



# AWARENESS, PREVENTION AND EARLY INTERVENTION

DESIGNING DIGITAL MENTAL HEALTH RESOURCES FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH  
**(2016-2019)**

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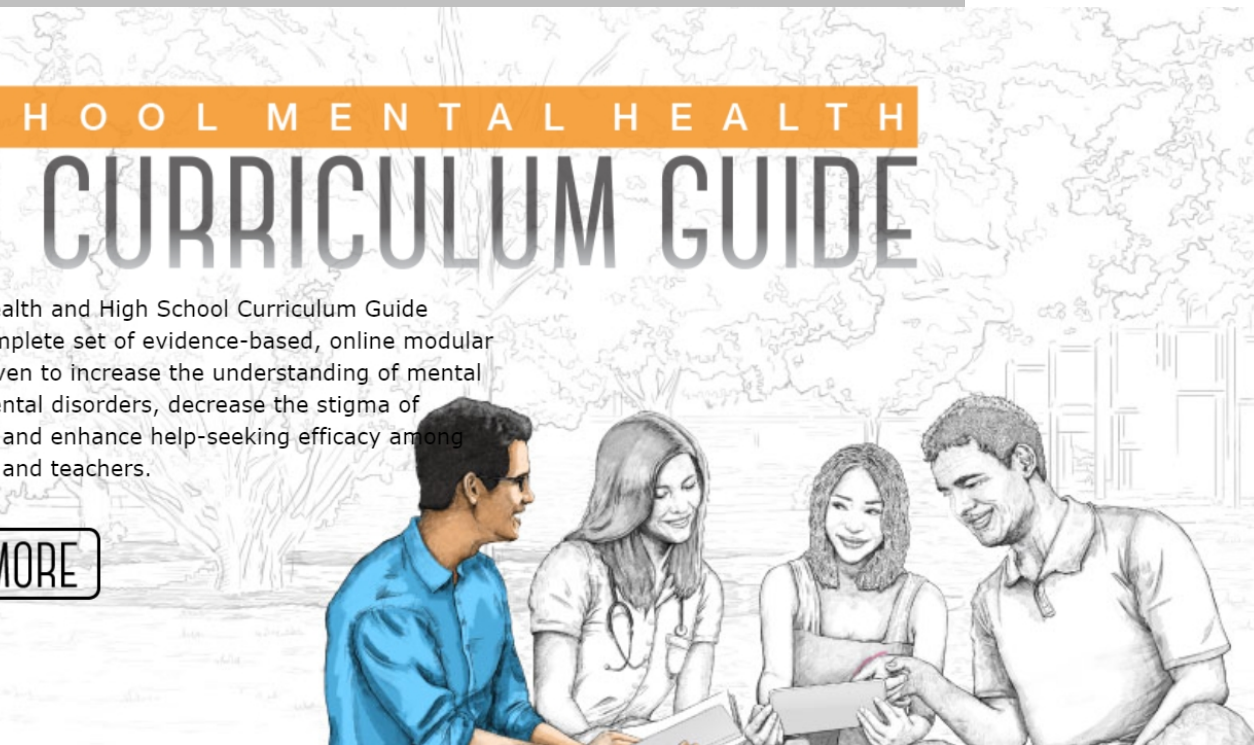




BoosterBuddy

# APEX project consortium

University of Turku,  
University of Eastern Finland,  
University of Jyväskylä in Finland,  
Dalhousie University and IWK Health Centre in Canada



Turun yliopisto  
University of Turku





# APEX goal

“The goal of the APEX-consortium is to promote mental health in families regardless of income, education, residence and place of birth” ([apex.utu.fi](http://apex.utu.fi))

# APEX in Jyväskylä...

Digital mental health literacy (children and adolescents)

Mapping digital mental health resources

Workshops – children's and young people's view of mental well-being and digital technology

Adaptation of a Canadian mental health literacy curriculum guide to Finland (adolescents)

Faculties of Information Technology + Education and Psychology

# Children, youth, health and mental health

## Health

- Understanding of health is superficial
- Few skills to maintain health
  - need for support from caregivers & teachers
- Parental interventions shown to promote child mental health

# Children, youth, health and mental health cont...

## Mental well-being

- Using strengths of individuals or groups to maintain and promote good mental health
- Mental health can be strengthened regardless of a co-occurring mental health problem
- Good mental health is viewed as a state without mental illness
- Positive mental health literacy → mental well-being





mindcheck.ca



Kids Helpline

# Digital Mental Health for Children + Youth

- Numerous mental health and mental well-being apps, websites and games
- Digital mental health applications do not necessarily meet the expectations of young people
- Only a few internet interventions have been designed to promote resilience and well-being in adolescents



## Mental Health App Review

*huddle*

# Mapping digital mental health resources

- Finnish and English search terms
  - 271 resources were found, 188 taken for further analysis
  - All adult oriented application and applications where mental health did not play a significant role were left out
- 188 applications have been coded based on the application type and its features
- Applications have been used for expert evaluations

# Expert Evaluations

- Various expert groups
  - Department of Teacher Education
  - Elementary school children and youth
  - Multidisciplinary researcher groups
- Multi-perspective evaluations
  - First reactions, level of engagement, emotional reactions
  - Visuality, usability, content

# Some early findings...

## Student teachers...

- Student teachers created their own criteria
- Students were surprised by differences in quality
- Applications with the worst feedback were games
- Suitable material was found however to support the students' own teaching
- Applications focusing on mental disorders dominated
- Finnish language pages seemed more suitable for supporting their teaching – *yet sixth graders liked the English pages more*

## Sixth graders

- Sixth graders were interested in the webpages
- The webpages were not so familiar, yet one student knew that Nuortennet in chat is always jammed
- Boys were really interested in the teen-related webpages
- One student told of how they knew a few friends who would need these websites
- Parents were also interested in hearing about the websites
- Many students really liked the English language websites

There are so many things that can be done...

# Scenarios





With J OPO...

# MENTAL HEALTH & HIGH SCHOOL CURRICULUM GUIDE

UNDERSTANDING MENTAL HEALTH AND MENTAL ILLNESS

VERSION 3





**TEENS  
CAN**

**be**

**resilient**



APEX - Awareness, prevention and early intervention  
Tietoisuus, ennaltaehkäisy ja varhaiset interventiot

