



“
***You are
not alone
in this.***

*Everybody is fighting their own battle.
We are going to get through
this together.*

-Shitanshu, 20,
Nepal

”

5

INTEGRATING SOCIAL AND BEHAVIOUR CHANGE COMMUNICATION INTO MENTAL HEALTH AND PSYCHOSOCIAL SUPPORT PROGRAMMING

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#OnMyMind campaign by UNICEF to advocate positive mental health by calling for investment and action to support and protect all children and young people, and a focus on ending neglect, abuse and childhood traumas.
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Introduction

Integrating Social and Behaviour Change Communication (SBCC) into mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) programming can raise mental health awareness, reduce stigma and promote positive behaviour change. SBCC is an evidence-based process that uses a mix of communication tools and channels to promote the uptake of services and bring about positive social and behaviour change (SBC). This chapter of the SBC for MHPSS package showcases examples of SBCC for MHPSS from 2019 to the present from within and outside UNICEF that use a variety of strategies and communication approaches – from print and digital storytelling to social media campaigns, hashtags and chatbots, documentary film, and more.

Who should use this document?

This chapter of the SBC for MHPSS package is tailored to a global and diverse set of change-makers committed to improving MHPSS, including but not limited to MHPSS and SBC practitioners, humanitarian aid workers, public health professionals, educators and policymakers. It serves as a valuable resource for those seeking to adapt examples of powerful communications campaigns and interventions for MHPSS to their own settings and needs.

How should this document be used?

These examples are a reference point for the intersection of SBC and MHPSS and can serve as recent best practices for how SBC can amplify the reach and impact of MHPSS programmes for children, parents and caregivers, and young people.

How was this document developed?

This chapter is the result of a collaborative effort involving experts in the fields of MHPSS and SBC who have highlighted powerful examples of communications campaigns and interventions for MHPSS around the world.



Source: Image from the Rwanda “Green Ribbon” campaign.

The examples of communication for MHPSS provided in this chapter are classified according to two conceptual frameworks: the Socio-Ecological Model (SEM) and the Behavioural Drivers Model (BDM).

Although impact and outcome evaluation data are lacking for some projects, the fact that most target several levels of the SEM, address psychological, social and/or environmental drivers of behaviour and employ several communication channels, indicates that MHPSS interventions that adopt a flexible, multi-level approach are more likely to achieve results. This also applies to approaches that focuses not only on individual behaviours but the broader family, community and social contexts.

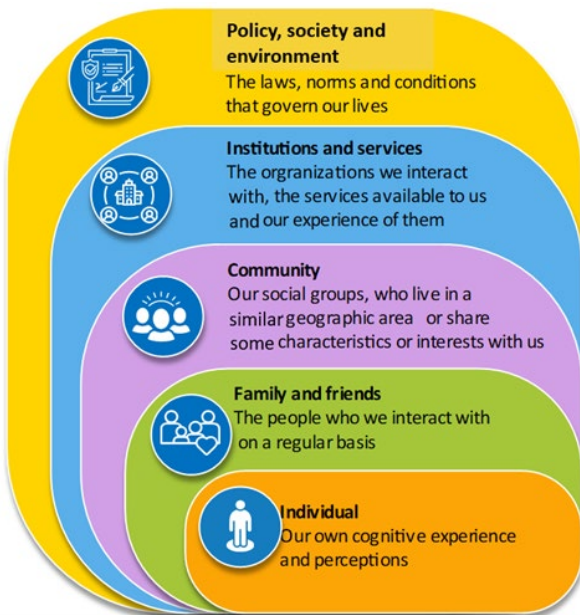


Figure 1: The Socio-Ecological Model

The Socio-Ecological Model

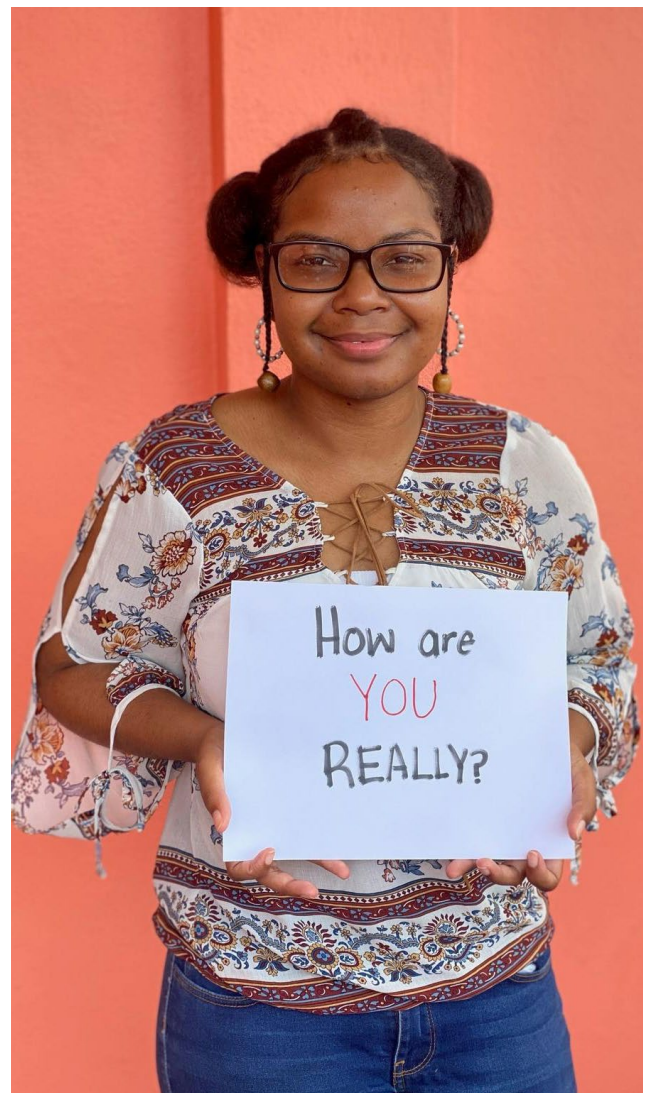
The SEM is a core framework for understanding an individual and their environment and is UNICEF's foundational model for SBC.

Each level of the model represents people and factors that influence that individual's behaviour. At the **individual** level are factors such as knowledge, beliefs and attitudes. The **interpersonal** level considers family and friends who influence a person and factors such as interpersonal communication. The **community** level considers elements such as norms and practices. The **institutional** level takes into account institutions and organizations, such as schools, workplaces and places of worship that may influence a person's knowledge, attitudes and behaviours. The **policy, society and environment** level considers policies, governance and other wider factors that influence behavioural decision-making.

Although the SEM outlines the broader structures that influence behaviour change, it does not describe the drivers of change. The **BDM** brings together models from the behavioural sciences, classifying determinants into three categories – psychological, social and environmental.

- **Psychological:** demographic and social characteristics. This includes the beliefs, intentions, perceptions and biases that influence decision-making.

- **Social:** people are heavily influenced by and concerned about the opinions and actions of others. Positive and negative social norms can play a huge role in personal decision-making.
- **Environmental:** a broad range of influences, including communications at every level (from interpersonal to small-group to mass media and social and digital media), government policies and services, and economic, political, social, technological and cultural changes.



Renata, 24, from Belize, holds a sign saying 'How are you. Really?' as part of a campaign to raise awareness on Mental Health Day. © UNICEF/UNI390578/Daly

Table 1: Classification of examples of communication for MHPSS

SBCC example	Focus area	Source/agency	SEM level(s)	BDM categories	Country/region	Communication channels used
40 seconds of action	Suicide prevention	WHO	Individual, interpersonal, community, institutional, policy, society and environment	Psychological, social, environmental	Global	Interpersonal, print, radio, TV, online, blogs, social media
My Hero is You	COVID-19 and children	IASC MHPSS RG	Interpersonal, community	Psychological, social	Global	Print, online, multimedia
#OnMyMind	Conversations for children and young people	UNICEF	Individual, interpersonal, community	Psychological, social	Global	Interpersonal, videos, social media, podcasts, chatbots
On My Mind podcast		UNICEF and Spotify			Ukraine and Poland	Podcasts and social media
U-Report	Issues of concern for young people, including five mental health modules	UNICEF	Individual, interpersonal, community, policy, society and environment	Psychological, social, environmental	Global	Digital platform that can be accessed by messaging apps, social media and SMS
Green Ribbon campaign	Increasing mental health service-seeking behaviour and decreasing stigma	UNICEF, Government of Rwanda, NGOs, media and private sector	Individual, interpersonal, community	Psychological, social	Rwanda	Radio, social media, internet, WhatsApp, SMS, public events
Pode Falar (Speak Up)	Physical and mental wellbeing of adolescents during COVID-19	UNICEF	Individual, interpersonal, community	Psychological, social	Brazil	Online platform, AI chatbot, live helpline
Connecting the Dots	Decreasing stigma, increasing knowledge of and access to services (based on personal stories)	UNICEF and Noemi Weis (filmmaker)	Individual, interpersonal, community, institutional	Psychological, social, environmental	Global	Documentary film, facilitator guides
Doing What Matters in Times of Stress	Simple techniques and strategies for coping with stress	WHO	Individual, interpersonal, community	Psychological, social	Global	Print guide, downloadable as PDF, with audio exercises, available in 25 languages
How are you really?	Conversations for youth about mental health and seeking help	UNICEF Serbia	Individual, interpersonal, community	Psychological, social	Serbia	Print, videos, social media
Migrant Child Story Telling	Children's stories of migration experiences	Rights and Opportunities Foundation (NGO), supported by UNICEF	Individual, interpersonal, community	Psychological, social	Global	Website, downloadable stories that can be printed and shared
NiSilencioNiTabu	Conversations for youth about mental health and seeking help	UNICEF and Government of Uruguay	Interpersonal, community, institutional, policy, society and environment	Psychological, social, environmental	Uruguay	Workshops, materials, games, facilitator's manual and social media
Social and Community Listening Informs MHPSS SBCC	Information from online, offline and on-the-ground sources to guide MHPSS programming	UNICEF	Individual, interpersonal, community, institutional, policy, society and environment	Psychological, social, environmental	Global	Social media, websites, monitoring and analysis of print and electronic media content
Internet of Good Things	Resources on MHPSS for low-end mobile devices, low literacy, first time internet users	UNICEF	Individual, interpersonal	Psychological, social	Global	Website

“40 seconds of action”

On World Suicide Prevention Day (10 September) in 2019, the World Health Organization (WHO) launched a “40 seconds of action” campaign to raise awareness about suicide prevention. The campaign was part of a broader WHO effort to increase awareness about mental health, culminating in World Mental Health Day one month later (10 October).

The 40 seconds slogan reflects an alarming statistic – every 40 seconds someone, somewhere in the world, loses their life to suicide. The multimedia campaign included the hashtag #40seconds alongside digital media posts and calls for action, which can be as small as starting a conversation with someone about how they are feeling.

The campaign targeted multiple participant groups, urging, for example, conversations with people who are struggling or contemplating suicide. It encouraged the media to highlight the 40-second statistic in interviews, articles and blogposts, and asked employers to alert employees about workplace and community resources. The campaign also promoted advocacy with policymakers.



Source: Campaign by the World Health Organization (WHO).

Links:

- <https://www.who.int/news-room/events/detail/2019/09/10/default-calendar/world-suicide-prevention-day>
- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P6D5Vgyl_Ms

“My Hero is You”

The COVID-19 pandemic sparked several SBCC initiatives for MHPSS. In early 2020, the Inter-Agency Standing Committee Reference Group on Mental Health and Psychosocial Support in Emergency Settings (IASC MHPSS RG), alongside member agencies and partners, developed the children’s storybook “[My Hero is You – How kids can fight COVID-19](#)”. The content – including the imaginary character of Ario – was developed using results from a survey of 1,700 children, parents, caregivers and teachers. The book is designed to be read to children, and an accompanying guide called “Actions for Heroes” provides support and activities. The book is available online and was translated into 138 languages as well as Braille and sign language interpretations. It also includes an audiobook and multimedia adaptations. A [report](#) released one year after the storybook was published details the book’s global reach. IASC MHPSS RG released a sequel in 2021 titled “[My Hero is You 2021: How kids can cope with COVID-19](#)”, which was once again developed by and for children and families in response to needs as they entered a second year of the pandemic.



“Previous humanitarian emergencies have shown us how vital it is to address the fears and anxiety of young people when life as they know it gets turned upside down. We hope that this beautifully illustrated book, which takes children on a journey across time zones and continents, will help them to understand what they can do to stay positive and keep safe during the coronavirus outbreak.”

Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus,
WHO Director-General

Links:

- <https://www.who.int/news-room/feature-stories/detail/scicom-compilation-hero>
- https://mcusercontent.com/c2523f4cbed5f394e2158b43f/files/ea10473c-ce96-4e8f-9119-4fe70b7f9eb/My_Hero_Is_You_FINAL_FOR_WEBSITE_LOWER_QUALITY_31.03.2020.pdf
- <https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/iasc-reference-group-mental-health-and-psychosocial-support-emergency-settings/my-hero-you>
- <https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/adaptations-my-hero-you-country-level-initiatives>
- <https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/sites/default/files/migrated/2021-04/Highlights-One%20Year%20on%20from%20the%20Release%20of%20My%20Hero%20is%20You.pdf>

#OnMyMind

UNICEF's [#OnMyMind](#) global campaign was launched alongside UNICEF's flagship [The State of the World's Children 2021](#) report on World Mental Health Day in 2021 in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. The campaign aims to normalize conversations about mental health and promote connection and action in support of all children and young people. Through videos, social media, web resources, podcasts, media engagement and youth chatbots, young people and parents/caregivers are provided with informative content, expert tips and guidance on mental health.

Since its launch, the #OnMyMind campaign has reached millions of people worldwide who have liked/shared/commented on social media, watched campaign videos, and/or visited and downloaded resources.

<i>Things parents say</i>	<i>Instead try</i>
"In my time we never..."	"It wasn't the best for me but it doesn't have to be hard for you."
"Just don't think too much..."	"What is making you feel this way?"
"You worry too much."	"I understand why you might find it hard..."
"It's not a big deal! You have everything."	"How can I best support you?"



Source: UNICEF's social media #OnMyMind campaign.

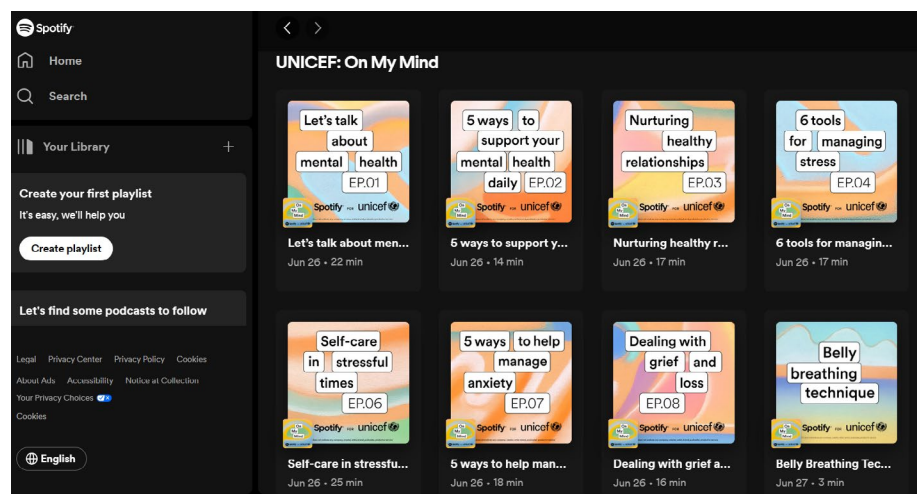
Links:

- <https://www.unicef.org/on-my-mind>
- <https://www.voicesofyouth.org/breakthestigma>
- <https://www.unicef.org/lac/media/28726/file/SOWC2021-full-report-English.pdf>

UNICEF and Spotify launch On My Mind podcast with youth

Understanding the everyday mental health needs of young people directly affected by conflict is key to being able to support them. In a new project, launched in June 2023, UNICEF is collaborating with Spotify and a group of Ukrainian and Polish youth impacted by the war in Ukraine to co-create a new youth-informed, evidence-based mental health podcast called [On My Mind](#). Season one will initially be available in Ukrainian, Polish and English, with new language versions coming online later. From episodes on breaking down the stigma around mental health, to nurturing healthy relationships and coping with grief, stress and loss, this co-created podcast will support tangible progress in improving access to mental health services and fostering a nurturing environment for young people.

Going forward, Spotify and UNICEF will work together to co-create, adapt, digitize and translate additional mental health content.



Links:

- <https://open.spotify.com/show/3Z9pPvKcxEksVstTt1x3nY>

U-Report digital platform

In February 2020, the U-Report for Humanitarian Action initiative – a joint effort of four UNICEF divisions – developed a U-Report information chatbot to support COVID-19 Risk Communication and Community Engagement.¹

U-Report has evolved into UNICEF's flagship digital platform to engage young people in programme priorities, emergency response and advocacy actions. It supports adolescent, youth and community participation and works to share information, raise awareness and collect quantifiable data on specific areas that impact children, including the most vulnerable. Responses received are analysed in real time, mapped and displayed on a public dashboard, ensuring that young people's feedback can be actioned by local and national decision-makers.

U-Report is available via numerous messaging, social media and SMS channels, and even works on a basic mobile phone. It is free, anonymous and easy to use.

Five mental health chatbots – part of a larger, multi-subject, modular chatbot – have been launched to coincide with World Mental Health Day under the mental health global advocacy priority and #OnMyMind campaign.

Figure 2: Five U-Report mental health chatbots



U-Report mental health chatbots:

- Building positive relationships
<https://weshare.unicef.org/Package/2AMZIFFSR5HL>
- Initiating conversations about mental health
<https://weshare.unicef.org/Package/2AMZIF6W7JFD>
- Breaking down the stigma associated with mental health
<https://weshare.unicef.org/Package/2AMZIF71AEKB>
- Understanding and managing stress
<https://weshare.unicef.org/Package/2AMZIFY1OHEW>
- Emotional regulation
<https://weshare.unicef.org/archive/Content-Emotional-Regulation-English-082023--1-2AM408LB6PY9.html>

By the start of 2023, almost 700,000 people had accessed these chatbots. Each one includes two or three feedback questions asking young people about the relevance and usefulness of the chatbot. The vast majority of respondents said they found them to be relevant and useful.

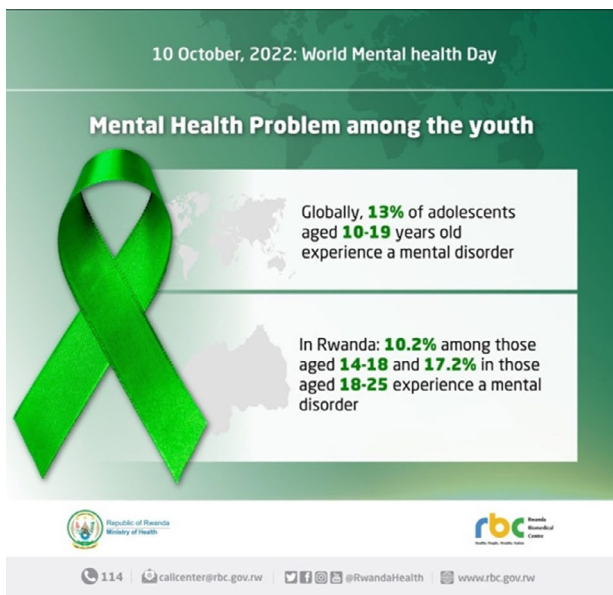
Future plans are to connect the UNICEF/Spotify podcasts to U-Report users and vice versa to ensure linkages between these different MHPSS resources in the broader MHPSS ecosystem.



¹This initiative is a joint effort of the Office of Innovation, Programme Division, Communication for Development and Office of Emergency Programmes.

“Green Ribbon” campaign

UNICEF Rwanda’s “Green Ribbon” campaign was launched on World Mental Health Day 2021 in an effort to reduce stigma and spur the uptake of professional mental health services. Reaching over 6 million people, the three-month campaign used radio, social media, digital platforms, videos featuring influencers and comedians and an event held at the University of Rwanda to communicate its core messages around mental health. Following the campaign, young people reported an increase in support-seeking, greater empowerment to support their peers and communities on mental health, and fewer feelings of shame. The campaign was developed in partnership with the Ministry of Health, Rwanda Basic Education Board, National Child Development Agency, University of Rwanda, Rwanda Broadcasting Agency, Girl Effect, “Kiss FM” radio, Association of Rwandan Journalists, MTN Rwanda, Bank of Kigali, and individual influencers.



The dome of the Convention Center in Rwanda’s capital, Kigali, turned green to mark World Mental Health Day and the Green Ribbon campaign. Source: UNICEF Rwanda.

Source: Latest figures released by Rwanda Biomedical Centre, from [Kigali Today Press online news](#).

Links:

- <https://www.unicef.org/rwanda/press-releases/rwanda-launches-green-ribbon-mental-health-campaign-amid-enhanced-push-mental-health>
- <https://www.unicef.org/rwanda/topics/mental-health>
- <https://twitter.com/unicefrw/status/1447179973962444806>

“Pode Falar” (Speak Up)

Another SBCC initiative from UNICEF that emerged from COVID-19 is “Pode Falar” (Speak Up), an online platform in Brazil featuring Ariel, an AI chatbot interacting with adolescents and young people in confidential conversations about mental health. The project was launched in 2022 following a survey of adolescents seeking to understand their physical and mental wellbeing during COVID-19 and learn more about their thoughts, feelings and actions. The chatbot listens and responds to questions and links users to services and external mental health experts in particular areas (see figure below). In the first year, 734,991 messages were exchanged with the chatbot. Specific terms – such as suicide and self-harm – direct the user to a live helpline provider to respond to crisis situations.

I WANT TO TAKE CARE OF MYSELF
Reliable content on how to help yourself and others.

I WANT TO BE INSPIRED
Testimonials from adolescents and young people who managed to overcome difficult situations. If you want, you can also leave yours.

I WANT TO TALK
Individual welcoming space offered by several organizations in the area of mental health.

IT'S ALL CONFIDENTIAL AND FREE!

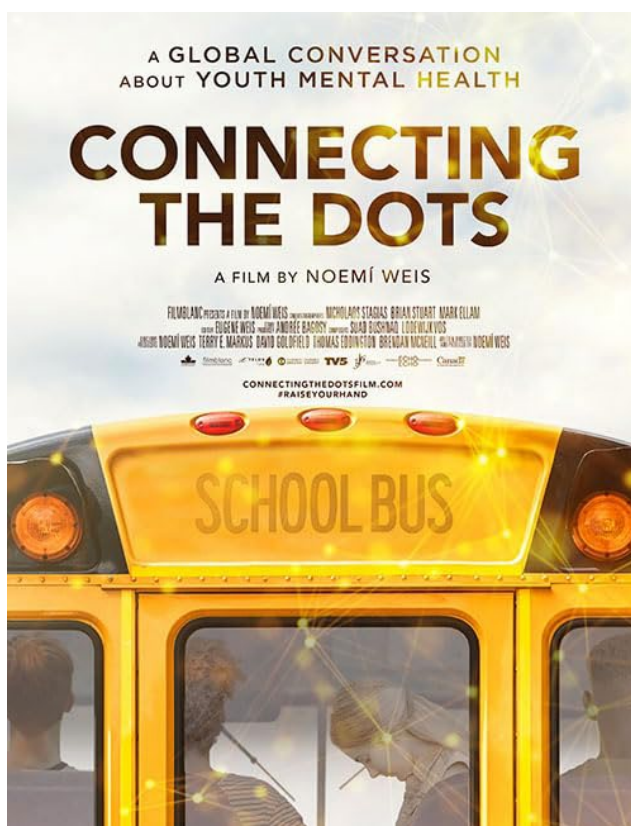
Source: The [three sessions of “Pode Falar”](#).

Links:

- <https://weni.ai/en/blog/success-case-pode-falar/>
- <https://www.podefalar.org.br/>

Connecting the Dots

[Connecting the Dots](#) is a documentary film by Noemi Weis that gives voice to young people, seeking to banish the stigma and shame around youth mental health, instil hope and increase self-care and support. The production has been shown at film festivals around the world. UNICEF collaborated with the filmmakers to create facilitator guides on mental health and assist conversations for teachers, parents, mental health professionals and young people.

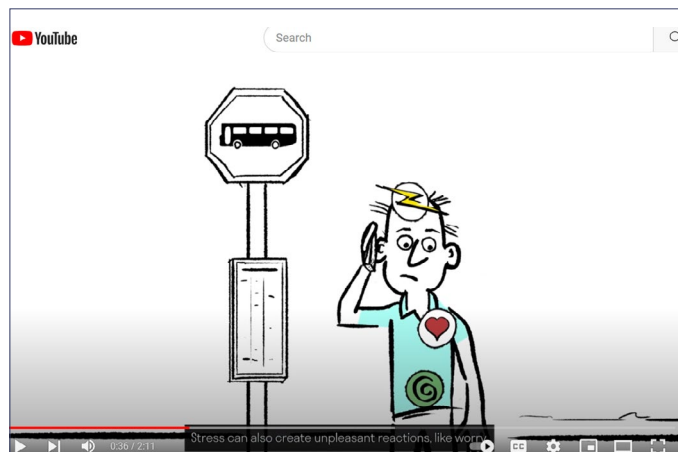
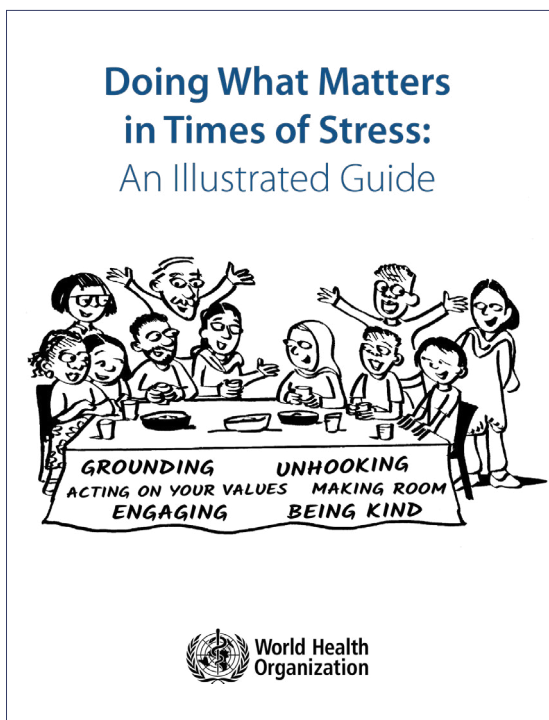


Links:

- <https://connectingthedotsfilm.com/>
- <https://www.instagram.com/connectingthedotsfilm/>

Doing What Matters in Times of Stress

WHO developed [Doing What Matters in Times of Stress: An Illustrated Guide](#) for stress management. The guide is available as a PDF download in over 25 languages and includes audio exercises. The guide is designed to equip people with skills to cope with stress, for example through simple techniques and strategies for adversity that anyone can learn and practice.



Source: YouTube video version of WHO's *Doing What Matters in Times of Stress: An Illustrated Guide*.

Links:

- <https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/9789240003927>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?app=desktop&v=E3Cts45FNrk>

How are you? Really

A UNICEF campaign in Serbia called [“How are you? Really”](#) is aimed at addressing the mental health of young people aged 14 to 25 by encouraging them to talk openly about how they feel and seek professional help if they are having difficulty in coping. The campaign includes videos and connections to direct mental health care and support services. It is a spinoff from [UNICEF’s Voices of Youth – Let’s Talk About Mental Health campaign](#) for which print materials and videos are available in English, Arabic, French and Spanish:



Source: UNICEF Serbia. The literal translation is, “How are you? But really.”

Links:

- <https://www.unicef.org/serbia/kako-si-ali-stvarno>
- <https://www.unicef.org/serbia/en/how-are-you-really>
- [How are you? Really. - YouTube](#)
- [How are you? Really. \(Milica Trojic\) - YouTube](#)
- [How are you? Really. \(Milica Trojic #1\) - YouTube](#)
- [How are you? Really. \(Milica Josic #1\) - YouTube](#)
- [How are you? Really. \(Milica Josic\) - YouTube](#)
- [How are you? Really. \(Aleksa Nikolic\) - YouTube](#)

Migrant child storytelling

The [Migrant Child Storytelling](https://www.migrantchildstorytelling.org/) website is a platform for children from the Middle East, Southeast Asia, West Africa, East Africa and Central America to tell their stories and share their lived experiences in words, drawings, photographs and videos. These children have fled their homes – be they from Afghanistan, Syria, El Salvador and many other places – to seek refuge elsewhere. They are now living or travelling through Europe, or moving from Central America to Mexico and the United States. For some, their journey was halted by the COVID pandemic, leaving them stranded in a country which was not their intended destination. Funded by the Rights and Opportunities Foundation, this project is an example of a participatory SBCC initiative that highlights real and harrowing experiences told by children themselves, many of which include struggles with mental health and stress.



Noah's house in Tijuana, from his story 'Life Under Lockdown in Mexico', as it appeared in www.migrantchildstorytelling.org. ©Noah.

This is part of one adolescent's story:

“Before lockdown, I was just about to start my last semester of high school. I was honestly struggling with my health at the time, and it put me in a very low place in terms of my mental health, and even more physically. I felt unmotivated and overwhelmed, but I was trying my best to finish high school strong.... This garden in front of our house is very well cared for by my grandma, and it shows by how beautiful it is. We have our own lemon and chili trees, and a little shaded sitting area in the corner that is perfect for relieving stress, even if it's for a short while.”

(Excerpt and image from Noah's story from the COVID-19 lockdown in Mexico, July 2020.)

Links:

- <https://www.migrantchildstorytelling.org/>
- <https://www.facebook.com/migrantchildstorytelling/>

NiSilencioNiTabú

[#NiSilencioNiTabú](#) (Neither Silence nor Taboo) is an SBCC campaign for MHPSS geared to adolescents and young people in Uruguay. Designed by UNICEF, the Ministry of Public Health, the National Public Education Administration, the National Youth Institute and other institutions, the campaign, launched in 2022, includes workshops for adolescents and young people and a kit of materials, including a card game and a manual to facilitate trainings and conversation. Thousands of young people have engaged with the campaign, which has sparked policy change and dialogue at the national level.



©INJU and UNICEF/2023/Uruguay/Casamadre.

Links:

- <https://www.unicef.org/uruguay/ni-silencio-ni-tabu>
- <https://www.anep.edu.uy/15-d/iniciativa-ni-silencio-ni-tab-fue-declarada-pol-tica-p-blica-nacional>

Social and community listening informs MHPSS SBCC

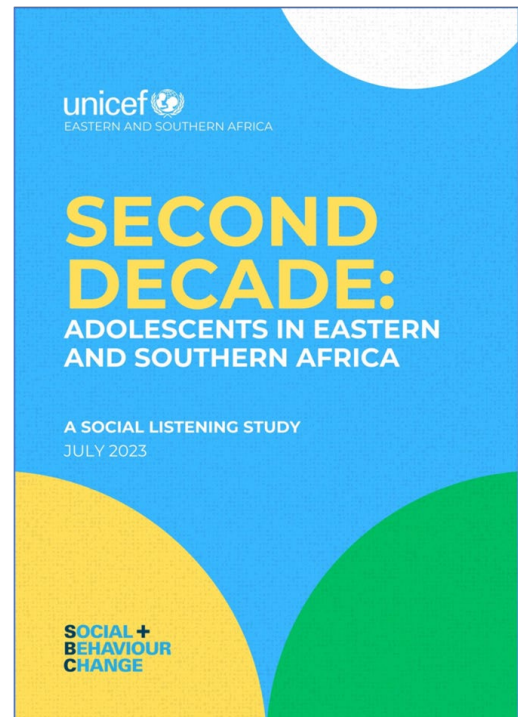
Social and community listening (SCL) is the process of gathering and analysing readily available information from online, offline and on-the-ground sources. This information could be comments from social media, news coverage on the radio, or data from a youth survey.

SCL complements existing data streams by providing rapid insights that can inform and enhance evidence-based SBC action. Triangulating information from multiple sources helps to develop a nuanced understanding of current MHPSS programming needs and community level information gaps.

SCL contributes to all seven pillars of UNICEF's Accountability to Affected Populations commitments. It is highly useful for identifying and including community voices, especially from young people, for designing MHPSS interventions or investigating further research requirements.

UNICEF Eastern and Southern Africa Regional Office used SCL to develop a multifaceted report on adolescent experiences in the region. The report, titled *Second Decade: Adolescents in Eastern and Southern Africa*, includes a section on mental health and provides SBC action recommendations based on identified insights. The report can be accessed on this [link](#).

For strategies to implement SCL for mental health and psychosocial wellbeing, the following steps can be adapted (Prepare, Listen, Understand, Engage) from this [UNICEF guidance](#).



Internet of Good Things

The Internet of Good Things is a data-light website, optimized for low-end mobile devices and designed with low-literacy, first time internet users in mind. The purpose of the platform is to provide UNICEF and partners with a shared online resource to cost-effectively expand the reach and impact of programmes and services to key populations with a solution that proactively bridges the digital divide. It contains briefs on six topics in MHPSS: understanding mental health, depression & anxiety, keeping mentally healthy: self-care tips, common questions about mental health, stress and me, and dealing with bullies.

Internet of Good Things – Mental Health



Mental Health

Understanding Mental Health



Depression & Anxiety



Keeping Mentally Healthy: Self-Care Tips



Source: Three of the six topics from Internet of Good Things – Mental Health

Links:

- <https://www.internetofgoodthings.org/en/sections/youth/your-health/mental-health/>

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