Based on a cross-sectoral approach, the Adolescent Tool Kit fuses together techniques and lessons learned from child protection, education and youth empowerment initiatives to bring about positive change in the lives of adolescents.

The kit focuses on building the capacity of children to deal with psycho-social stress while self-empowering them to address the risks associated with youth and adolescents in any given situation. The goal is to do this by giving them skills, methods and tools to create their own adolescent support system and their own solutions.

Introduced in five government schools, two youth centers and three NGOs to date, the competencies addressed through the activities and approaches in the Adolescent Kit are organized into a framework of ten domains comprising of knowledge, attitudes, and skills that are essential for the wellbeing and healthy development of children.

Although only a few facilitators so far have been provided the Kit and training on how to use it, UNICEF plans on making the Adolescent Kit available to all the counselors in the Career Education and Counselling Division (CECD) under the Ministry of Education.

"The Adolescent Tool Kit gave me an opportunity to look within myself and understand my strengths better," said Tandin Zangmo (left), a Class IX student in KMSS.

Bhutanese children are learning through an Adolescent Tool Kit on how to recover emotionally, build and restore healthy relationships, explore the world around them, and pursue their goals and interests. The Adolescent Tool Kit, provided by UNICEF, aims to improve the psychosocial wellbeing of children, teach them new skills and engage them positively with their communities.

Students of Khasardrapchu Middle Secondary School (KMSS) undergo a session of critical thinking and decision making using the Adolescent Tool Kit.

The Adolescent Kit provides all the necessary tools required for adolescents to express themselves creatively, have fun, experiment, solve problems, learn new skills and connect with others.
Sonam Lhamo (standing), a counselor at the Changjiji Youth Centre, has been continuously using the Adolescent Tool Kit to engage the youth in her community. She said that most children are excited with the variety in the kit and want to try out all the resources.

Twins Dechen Pelzom and Rinchen Pelzom (right) are regular visitors to the youth centre in Changjiji.

"The Adolescent Tool Kit has taught me how to communicate and express myself better," said Rinchen (extreme right). "It has also boosted my self esteem and taught me the importance of teamwork."

Participants and facilitators in the Youth Centre in Changjiji, Thimphu, pose for a group photograph after discussing issues related to their community.

Tenzin Phuntscho, 16, and his friends, after mapping their community, identified unemployment as the major factor for youth related problems.

The upside of the Adolescent Tool Kit is that it can be integrated into child friendly spaces, education schemes, youth centre activities, community-based protection networks or simply established as a separate initiative.

Schools and programs can either use the Adolescent Tool Kit as a comprehensive approach to engaging adolescents, or select tools, guidance and activities to target specific areas that need strengthening for children. Facilitators and counselors can use the materials and supplies in the kit to support the existing activities as well as improvise new ones.