

Health, safety and well-being: the learning points

The information below describes the learning points in more detail and includes some aspects of Health, safety and well-being that can be addressed in your sessions. Use them in conjunction with the activity notes and the **Linking the cross-curricular themes to your subject or vocational area** guidance notes, as a memory aid or starting point for further research.

Introduction

Health and safety has changed considerably from an approach based on a set of rules and laws, to one which now includes well-being. While rules and laws are still important, the focus has moved from a technical safety perspective to a human-centred one. In particular, the emphasis is now on developing positive behaviour and the engagement and involvement of workers.

The approach explored throughout these resources extends beyond the purely factual, as outlined in, for example, the Health and Safety at Work Act, and explores the broader meaning of health, safety and well-being. The resources seek to build on the standard topics which may be already covered elsewhere in the learners' programme, and develop individual attitudes and behaviours.

What's behind the learning points?

Each learner activity, storyboard and video clip included in these resources addresses an aspect of one or more of the six learning points in Health, safety and well-being. The information below describes the learning points in more detail with some aspects of Health, safety and well-being to be included in your sessions.

Learning point 1: Understand what health, safety and well-being is and why it is important (including the importance of individual responsibility, attitude and behaviour).

- This is not just about a set of rules and laws, but about how learners stay safe and healthy through positive attitude and behaviours.
- Each of us is responsible for our own health, safety and well-being, and that of others. This relies on individuals taking appropriate action to demonstrate responsibility for health, safety and well-being.
- Safety is important and much of this content is covered in other resources. However, health and well-being issues can have serious, long term effects.
- Young people are particularly at risk at work due to factors such as lack of experience and peer pressure.

Learning point 2: Explore the importance of mental well-being and the causes and prevention of stress.

- What may be regarded as a stressful situation differs from individual to individual.
- Stress can lead to minor health conditions such as eczema, or more serious illnesses like cardiovascular disease. Both minor and serious conditions can affect work, social life and personal happiness.
- Common causes of stress include a lack of direction in your job, demanding or unrealistic targets, difficult working relationships, bullying and harassment.
- Indicators of stress include headaches and indigestion, disturbed sleep and fatigue, loss of concentration, shortened temper and loss of self-esteem.
- Stress prevention techniques might include having clearly defined areas of work, effective time-management, resolving disputes with colleagues and taking time to relax.

Learning point 3: Determine what musculoskeletal disorders (MSDs) are, the factors that can cause them, and how risks can be reduced.

- MSDs are a range of health conditions, e.g. suffering from a strained back, muscle aches, repetitive strain injuries, and many other conditions that affect muscles and bones.
- Factors that can cause MSDs include the movement of heavy loads, physically challenging tasks and individual aspects such as fitness, well-being, training and competence.
- Risk can be reduced by taking responsibility for your own fitness and well-being and ensuring training is in place.

Learning point 4: Highlight the importance of looking after the skin (with particular reference to the issues of dermatitis and skin cancer).

- Occupational dermatitis is a common skin condition often caused by substances in the workplace.
- Looking after the skin means observing high standards of hygiene such as wearing personal protective equipment and clothing, and checking skin for any abnormalities (e.g. skin blotches).
- Hazardous substances include those that are classed as irritants, harmful, corrosive, toxic or very toxic, and these must be stored safely.
- Fumes and dust can be equally as harmful to the skin, lungs and other organs.
- Those working outdoors need to protect themselves from the sun's potentially harmful rays. Protection can include sun screen, protective clothing and hats or caps.
- The skin can also be damaged by burns, scalds, abrasions, cuts, and puncture or needle stick injuries.

Learning point 5: Establish the seriousness of slips, trips and falls, the factors that contribute to them and how they can be prevented.

- These are the greatest cause of serious accidents in the workplace.
- Factors which raise the risk of slips, trips and falls include floor surface, holes and damage, housekeeping, trailing cables, a change in the floor level, and contamination.
- Individual factors which contribute include type of footwear, the task, concentration and taking responsibility for being diligent and observant.
- Individuals must take responsibility for keeping their workplace tidy and safe.

Learning point 6: Explore the risks associated with transport, driving and vehicles, and how risks can be reduced.

- Road accidents are the greatest cause of fatalities in young people.
- Everyone is exposed to risk of traffic, vehicles and transport.
- Risks that individuals need to be aware of include driving themselves or being driven, being a pedestrian, getting to and from work and driving as part of their job.
- Drivers should be aware of the risk of distractions when driving, such as using mobile phones, smoking, drinking and eating.
- Individual factors include physical well-being and being fit to drive, being alert, mental well-being, ergonomics, and musculoskeletal disorders.
- Other factors such as alcohol and drugs can have an adverse effect on the body's ability to stay alert and make clear judgements, perceptions and reactions while driving.

How can this theme be applied to your subject or vocational area?

The document **Why are Customer care, Enterprise, and Health, safety and well-being important?** explains the importance and relevance of teaching the cross-curricular themes in a subject or vocational context.

The relevance of some learning points is clear across all subjects or vocational areas. Others will need some prompts or interpretation. The guidance notes for **Linking the cross-curricular themes to your subject or vocational area** provide suggestions on how you might contextualise the cross-curricular themes. These suggestions are not exhaustive, and you may have your own ideas of how to make this theme relevant to your learners.

Learners also need to be aware of the learning points in the context of a changing society in terms of increased ethnicity, an aging population and the diversity of partnerships and relationship status. Your examples will need to reflect this.

Sources of additional information

Together with the activity notes, this briefing sheet aims to provide sufficient information for teachers to teach sessions on Health, safety and well-being. Should you wish to research this theme in more detail further information can be found in the following sources:

- General health, safety and well-being:
 - www.hse.gov.uk
 - www.rospa.com
- Slips, trips and falls:
 - www.hse.gov.uk/slips/index.htm
 - www.tuc.org.uk/h_and_s/tuc-6076-f0.cfm
- Stress and mental health:
 - www.hse.gov.uk/stress/index.htm
 - www.worklifesupport.com/
 - www.dignityatwork.org/
 - www.banbullyingatwork.com
 - http://www.bbc.co.uk/health/conditions/mental_health/coping_stress.shtml
- Transport, driving and vehicles:
 - www.hse.gov.uk/workplacetransport/index.htm
 - www.rospa.com/roadsafety/index.htm
 - www.rospa.com/roadsafety/resources/drivers.htm
- The skin:
 - www.hse.gov.uk/skin/index.htm
 - www.skincarecampaign.org/
 - www.britishskinfoundation.org.uk/
- Musculoskeletal disorders:
 - www.hse.gov.uk/msd/index.htm
 - <http://www.bbc.co.uk/health/conditions/repetitivestrain1.shtml>
 - www.rsi.org.uk/
- Young people and workers:
 - www.safelearner.info
 - www.hse.gov.uk/youngpeople/index.htm
 - www.wisep2work.co.uk/
 - www.youngworker.co.uk/