

Early Adolescent Skills for Emotions (EASE)

Purpose

Equip individuals, including professional actors, volunteers or community members, with knowledge and skills to enhance problem management and coping skills amongst adolescents living under adverse conditions.

Briefly about

EASE is an evidence-based group psychological intervention to help 10–15-year-olds affected by internalizing problems (e.g. stress and symptoms of anxiety, depression) in communities exposed to adversity.

Published by the WHO and UNICEF, EASE aims to support adolescents and their caregivers with skills to reduce distress.

The intervention consists of 7 group sessions for adolescents and 3 additional group sessions for their caregivers. It is based on aspects adapted from Cognitive Behavioural Therapy and has been designed to be suitable for delivery by trained and supervised non-specialist helpers.

Target Groups

EASE Helper:

The target group for the EASE training comprises: (a) mental health professionals who have not previously been trained in the strategies described in EASE; (b) people without professional training in mental health care (ranging from people with a degree in psychology, but without formal training and supervision in psychological interventions, to community workers and other non-specialist helpers); and (c) trainers and supervisors of helpers who will offer EASE.

EASE beneficiaries:

EASE is for adolescents aged approximately 10–15 years. who are affected by adversity. It has been designed to help adolescents cope with internalizing problems (such as feelings of intense sadness, anxiety or stress, etc.). It is for adolescents whose emotional distress could be at a level that is interfering with their functioning. EASE is also for the caregivers of these adolescents. In EASE, caregivers are given skills to support their child

Outcomes

The EASE adolescent sessions aim to improve an adolescent's capacity to better manage or cope with internalizing problems. Specifically, these sessions help adolescents to: Improve identifying their feelings. Improve stress management. Increase behavioural activation & problem-solving

Monitoring and Evaluation

The EASE manual provides a thorough guide on how to do the assessments, why doing assessments and when to do the assessments. Measuring EASE follows a pre and post assessment structure. Both caregivers and adolescents are being assessed individually.

The organization implementing EASE will need to select which measures to use for the assessments of adolescents and their caregivers. It may be necessary for organizations to

translate, culturally adapt and validate any measures used, and for all measures, a locally validated cut-off score should be used. The assessment measures are ideally the same for the pre-intervention and postintervention assessments.

- Basic demographic information
- Internalizing problems eg. e Pediatric Symptom Checklists (PSC-17 or PSC-35) or WHO mhGAP assessment of emotional disorders tool
- Risk of self-harm and thoughts of suicide

Key considerations

Implementing EASE requires thoughtful adaptation to local contexts, especially in terms of language, cultural norms, and adolescent development.

EASE is a group-based intervention for young adolescents (10–14 years) delivered through seven weekly sessions and three caregiver sessions. The group setting is crucial for peer interaction and normalisation of emotional challenges.

Facilitators should have experience working with children or adolescents and be trained in child safeguarding and communication. Training and regular supervision are essential to ensure fidelity and emotional safety.

Caregiver involvement is a key component of EASE and supports the child's emotional regulation and well-being beyond the sessions.

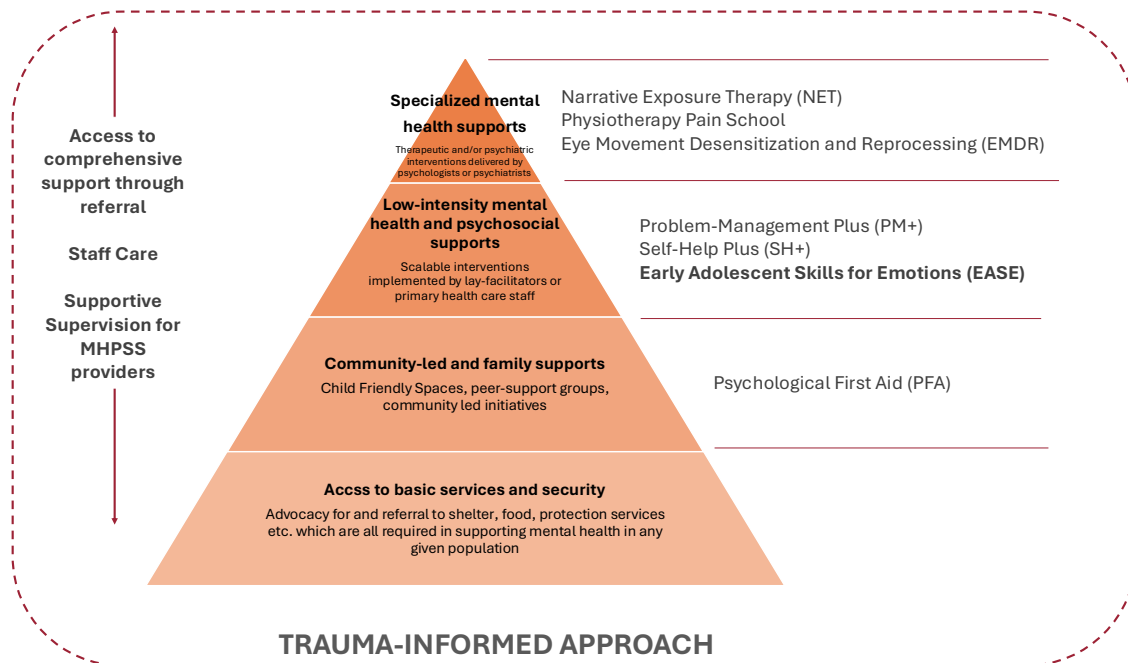
Coordination with schools, community leaders, and child protection systems enhances feasibility, engagement, and sustainability.

Check questions

- ☐ In my organisation, we need an evidence-based, scalable intervention to support the mental health of early adolescents.
- ☐ We can recruit and train facilitators who are comfortable working with young adolescents and are open to learning and applying EASE methods.
- ☐ My organisation can ensure appropriate supervision, child protection measures, and coordination with caregivers, schools, and relevant services.
- ☐ Our team is willing and able to follow the EASE protocol, use the materials provided, monitor participant progress, and participate in supportive supervision.

Type of intervention

EASE is a focused, non-specialised intervention



Implementation overview: Early Adolescent Skills for Emotions (EASE)

