



Action plan ‘Good Mental health for All’

Why an action plan? >

15-20 years longer life expectancy

Due to good mental health

Our ambition >



We aim to drive change towards a **mentally healthy Netherlands**, focused on all citizens.

A mentally healthy Netherlands, with an additional specific focus on young people and young adults, the working population and people in a vulnerable position.

Objectives >



To **raise awareness and start a societal discussion** about the importance of having and maintaining good mental health, focused on the individual and society as a whole.



A greater focus on **prevention** (strengthening mental health and providing easily accessible support where required).



To **provide people with tools** that enable them to manage their own mental health and to be alert to the mental health of others.

Knowledge-based approach >

We will create an **efficient and effective knowledge infrastructure**, in which knowledge can be efficiently exchanged.



Let's get started! >

There is scope for new ideas and initiatives that arise from the field or the target groups (co-creation).

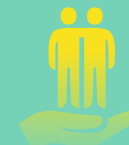
Are you in?

Five action lines >

1 **Mental well-being in society** >



2 **Mental well-being in the community** >



3 **Mental well-being at school** >



4 **Mental well-being at work** >



5 **Mental well-being online** >



Why an action plan for mental health?

The mental health of the Dutch population has been under pressure for some time now, partly as a result of developments within society. According to the Future of Public Health Survey, the pressure on mental health is one of the biggest health risks for the future.¹ Our society is becoming ever more complex and puts people under significant pressure. There is a strong emphasis on achievement and self-reliance. At the same time, social cohesion is decreasing and labour market shortages are increasing, which means that there are fewer people available to provide care and support. We have access to the internet and social media 24 hours a day. In addition, people are given the idea that life must always be perfect. As a result, people may feel pressure to make this happen, which can lead to mental health problems.

People with good mental health have a life expectancy of 15 to 20 years longer than people with poor mental health.² Among other things, this is because people with good mental health recover more quickly from physical illnesses. People who are mentally healthy not only feel better but are also more likely to feel connected to each other and, generally speaking, look after their children well. They are also productive and are valuable to their family and friends and to society as a whole. If we want to reduce or prevent the risk of problems arising, timely and appropriate deployment of preventive interventions in the right groups and environments is essential. The use of smart (digital)

applications may be helpful here. The involvement of people with first-hand experience and key figures in the community, such as parents and other role models, is crucial as well. Despite the fact that mental health is an inseparable part of our general health as a whole, the current approach is still too fragmented.

Mental health is not just about whether or not a person is experiencing mental health problems. It is primarily about people's general well-being (mental health as an important part of your general health, i.e. positive health). Consequently, it is important to approach this not from a medical perspective but rather from the perspective of people's day-to-day lives. It is important that we invest in meaningful activities, in a good (online) workplace and educational environment and in encouraging interaction. It is also important that we invest in cross-sector collaboration, because people use different care and welfare sectors simultaneously. Social partners, the business community and the social and cultural sector are crucial in this regard.

The coronavirus pandemic of the last two years has given rise to anxiety, loneliness, illness and death. These are risk factors that can have a negative impact on mental health.

At the same time, the pandemic has demonstrated that people are extremely resilient and that digital applications, digital and hybrid care, and online support can be widely used. One of the lessons that many people say they have learned from the coronavirus pandemic is that life is not always how we want it to be and that it helps to accept this idea.

The government has acknowledged the importance of mental resilience by explicitly including this theme in the coalition agreement. Together, we are therefore committed to 'Good Mental health for All', an action plan that focuses specifically on young people and young adults, the working population and vulnerable individuals (e.g. vulnerable older people and others in a vulnerable socio-economic position). In this context, over the forthcoming period, we will engage in an ongoing dialogue with the target groups in order to ensure that the actions we develop are in line with their needs. Our ambition is to strengthen the mental health of our population, to ensure that everyone can continue to engage with society and to reduce the societal costs and the social impact of mental health conditions. In doing so, we will focus on the individual, the environment and society. The ambitions are high, but so is the urgency of the situation.

¹ *Volksgezondheid Toekomst Verkenning (Future of Public Health Survey) – RIVM.*

² *Samen werken aan een mentaal gezonde samenleving (Working together towards a mentally health society) – Trimbos Institute.*



Are you with us?

What are we talking about?

Various terms are used to describe and define mental health. Consequently, it is difficult to get a clear picture of what mental health actually is. The Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport (VWS) therefore commissioned the National Institute for Public Health and the Environment (RIVM) and the Trimbos Institute to conduct a Delphi study in collaboration with a number of different partners from the fields of research, professional practice, policy and the target group (young people and adults). The aim of this study was to reach a consensus regarding the building blocks and a workable definition of mental health.¹This study indicates that mental health can be defined on the basis of four components. In other words, mental health is characterised by:

- the way in which an individual relates to themselves (*personal component*);
- the way in which an individual relates to others (*social component*);
- the way in which an individual acts, behaves or conducts themselves in everyday life (*functional component*);
- the way in which mental health is perceived and the significance that is given to it on a personal level and within society as a whole (*perceptive component*).

Each component of mental health comprises a number of building blocks, as illustrated by the infographic shown here. It should be noted that the Delphi study was conducted in Dutch. Although results and concepts were translated into English as accurately as possible, it is important to note that results and concepts may have been different if the study had been carried out in English.

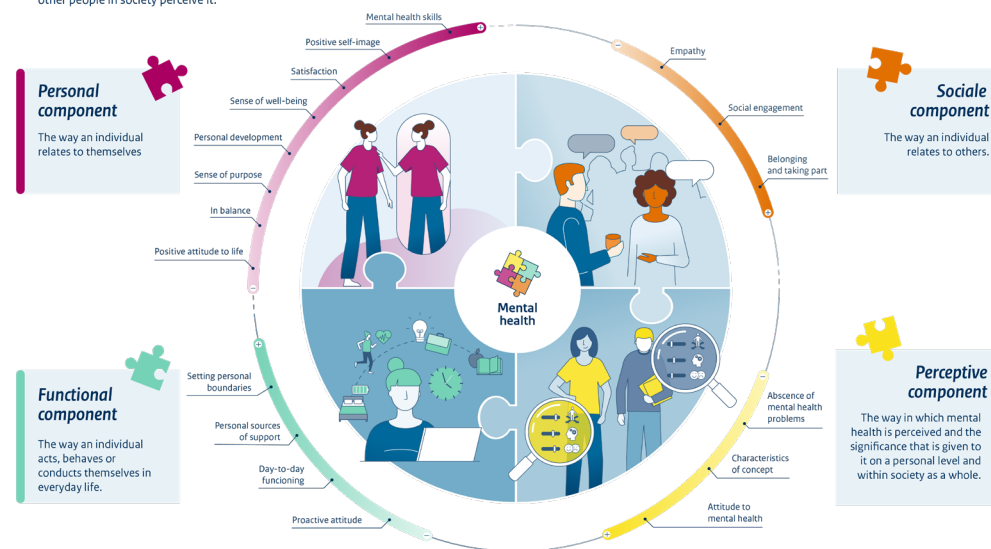
¹ [Delphistudie Definitie Mentale Gezondheid \(Delphistudy on the definition of Mental Health\) – Trimbos institute.](#)

What is mental health?

The way you relate to yourself and to others and how you cope with the challenges of everyday life. At the same time, it is also about how you and other people in society perceive it.

Readers guide

The colour grading from light to dark indicates the relative importance.




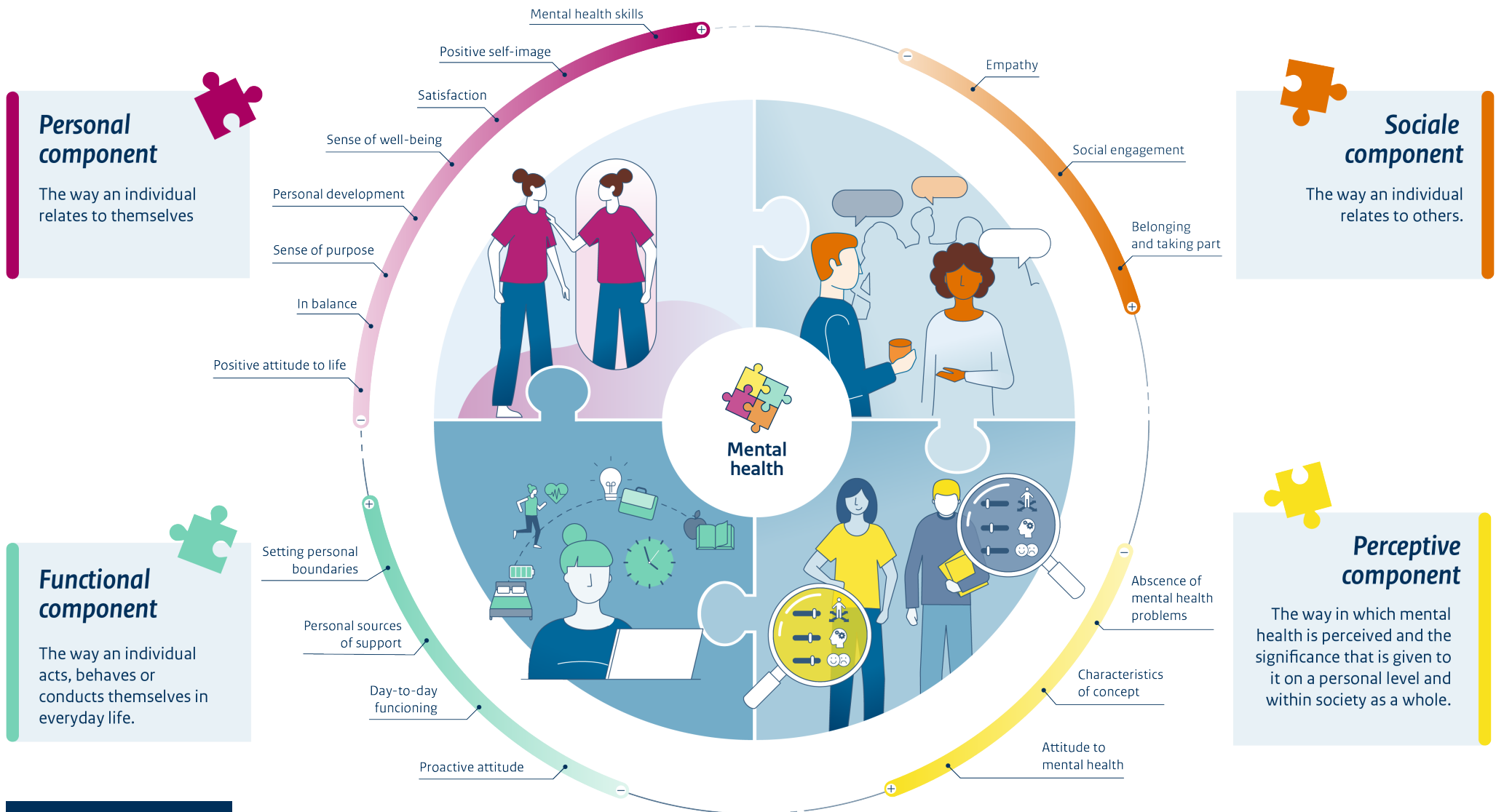
[Click here to enlarge the infographic](#) ➔

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[Click here to go back](#)

Our ambition

Action at multiple levels

Mental health and resilience are important prerequisites to live and grow up healthy. We are driving change towards a mentally healthy Netherlands, for all inhabitants of the Netherlands. Everyone has a role to play in this: citizens, employees and employers, healthcare professionals, schools, sports associations, community organisations, government organisations, etc. The aim of this movement is to ensure that there is an awareness of mental health in everyday life and that we encourage each other to work together on the promotion of our mental health. A parallel can be drawn here with the ambition to encourage physical exercise in everyday life: we know that exercise can have a positive impact on people's mental well-being. The prevention of mental health problems is still too often seen as a matter for the individual. In addition (as for physical exercise but also more broadly in the prevention approach), there must be a greater focus on interventions in the living environment and tackling risk factors and causes that come from society. By tackling this at these levels and from different perspectives, we can bring about change together. In this context, we address the underlying problems and societal issues (such as poverty, financial security, adequate social services, etc.) and are committed to a mental-health-in-all-policies approach. We regard this action plan as a tool to kickstart change.



Objectives of the action plan



To raise awareness and start a societal conversation about the importance of having and maintaining good mental health, focusing on the individual and society as a whole.



To focus on health and prevention (strengthening mental health and the provision of easily accessible support where required).



To provide people with tools that enable them to manage their own mental health (e.g. helping them to understand the key factors that affect mental health, such as adequate sleep, exercise, etc.) and to be alert to the mental health of others.

Together with the target group itself and the partners from the field, over the forthcoming period, we will develop the abovementioned action plan objectives further and make them more specific. Many initiatives are already under way: we will strengthen the initiatives we already have and retain what is working well. By linking this new movement with existing initiatives, we can have a positive impact on mental health together.

We will start with five lines of action

We talked to a wide range of partners and asked them what form a prevention strategy for mental health should take. The remit was to liaise with each other and to continually further develop the needed actions together with the target group and in collaboration with partners in the field. This valuable input is the foundation of the action plan, together with the components from the conceptual framework. Also, we are not starting from scratch with this action plan. In recent years, community organisations, local authorities and the government have already addressed the issue of mental health. We are building on this through existing programmes such as 'Een tegen Eenzaamheid' (Together against Loneliness), the National Prevention Agreement and the Multiannual Depression Prevention Programme. At the same time, everyone agrees that there is a need for a coherent approach that provides additional impetus over and above all the existing initiatives. In this action plan, we work with five action lines in which existing initiatives are linked to each other and are given additional stimulus in the short term:

In this action plan, the lifecycle approach and living environment vision are key. Particular attention is paid to important life stages and the transition between them (from school to work and from work to retirement). In all living environments, the focus is on universal as well as selective and indicated prevention. With a focus on early detection of emerging problems and easily accessible facilities to support the individuals concerned.

1

Mental well-being
in society



2

Mental well-being
in the community



3

Mental well-being
at school



4

Mental well-being
at work



5

Mental well-being
online



Mental well-being in society

What do we want to achieve?

Individuals are aware of their mental health and understand the importance of maintaining it, just as they do their physical health. Mental health must become an integral part of the maintenance of your 'general' health. Individuals also understand how they can help others maintaining their mental health. People talk to each other about their mental health and about factors in the individual, the environment and society that can affect mental health.



We will do this in conjunction with

The target group (including the youth panel on mental health and people with first-hand experience), municipalities, municipal public health services (GGDs), education, sport and culture, community organisations, the Denktank Mentale Vooruitgang (Think Tank on the Future of Mental Health) and knowledge institutions.



What will we do?

- From 2023 onwards, we will participate in the annual **European Mental Health Week** in May. We are calling on all educational establishments (from primary schools to universities), sports associations, cultural institutions, youth associations, employers and community organisations to focus on mental health over the course of this week. We are asking these organisations to do this in collaboration with existing local initiatives of community organisations in order to boost collaboration.
- In anticipation of the annual mental health week, we will launch **'the Mental Meetup'**: a day on which we organise activities around the topic of mental health in various locations nationwide (e.g. visible in the local community and in an educational establishment), to engage in a conversation about stress, pressure to achieve and other factors that affect mental health. The autumn has been deliberately chosen for this; the idea is to engage in a conversation in good time around how people can get through the busier and darker winter months in good mental health. Also, by that time, young people will have the first few weeks of the new academic year under their belts and may have become aware once again of the factors that affect their mental health. We will link up with other health themes, such as the positive impact of exercise, healthy eating, green space/nature, rest, etc. on mental health.
- We will kickstart **the social debate with regard to our achievement-oriented society**; raising awareness of, among other things, the importance of accepting imperfections and what you can do to stay or become mentally healthy; making it acceptable to talk about emerging mental health problems; how to cope with dropping out of work; and societal influences on mental health. What factors in society and within existing systems (e.g. education and work) cause stress, for example? This also touches on the Youth Reform Agenda (Hervormingsagenda Jeugd) concerning what we as a society understand by a normal childhood and upbringing and what is meant by 'normal care'.
- We will involve the sports, leisure and **culture sectors in raising awareness of mental health**. We will enter into a dialogue with these sectors around how we can achieve this and how we can do this in co-creation with the target group.



Mental well-being in the community

What do we want to achieve?

Citizens are aware of the easily accessible mental health support available to them in their (local) environment. As a result, they will seek help sooner if it is needed, and minor problems will be picked up earlier.



We will do this in conjunction with

The Association of Netherlands Municipalities (VNG) and municipalities, knowledge institutions such as RIVM, the Trimbos Institute, Pharos, Stichting MIND, MIND Us, the National Youth Coalition (Nationale Jeugdcoalitie), Maatschappelijke Diensttijd (the community service scheme organisation), Young Impact, and the Netherlands Municipal Public Health Services and Medical Assistance in Accidents and Disasters.



Join Us has groups throughout the Netherlands where young people between the ages of 12 and 18 and 18 and 25 can go for support. As well as the regular Join Us programme, they also offer an online variant: Join us Online. Young people between the ages of 18 and 30 who do not have access to the regular Join Us groups because of where they live can use this option. There is also a Join Us Community, an online meeting place for young people between the ages of 12 and 30 who sometimes feel lonely. This is a safe space where young people can meet each other, have fun together and provide each other with support.

What will we do?

- We will explore how we can strengthen, improve and scale up the deployment of **readily accessible walk-in facilities** with, among others, people with first-hand experience. Together with MIND Us, FNO GeestKracht (the mental health programme of the fund for vulnerable groups in the Netherlands, FNO) and the Instituut voor Publieke Waarden (Institute for Public Values, IPW), we plan to take stock of existing walk-in facilities (quantity and quality), to make a social business case and to enter into a dialogue with municipalities with a view to creating more walk-in facilities.
- There is a clear correlation between well-being, mental health and culture. Engaging in cultural activities makes people more resilient, connects people to each other and encourages personal development. All of this helps foster good mental health. The Ministry of Education, Culture and Science's Cultural Participation Programme aims to ensure that everyone can access cultural activities, particularly those who would not normally have access to them. The associated Ministry of Education, Culture and Science grant scheme, '**Samen Cultuurmaken 2021-2024**' (Engaging in Culture Together 2021-2024) supports projects in the field of cultural participation that involve collaboration between the cultural and social sectors. Together, we will focus on reaching greater numbers of vulnerable people through this scheme.
- We will focus on physical exercise activities and other healthy activities in the community with a view to fostering **interaction and a sense of purpose**.
- We will **encourage young people to help others**. In their social lives (e.g. in sport and culture and at the scouts), young people look out for each other, which enhances their own mental health and that of those around them (interaction and sense of purpose). As part of 'the community service time' (in Dutch: maatschappelijke diensttijd (MDT)), young people help others and/or society. A number of different MDT projects (e.g. Young Impact) already focus on enhancing mental health – among other things, helping to prevent loneliness. We are investigating other ways in which MDT can help improve young people's mental health.



[Learn more >](#)

Mental well-being in the community

- We are focusing on the creation of a **strong social and pedagogical foundation** to support young people's mental health. Together with the National Youth Coalition (the national sports federation NOC-NSF, Sociaal Werk NL (Social Work Netherlands), Vereniging Sport Gemeenten (the Community Sports Association), NJR (the Dutch National Youth Council), Jeugdfonds sport&cultuur (the Youth Fund for Sport and Culture), Scouting NL, the cultural engagement organisation LKCA, the creative platform for young people Kunstbende and the outdoor play organisation Jantje Beton), we will explore how local associations and youth workers can do even more to enhance the mental health of their members. In addition, we plan to focus more on integrated approaches, such as 'Opgroeien in een Kansrijke Omgeving' (Growing up in a Fulfilling Environment, OKO), an approach based on the Icelandic prevention model (data-driven, community and evidence-based). The initial results from pilots in six municipalities are positive.
- We will approach municipalities nationwide to encourage them to combine sport and exercise for older people, thereby helping to reduce **loneliness** (in conjunction with the *Eén tegen Eenzaamheid* (Together against Loneliness) programme).
- In order to provide better support for people in the community, we will **strengthen local health policy**, and where they have not yet done so, we will encourage them to include mental health in the local prevention agreement. We will do this by supporting municipalities (with implementation, among other things), sharing knowledge around effective interventions for the promotion of mental health and deploying knowledge coordinators on the theme of mental health. We will build on existing structures and link up with the lifestyle themes under the National Prevention Agreement.
- In line with the broader prevention approach, we will invest more in reaching **people in a vulnerable position** (including vulnerable older people and people with a low socio-economic status) and increasing opportunities for strengthening and protecting mental health. For this reason, together with people with first-hand experience from these target groups, municipalities, experts and knowledge institutions, we are keen to establish how we can make advice and support accessible and appropriate and how we can pool resources in the communities around these individuals. We will also be mindful of cultural sensitivity in this context.
- Research by RIVM on the impact of green spaces on health¹ indicates that green spaces in the areas where people live correlate with better mental health. A green environment reduces anxiety, depression and stress and increases resilience and sense of purpose. In order to enhance green spaces and health in the living environment, the Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport and the Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality (LNV) have launched the **Healthy Green Living Environment** programme. The aim of this programme is to help municipal policy developers, implementers and decision-makers from the spatial, social and health sectors in various ways to take health and green spaces into account as a matter of course and in an integrated way when designing, laying out and managing the living environment. Clearly, the usage and experiences of residents will be taken into account in this context.

¹ RIVM, Kennisbundeling groen en gezondheid (RIVM Research on the impact of green spaces on health) 2022.



Mental well-being at school

What do we want to achieve?

As many young people as possible can develop in the best possible way in a safe and fulfilling school/studying environment and are sufficiently resilient to be able to cope effectively with everyday challenges and the growing pressure to achieve.



We will do this in conjunction with

Young people themselves (incl. students unions), the Trimbos Institute, Pharos, the healthy schools programme Gezonde School (the Netherlands Municipal Public Health Services and Medical Assistance in Accidents and Disasters, the Netherlands Association of Senior Secondary Vocational Schools, the Secondary Education Council, the Primary Education Council and RIVM), the well-being coalition Coalitie Welbevinden (the Trimbos Institute, Pharos and Gezonde School, as well as NCJ (the National Centre for Young People's Health), NIP (the Dutch Institute of Psychologists) and NJi (the Netherlands Youth Institute)), the centre of excellence for inclusive education ECIO, the Secondary Education Council, the Netherlands Association of Universities of Applied Sciences and UNL (Universities of the Netherlands).



Well-being at Het Spectrum primary school

Het Spectrum is a school in Delfgauw with extremely demanding parents. Despite having a code of conduct, which was drawn up together with pupils and parents, bullying continued, and there was a sense of underlying unease. So, the school came up with a broad and systematic plan to tackle the issue of well-being within the school in consultation with all those involved: Deliberate choices were made from the options provided under the Healthy Schools programme. As a result, there is now 'a comprehensive focus on well-being throughout the school'. The school has received a well-being award (*Vignet Welbevinden*). Clear rules on behaviour have been put in place. The school has a green, exercise-friendly playground that enhances pupils' well-being. The school building has been transformed. Paintwork is lighter, so it has a more calming effect, and the hall has been designed to resemble a terrace with cosy corners full of plants.

What will we do?

- We are in conversation concerning scaling up of the support programme **Welbevinden op school** (Well-being in Schools), among other things through the Gezonde School (Healthy Schools) programme (in conjunction with the lifestyle themes, e.g. diet and exercise). As knowledge partners, the Trimbos Institute and Pharos focus on further developing and translating scientific insights around the importance of an integrated approach to well-being into practical guidance for schools (primary, secondary and senior secondary vocational schools), municipal public health services and municipalities. Through the Healthy Schools approach (in conjunction with the lifestyle themes, e.g. diet and exercise), schools are supported in an integrated way with practical implementation (tips & tricks, confidential adviser, incentive funds and training for a healthy school coordinator). This allows schools to work in an accessible way towards a healthy teaching and learning environment (with an awareness of pressure to achieve, for example) and on students' mental health skills. The programme also focuses specifically on the children of immigrants and disadvantaged children.



[Learn more >](#)

Mental well-being at school

- Through the **National Education Programme** we enhance schools' ability to work effectively on mental well-being. The National Education Programme provides a number of different evidence-based interventions in this field. The programme started in 2021 and will run until school year 2024-2025. All primary and secondary schools are participating in the programme. In the senior secondary vocational and higher education sectors as well, there was only one institution that had not planned expenditure from National Education Programme funding for 2021. Of the secondary schools that are making use of the programme, 94% opt for interventions that are aimed, among other things, at mental well-being.¹ In senior secondary vocational education and higher professional education sectors as well, many institutions are spending this funding on well-being and social cohesion.²
- In addition, mental well-being is the first theme that was included in the recently launched knowledge community of the National Education Programme. This knowledge community is working on strengthening regional knowledge networks, practical examples and learning from each other. We are currently exploring how this knowledge platform can be expanded to include senior secondary vocational education.
- Together with the educational establishments and student unions, we will develop an **integrated approach** with support from experts and professionals (including ECIO (the centre of excellence for inclusive education) and the Trimbos Institute) where necessary. In addition, an **in-depth study** into pressure to achieve and stress will be launched in 2022, partly on the recommendation of the RIVM report.³
- By enabling the sharing of data across care and support domains, the **right information will be available in the right place** for the right prevention, support and care (this also applies to Action Line 4; mental well-being at work).

¹ *Parliamentary Paper 35925-VIII no. 164.*

² *The second progress report of the National Education Programme for senior secondary vocational and higher education will be submitted to the House in June.*

³ *See Monitor Mentale gezondheid en Middelengebruik Studenten hoger onderwijs, deelrapport I, Mentale gezondheid van studenten in het hoger onderwijs (Monitor of Mental Health and Substance Abuse among Students in Higher Education, Sub-report I, Mental health of students in higher education) – RIVM.*



Mental well-being at work

What do we want to achieve?

Employees feel mentally healthy in their work and can cope effectively with potential stressors that lie in a combination of the individual, the work environment and society. Employers and occupational health professionals are aware of the importance of good mental health and provide support to employees where necessary. The aim is to address the increasing number of burnout symptoms and stop this number from growing.



Work Stress Week is organised annually in the third week of November by the organisation for vitality, participation and careers (OVAL). The aim of the week is to make employees and employers aware of the importance of job satisfaction, prevention and development. Work Stress Week has become a great success thanks to support from the Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment, the Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport, employer and employee organisations and sector and professional associations, and because many hundreds of individual companies organised activities around it.

We will do this in conjunction with

Employees and employers themselves and with the partners in the BMS (Brede Maatschappelijke Samenwerking burn-outklachten (Broad Social Collaboration to reduce Burnout)) (the Netherlands Organisation for Applied Scientific Research (TNO), the Confederation of Netherlands Industry and Employers (VNO-NCW), the Netherlands Trade Union Confederation (FNV), the Christian National Trade Union Federation (CNV), the Trade Union Federation for Professionals (VCP), the Dutch Institute of Psychologists (NIP), the Dutch Association of Mental Health and Addiction Care (NL GGZ), the Trimbos Institute and occupational health partners, as well as many other partners).



What will we do?

- Together with partners in the field, we will implement the **'Broad Social Collaboration to reduce Burnout'** (BMS), which has already been launched, in order to strengthen the prevention of burnout. The BMS is a multiannual programme that focuses on tackling the combined causes of burnout that come from the individual, work and society.
- We will support a **preventive approach to tackling burnout by employers, employees and occupational health professionals**. For example by including a module on psychosocial work stress in the online risk assessment and evaluation tool. This will help employers to more effectively comply with their statutory obligation to identify psychosocial risks in the workplace, with a plan of action for taking measures to prevent them and engaging in a dialogue around this with employees. In addition, available interventions to prevent burnout are being brought together and made easily accessible. For the healthcare risk sector, work is under way on a pilot of the chain approach 'employees in the healthcare sector' (*'ketenaanpak 'werkenden in de zorg'*) to prevent mental health problems among healthcare staff, and a possible approach for other risk sectors (education, industry, ICT) is also being explored.



[Learn more >](#)

Mental well-being at work

- We will encourage the further development of good initiatives through the **‘Mental Health of Employees’** grant scheme (*‘subsidieregeling ‘Mentale vitaliteit van werkenden’*), which aims to strengthen the mental well-being of employees in the aftermath of the coronavirus pandemic. We are also setting up an online knowledge platform that brings together knowledge, good practices and experiences for stakeholders, employers, employees and occupational health professionals.
- In line with Action Line 1, a public campaign will promote a change in culture within society in order to further dispel the taboo around burnout and to **raise awareness of unhealthy (work) pressure in society**. We will also drive the social debate around tackling the social causes of burnout. For example, the increased level of digitalisation in society can lead to greater work pressure, or the increase in robotisation can lead to stress as a result of job insecurity.
- In addition to the BMS, we will help older people with the **transition from work to retirement**.¹ Some older people are keen to keep working, part time or otherwise. Others can help improve social cohesion in communities by coaching families or individuals, or they can opt to do voluntary work. This increases social productivity and participation, and older people remain mentally healthy through their active participation in society.

¹ *Strategische verkenningen 4, Mentaal vermogen: ouderen (strategic survey 4, Mental capacity: elderly) – Trimbos institute.*



Mental well-being online

What do we want to achieve?

Citizens are media-wise and are aware of what digital balance means for them, and in particular, how they can maintain this balance (digital skills). In addition, offline mental health support accurately reflects people's online and offline experiences, and online support is also available (online as a tool).



What will we do?

- We are in conversation with the Dutch Media Literacy Network, which is already active in the technological world of young people and is keen to play its part in reducing the risks associated with this world. It organises a Media Awareness Week and Media Days for young children (Media Ukkiedagen), for example. Together with them, we will provide young people and older people with even better information on the online world and raise awareness of tools that enhance mental health skills, such as [digitalebalans.nl](#) and MediaMasters.
- Together with the Dutch Media Literacy Network, the Trimbos Institute has developed **The Digital Balance Model¹ (Het Digitale Balansmodel)**. Together with the Trimbos Institute, we are looking at how we can disseminate knowledge around this theme more effectively and raise awareness of it, also in relation to themes such as gaming and online gambling².
- Together with **MIND Us**, we will explore how we can better align the online and offline worlds of support with each other. We will do this at various levels, e.g. by increasing the use of successful apps. But also by equipping helplines (such as Kindertelefoon) to, in addition to providing a listening ear, share user-friendly tips and to refer people to local offline support, such as walk-in facilities.
- On 31 March, the Social and Economic Council (SER) published an advisory report on the future of hybrid working. Among other things, the SER advised the government to include a **focus on digital skills and awareness** in its digitalisation strategy and education plans. We will also request attention to the position of vulnerable groups that find it hard to access the digital society and, as a result, develop mental health problems.



We will do this in conjunction with

Young people themselves, the Dutch media literacy network Netwerk Mediawijsheid, the children's helpline Kindertelefoon, Stichting MIND, MIND Us and the Trimbos Institute.



MediaMasters is an exciting serious game around the opportunities and dangers of digital and other media, specifically for year groups 7 and 8 in primary school. By playing the game, students build a basic knowledge of media awareness. They learn to take a critical view of media and understand better how it works. It also helps make students aware of the impact of media and gives them a better understanding of their own media behaviour.

[Learn more >](#)

¹ Mediawijsheid: *Gezond leven in een digitale wereld (Media awareness – healthy living in a digital world)* – Trimbos Institute and *Factsheet digitale balans jongvolwassenen (Factsheet on digital balance for young adults)* – Trimbos Institute.

² *Gamen & Gokken (Gaming and Gambling)* – Trimbos Institute.

Mental well-being online

- We will work with Alliantie Digitaal Samenleven (the digital society alliance), Digisterker, the coalition for digital skills in healthcare Coalitie 'Digivaardig in de Zorg' and libraries to ensure that everyone has sufficient **skills** to participate in the digital world but, at the same time, is also able to maintain a good **balance**. Through these initiatives, awareness and skills are being enhanced.



Knowledge-based approach

The action plan

A lot of knowledge is already available in many different places. Yet we know that the availability of knowledge does not necessarily lead to effective implementation of this knowledge. The challenge is, on the one hand, to effectively link the available knowledge and make it accessible and, on the other, to implement this knowledge in practice and align it with the world of the target group.

Consequently, the approach is not set in stone: the various actions to be launched will be monitored. From the results of monitoring (national, regional and local), we will gain insights into the progress of the actions; we will evaluate what knowledge is lacking; we will learn about what is or is not working and for whom; and we will programme new knowledge questions. We will monitor and use the data to learn and transform and will share this with others, so local communities are empowered. To this end, we will actively seek to connect with relevant stakeholders, including various knowledge institutions, municipalities, municipal public health services, education partners, the healthcare sector and the target group.

Over the coming period, we will therefore remain in close contact with stakeholders and continue to work in close collaboration to review what else is needed when it comes to knowledge development, implementation and monitoring. In this context, we will take into account the mental health of the individual, the social context and the living environment. The focus is on an effective, integrated approach, allowing us to monitor the resilience of our society.

In this context, our ambition is as follows

To create an efficient, effective and learning knowledge infrastructure, in which knowledge can be developed and exchanged efficiently, and in which local health policy can be supported.



Finally

Let's get started!

The action plan is not yet set in stone. It is an evolving document with scope for new ideas and initiatives that arise from the field or the target groups. It will be informed by the lessons learned from the various actions that are under way. Over the coming period, we will also continue to liaise and work closely with the target groups and other stakeholders to establish what else is needed. In short: a bottom-up approach that, as conversations progress (co-creation) and actions are developed, leads to new insights, ideas and further collaboration at national, regional and local level.

Are you with us?

Questions?

If you have a question about the '**Good Mental Health for All**' action plan, please email postbusmentalegezondheid@minvws.nl

