

Schools Mental Health Fund and Menu: Whole School Approach Fact Sheet

This fact sheet summarises whole school approaches that are available on the [Schools Mental Health Menu \(the Menu\)](#). Whole school approaches recognise that all aspects of the school community have a positive impact on student health and wellbeing. Whole school approaches can complement and enhance implementation of Menu items and contribute to improved mental health and wellbeing outcomes.

Schools Mental Health Fund and Menu

In response to Recommendation 17 from the Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health System, the Victorian government invested \$200 million over four years and \$86.9 million ongoing to create a Schools Mental Health Fund (Fund). Underpinning the Fund is the Menu.

Background

A whole school approach has an evidence-based framework and considers student mental health and wellbeing through an individual, classroom and organisational lens. It focuses on mental health and wellbeing promotion and supports students to develop healthy social and emotional skills and behaviours.

This begins with establishing a strong foundation among the leadership team and staff. Successful implementation requires ongoing collaborative effort of school leaders, teachers, students, families and community.

The Menu is a list of evidence-based programs and initiatives across three tiers of intervention to give schools confidence in identifying programs, staff and resources that will improve student mental health and wellbeing outcomes.



Whole school approaches to wellbeing on the Menu

The Menu includes whole school approaches to support student mental health and wellbeing.

These approaches are complementary and support implementation of the curriculum and other Menu programs. They are summarised on pages 4-10 and include the core, department funded initiatives Respectful Relationships, and School-wide Positive Behaviour Support, and third-party evidence-based interventions schools can select from the Menu. Different models can be complementary, as illustrated in the case study below.

The whole school approaches should be implemented alongside the department's:

- 7 evidence-informed [High Impact Wellbeing Strategies](#) (HIWS) that promote student wellbeing.
- [10 High Impact Teaching Strategies](#) (HITS) that teachers can apply to increase student learning.

Using the School Mental Health Planning Tool

The School Mental Health Planning Tool (Tool) helps schools better understand the mental health and wellbeing needs of their school. It supports schools to select programs, staff and resources from the Menu that can improve mental health and wellbeing outcomes for students.

The Tool provides a framework to simplify schools' decision-making when planning their mental health and wellbeing interventions, including whole school approaches.

The Tool is informed by the FISO Improvement Cycle to support a logical planning process and includes statements and questions for schools to discuss with their wellbeing and school improvement teams.

The Tool highlights the importance of student voice in planning and decision-making. The Tool also links users to other relevant resources. The Tool guides schools to:

- utilise available data to inform their assessment of student mental health and wellbeing needs
- identify current strengths and capabilities within the school that address student needs and inform the approach
- better understand challenges or gaps that require attention
- consider their capacity to implement and sustain interventions to ensure they are practical and appropriate to the school's context.

Department of Education school-based and regional mental health staff (including Mental Health Practitioners in Schools and Student Support Services in regions) are available to assist schools in using the Tool.





Case Study

Lalor Gardens Primary School

Lalor Gardens Primary School has embedded **School-Wide Positive Behaviour Support, Respectful Relationships and the Berry Street Education Model in their school culture. The aim has been to establish a positive and proactive philosophy of prevention-focused practices, to improve student behavioural, wellbeing and academic outcomes.**

The school has established a **School-Wide Positive Behaviour Support** team to drive the essential features of universal prevention strategies. They have developed defined statements of expectations based on the school's values, which are taught in specific ways including:

- ✓ a weekly whole school focus presented at school assembly
- ✓ wellbeing sessions with staff for the teaching of skills, strategies and behaviours
- ✓ morning and afternoon 'circle time' where students are acknowledged with a greeting and positive primer for each day
- ✓ a 'mindful minute' each day where the whole school practices mindfulness
- ✓ a whole school acknowledgement system referred to as the 'garden of excellence', where students are acknowledged for demonstrating the school values and expected behaviours with tickets which they can redeem for rewards.

The **Respectful Relationships** initiative supports the school to monitor gender bias in their teaching and wellbeing practices. The initiative also supports the school to deliver respectful relationships education through the Health and Physical Education and Personal and Social Capability areas of the curriculum which forms their social-emotional learning program.

The school draws on the department's **Resilience, Rights and Respectful Relationships (RRRR)** teaching and learning materials and professional learning funded through the initiative.

Given the number of students experiencing vulnerability, the school engaged Berry Street to implement the **Berry Street Education Model** to upskill staff in trauma informed, evidence-based teaching practices. The Berry Street Education Model teaches that a calm, predictable, routine environment is an essential prerequisite for learning. The school has established a calm down space in each teaching area, and all students have developed a ready to learn plan, including tools and strategies they can implement if they're not in the 'ready to learn' green zone.

Through implementation of School-Wide Positive Behaviour Support, Respectful Relationships and the Berry Street Education Model, the school has developed clear ways to respond to inappropriate behaviour, which are used by all staff to provide consistent practices across the school.

As a result of these initiatives, students are more aware of their expectations and more in tune with their emotions, which has created calm and productive working environments. The approach has especially helped students with additional needs to be able to calm down and return to their green 'ready to learn' zone. The school utilises the Zones of Regulation to assist students to understand their emotions and identify the zone they are in along with tools of self-regulation.

Lalor Gardens Primary uses wellbeing data, including AToSS and behaviour data, for consistent and collaborative wellbeing planning and practices across the school.

The school has developed a Wellbeing Scope and Sequence that includes Schoolwide Positive Behaviour Support, Berry Street and Respectful Relationships. This is reviewed termly using wellbeing data to ensure the school responds to the needs of students. The school is also planning to introduce peer observations to monitor the impact of programs.

Thanks to this consistent approach to behaviour management across the school, staff and students have developed a good understanding of how a safe and comfortable learning environment can be created, and student engagement, learning and wellbeing have improved significantly.



Respectful Relationships



Overview of the model

Respectful Relationships is a departmental initiative and core social and emotional learning resource that supports schools to embed a culture of respect and equality across their entire community, from our classrooms to staffrooms, sporting fields, fetes and social events. It teaches our children how to build healthy relationships, resilience and confidence.

The whole school approach to Respectful Relationships leads to positive impacts on students' academic outcomes, their resilience, wellbeing and mental health, classroom behaviour, and relationships between teachers and students.

The whole school approach recognises that schools are:

- a safe space where young people can learn about gender equality and respectful relationships, in and out of the classroom
- a workplace where all staff should feel equally respected, safe and valued and have equal opportunities
- part of the wider community that can model gender equality and respectful relationships.

Respectful Relationships supports delivery of Health and Physical Education and Personal and Social Capability areas within the Victorian Curriculum. The department supports schools to deliver this curriculum through the optional Resilience, Rights and Respectful Relationships Building Respectful Relationships teaching and learning materials for Foundation to Year 12.

Further information about Respectful Relationships is available on the Menu.



Cost

Free — schools can use their Schools Mental Health Fund to engage staff and/or for CRT to enable them to further support the implementation of Respectful Relationships.



Target audience

All government schools are required to implement and embed Respectful Relationships through a whole school approach. Can be implemented in any school setting to support students from Foundation through to Year 12.



Implementation

Implementation of the whole school approach to Respectful Relationships requires a commitment by the whole school community. The following support is available to schools to support implementation:

- Lead and Partner Schools model, with Lead Schools supporting Partner Schools and guiding them on the implementation journey.
- Professional learning and support for school staff to support curriculum delivery and implementation of a whole school approach to Respectful Relationships
- The [Resilience, Rights and Respectful Relationships](#) and [Building Respectful Relationships](#) teaching materials for Foundation to Year 12.
- A regional Respectful Relationships workforce to support schools to implement the whole school approach and strengthen referral and response to disclosures of family violence.



School-Wide Positive Behaviour Support



Overview of the model

School-Wide Positive Behaviour Support (SWPBS) is a departmental framework that brings together school communities to develop positive, safe, supportive learning cultures.

It assists schools to improve social, emotional, behavioural and academic outcomes for children and young people, through the implementation of evidence-based approaches to student behaviour to create optimal environments for learning and wellbeing.

When SWPBS is implemented well, teachers and students have more time to focus on relationships and classroom instruction. Students and staff benefit from:

- increased respectful and positive behaviour
- increased time focused on instruction
- improved social-emotional wellbeing
- positive and respectful relationships among students and staff
- increased adoption of evidence-based instructional practices
- a predictable learning environment with improved perceptions of safety and increased attendance.

SWPBS uses a tiered intervention framework which invests in:

- primary prevention (tier 1): supports for all students, staff and settings
- secondary prevention (tier 2): additional specialised group systems for students with at-risk behaviour
- tertiary prevention (tier 3): specialised, individualised systems for students with high-risk behaviour, provided in addition to primary and secondary prevention.

Further information about SWPBS is available on the Menu.



Cost

Free — schools can use their Schools Mental Health Fund to engage staff and/or for CRT to implement SWBPS with fidelity.



Target audience

Can be implemented in any school setting to support students from Foundation through to Year 12.



Implementation

Implementation of SWPBS requires commitment by the whole school community, particularly from the principal and leadership group. All schools implement 8 essential features:

- A common philosophy and purpose
- Leadership and school-wide support
- A set of expected behaviours
- Procedures for teaching and practising expected behaviours
- A continuum of procedures to encourage expected behaviours
- A continuum of procedures to discourage inappropriate behaviour
- Record-keeping, decision making and ongoing monitoring procedures
- Support staff to use effective classroom practices

Program available to purchase via the Menu

Program

Berry Street Education Model

Overview of the model

The Berry Street Education Model is a teaching and learning approach that enables teachers to meet the challenging behavioural, cognitive, and relational needs of students, provided by Berry Street.

The model includes interventions that can be implemented at each tier of the Menu and School- Wide Positive Behaviour Support frameworks.

The pedagogical strategies incorporate evidence-based trauma-aware teaching, positive education, and wellbeing practices and aim to:

- support children to build their self-regulatory capacities
- build a sense of relatedness and belonging at school
- integrate wellbeing principles that nurture growth and identify strengths.

There are five domains with the initial focus building students' self-regulatory ability and relational capacity and then nurturing further willingness to engage in learning.

- **Body:** Building students' capacity increasing physical regulation of the stress response, de-escalation and focus
- **Relationship:** Nurturing on-task learning through relational classroom management strategies
- **Stamina:** Creating a culture of academic persistence by nurturing resilience, emotional intelligence and a growth mindset
- **Engagement:** Motivating students with strategies that increase their willingness to learn
- **Character:** Harnessing a values and character strengths approach to instill students' self-knowledge for future pathways.

The Berry Street Education Model is available to purchase through the Menu.

Cost

\$5000+

Target audience

The model is for general use across school types, though arises from trauma-informed practices for students with more challenging needs. The approach can be used by individual schools or clusters.

Implementation

Implementation can be self-paced and starts with school's individual readiness. It includes the following activities:

- Pre-planning with the school to determine their needs
- Staff training in the Berry Street Education Model approach
- School leadership and support to embed Berry Street Education Model as a whole school approach
- Resources such as student lesson plans and guiding manuals
- Self-reflection checklists — to monitor progress in using the approach.

Program available to purchase via the Menu

Program	All-School Visible Wellbeing Program
Overview of the model	<p>The All-School Visible Wellbeing Program, developed by Professor Lea Waters, emphasises the importance of context and empowering teachers through a focus on pedagogy in implementing Positive Education as a whole school approach.</p> <p>The All-School Visible Wellbeing Program trains teachers in a wellbeing framework, language and practices that can be embedded in the classroom.</p> <p>It is underpinned by an evidence-based framework called SEARCH and is based on six pathways to wellbeing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Strengths• Emotional Management• Attention and Awareness• Relationships• Coping• Habits and Goals <p>The All-School Visible Wellbeing Program is available to purchase through the Menu</p>
Cost	\$5000+
Target audience	The model is for general use across school types and can work among school clusters or for individual schools.
Implementation	<p>The All-School Visible Wellbeing Program Partnership Model runs for a two-year period to embed the approach within the culture of a school. Activities include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Staff training — with a focus on the SEARCH pathways• Leadership and team coaching — support to embed All-School Visible Wellbeing Program as a whole school approach• Resources — such as workbooks, student lesson plans, activities manual• Measurement tools — surveys to track the wellbeing
Program	Healthy Minds Program
Overview of the model	<p>The Healthy Minds Program is a prevention program for schools that aims to prevent and reduce the risk for the onset of symptoms of anxiety, depression and eating disorders, while also building wellbeing and resilience.</p> <p>Healthy Minds aims to equip students, staff and parents with the tools they need to better support their own wellbeing and the wellbeing of other students. This is achieved by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Teaching psychological skills to students• Engaging school staff to support, connect and refer students while implementing the wellbeing program• Improving parents' knowledge of their children's psychological development. <p>Healthy Minds is available to purchase through the Menu.</p>
Cost	\$5000+
Target audience	Healthy Minds targets secondary school students, their teachers and their parents. The main 8-week component is for either Year 7 or 8 cohorts. Booster sessions are available for other cohorts.
Implementation	<p>The program is delivered by psychologists and the school's own teaching staff. This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 10 visits to the school (or the equivalent service delivered via remote learning)• A 1-day teacher training workshop• A Year 8 (or Year 7) Parent Night• The Year 8 (or Year 7) term-long program• A teachers' guide with detailed lesson plans links, worksheets and resources• Student workbooks• Weekly Parent Modules• Flexible boosters' (up to 3 hours' presentation time) for other year levels, staff or parents• Accreditation as a Healthy Minds School (accreditation is renewed annually).

Program available to purchase via the Menu

Program	Smiling Mind Primary Schools Program	
Overview of the model	<p>The Smiling Mind Primary Schools Program uses social and emotional learning and mindfulness to equip children with the skills they need to succeed in life, by building healthy minds and engaged classrooms.</p> <p>The program can be used as a stand-alone social and emotional learning program in the classroom or adapted to complement existing wellbeing programs. It can be adapted and implemented in a variety of ways to suit specific student cohorts.</p> <p>Smiling Mind aims to improve student self-regulation, mental health and wellbeing and engagement in learning. It also aims to improve educator confidence to deliver mindfulness-based social and emotional learning.</p> <p>The Smiling Mind Program is available to purchase through the Menu.</p>	
Cost	\$5000+	
Target audience	The Smiling Mind Program targets primary school students and teachers.	
Implementation	<p>The Smiling Mind Program includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 20 scaffolded lessons for Years 1 to 6• Classroom and take-home activities• Skill building and meditations. <p>To support educators to implement this program in their classrooms, The Smiling Mind Program offers both individual and whole school training that builds upon the Primary Classroom Program.</p> <p>Individual professional development is self-paced, and delivered online through the Learning Hub. The whole school implementation program is designed to be rolled out over 12-15 months.</p> <p>SMPSP is delivered digitally, either through the Smiling Mind app, online Learning Hub or via live-online workshops on Zoom. Each lesson is designed to be delivered over a fortnight, but this is flexible.</p>	
Program	Understand, Notice and Improve	
Overview of the model	<p>Understand, Notice and Improve, provided by the University of Melbourne, is a program for students, teachers and parents to create shared knowledge regarding mental health literacy and wellbeing.</p> <p>The course is divided into three areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Understand — to improve mental health literacy• Notice — to identify mental health issues• Improve — to provide strategies to improve wellbeing in the school. <p>The shared common knowledge through this program will support further discussions to improve students' teachers' and parents' wellbeing.</p> <p>Understand, Notice and Improve is available to purchase through the Menu.</p>	
Cost	\$201-\$2000	
Target audience	Understand, Notice and Improve targets whole secondary schools including students, teachers, parents and carers.	
Implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Understand, Notice and Improve is online and self-paced and written in a style that is accessible for senior schools students, parents and teachers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Each module should take 1 to 1.5 hours to complete. The whole course should take 3 to 5 hours to complete.