



Youth — Educator Handbook





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About this resource

Teachers and youth educators can play a powerful role in helping students get the most out of BITE BACK, especially in terms of engagement and participation.

Elements of BITE BACK can be applied as an out of class or in class activity, or a combination of the both.

This resource provides practical tips, delivery models and simple lesson plans that can help both educators and students get the most out of BITE BACK.

To familiarise yourself with the site and its key features, we suggest you spend some time working through the various elements of BITE BACK for yourself prior to implementing it with students. You never know what you'll get out of it for yourself!



Photo by Naassom Azevedo

S.1

Introducing BITE BACK

What is BITE BACK?

Black Dog Institute's BITE BACK is the very first online positive psychology program designed to improve the overall wellbeing of young Australians aged 13 to 16 years old. BITE BACK is an interactive, self-guided, online learning platform, containing a range of quizzes, activities, and videos.

What's the evidence?

BITE BACK has been evaluated via a randomised controlled trial that explored the feasibility of BITE BACK and its ability to improve the wellbeing and mental health outcomes of Australian youth. Further aims were to examine rates of adherence and attrition, and to investigate the program's acceptability.

The results of this study suggested that using BITE BACK could decrease symptoms of psychopathology and increase wellbeing in young people especially for those that used the website more often and/or for longer than 30 minutes per week. Qualitative data indicated that acceptability of the BITE BACK website was also high.

S.2

Delivering BITE BACK as a Youth Educator

Table 1 (over the page) provides an outline of the four primary ways in which BITE BACK can be utilised as an in class and/or out of class activity. Delivery models 1 to 3 focus on BITE BACK's key feature, the Mental Fitness Challenge. Delivery model 4 focuses on using individual activities available from the BITE BACK website's Learn and Explore sections.

Table 1: BITE BACK delivery options

1. BITE BACK Mental Fitness Challenge

Out of class delivery - Least Intensive

Overview

1. Drawing from Section 5 of this handbook, introduce the MFC noting its benefits and that prizes are up for grabs (gift vouchers valued up to \$50) to those who complete the Challenge.
2. Students sign up and complete the Challenge in their own time.

Optional: Provide each student with an MFC workbook and ask them to complete the relevant section each week to reinforce learnings.

Resources required

Class time

5 – 10 minutes to introduce the MFC

Materials

BITE BACK Youth Educator Handbook
Student home access to a desktop, tablet or smart phone

Optional: MFC workbook for each student

2. BITE BACK Mental Fitness Challenge

In/Out of class delivery - Moderately Intensive

1. Drawing from Section 5 of this handbook, introduce the MFC noting its benefits and that prizes are up for grabs (gift vouchers valued up to \$50) to those who complete the Challenge.

2. Students sign up and complete the Challenge in their own time.

3. Use the simple 5 – 10 minute lesson plans (Section 5 of this handbook) to introduce each week of the MFC.

4. Students complete the relevant week's activity in their own time.

5. Use the simple 5 – 10 minute lesson plans (Section 5 of this handbook) to wrap up each week of the Challenge.

Optional: Provide each student with an MFC workbook and ask them to complete the relevant section each week to reinforce learnings.

Class time

5 - 10 minutes per class each week for six weeks

Materials

BITE BACK Youth Educator Handbook
Student home access to a desktop, tablet or smart phone

Optional: MFC workbook for each student

3. BITE BACK Mental Fitness Challenge

In class delivery - Most Intensive

Overview

1. Drawing from Section 5 of this handbook, introduce the MFC noting its benefits and that prizes are up for grabs (gift vouchers valued up to \$50) to those who complete the Challenge.

2. Provide each student with an MFC workbook (this can be worked through digitally).
3. Students access the BITE BACK website at www.biteback.org.au and sign up to the MFC.

Optional: Use the simple 5 – 10 minute lesson plans (Section 5 of this handbook) to introduce each week of the MFC OR skip this step and allow students to commence working through the relevant week's activity.

4. Students work through the the relevant week's activity in the classroom and complete the related section of the MFC workbook.

5. Use the simple 5 – 10 minute lesson plans (Section 5 of this resource) to wrap up each week of the Challenge.

Resources required

Class time

Full lesson (40 – 50 minutes) each week for six weeks

Materials

BITE BACK Youth Educator Handbook

Computers or tablets for students in the classroom

MFC workbook for each student

4. Individual BITE BACK activities

In class delivery - Moderately Intensive

1. Drawing from Section 5 of this handbook, introduce BITE BACK and the concepts of building resilience and wellbeing.

2. Choose an activity within Section 5 of this handbook to complete with the class. Activities derive from the 'Learn' and 'Explore' sections of the BITE BACK website and can be easily completed as one-off in class activities.

Class time

Full lesson (40 – 50 minutes) for each activity

Materials

Computers or tablets for students in the classroom

Access to camera/phone to take photographs for photography activity

S.3

The BITE BACK Mental Fitness Challenge

What is the BITE BACK Mental Fitness Challenge?

The BITE BACK Mental Fitness Challenge (MFC) is a six-week challenge that covers several recognised domains of positive psychology including Gratitude, Mindfulness, Connections, Character Strengths, and Meaning and Purpose. Each week introduces a new domain and coaches the participant to complete an activity that can build 'mental fitness' in that area.

The final week of the Challenge culminates with students developing a personalised poster that captures the key concepts and what they've learned about themselves across the Challenge.

Who is the MFC for?

The MFC is designed for students in Years 7, 8, 9 and 10 but is also considered appropriate for students in all other year groups.

What's in the MFC?

There are six modules within the MFC that are completed online. Each module takes 10-15 minutes to complete and contains:

- a quick animation to introduce the topic
- some reading
- an activity that is mostly conducted online

Once a week of the Challenge has been completed, subsequent weeks will unlock immediately. Ideally, participants will reflect on and practise the strategy they have learned across a week rather than moving immediately from one week to the next.

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FAQs

Do participants have to complete each week of the MFC in one go?

No, participants can log in and out of the MFC and their progress will be saved as they go.

Is the MFC fully mobile responsive?

Yes

Are there prizes?

Yes. Participants collect brand tokens as they complete each week of the Challenge and go in the draw to win a gift voucher of the same brand. Prize draws are conducted on the final week of each school term. The participant will go into the prize draw that is closest to the date of their completion.

Does the MFC support the Health and Physical Education Australian Curriculum?

The Challenge aligns well with Mental Health and Wellbeing focus area of the Health and Physical Education Australian Curriculum. The MFC could also be applied during pastoral care or homeroom and can be completed in class time or as an out of class (homework) activity.

Can large groups access BITE BACK at the same time?

To minimise potential bandwidth issues, limit participants logging on to the MFC to one classroom at a time. It may also be worth streaming the animations within each module to the classroom as opposed to students watching individually, depending on the school's internet connection.

Are BITE BACK participants identifiable by name when using the site?

We encourage participants to create anonymous usernames when using BITE BACK and would request youth educators help facilitate this as much as possible. Please also note that no posts containing identifying features (addresses, email addresses, links to social profiles, photos showing faces) will successfully pass moderation.

S.5

Week by week MFC lessons plans



WEEK ONE - GRATITUDE

Introduction Approx. 5 – 10 minutes

1. **Introduce** the topic using the animation found at the beginning of the Challenge. Also available at this link: <https://youtu.be/6sgu2wXCOPg>
2. Recap on the meaning of Gratitude with your students to ensure they have a basic understanding of what it is.
3. **To build a richer understanding of Gratitude**, visit the [Gratitude page](#) in the Learn section of the BITE BACK website.
4. Encourage students to share with the class something they feel grateful for today.
5. **Check in** with your students mid-week to see how they are going.

Key point/s:

- What do you do when you feel like you have nothing to be grateful for? Point out gratitude is about noticing things, no matter how small (like having shoes on your feet, the sun on your face) and acknowledging them and feeling good about them.
- Expressing gratitude is also an important part of improving gratitude levels. Encourage students to share their gratitude with others.

Conclusion Approx. 5 – 10 minutes

Wrap up the topic using all or a selection of the questions below depending on what you have time for:

Core questions:

- What did you find difficult about this part of the Challenge?
- What did you find enjoyable about this part of the Challenge?

Optional questions:

- What did you learn from this part of the Challenge?
- Can you make gratitude a part of your daily life?
- Encourage students to share a piece of gratitude with the class or the person next to them.
- Play the [Week 2 Mindfulness teaser clip](#).



WEEK TWO - MINDFULNESS

Introduction Approx. 5 – 10 minutes

1. **Introduce** the topic using the animation found at the beginning of the Challenge. Also available at this link: <https://youtu.be/CNmfZYBj2gA>
2. Recap on the meaning of Mindfulness with your students to ensure they have a basic understanding of what it is.
3. **To build a richer understanding of Mindfulness**, visit the [Mindfulness page](#) in the Learn section of the BITE BACK website.
4. **Check in** with your student's mid-week to see how they are going.

Key point/s:

- Mindfulness is described as a way of paying attention. It means staying aware of what is taking place right now, rather than thinking about the past or the present.
- Practising mindfulness can give you a clearer head and trains your brain to slow down, making it a great way to deal with stress.

Conclusion Approx. 5 – 10 minutes

Wrap up the topic using all or a selection of the questions below depending on what you have time for:

Core questions:

- What did you find difficult about this part of the Challenge?
- What did you find enjoyable about this part of the Challenge?

Optional questions:

- What did you learn from this part of the Challenge?
- Encourage students to discuss how else they can practice mindfulness in their everyday life.
- What got in the way of the students practicing mindfulness? Forgetting to practice is quite normal; keep trying.
- Remind students that like physical exercise or learning to play an instrument, mindfulness is a skill and it takes practice.
- Play the [Week 3 Connections teaser clip](#).



WEEK THREE - CONNECTIONS

Introduction Approx. 5 – 10 minutes

- 1. Introduce** the topic using the animation found at the beginning of the Challenge. Also available at this link: <https://youtu.be/fMhWOTnt1PA>
- Recap on the meaning of Social Connections with your students to ensure they have a basic understanding of what it is.
- To build a richer understanding of Social Connections,** visit the [Social Connections page](#) in the Learn section of the BITE BACK website.
- 4. Check in** with your students mid-week to see how they are going.

Key point/s:

- Keep in mind this section has an alternate pathway for those who may feel they do not have anyone they can rely on. These students are encouraged to take on actions for their own wellbeing.

Conclusion Approx. 5 – 10 minutes

Wrap up the topic using all or a selection of the questions below depending on what you have time for:

Core questions:

- What did you find difficult about this part of the Challenge?
- What did you find enjoyable about this part of the Challenge?

Optional questions:

- What did you learn from this part of the Challenge?
- Encourage students to share their chosen ways to strengthen social connections, and how else they may be able to do this.
- Play the [Week 4 Strengths teaser clip](#).



WEEK FOUR - CHARACTER STRENGTHS

Introduction Approx. 5 – 10 minutes

- 1. Introduce** the topic using the animation found at the beginning of the Challenge. Also available at this link: <https://youtu.be/JwN11F21eK8>
- Recap on the meaning of Strengths with your students to ensure they have a basic understanding of what it is.
- To build a richer understanding of Strengths,** visit the [Strengths page](#) in the Learn section of the BITE BACK website.
- 4. Check in** with your students mid-week to see how they are going.

Key point/s:

To assist students in identifying their strengths propose the following:

- Suggest they complete the Values In Action questionnaire freely available online.
- Talk to people who know you well, what do people often compliment you on?
- What aspects of your life are you most proud of?
- What skills have you learned very easily?
- When do you feel most yourself?

Conclusion Approx. 5 – 10 minutes

Wrap up the topic using all or a selection of the questions below depending on what you have time for:

Core questions:

- What did you find difficult about this part of the Challenge?
- What did you find enjoyable about this part of the Challenge?

Optional questions:

- What did you learn from this part of the Challenge?
- Encourage students to share their top strengths.
- Discuss how their strengths would be useful in different scenarios.
- Encourage students to share how they used their strengths this week.
- Play the [Week 5 Meaning and Purpose teaser clip](#).



WEEK FIVE - MEANING AND PURPOSE

Introduction Approx. 5 – 10 minutes

1. **Introduce** the topic using the animation found at the beginning of the Challenge. Also available at this link: <https://youtu.be/d2O9Wn8zYLO>
2. Recap on the meaning of Meaning and Purpose with your students to ensure they have a basic understanding of what it is.
3. **To build a richer understanding of Meaning and Purpose**, visit the [Meaning and Purpose page](#) in the Learn section of the BITE BACK website.
4. **Check in** with your students mid-week to see how they are going.

Key point/s:

- When creating a purpose statement, it is important to include benefits not just for ourselves, but for others as well. When we're connecting with and supporting others, this positively impacts our mental fitness.

Conclusion Approx. 5 – 10 minutes

Wrap up the topic using all or a selection of the questions below depending on what you have time for:

Core questions:

- What did you find difficult about this part of the Challenge?
- What did you find enjoyable about this part of the Challenge?

Optional questions:

- What did you learn from this part of the Challenge?
- Encourage students to share their purpose statement, and what they are planning to do for themselves and others.
- Ask the students if they used their purpose statement to help guide decisions throughout the week.
- Did the students act out their meaning and purpose statement goals this week?
- Encourage students to share their purpose statement, and what they are planning to do for themselves and others.
- Play the [Week 6 Mental Fitness Plan teaser clip](#).



WEEK SIX - MENTAL FITNESS PLAN

Introduction Approx. 5 – 10 minutes

1. **Introduce** the final week of the challenge by congratulating your students for making it all the way through.
2. The final week of the Challenge culminates with students developing a personalised MFC poster that captures the key concepts and what they've learned about themselves across the Challenge.
3. Ask students to recall the five themes covered across the Challenge (Gratitude, Mindfulness, Social Connections, Character Strengths, Meaning and Purpose).

Key point/s:

- Ask your students to print a copy of their poster or take a screen shot when completed so they can share with class mates at a future lesson if they feel comfortable (or friends/family out of class).

Conclusion Approx. 5 – 10 minutes

Wrap up the Challenge by encouraging students to continue with at least one if not more of the strategies they have learned across the Challenge.

- Remind students that mental fitness, just like physical fitness, takes persistence and discipline. The more you practice – the stronger your mental health will get.
- Ask students to share their poster with a classmate if they feel comfortable (or friends/family out of class).

Core Questions

- What weeks and strategies did you find most enjoyable from the Challenge and why?
- What weeks and strategies did you find most difficult about the Challenge and why?
- Ask students to share what strategies they aim to continue using or drawing from.

S.6

Delivering one off BITE BACK activities

LEARN

Learn is a part of the BITE BACK website which contains 12 concepts relating to positive psychology. Each of the 12 concepts contains an introduction, the benefits of that concept, the research behind the concept, as well as tips on how to build the concept in your life.

Overview

1. Direct students to BITE BACK's 'Learn' section at biteback.org.au/Learn
2. Allocate one of the twelve areas to each pair or small group and ask them to make a summary of their allocated area by investigating the following:
 - What it means
 - How it helps improve mental fitness
 - Two to three things you can do to develop it
3. Once groups have completed their investigations set up a jigsaw or speed dating activity so each group can share their findings with other students and deepen their knowledge of various ways to build their mental fitness.

Resources required

Class time - Full lesson (40 – 50 minutes)

Materials - Computers or tablets for students in the classroom

SNAP THAT (mindful photography)

SNAP THAT is an activity on BITE BACK that encourages participants to get creative and out and about.

Overview

1. Direct students to BITE BACK's 'Learn' section at biteback.org.au/explore to investigate the following:
 - What does mindfulness mean?
 - How does it help improve mental fitness?
2. Ask students to login/register for BITE BACK and complete the mindfulness quiz in the Explore section of the website.
3. Direct students to the SNAP THAT page on the website and read the 'more about SNAP THAT' information to get an idea of what the activity involves, tips and inspiration.
4. Ask students to take three mindful photographs. Their focus may be a tree, building, art, or any other object of interest.
5. Ask students to login to BITE BACK, directing them to the Explore section to post their photographs on SNAP THAT.
6. Ask students to answer the following questions:
 - What did you find difficult about this activity?
 - What did you find enjoyable about this activity?

Resources required

Class time - Full lesson (40 – 50 minutes)

Materials - Computers or tablets for students in the classroom

POWER UP (mindful meditations)

POWER UP is a place where participants can listen to a variety of 18 mindfulness meditation tracks. Each track ranges from two to eight minutes long and cover a range of topics.

Overview

1. Direct students to BITE BACK's 'Learn' section at biteback.org.au/learn to investigate the following:
 - What does mindfulness mean?
 - How does it help improve mental fitness?
2. Ask students to login/register for BITE BACK and complete the mindfulness quiz in the Explore section of the website.
3. Direct students to the Explore page to listen to a POWER UP track of their choice.
4. Ask students to answer the following questions:
 - What did you find difficult about this activity?
 - What did you find enjoyable about this activity?

Resources required

Class time - Full lesson (40 – 50 minutes)

Materials - Computers or tablets for students in the classroom

THANK TANK (practising gratitude)

THANK TANK is an activity on BITE BACK that encourages participants to cultivate joy through gratitude. They need to think of things that they are grateful for (e.g. sunshine, fresh coffee, education) and post these onto the THANK TANK.

Overview

1. Direct students to BITE BACK's 'Learn' section at biteback.org.au/learn to investigate the following:
 - What does gratitude mean?
 - How does it help improve mental fitness?
2. Ask students to login to BITE BACK and complete the gratitude quiz in the Explore section of the website.
3. Direct students to the BITE BACK activity THANK TANK to post three entries. Ask students to complete this activity three more times in their own time throughout the week.
4. Ask students to answer the following questions:
 - What did you find difficult about this activity?
 - What did you find enjoyable about this activity?

Resources required

Class time - Full lesson (40 – 50 minutes)

Materials - Computers or tablets for students in the classroom

Real Stories (stories of resilience)

Real Stories is a space for young people to share their own stories of resilience and gain inspiration from others' stories. The activity requires participants to post their short story of overcoming a difficulty share it with the BITE BACK community.

Overview

1. Direct students to BITE BACK's 'Explore' section at biteback.org.au/explore and go to Real Stories.
2. Ask students to think about a time when things were difficult and how they came out on top. Maybe they conquered a fear or overcame adversity.
3. Ask students to register or login to BITE BACK and write their story on Real Stories. The story must be under 400 characters and they are able to post it privately or anonymously if they wish.
4. Ask students to answer the following questions:
 - What did you find difficult about this activity?
 - What did you find enjoyable about this activity?

Resources required

Class time - Full lesson (40 – 50 minutes)

Materials - Computers or tablets for students in the classroom



Photo by Midas Hofstra

The front cover features a vibrant, abstract design. It consists of several overlapping circular shapes: a large teal circle on the left, a red circle on the top right, and a yellow circle at the bottom center. A purple circle is partially visible at the bottom right. A halftone pattern of white dots is overlaid on the yellow and purple circles. The text 'BITE BACK' is positioned in the top right corner, split across two black rectangular boxes.

**BITE
BACK**

Front Cover Photo by Sarah Brown

www.biteback.org.au