[1] School-based Mental Health Promotion

In the world, 8% of children and 15% of adolescents are reported to have some form of mental disorder, underscoring the importance of mental health support and services. Furthermore, promoting mental health during childhood and adolescence—through the development of socio-emotional, interpersonal and stress management skills etc—is crucial for preventing mental disorders in adulthood and fostering well-being.

Schools provide a key opportunity for intervention in promoting mental health among children and adolescents. UNICEF, WHO, and UNESCO identify the following as its pillars: (1)Create an enabling learning environment for positive mental health and well-being; (2) access to early intervention and mental health services and support; (3) Promote teacher well-being; (4) Enhance MHPSS capacity in the education workforce; (5) Ensure meaningful collaboration between the school, family, and community to build a safe and nurturing learning environment.

However, it is recognized that promoting mental health in schools faces various challenges, such as budgetary constraints, intersectoral collaboration, and societal understanding, and the methods and scope of implementation vary by country and region.

Japan has a long history of school health programs. In recent years, various initiatives have been undertaken to promote children's mental health in schools. By 2019, school counselors had been appointed to all public elementary and junior high schools to provide psychological support to children. Furthermore, in 2022, mental health was incorporated into the health education curriculum. At the same time, however, challenges related to mental health in schools—such as bullying and school refusal—remain significant.

Applicants should submit an abstract in response to the following questions.
For the purposes of this topic, "school-based mental health promotion" refers to initiatives conducted in primary or secondary education and does not necessarily need to be implemented on a national scale.
Please also describe your specific involvement in the research or project being presented.

In your country or region,

Q1 What do education professionals recognize about mental health for children and adolescents?

Q2 What kinds of school-based initiatives are being implemented to promote mental health? What role do mental health professionals play in these initiatives?

Q3 What challenges have these initiatives encountered during implementation, and what measures have been taken to ensure they are implemented effectively? What additional measures are needed to make these initiatives more effective or expand their reach to a broader population in future?