

Summary of Findings of Pilot Stage of: **WIRED FOR WELL-BEING**

(Levels B & C) & Independent Research Study (Level A)

Fiona Forman, January 2022



Programme details:

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Introduction:

The **Wired for Well-Being** programme is a 3-level SPHE programme for Junior Cycle students from 1st to 3rd year. It is based on the field of Positive Psychology, the science of well-being. Positive Psychology is underpinned by concepts such as Character Strengths, Positive Emotions, Positive Relationships and Resilience (Seligman, 2011).

The programme was created by Fiona Forman, (M.Sc. Applied Positive Psychology), a former teacher who is also the co-author of the **Weaving Well-Being** (Forman & Rock, 2016) and the author of **Welcome to Well-Being** (Forman, 2021) programmes for primary school students.

The aim of the programme is to teach students to understand and enhance their own well-being through a range of evidence-based strategies and skills. It was created in line with the SPHE curriculum objectives and the 6 Well-Being Indicators outlined in the **Well-Being Guidelines for Junior Cycle** (DES, 2018) - *active, responsible, connected, respected, aware and resilient*.

Programme Overview:

The programme is skills-based and each level has 8 lessons, based on Positive Psychology and neuroscience. The content is as follows:

Book A

Skill 1: Understand your Well-Being

Skill 2: Nurture Neuroplasticity

Skill 3: Savour your Sleep

Skill 4: Prioritise Positivity

Skill 5: Choose Kindness

Skill 6: Be your Own Best Friend

Skill 7: Tame Technology

Skill 8: Become Wired for Well-Being

Book B

Skill 1: Get Good at Well-Being

Skill 2: Tackle your Thoughts

Skill 3: Embrace Imperfection

Skill 4: Tame your Emotions

Skill 5: Know your Strengths

Skill 6: Connect and Uplift

Skill 7: Reboot Your Resilience

Skill 8: Become Wired for Well-Being

Book C

Skill 1: Excel at Well-Being

Skill 2: Cultivate Optimism

Skill 3: Get Good at Stress

Skill 4: Make your Goals Work for You

Skill 5: Evolve with Intent

Skill 6: Stop and Drop

Skill 7: Believe you Make a Difference

Skill 8: Become Wired for Well-Being

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Structure:

Each level of the programme contains the following components:

- **Teacher Resource Book** - with lesson plans containing background information, body and mind check-in, relevant SPHE modules, well-being indicators, lesson outcomes, development and conclusion
- **PowerPoint slides** – containing all relevant material for the presentation of the lesson, including a multi-media element
- **Pupil Book** – containing 2 Pupil Activities per lesson and Homework Activity
- **Parent/Guardian/Carer Guide** – (in the centre of each Pupil Book) to encourage parents to support their child in using the skills
- **Supplementary activities/resources**
- Each lesson has a supplementary photocopiable sheet at the back of the book along with other suggestions to help to embed the topic. There is also a poster for each lesson
- There is also a **Digital Page** for each level of the programme to enable easy access for teachers to all of the content
- An **App** for Level A will be piloted in September 2022

Wired for Well-Being: Level A – Independent Research Study:

Level A of the programme was previously piloted and the final version has been available from February 2020.

Independent research entitled 'A Comparison of Two Universal, School-Based Well-Being Interventions: My Friends Youth and Wired for Well-Being' was completed on Level A of the programme in 2021 by Dr. Aoife Rice as part of her Ph.D. dissertation with University College Dublin.

There were 139 participants in the study and outcome measures include the EPOCH Measure of Adolescent Well-being, The Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire and researcher-designed surveys.

The findings, which are due for publication, indicate that **Wired for Well-Being:**

'Significantly enhanced the positive factors of well-being from baseline to post-intervention, with a moderate effect size.'

High levels of enjoyment and engagement by students were reported by students and all teachers reported that they would recommend the programme.

The study concluded that qualitative and quantitative data indicate that Wired for Well-being is a:

'Suitable alternative to 'My Friends Youth' that demonstrates better feasibility and promising effectiveness in this context.'

The Pilot Stage of Levels B and C then took place in schools from September – December 2021.

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Aims of the Pilot Stage:

The following schools took part in the Pilot Stage for Levels B and C:

- Castleknock Community College, Co. Dublin – Level B
- Christ King Secondary School, Cork – Level B
- Curragh Post Primary School, Co. Kildare – Levels B and C
- St. Mary's College, Derry – Levels B and C

Teachers and students were surveyed using Google Forms in December 2021 – not all schools had completed the programme at this stage but most had covered at least 5 lessons of the 8.

The aims of the pilot stage were as follows:

- To establish how easy the programme was to teach
- To establish how helpful the programme was to the students (from both teacher and student viewpoints)
- To gauge general levels of pupil engagement in the lessons
- To obtain suggestions for improvement in any aspects of the programme, in order to incorporate some of these ideas into the final edition of the programme

Pilot Stage Feedback:

Teacher Feedback

19 teachers provided feedback through Google Forms. They were asked the following questions:

1. How easy was the Wired for Well-Being programme to teach, in general?

All teachers rated the programme as easy to teach, with a large majority rating it as very easy or extremely easy.

2. How helpful was the programme to your students' well-being, in general?

All teachers rated the programme as helpful to their students' well-being, with a large majority rating it as very helpful or extremely helpful.

3. How engaged were the majority of students in the lessons, in general?

Very good levels of student engagement in the lessons were reported, with a large majority of teachers reporting very high or extremely high levels.

4. Which topics were particularly helpful to your students?

Different topics were chosen by teachers with no one particular topic identified as more helpful in general, some teachers also said they found all topics helpful.

5. Do you have any suggestions on how to improve the programme?

Some teachers suggested less content per lesson and made specific suggestions for particular topics. The following responses are generally reflective of the teacher comments:

'Overall, the programme was very beneficial and gave students a new perspective on their wellbeing, seeing it as very much a part of their overall health and wellbeing.'

'Excellent resource that is pitched perfectly for students.'

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Student Feedback

105 students gave feedback through Google Forms.

They were asked the following questions:

1. How helpful was the Wired for Well-Being programme to you, in general?

A large majority of students reported that the programme was helpful to them.

2. Which topics were particularly helpful to you?

Different topics were chosen by students with no one particular topic identified as more helpful in general, some students also said they found all topics helpful.

3. Do you have any suggestions on how to improve the programme?

Most students had no suggestions for improving the programme overall and some students gave suggestions for particular topics. The following responses are generally reflective of the student comments:

'The programme is great!'

'I really enjoyed these lessons and they helped me.'

'It is really helpful thank you.'

'The booklet was really good at helping me fight negative thoughts.'

'I really think this programme would help teenagers be more confident in themselves.'

'It is very educational for wellbeing.'

Conclusion

The findings of the pilot stage were very positive and feedback from teachers and students will be very helpful in shaping the final version of the programme.

The author would like to express her sincere thanks to the teachers, students and principals of all of the pilot schools for all of their time, help and support in piloting the programme and for their invaluable feedback.

