

*Promoting Positive Mental
Health*

APIN Conference

April 20, 2007

There is No Health Without Mental Health

WHO, 2004

What Do We Mean by Positive Mental Health ?

What is Mental Health?

Emotional intelligence

Positive affectivity

Positive self esteem

Feelings of mastery

Optimism

Self management

Stress management

Problem solving

Creativity

Decision making

Mental health literacy

Communication

Social competence

Social values & respect

A cluster of cognitive, emotional and social capacities that people need

- **To enhance their well-being,**
- **To create satisfying and respectful social and intimate relationships,**
- **To develop themselves mentally and physically,**
- **To cope with the adversities and changes in life, and**
- **To reduce risk of serious problems and illness**

Hosman , 2005

What Influences Mental Health?

- Public policies in sectors such as health, housing welfare, education, employment, arts, media etc.
- Supportive social, economic, educational, cultural and physical environments
- Communities that recognize and accept diversity and promote involvement.

What is Mental Health Promotion?

It's about protecting, supporting and sustaining the emotional and social well-being of the entire population.

Seeks to enhance protective factors such as positive self-esteem and emotional resilience and to eliminate, reduce or minimize the effects of risk factors.

What Challenges Mental Health?

Risk Factors

- Discord and violence in the family
- Absence of love and affection
- Coercive parenting style
- Poor monitoring and supervision at home and school
- Poor peer relations

Risk Factors

- Alienation from school
- Experience of abuse or violence
- Parental mental illness, substance misuse and criminal involvement
- Poor body image

What Strengthens Mental Health?

Protective Factors

- Connectedness to family and school
- Cohesive and non-violent school environment
- Having a positive relationship with at least one parent
- Having a personal confidante, role model or mentor

Protective Factors

- A sense of self-worth and social connectedness
- Internal locus of control
- Experiences of achievement
- Belonging to a positive peer group
- Leading an active lifestyle

Adolescent Transitions

- Puberty
- Increased need for independence
- Peer relationships
- Identity and sexual orientation issues
- Reproductive health changes
(adolescent mothers)

Bent But Not Broken

- “I think of how trees writhe, shake and bend during a storm. Even ice on the trees force branches to bend down and bow to the earth, but rarely do they break. As the thaw comes, gradually their resilience makes them spring back”

Ardath Rodale

Creating Connections

- Research shows that social support, the positive interaction with other humans is a key factor in the mental health of individuals and communities.
- Provides a sense of belonging, feelings of self efficacy and self esteem.

Encourage Healthy Lifestyles and Leisure

Creative activities provide an outlet to express emotions

Various forms of physical activity, exercise and sport promote psychological well-being

Strengthen Skills

- Coping skills
- Expressing feelings
- Help seeking behavior and awareness of resources
- Self efficacy and confidence
- Problem solving

Mental Health Literacy

Mental health literacy refers to knowledge, beliefs and abilities that enable the recognition, management and prevention of mental health problems, including attitudes that promote help seeking behaviours.

Jorm, et al 1997

Support Attachment

- Secure attachment establishes the basis on which the child will form relationships with others; his sense of security about exploring the world; his resilience to stress; his ability to balance his emotions, make sense of his life, and create meaningful interpersonal relationships in the future.

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What Nurtures your Mental
Health?

