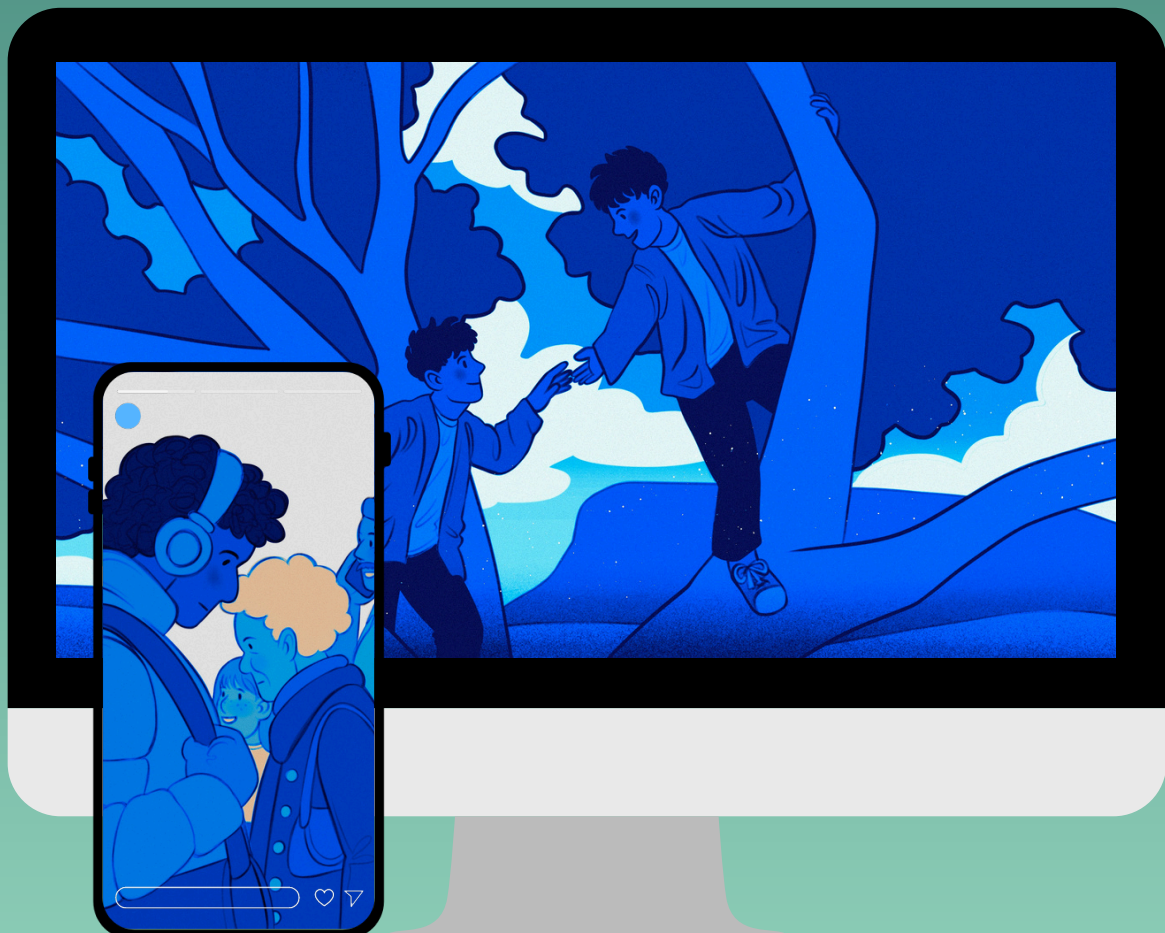


Senior Cycle Skill-builder

Classroom user guide

spunout's free, self-directed e-learning course
aligned with senior cycle SPHE and Bí Cineálta



What is the Senior Cycle Skill-builder?

It's an e-learning course that helps senior cycle students (16+) develop key skills to support their mental health and wellbeing, and be a positive force in the lives of others.

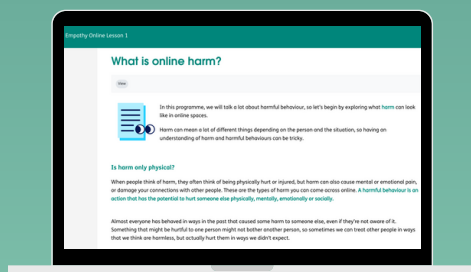
The course is divided into eight 30-minute sessions, and explores topics like:

- Peer active listening
- Building empathy in online spaces
- Protecting yourself and others online
- Understanding bias and discrimination
- Managing your thoughts and feelings
- How to support your mental health

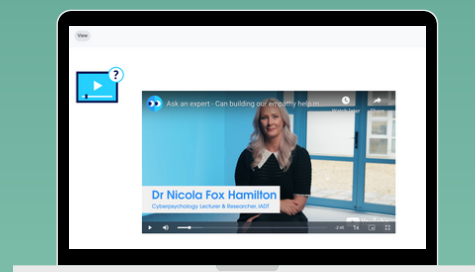
The Senior Cycle Skill-builder supports social and emotional learning in Transition Year and beyond. It has been developed to align with specific learning outcomes from the new senior cycle SPHE curriculum and to support the prevention of bullying behaviours under Bí Cineálta

What's in a spunout academy course?

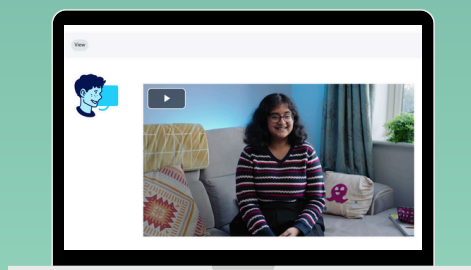
Concise information



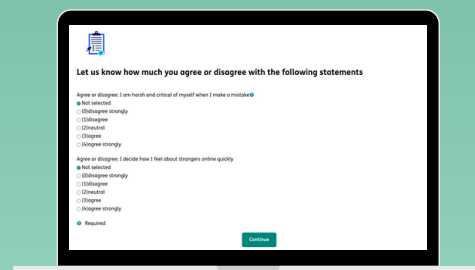
Expert interviews



Youth lived experience

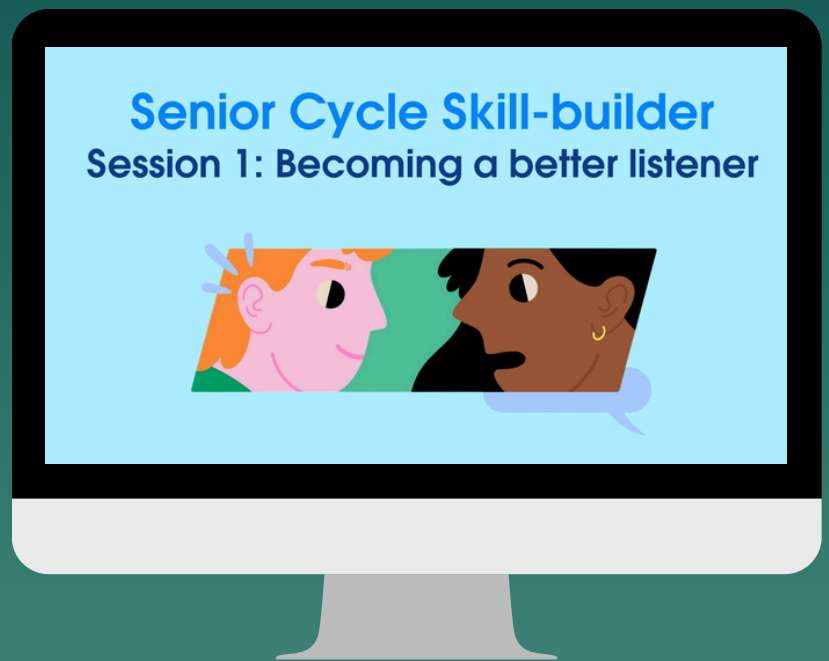


Interactive activities



Session 1

Becoming a better listener



This first session introduces the concept of active listening.

Building peer active listening skills with your students can foster empathy and understanding in learning spaces. In this session, students learn:

- What active listening is and why it's important
- How to use non-verbal active listening skills
- How to use verbal active listening skills

Bring this session into the classroom

with these conversation openers

- What qualities do you look for in a person that make you comfortable opening up to them?
- Think of a time when someone made you feel heard. What things did they do to show you they were really listening?

Session 2

Active listening in action



Session 2 continues to explore active listening.

In this session, students learn:

- How to use active listening to explore options and set goals
- Finding how you can help and support your friends
- What to do if you're concerned about your friend's wellbeing
- Active listening in ways that feel natural for you
- Self-care when active listening

Bring this session into the classroom

with these conversation openers

- It feels good when a friend feels safe to open up to you, but that doesn't mean you have to support them on your own. How can you help your friend involve other people in their support network?
- Supporting others can take a toll on your wellbeing, so self-care is important. What things help you re-charge when you're dealing with a lot?

Session 3

How we spend time online



Session 3 explores how we can be impacted by our time online.

In this session, students learn:

- Types of harm we can encounter online
- How empathy can help build a better internet
- Understanding thinking biases and jumping to conclusions online
- How biases can turn into discrimination

Bring this session into the classroom

with these conversation openers

- What are the best parts of spending time online for you?
What are the hardest parts?
- Social media can feed into our thinking biases. What types of online content can encourage people to jump to conclusions?

Session 4

Making a difference online



Session 4 explores how to protect yourself and others in online spaces.

In this session, students learn:

- How to make our online spaces safer
- How to support others who are being harmed online
- How to find empathetic online communities

Bring this session into the classroom
with these conversation openers

- If you've received hate or harassment online before, how did you respond?
- Now that you have completed this session, what changes might you make to how you spend your time online?

Session 5

What is mental health?



Session 5 explores what mental health is and what things influence our mental health.

In this session, students learn:

- What mental health really means
- The signs of positive and negative mental health
- How experiences, environment and biology affect mental health
- What helps you to build positive mental health

Bring this session into the classroom

with these conversation openers

- We all have our own signs to look out for when our mental health is dipping. What things do you notice when you're going through a difficult time?
- Positive mental health is more than the absence of mental illness. What signs do you notice when your mental health is in a good place?

Session 6

Your thoughts and feelings



Session 4 explores how our thoughts, feelings and behaviours interact to shape our mental health.

In this session, students learn:

- How thoughts, feelings and behaviours influence each other
- How to build emotional awareness
- How to change unhelpful thinking patterns
- What physical things we can do to support mental health

Bring this session into the classroom

with these conversation openers

- Can you think of a time when your expectations about a situation affected how you felt, and then how you acted? How might things have gone differently if you had thought about it another way?
- Different people express their feelings in different ways. What does emotional expression look like for you?

Session 7

Growing your mental health



Session 7 explores steps you can take to improve and maintain your mental health.

In this session, students learn:

- How exercise and diet influences mental health
- How mindfulness and helping others influences mental health
- How to explore your strategies for coping with stress

Bring this session into the classroom

with these conversation openers

- When it comes to supporting your mental health, small day-to-day things make a big difference over time. If you were going to start one new thing to look after your mental health, what would it be?
- Helping the people around us can actually improve our own mental health. Why do you think that is?

Session 8

Mental health supports



Session 8 explores your mental health support options and how you can access them.

In this session, students learn:

- How to recognise when it's time to access extra support
- Your mental health support options
- What is mental health recovery and what can a recovery journey look like

Bring this session into the classroom
with these conversation openers

- A lot of people face barriers to accessing mental health supports. What things might hold people back from reaching out?
- How can we overcome these barriers?

Curriculum alignment

The Senior Cycle Skill-builder was designed to help students develop key skills aligned with the senior cycle SPHE curriculum and Bí Cineálta.

The course is aligned with Strand 1 (health and wellbeing) and strand 3 (into adulthood) of the SPHE curriculum. It is aligned with area 5 (preventing bullying behaviour) of Bí Cineálta.

The table below shows how individual sessions are linked to specific learning outcomes across both policies. SPHE alignment is in **dark blue**, Bí Cineálta alignment is in **light blue**

Session 1: Becoming a better listener	1.10: How to safely navigate social situations where yourself or others are at risk
Session 2: Active listening in action	3.3: Caring for yourself and others through a range of life events 5.1: Students and staff experience belonging and feel safe, connected and supported 5.4: Strong interpersonal connections are a vital part of effectively preventing and addressing bullying behaviour.
Session 3: How we spend time online	3.1: Strategies for self-care 3.5: Being your own person and advocating for yourself and others
Session 4: Making a difference online	3.6: Recognising discrimination and having the skills to express solidarity 5.2: A focus on empathy and diversity in teaching and learning 5.5: Preventing cyberbullying behaviour
Session 5: What is mental health	1.1: Exploring the determinants of good health 1.4: Exploring the factors that influence health and wellbeing 1.7: Recognising signs of low mood, stress and anxiety
Session 6: Your thoughts and feelings	1.5: Recognising helpful and unhelpful thinking patterns 1.6: Strategies for regulating thoughts and emotions
Session 7: Growing your mental health	1.2: Ways to influence your holistic health 3.1: Strategies for self-care
Session 8: Mental health supports	1.8: Responding to low mood, stress and anxiety

How can I sign up?

The Senior Cycle Skill-builder is free to use for educators and students. You have two options for using this course in your classroom.

Option 1: Request free accounts for your class

spunout can set up free accounts for your students.

Simply email joseph@spunout.ie, outline how many student accounts you require, and you will receive usernames and passwords for accounts that come pre-enrolled in the Senior Cycle Skillbuilder.

Option 2: self-enrollment.

Students can create their own free accounts on the spunout academy platform.

Getting started is simple.

- Visit www.spunout.ie/academy
- Click on the Senior Cycle Skill-builder course and enroll by creating a free account
- Activate your account and start learning

Content development process

Every course on the spunout academy goes through a multi-stage content development process that involves an academic literature review, consultation with real young people in Ireland, and validation from subject matter experts.

This helps us ensure that our courses are up to date, accurate, and relevant to young people's needs.



Academic
literature
review



Online youth
survey



Action panel
consultation



Subject matter
expert
validation



Youth-
proofing

Questions or queries?

Contact our Head of Learning & Curriculum:
joseph@spunout.ie

Want to learn more about spunout academy?
Visit www.spunout.ie/academy

