

Barnardos Wellbeing Programme supports the positive mental health and wellbeing of children, parents and significant others in their communities, by empowering them to develop wellbeing practices that support them to be calm, present and resilient.

It equips them with the tools to manage their emotions effectively, cope with difficult situations and sustain good relationships with others.

Target Group

- Children aged 4 -18 years and their parents
- Teachers and other professionals

In communities affected by socio-economic disadvantage, violence, trauma, addiction and poor mental health.



Programme Components

4-6-week programmes and one-off 1-2-hour workshops in:

Breath Body Mind (BBM) practices which combine the movement of the body with the movement of breath to enhance physical and mental health. This integrative approach increases awareness of the healing power of breath and supports balancing the nervous system.

Creative Mindfulness practices introduce mindfulness and self-compassion practices to children and adults in fun and creative ways. Participants learn how to calm and relax their minds, focus, understand and express their feelings, and cultivate kindness for themselves and others through creativity, stories, art, craft, meditation, visualization, and discussion.

Singing Circles is a community singing and sounding practice which creates opportunities for shared joy, relaxation and connection to ourselves and others.

Grow from Seeds uses creative approaches to interculturalism through storytelling, creative drama and performing arts. The programme complements the SPHE curriculum and addresses anti-social behaviour through active citizenship, empowerment and participation of pupils.

Outcomes for children and adults

- Children, parents and teachers have an increased understanding of their thoughts and feelings and how these are connected to their body.
- They learn a variety of practices that they can use to alleviate stress, reduce anxiety, improve rest and sleep, and manage emotions in their daily lives.
- The knowledge and skills acquired by parents help them to deal with the stresses of parenthood and manage their emotions in an effective way so that they are calmer in their interactions with their children and others.
- Teachers and other professionals have a greater understanding of how children's nervous systems can be regulated and supported, which strengthens their skills in assisting children to be grounded and focused in school and group settings.

"Over the last six weeks, my stress levels have gone way down. I'm well able to use what we've learned here to manage day to day." (Parent)

"...we've seen an improvement in the behaviour of the class. There was a lot of challenging behaviour throughout the year, and in the last few weeks they seem to have settled a bit better and have better skills to cope with different situations."

(Teacher)

"I think the programme is a great place to help children relax if something made you angry or sad, so that when you get older you know how to handle it."

(Pupil)

The Wellbeing Programme has supported 2,381 children and adults in 35 schools and community settings since mid-2021 in Dublin, Tipperary & Westmeath.

- Dublin: Tallaght, Tyrrelstown
- Tipperary: Thurles, Clonmel, Carrick-on-Suir
- Westmeath: Athlone