

#GodCaresForMe 



**Scripture Programme
2020 – 2021
Brigaders**

Taking Time Out

There are many bible verses about taking time out from our busy lives.

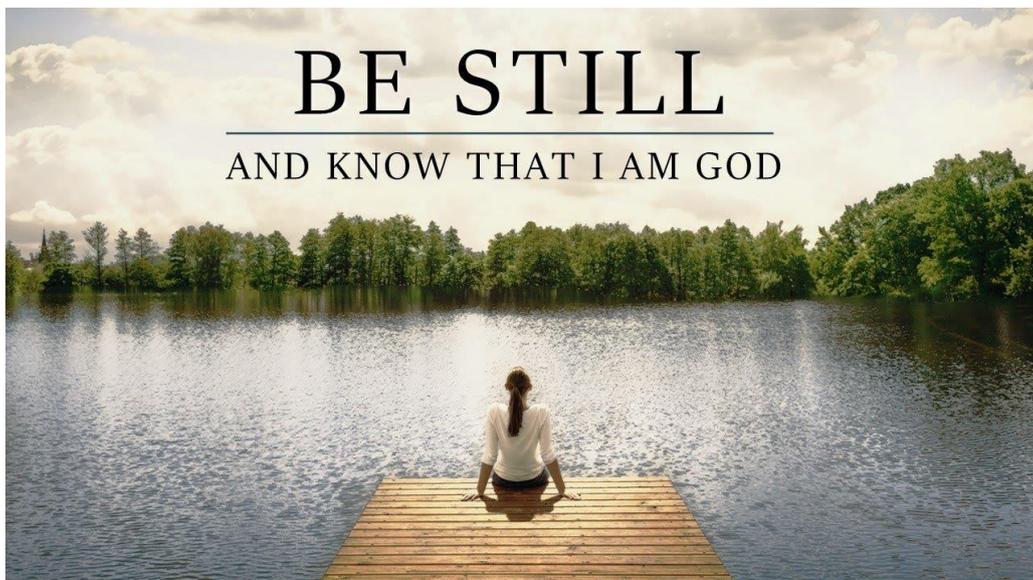


While it was still dark, Jesus woke and left the house. He went to a lonely place, where he prayed.

Mark 1 v 35

Crowds of people were coming and going so that Jesus and his followers did not even have time to eat. He said to them, "Let us go off by ourselves to some place where we will be alone, and you can rest for while".

Mark 6 v 31



Psalms 46 v 10

Poetry Reflection

The poems below are taken from
Stillness through my Prayers
By Sr. Stanislaus Kennedy

Discuss the below poems from the section Trust.

Teach me to trust myself, to follow my deepest desires, explore the recesses of my heart, as I strive to become whole.

Faith is living with promise, with waiting, with Darkness, with ambiguity, with uncertainty.
Faith, a gentle strength without answers.

Believing goodness awaits us, we stop –
Tasting its gift.
Believing life is flawed, we stop – feeling the fear.
Believing our soul is luminous, we stop –
Discovering life's blessings.

Activity

Write your own short poem about Trust.

Discuss the below poems from the section Beyond Fear.

To know the light, we must know the dark,
to be full we must be empty.

Bring me comfort, bring me support, help me to feel safe,
Give me something to hold on to.

Nelson Mandela spent time – twenty-seven years
- Locked up, waiting, imprisoned in darkness.
Waiting in darkness, he became light, shining for his people, party, country, world.

Darkness faced alone – desolation, emptiness, loneliness, confusion, fear.
Darkness accepted, faced with faith, hope, love –
New life born within us, bringing peace, courage, vision.

Activity

Write your own short poem about your fears.

Poetry Reflection

Discuss the below poems from the section Stillness.

Making space. Resting in the moment.
Remembering the preciousness of life.
Taking time. Relishing life with joy, with wonder.
Remembering to give thanks.

My world can be buzzing with voices of
aggression, fear, doubt and criticism.

By taking time to listen to my inner voice
in silence, in solitude and in peace, I listen
to my heart's voice, as it is drawn into wisdom.
Taking time to be.

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Anytime is a time to stop, reflect, accept what has
been. Live in the moment. A time to commit to
the future with confidence, strength, courage.

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Stillness, present in any space, every place,
Available, always, everywhere, to all who seek it.

Stillness and silence awaits me everywhere.
I don't have to travel from the busyness of the city,
the bustle of living.

I find it when I stop and notice
the petal of a flower, a cloud over the sun,
the changing moon, the colours of the sea,
the perfection of a newborn child,
a blanket of snow,
the leaves falling, the magic of birdsong,
the countless wonders of day and night.

Activity

Write your own poem about Stillness.



Activity

Read the account of Sister Stan and reflect on her achievements.

Sr. Stan

Sister Stanislaus Kennedy was born Treasa Kennedy in 1939 near Lispole on the Dingle Peninsula in County Kerry, Ireland.



As one of five children she grew up among fisherman and farmers during a time when there was high unemployment in Ireland and many Irish citizens were driven to emigrate in search of a better life.

At eighteen years of age Sr. Stan, then Treasa Kennedy, decided to become a nun with The Religious Sisters of Charity, formerly known as the Irish Sisters of Charity which was founded by Mary Aikenhead. She too was drawn to work on behalf of the poor in the towns and cities of Ireland, from stories she had heard and read about whilst growing up in the townland of Lispole on the Dingle Peninsula, Co. Kerry.

As a young girl, Sr Stan noticed that there were distinctions between people, those who had a lot and those who had very little. For almost fifty years now she has pioneered, campaigned, explored and developed a range of inspiring social innovations to benefit thousands of people who have experienced exclusion in its many forms.

In 1974 the Irish Government appointed Sr Stan as the first chair of The National Committee on Pilot Schemes to Combat Poverty in Ireland and in 1985 the European Commission appointed her as Trans-National Co-ordinator in the European Rural Anti-Poverty Programme working right across Europe. From the small townland of Lispole, Sr Stan's desire to create a more equal society was moving further afield.

Moving to Dublin in the early 1980's Sr Stan tackled one of Ireland's most neglected social inequalities – homelessness. In 1985 Sr Stan established Focus Point which is now Focus Ireland www.focusireland.ie , the biggest national, voluntary organisation helping people to find, create and maintain a home.

In 1998 Sr Stan founded the Sanctuary, a meditation/spirituality centre in the heart of Dublin city, a place where people can find a quiet space and time for themselves to explore and develop their inner world and wisdom and find stillness.

See www.sanctuary.ie



Help in Hard Times

Verses and quotes

Here are some verses and quotes to learn or think about.

When life gives you a hundred reasons to break down and cry, show life that you have a million reasons to smile and laugh.

My wish for you today and always...

A heart free of sadness

A mind free of worry

A life full of gladness

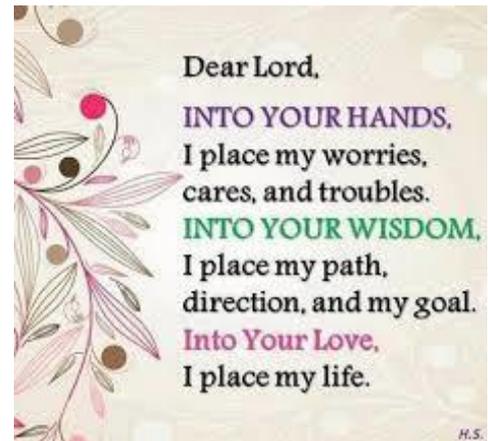
A body free of illness

A spirit full of blessings

A day filled with Love

Cast your burden on the Lord
and he will sustain you

Psalm 55 v 22



God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in times of trouble

Psalm 46 v 1

For I the Lord Your God will hold your right hand, saying to you, Fear not, I will help you

Isaiah 41 v 13

During hard times we always have help from God and our family and friends to help us through those difficult times.

The leader could give the girls a simple story of how someone helped her during a particularly difficult time as an example.

Interviews

Chat with approx. five people e.g. neighbours, friends, frontline workers, church minister, shop worker, granny, people who were cocooning etc.

Ask them how they got on during the lock down or restricted conditions, how did they find living in those different times.

Decide what questions to ask, here are some suggestions:

1. How did you cope with a different routine?
2. What was it like not going to school/work? Did you feel different?
3. Did you learn any new skills?
4. Did you miss travelling on buses, trains or in cars?
5. Could you hear the birds better?
6. Did you have more family time? Was it good?
7. Did you pray more for people to get better?
8. Did you miss getting dressed up and going to see friends?
9. Did you miss the organisations you are involved in?
10. Did you use your time and plan your day differently?
11. Did you discover any games or activities to do with your family?
12. Did you find out any new family history or stories?

Report back the following week after the interviews are finished and compare answers. Discuss the different answers received; were they different for different age groups?

Wellbeing Plan

Below are 7 ideas or tips for helping with our wellbeing. Get the girls to read and discuss them and see if they could put any of them into action while at GB.

Idea 1: Nature walk

Getting out and about is so good for our health and wellbeing. Time outdoors relieves stress, improves memory and attention, and even boosts creativity.

If it is possible, in your GB weekly meeting, plan a trip outside the hall / in the local area to see the flowers, hear the birds and get fresh air in your lungs. (dependant on your location and weather)

How many are your works, Lord!
In wisdom you made them all;
the earth is full of your creatures.

Psalm 104:24



Gracious words are a
honeycomb, sweet to the soul
and healing to the bones.

Proverbs 16:24



Idea 2: Compliment someone

The Bible is full of encouragements to use our words kindly to build others up! The girls could get into a circle and on a small slip of paper, write a compliment about the person to their right in the circle and then give it to them.

Alternatively, write a compliment about someone who lives with them at home and give to them as a nice surprise. They could make cards with complimentary messages on them.

Idea 3: Set a new fitness goal

For physical training is of some value, but godliness has value for all things, holding promise for both the present life and the life to come.

1 Timothy 4:8



Physical activity can boost your energy levels and improve your mood. In GB, the girls do plenty of physical exercise like skipping, marching, PE and Modern Dance and these are all beneficial to their wellbeing.

Idea 4: Do a random act of kindness



Love your neighbour as you love yourself, *Mark 12: 31*

The Bible tells us to love our neighbour as ourselves. Helping others can increase your wellbeing. Make cards for elderly neighbours or relatives, or a nearby nursing home, or complete a similar act of kindness.

Idea 5: Drink plenty of water today

Do you not know that your bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own.

1 Corinthians 6:19



Drinking lots of water and keeping hydrated can improve your concentration and help to boost productivity.

Idea 6: Plan a healthy meal or snack



So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God.

1 Corinthians 10:31

Eating a balanced diet, rich in vitamins, can help improve your mood and overall wellbeing.

Discuss with the girls the kinds of food they have for school lunches or snacks.

Idea 7: Meditate on God's word

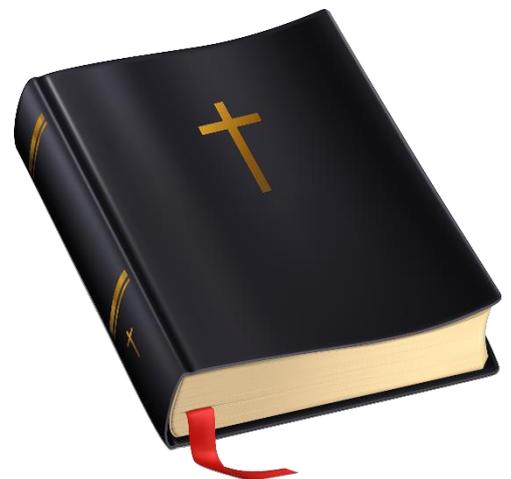
The Bible helps us to see the goodness of God our heavenly Father.

Find a quiet time during the week to step away from screens and open God's word – the bible – away from distractions.

Focus on encouraging Bible verses that remind you of God's promises in your life.

Jesus answered, 'It is written: "Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God."

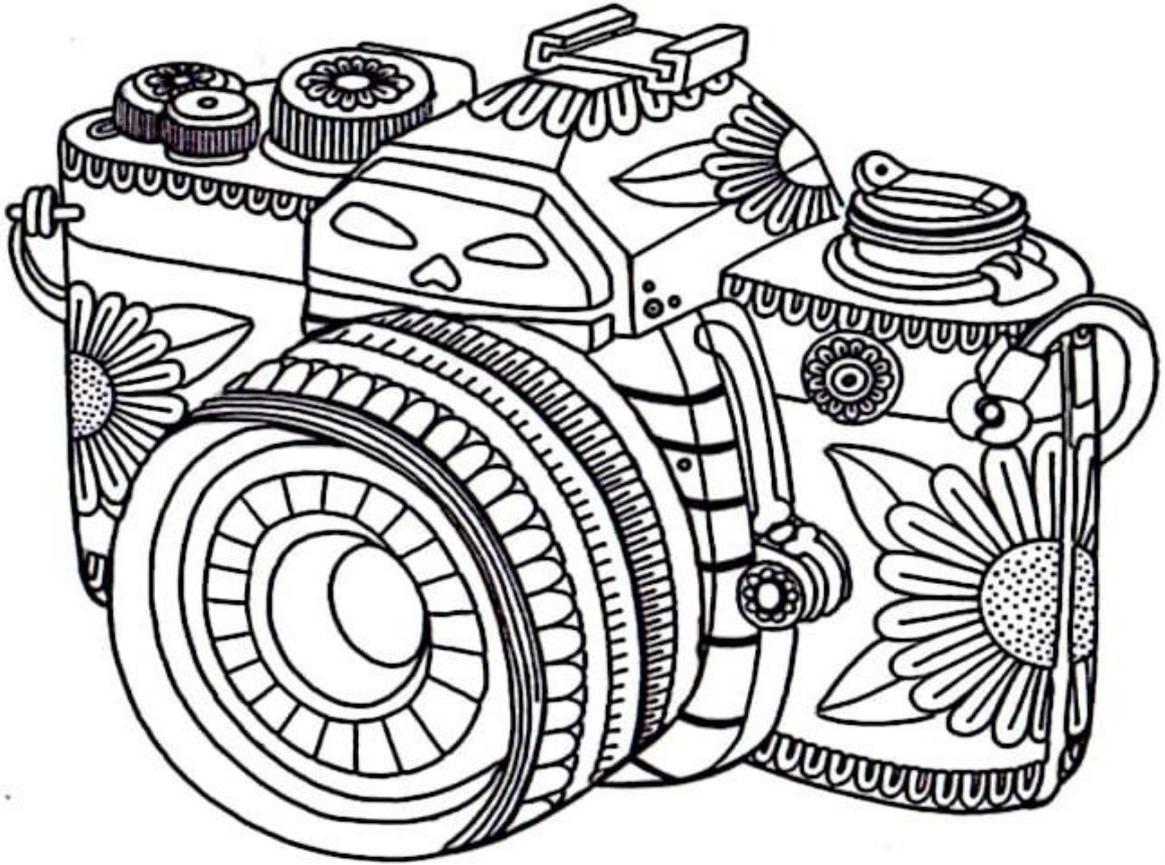
Matthew 4:4



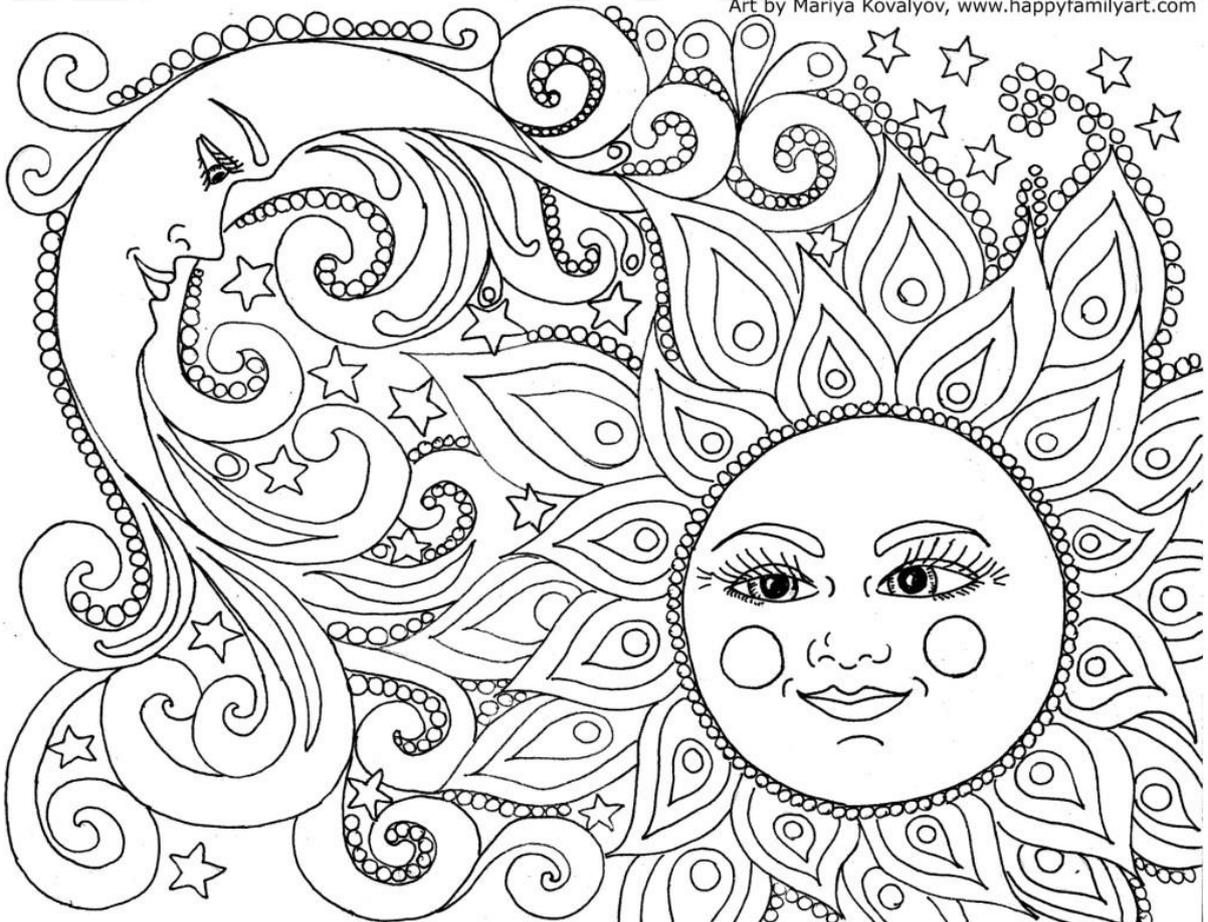
Relaxation by Colouring

Creative projects like colouring can be very relaxing. Colour in these pictures, or similar, while chatting and catching up.





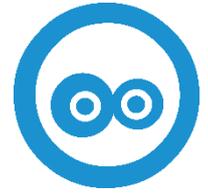
Art by Mariya Kovalyov, www.happyfamilyart.com





Positive Mental Health

How to look after yourself one thought at a time
Taken from SpunOut.ie



Mental health is about more than being free of mental illness such as [depression](#), [bipolar disorder](#), or [schizophrenia](#). It is also about having a positive sense of wellbeing. Positive mental health allows us to enjoy life's pleasures, believe in our own abilities, cope with the normal stresses of life, work/study productively and enjoy socialising.

What is positive mental health?

Positive mental health is about reaching our potential and feeling like we always have the chance to give everything our best shot. Not just feeling positive, but also getting out there in the big bad world. Positive mental health not only prevents mental ill health, it also leads to greater enjoyment and satisfaction with one's life.

What can I do to help maintain positive mental health?

Eat well, be well. A lot of what you put into your body can affect how you feel inside and out. The right food and drinks can help keep your mind hydrated, active, energetic and at optimum levels for concentration. Visit our www.spunout.ie/healthhack page for more info on how to improve your food.

Get a good night's sleep. Most people need at least 7 hours of quality sleep to function properly; if this is causing you problems then it can affect your mood. Don't worry though, www.spunout.ie/health/category/sleep to get better sleep.

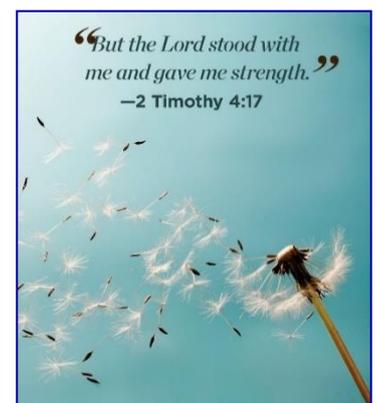
Exercise for at least 30 minutes a day. You don't have to run 5k every day or anything, just get your heart rate going for 30 mins of activity at least 5 days a week. Walking, dancing, swimming, team sports are only a few ways you can do this. Get more inspiration on our www.spunout.ie/healthhack page.

Talk it out. www.spunout.ie/health/article/sh-converstion-mental-health can help reduce the problem, as they say 'a problem halved is a problem solved'. If you're not comfortable talking to a friend or family member, then it could be good to try a non-judgemental listening service like the www.smaritans.org

Cut down on alcohol www.spunout.ie/health/article/ac-facts-about-alcohol when you are not feeling great can make you feel worse. Alcohol is a depressant so taking a break from it or cutting down on your intake might help improve your mood.

Stay in touch with friends. Maintaining relationships is a great way to keep a positive mental health. It can be easy to lose touch with people after school or college and this is a natural occurrence a lot of the time but make the effort to meet up and socialise, it will be worth it.

Take time out. Some people find it hard to balance life between school/college/work/socialising, but it is important to remember to take time out for yourself sometimes and do things that you enjoy. Me time can be just as vital as maintaining contact with friends and family!



Factors associated with positive mental health:

Happiness at Work/School:

If you are happy at work or school/college, this will help to boost your mental health. You will likely feel satisfied by your accomplishments - the pats on the back for a job well done or the good grades showing evidence of your hard work. We humans love routine and a stable work/school/ college life provides this.

Relationships:

Having close friends and family is very good for mental health. Having someone to chat to and socialise with is essential for well-being. If you do not feel supported by your family, friends can really swoop in and be there for you. As the saying goes 'Friends are the family you choose for yourself'.

If you are in a situation where you are being bullied, it is important to get help. It is not your fault, no matter what the bullies say. Bullies pick on people so that they can feel good about themselves and this says more about them than it does about you.



Get more information on being bullied
www.spunout.ie/life/article/bullying

Money:

Having enough money seems to be important for mental health. Worrying daily that the bank/landlord will knock on your door is very stressful in itself. It also helps when you have enough money to buy healthy food. Cheaper food may be high in sugar or fat and more healthy food may be more expensive. The link between food and mood is so significant that the mental health charity, has written a guide on the link between the two.

A budgeting service such as www.mabs.ie/en/ should be able to help you budget so that you can manage to afford all the essentials you need to live a happy healthy life.

Freedom from discrimination:

Discrimination seriously impacts mood and mental health. Many groups in society are discriminated against, for reasons ranging from hair colour to skin colour to sexuality to gender. There are various organisations in Ireland that help to support people being discriminated against. These organisations provide legal advice also, as most forms of discrimination are illegal in Ireland.



Creativity:

It is always good to have an outlet for stress or even happiness.

Anything from baking to sewing to singing will help release any pent-up frustrations. It is also good to be able to express a full range of emotions and creative pursuits allow you to do this.

We are Jigsaw, The National Centre for Youth Mental Health. There to ensure that no young person feels alone, isolated and disconnected from others around them. We provide vital supports to young people with their mental health by working closely with communities across Ireland.

Our Mission is to advance the mental health of young people in Ireland (aged 12-25) by influencing change, strengthening communities, and delivering services through our evidence informed and early intervention approach.

We will influence change: We will use our experience and knowledge to create a more supportive environment for young people. We will influence decisions and work collectively with our partners to secure changes to awareness levels, laws, policies, funding and more to advance our vision for the mental health of Ireland's young people.

We aim to:

- Communicate widely Jigsaw's prevention and early intervention approach to youth mental health.
- Deliver robust research and evidence to better inform systems change and effective service delivery and to increase our collective understanding of youth mental health.
- Be a strong voice in influencing public policy and conversation, through an evidence-informed approach.

We will strengthen communities: We believe in a community-based, holistic approach and we cannot achieve our vision without the active involvement of, and engagement with, communities across Ireland.

In order to drive the change we see as essential in youth mental health we will inform, support, educate and empower a wide section of our communities, enabling a better understanding of our collective responsibility in supporting young people's mental health.

We aim to:

- Increase awareness of the collective role of communities in supporting young people's mental health and enhance the mental health literacy of the entire population.
- Improve our collaboration and partnerships with other services, to create a more integrated system of mental health care for young people.
- Build the confidence and competence of young people, their families, communities and other settings to support young people's mental health.

We will deliver vital early intervention services: Our early intervention youth mental services are designed to be safe and compassionate spaces in and of the community. They offer quality care to a young person when and where they need it most.

We aim to:

- Provide an early intervention mental health service for 12 – 25 year olds in local communities that is accessible, visible, impactful, inclusive and timely.
- Evolve and enhance our Jigsaw services for young people.
- Open additional Jigsaw services so more young people can access the service in their local community.
- Develop e-mental health supports for young people, their families and those around them.

More Information at www.jigsaw.ie