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Scottish Government - Education and Skills Committee Consultation on Personal and Social Education

“What should personal and social education sessions be about?”

We are a charity based in South Lanarkshire delivering services that work towards achieving the priorities and recommendations of both the Scottish Government and the Scottish Youth Parliament in relation to mental health.

We achieve this through the delivery of interactive group sessions within schools and local youth organisations.

We provide children and young people with essential transferable life skills which will assist them in discovering their own strengths and capacities. This will be invaluable in assisting them to deal with many of the challenges that young people face today and will also help to prepare them for those often difficult transitions through childhood into adolescence and later into adulthood.

We feel that PSE classes should focus on providing pupils with such skills and in particular those in relation to the promotion and management of their own mental health.

With such a focus currently on closing the attainment gap through the Attainment Challenge, there is a great deal of effort being undertaken by schools to improve the standards of numeracy and literacy. We are, however hearing from teachers that it is a real challenge to address the health and wellbeing aspect of this work. It is clear that PSE classes are the ideal opportunity to cover such topics, however there appears to be a real lack of consistency as to how this is achieved with varying degrees of success.

We feel that a solution to this would be to prioritise education regarding mental health and stress management as embedded within Curriculum for Excellence and in order to ensure consistency, have key sessions delivered during PSE classes by community based specialists working in partnership with schools and funded by the Pupil Equity Fund.

Our organisation has already delivered several pilot programmes locally based on this model and we have received very positive feedback from both staff and pupils.

Susan Livingstone
Wholistic Life – Coaching for Kids