

Mental Health Promotion Case Studies from Countries

A Joint Publication of the
World Federation for Mental Health
and the World Health Organization



World Federation for Mental Health



World Health Organization

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Editors

Shekhar Saxena and Preston J Garrison



World Federation for Mental Health



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Foreword

One of the major goals of both the World Federation for Mental Health (WFMH) and the World Health Organization (WHO) is promotion of mental health. Mental health is described by WHO as a state of well-being in which individuals are able to realize their own abilities, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and are able to make a contribution to their community. Viewed this way, mental health is more than a mere absence of mental disorders; it has a positive dimension and is relevant to all people rather than only to those with a disorder.

WFMH and WHO have fostered and encouraged development of mental health promotion activities throughout the world for many years, and are aware that some good work is being done in this field. However, a shared concern that most of the innovative mental health promotion programmes being developed are not widely disseminated and replicated led to this collaborative project. The project collected and compiled a sample of mental health promotion programmes, initiatives and strategies into a document that mental health associations and other organizations can use in their own communities and countries.

The case studies come from most regions of the world, though there are more from high income countries. However, there are some examples of good work from middle and low income countries, often working with incredibly small human and financial resources. A number of contributions have focused on culture-specific aspects of their activities; these are likely to be of particular interest to programme planners and will need special attention when attempts at replication are made. Case studies from high income countries often target populations that are disadvantaged, making these particularly interesting to WFMH and WHO. Overall, the collection gives a glimpse of the range of mental health promotion programmes, some evidence based and others less so.

This publication also demonstrates the close collaboration between the World Federation for Mental Health and the World Health Organization, who continue to work in a synergistic and harmonious manner towards promoting mental health in the world.

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