activity to explore the differences in health and wellbeing in Ireland compared to other countries around the world.



Need:

- Students in groups of no more than four
- A3/4 paper and pens (or alternatively, you may wish to use black paper and coloured chalk to create more of a visual impact)
- Access to computers/the internet/statistics already printed off for each group if this is not available

Instructions

1. Ask students in their groups to research the same statistics on health for a country that Concern works in. A useful website to use may be the WHO (World Health Organisation). You may wish to designate each group a country – find out where we work on our website: <https://www.concern.net/where-we-work>.
2. Ask each group to create an infographic (or visual poster) to compare the statistics on A3/4 paper.
3. You may wish to ask each group to present their findings to other students or make a visual display.

Health in Ireland



- **Life expectancy:**
Men – 81.1, Women 84.6
- **Infant mortality rate (under the age of one):**
3.0 deaths per 1,000 live births
- **Main causes of death:**
29% Cancer, 27% Circulatory, 12% Respiratory
- **Undernourishment:** Less than 2.5%
- **Obesity:** 21%
- **Spending on healthcare:** €38.8 billion

DEBRIEF

- Discuss the Irish stats – was anything surprising or unexpected?
- Discuss the findings from the other countries – again, was there anything surprising?
- Ask the students to consider why they think there are differences?
- How does health impact on other aspects of life? Which other SDGs may health impact on?
- How do you think health and poverty are related?

EVERY WOMAN EVERY CHILD: STRIVE, THRIVE AND TRANSFORM

In 2010 the United Nations launched a global movement called **Every Woman Every Child** that seeks to put pressure on governments, corporations and civil society to address major health issues facing women, children and adolescents around the world.

Healthy women and children create healthy societies. When adolescents realise their rights to health, well-being, education and full and equal participation in society, they are equipped to attain their full potential as adults.



TEACHER/ FACILITATOR ACTIVITY 2

It's all linked together

Use this activity to allow students to reflect on the consequences of climate change on health and wellbeing around the world.



Need:

- SDG cards
- A clear space to sit/stand in a circle
- Paper and coloured pens

Instructions

1. Bring your group into a circle and introduce the issue of climate change. You may wish to put the climate action SDG card into the middle of the circle or an object to symbolise climate change
2. Now, break students into groups of a maximum of four. Give each group one of the following SDG cards/ SDG topic areas: SDG 1 Poverty, SDG 2 Hunger, SDG 4 Education, SDG 6 Water and Sanitation, SDG 8 Economic Growth, SDG 10 Reduced Inequalities, SDG 16 Peace and Justice
3. Allow five to ten minutes for the young people to discuss how their topic/card links to the topic of climate change. Ask them to create a mind map with their ideas during this time
4. Bring the group back together into the circle and ask them to share their ideas
5. Now, place the health and wellbeing card into the circle and explain that you now would like students to consider how health and wellbeing is impacted by climate change
6. Break the students off into their groups again, and ask them to consider how health and wellbeing interacts with their topic/card, and how climate change may make these worse or add to the situation. Remember to think about physical and mental health. They should add these ideas to their mind map in a different colour. You may wish to show the students the examples above if they are struggling to think of ideas
7. Bring the group back together and discuss their ideas

Did you know:



- Vector borne diseases such as malaria and dengue fever may occur more frequently and in more places due to changing climates and more humidity
- Droughts may occur more frequently leading to increased risk of dehydration and sanitation issues, as well as impacting on food production, which can lead to hunger and famine
- An increase in flooding may lead to contaminated water supplies spreading diseases such as cholera
- Between 2030 and 2050, climate change is expected to cause 250,000 additional deaths each year due to malaria, malnutrition, diarrhoea and heat stress

EXTRA:

You may wish to ask students to write a reflection on this activity as a newspaper article or blog entry.



DEBRIEF

- How are climate change and health related?
- How is health and wellbeing related to the other issues in the world?
- What can we do?



MENTAL HEALTH, WELL-BEING AND POVERTY

The causes of poor health for millions globally are rooted in political, social and economic injustices. Poverty is both a cause and a consequence of poor health.

Globally, 830 million people - or one in ten - live on less than \$3 per day, the extreme poverty line for low-income countries (World Bank, 2025). Poverty creates ill-health because it forces people to live in environments that make them sick, without decent shelter, clean water or adequate sanitation. Additionally, the environment a person is forced to live in due to poverty, conflict or disasters can have a profound negative impact on a person's mental health.



KEY HEALTH TERMS

Mental health:

A state of wellbeing in which a person can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and is able to make a contribution in their community. In this positive sense, mental health is the foundation for individual wellbeing and the effective functioning of a community.

Psychosocial Support:

The term psychosocial refers to the relationship between a person's social situation and their thoughts and behaviours. Psychosocial interventions are designed to address the psychological impact of conflict on a person's behaviour, emotions and economic status.

Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD):

PTSD is a mental health condition which is developed by people who have experienced or witnessed a traumatic event. Symptoms may include flashbacks, nightmares and severe anxiety, as well as uncontrollable thoughts about the event.

DEBATE IT!

Use these statements to debate and explore health and wellbeing issues with your students.



Good Health and Wellbeing is the most important SDG



Social media does more harm than good for young people's mental health



Ireland is a healthy country

The orphaned child from Six Years of War, Six Shattered Lives an illustration series to mark six years of war in Syria. Artist: Marc Corrigan/March 2017



TEACHER/ FACILITATOR ACTIVITY 3

Refugee storytelling

Traumatic events can have a long term impact on people's mental health, wellbeing and physical health. Use this activity to explore the impact of conflict on health.



Need:

- Students in groups of four
- Pens and paper
- The storytelling cards (you may wish to have each card visible to students to prompt them either by photocopying them or putting them on a projector).
- Props to help students get into character

Instructions

Explain to students that they are going to go on a journey using their imagination. The people they are with is their family. The story is their own, but is also the story of many people throughout the world. You are going to go through the story stage by stage thinking of the impact of this journey on a person's mind and body. Every time a section of the story is read aloud, ask the students to close their eyes

1. Read the first card pausing for each blank. Give the students around seven or eight minutes to fill in the blanks for their family. Ask them to make a note of this. Also, ask them to consider how this scenario may affect their mental and physical health
2. Repeat the above for each card, ensuring that students fill in the blanks and consider the health impacts on their family for each stage of the journey
3. Next, give the students time to prepare a presentation of their journey. This could be acted out/drawn/written/ freeze frames or a combination of styles. They should pay particular emphasis to the health impacts of the family and how it has affected them
4. Ask the students to present to the rest of the group, giving time at the end of each presentation to discuss the impacts of health and wellbeing, and for other students to ask questions
5. At the end of the activity, ask the students to close their eyes. Tell them to picture the family in their head at each stage of the journey giving them time to do this. Now ask them to slowly imagine walking away from the family and return to themselves

DEBRIEF

- How did this activity make the students feel?
- How much impact does conflict inflict on a person's mental and physical health? Are these health issues reserved only for those who are fighting?
- How can we help people who have gone through this experience?

STORIES OF SURVIVAL

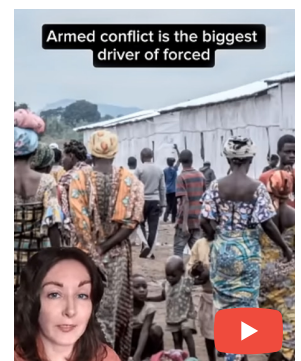
Why not follow up this activity by hearing about the fight for survival from someone living in the World's Largest Refugee Camp



My child is 15 months old.

ADDITIONAL VIDEO ACTIVITY

Why are there so many refugees now?



Armed conflict is the biggest driver of forced

Activity 3: Refugee storytelling

20th September 2022

My name is _____ I live in a city/town/village in _____ with _____

Tensions have been rising in my country for months between the government and civilians. Peaceful protests have turned into outbreaks of fighting on the street. This has led to shortages of foods, medicines and other essential things due to disruptions in delivery.

I can't go out with my friends anymore on the weekend because my parents are afraid of _____

10th January 2023

Outbreaks of fighting have escalated into full blown conflict, and my community is caught between the government troops and the rebels. My family are on the side of _____
because _____. But ultimately, we all just want the fighting to end.

My neighbourhood has seen little damage so far, but those not too far away have experienced houses being destroyed due to fighting. There are power outages and our school is badly damaged, but everyone still attends because _____

The cost of food and medicines has significantly increased so we must use things sparingly. The water supply has been rationed and there are fears of it being contaminated.

Despite this, people are still trying to continue as normal.

12th June 2023

The conflict is still ongoing and all sense of normality has gone. My family decided that it was becoming too unsafe to continue living in _____. We sold our house, but got much less than it was worth.

When we left, I could pack one rucksack. In it, I packed _____. I had to leave behind _____

We flew to _____ first of all, but the flights were very expensive. My father then paid a large sum of money to a man who said he could get us to _____ where we have family. We had little left for food. The journey was so scary – so many people crammed onto a small boat. A few meters off shore, it capsized. I thought I was going to drown! My _____ can't swim so I quickly grabbed them, but I didn't think I would make it to shore.

When we got to land, we felt _____. The authorities registered us and took us to a camp. I don't know what will happen next.

15th June 2024

We are still living in the refugee camp one year on. It is very crowded here and more people arrive every day.

There is a limited supply of water, food is rationed and there are not enough toilets for everyone. My old life in _____ with my own bedroom feels like a dream. In the winter, it is very cold and damp, and you never seem to be able to get warm enough. I haven't been to school/work in over a year.

Many people are becoming very sick because _____. We all constantly worry about us getting sick too. I don't know what the future holds.

Ebola in the DRC



With over 30 years' experience in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Concern is supporting 70,000 recently displaced people outside of Goma, increasing access to clean water through delivering safe water and sanitation.

In May 2026, a new outbreak of Ebola in the DRC was confirmed. Since then, there have been thousands more cases and deaths from the disease (Concern Worldwide, 2026).



A motor convoy carries a monitoring team from the EAST Consortium to a clinic in North Kivu DRC. The mountainous terrain is hard to navigate, and accessing some of these clinics is even more difficult due to ongoing conflict and security risks. Photo: Concern Worldwide 2026

The DRC has lived through more Ebola outbreaks than any other country in the world. This latest threat comes on top of years of intensified conflict, funding cuts, and limited access to healthcare. And while we've seen major advances in recent years with vaccines and treatment, they won't be effective against this rare strain of Ebola, which threatens communities already facing extreme pressure.



At Bisengimana Health Centre in Goma, all patients and visitors are required to wash their hands and undergo a temperature screening before entering the facility. These measures help prevent the spread of Ebola Virus Disease (EVD) and protect both health service users and medical staff. Photo: Samuel Isenge/ Concern Worldwide (June, 2026)

Ongoing conflict has made some areas unsafe or inaccessible for health workers and humanitarians, while health centres are often targets for attack. Exacerbating the situation are cuts to humanitarian funding, with the equivalent of just 20% of the 2025 humanitarian response funded.

Concern was internationally recognised for its response to the largest Ebola outbreaks historically recorded, focusing on work with local health centres to provide essential equipment, training, and refurbished facilities.

