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ВСЕМИРНАЯ ОРГАНИЗАЦИЯ
ЗДРАВООХРАНЕНИЯ
ЕВРОПЕЙСКОЕ РЕГИОНАЛЬНОЕ БЮРО

**WHO's 3rd Autumn School on
Quality of child and adolescent
Mental Health care**

**Online: 26th October & 7th December 2026
In person, Athens, Greece: 2-5 November 2026**

[March 2026]

Original: English

Draft Brochure

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2. Background

Mental health is a priority of the WHO's European Programme of Work 2, 2026–2030 (EPW2) and an essential component of living and ageing in good health, and to turn the tide on NCDs and mental health. Improving mental health for children and adolescents is one of the key objectives of the WHO/UNICEF strategy for the health and well-being of children and adolescents in the European Region (2026-2030), and includes a focus on strengthening the quality of care for this population.

The Athens Office on Quality of Care was established in April 2021, with a vision to decisively improve the quality of care and patient safety, inspired by the EPW. In collaboration with the Government of Greece, the WHO Athens Office on Quality of Care launched a European Programme on the Quality of Mental Health Care for Children and Adolescents in March 2022. The WHO Athens Office on Quality of Care is developing comprehensive training programs and courses tailored to quality of care and patient safety.

The WHO Athens Office on Quality of Care in collaboration with WHO European Mental Health and Well-being team will host the third WHO European Autumn School on Quality of Child and Adolescent Mental Health Care. This innovative initiative aims to advance knowledge and proficiency in the realm of child and adolescent mental health care quality.

The Autumn School will use a mixture of interactive learning methods: small group problem-based learning, expert speakers, case studies and information sharing. This is to ensure that opportunities for learning and applying skills is maximized.

3. Course Details

- Duration and format:
 - 26th October: pre course briefing (90 minutes, online)
 - 2-5 November: in person intensive workshops in Athens, Greece (all day)
 - 7th December: post course follow up (90 minutes, online)
- Language: English
- Participants: The Autumn School aims to engage early career professionals working on mental health in Ministries of Health.
- Program outline: an in-depth interactive exploration of advancements in child and adolescent mental health quality, including an introduction to quality of care, strategies to improve quality of child and adolescent mental health care and problem solving joint challenges.

4. Why a course in Quality of child and adolescent Mental Health?

Strengthening the quality of child and adolescent mental health is a priority across the WHO European Region¹. Across the Region, over one in five adolescents aged 15-19 years old live with a mental health condition, suicide is the leading cause of death for young people aged 15-29 years old, and the number of

¹ Hall, Lazeri, Breda & Azzopardi-Muscat (2026) Applying a quality of care lens to strengthening WHO European Region child and youth mental health services. *Lancet Psychiatry*.

children and young people living with mental health conditions has increased by a third over the past 15 years. Emerging issues include an increase in problematic gaming, social media use and vaping ².

Despite this evidence, countries across the WHO European Region are not well equipped to respond to the mental health needs of children and adolescents. One in five countries lacks a policy or plan for child and adolescent mental health. Existing data shows high variability and inconsistencies in the number, type and use of child and adolescent mental health services across the Region, and the workforce is not sufficient to meet the population's needs¹.

Hence it is not surprising that the majority of children and adolescents requiring support do not receive it. Not receiving timely mental health care can have negative ongoing consequences for the individual throughout their lives, impacting on their families and wider communities.

Quality of mental health care is “a measure of whether services increase the likelihood of desired mental health outcomes and are consistent with current evidence-based practice”³. Quality health services should be effective, safe, people-centered, timely, equitable, integrated and efficient⁴. In child and youth mental health care, there remains a lack of standardized information, limited scientific evidence, lack of provider training and support and cultural barriers to integrating mental health care within general health environments⁵.

The onus to solve complex challenges and strengthen the quality of care often falls on health leaders and clinicians. To strengthen quality of child and youth mental health care, it is essential to engage with and support leaders through targeted capacity building initiatives⁶. Hence WHO aims to support health leaders and clinicians working in child and adolescent mental health to strengthen the quality of care through this Autumn School.

5. WHO Regional Office for Europe's work to strengthen the quality of child and youth mental health care

In response to Member State requests, WHO Regional Office for Europe has developed a suite of resources to support with the strengthening of child and adolescent mental health care:

- [Child and youth mental health in the WHO European Region](#), a report which collates the existing data at a systems level, and uses this to make recommendations to strengthen quality of care.
- **A tool to map multi sectoral systems and services for child and youth mental health**, which takes a whole of system approach to identify services and areas for quality strengthening.
- **The first [WHO Quality Standards for child and youth mental health services](#)**, to support with assessment and strengthening of care quality at a service level.
- **[WHO Audit tool to strengthen quality of child and youth mental health services](#)**, to support the implementation of the quality standards.
- **[Youth engaged for mental health](#)** outlines WHO's approach to youth participation.

² Child and youth mental health in the WHO European Region (2025) Copenhagen. Accessed from: [Child and youth mental health in the WHO European Region: status and actions to strengthen the quality of care](#)

³ WHO (2003) Quality improvement for mental health. Geneva, World Health Organization (Mental health policy and Service Guidance Package).

⁴ WHO (2023) Quality of care overview, accessed online 28th February 2023 from [Quality of care \(who.int\)](#)

⁵ Kilbourne et al (2018) Measuring and improving the quality of mental health care: a global perspective. *World Psychiatry*. 17(1), 30-38.

⁶ Hall et al. (2026) Leadership matters: a systems approach to strengthening the quality of child and youth mental health care. *European Journal of Public Health*.

6. What will participants gain from attending the Autumn School in Quality of Child and Adolescent Mental Health?

The aims of The Autumn School on quality of child and adolescent mental health are three fold:

1. To equip participants with technical knowledge and understanding to improve quality of child and adolescent mental health care. Attendees will be supported to understand theories and concepts related to quality of care, to learn about WHO's tools and products to strengthen the quality of child and adolescent mental health care and practical information on how to implement initiatives to strengthen the quality of care.
2. To support the development of shared learning through joint problem solving, small group discussions and activities to increase psychological safety.
3. To support the application of theory to practice through the opportunity to apply the learning to their own context, sharing of case examples and jointly considering shared challenges.

7. Overview of the Programme

Pre- course briefing (90 minutes online, 26 October): will provide an introduction to the course aims and structure, prepare participants for the small group learning activities and will introduce WHO's landmark report and data on child and youth mental health in the WHO European Region.

- 26th October: pre course briefing (90 minutes, online)
- 2-5 November: in person intensive workshops in Athens, Greece (all day)
- 7th December: post course follow up (90 minutes, online)

In person intensive workshops (Athens 2-5 November)

Day 1 provides an introduction to quality of care theories and practices, including how to take a systems approach to strengthening care quality and introduction to the quality strengthening cycle. WHO's mapping tool to strengthen quality of child and youth mental health systems will be presented alongside case studies of its implementation from across the Region. Participants will then be given opportunity to consider how these theories can be applied in their own context.

Day 2 will focus on the action of quality improvement, through the use of quality standards protocols and methods to strengthen quality of care for child and youth mental health. The WHO Quality Standards for Child and Youth Mental Health Services will be introduced alongside case studies from countries of their implementation. Participants will then be given the opportunity to consider how these apply in their context through small group learning activity.

Day 3 provides master classes on two essential components to strengthen quality of child and adolescent mental health care: youth engagement and outcome measures. Case studies will be

presented from different countries across the Region. Small group learning activities will provide opportunity to discuss further and apply to their context.

Day 4 will be a fully interactive day, with participants presenting ideas for how to apply lessons learnt from the course to their own context. Feedback will be given from the group. A closing ceremony including certificates and presentation of the problem-based learning assignments throughout the course will be held.

Post- course follow-up (90 minutes online, 7 December): will bring together participants in their small groups to consider learnings from the course, and how they can be applied in their context as well as any other additional needs for support.

8. Draft Programme

Pre course briefing 26 th October (online)	
Time	Activity
Tbc (90 minutes)	Welcome to the course and introduction to quality of care - Greetings to the participants and course overview - Introduction to WHO's report: Child and Youth mental health in the WHO European Region. - Preparation for small group learning - Q &A

In person intensive workshops (2-5 November, Athens, in person)	
Day 1: A systems approach to strengthening quality of child and adolescent mental health care	
Time	Activity
09.00-09.30	Registration
09.30-11.00	<u>Session 1: Welcome to the course and introduction to quality of care: Official opening of the Autumn School</u> - Opening addresses - Welcome and setting the scene
11.00-11.30	Coffee break
11.30-13.00	<u>Session 2: Introduction to quality of care and patient safety for CAYMH in WHO European Region</u> - Introduction to quality of care and patient safety - Interactive activity in groups
13.00-14.00	Lunch break
14.00-15.00	<u>Session 3: WHO multi sectoral mapping tool to strengthen quality of child and youth mental health care</u> - Introduction to the tool and case examples
15.00-15.30	Coffee break
15.30-16.45	<u>Session 4: Small group learning</u>
16.45-17.00	Wrap up and close

Day 2: Strengthening quality of child and youth mental health services	
Time	Activity
09.30-10.00	Welcome back and overview of the day & Wellbeing activity

10.00-11.00	<u>Session 1: WHO tools to strengthen quality of child and youth mental health services</u> - Tools and case examples
11.00-11.30	Coffee break
11.30-13.00	<u>Session 2: Introduction to quality improvement</u> - Methods to strengthen quality of care
13.00-14.00	Lunch break
14.00-15.00	<u>Session 3: Consultation on implementation guide for QoC CAYMH standards</u> - Interactive session to co develop implementation guide -
15.00-15.30	Coffee break
15.30-16.45	Session 4: Small group learning
16.45-17.00	Wrap up and close

Day 3: Master classes: youth engagement & outcome measures	
Time	Activity
09.30-10.00	Welcome back and overview of the day and wellbeing activity
09.30-11.00	<u>Session 1: Master class- youth engagement</u> - Run by WHO's Youth Advisory Group
11.00-11.30	Coffee break
11.30-13.00	<u>Session 2: Master class- outcome measures</u> - Measuring and gathering feedback on quality of child and youth mental health care
13.00-14.00	Lunch break
14.00-15.00	Small group learning
15.00-15.30	Coffee break
15.30-16.45	Group activity
17.00-17.05	Wrap up and close

Day 4: User engagement and measuring what matters	
Time	Activity
09.30-10.00	Welcome back and overview of the day and wellbeing activity
10.00-11.00	Group presentations
11.00-11.30	Coffee break <i>Including confidence circles</i>
11.30-13.00	Group presentations
13.00-14.00	Lunch break
14.00-15.00	Certificate ceremony
15.00-15.30	Coffee break
15.30-16.00	Wrap up and close & next steps

Post course follow up – 7 December (online)	
Time	Activity
Tbc (90 minutes)	Post course follow-up in small groups - Feedback on the course - Facilitators and barriers for implementation - Further support