



# Brain Building in Education Event

**WEDNESDAY 16 OCTOBER 2024**

Brought to you by The Queensland Brain Institute at The University of Queensland, ARACY's Thriving Queensland Kids Partnership and Tim Fairfax Family Foundation



# Thriving Queensland Kids Partnership (TQKP)

TQKP is a Queensland-based intermediary and relationships broker focused on systems change for the benefit of children, young people and families.

Instigated and hosted by ARACY—Every Child Thriving, TQKP brings together a cross-sectoral coalition of Queensland leaders, organisations, practitioners, and collaborators working together with the shared purpose of catalysing systems to change the odds for Queensland children and young people to thrive.

## To achieve this, TQKP is:

- bringing people, organisations and sectors together
- using what we know and learn
- supporting leaders and catalysts, and
- facilitating collaborative action, innovation and development.

## In this way, we can build better connections, capabilities and capacities in the key areas of:

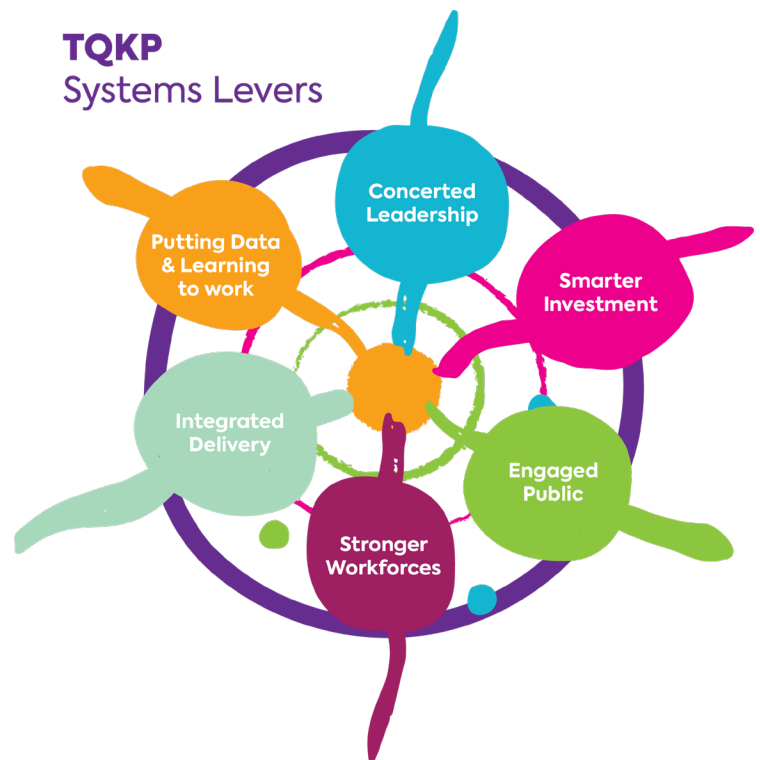
- concerted leadership
- smarter investment
- enabled caregivers and communities
- integrated service delivery
- stronger workforces, and
- putting data, evidence and experience to work.

This means a better equipped and stewarded ecosystem, working well together to:

- reduce the experience and consequences of inequity and adversity, and
- improve opportunities, capabilities and outcomes

*... so that all Queensland kids can have a great start and journey in life.*

## TQKP Systems Levers



# Agenda

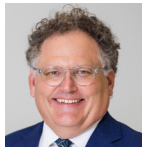
- 8.30am Arrival and coffee**
- 9.00am Welcome**  
Grant Webb, Educational Consultant  
**Acknowledgement of Country**
- 9.05am Thriving Queensland Kids Partnership overview**  
Michael Hogan, Thriving Queensland Kids Partnership
- 9.20am Brain Builder's Initiative overview**  
Sally Staton, Queensland Brain Institute, UQ
- 9.30am Objectives for the day**  
Sally Staton, Queensland Brain Institute, UQ
- 9.40am The Education System in Queensland**  
Chris Lassig, Department of Education QLD  
Robyn Albury, Department of Education QLD
- 10.20am Morning Tea**
- 10.40am Panel 1: Translating Evidence from Neuroscience for Education**  
Facilitator: Professor Karen Thorpe, Queensland Brain Institute, UQ  
Panel members:  
Stephanie MacMahon, Science of Learning, UQ  
Zoltan Sarnyai, Laboratory of Psychiatric Neuroscience, JCU  
Geraldine Harris, Pathways to Resilience, Griffith University  
Sarah Callinan  
Scott Taylor, Headspace
- 11.20am Brain Break**
- 11.25am Panel 2: Application of Neuroscience in Queensland Schools**  
Facilitator: Michelle Cole, Thriving Queensland Kids Partnership  
Panel members:  
Lindy-lou Brown, Deception Bay North State School  
Angela Raven, Centenary State High School  
Wendy Fox, Department of Education Far North Qld Region  
Veronica Graham, Secondary School Teacher North Queensland
- 12.05pm Lunch**
- 12.45pm Launch of new initiatives in Queensland Schools**
- Brain Health in Queensland Schools (BHiQS)  
Katie Norman, Tim Fairfax Family Foundation
  - Mental Health in Primary Schools (MHiPS) in Queensland  
Frank Oberklaid, Murdoch Children's Research Institute
  - Brain Health in Queensland Schools  
Sally Staton, Queensland Brain Institute, UQ
- 1.20pm Next steps: Implementing Brain Building in Education in Queensland**  
Facilitator: Sophie Morson, Thriving Queensland Kids Partnership
- 2.15pm Closing Remarks**  
Michael Hogan
- 2.30pm Close**

# Presenters



## **Dr Grant Webb – Educational Consultant**

Over the past 40 years Dr Webb has undertaken teaching and leadership roles across a variety of educational contexts, both nationally and internationally. Dr Webb is well known for his work in literacy education and early childhood education both within the state and nationally. He has been actively involved with the Australian Literacy Educators' Association (ALEA) including undertaking the roles of Local President, National Vice President, National President, State Director, and was appointed as the Chair of the International Development in Oceania Committee (IDOC) which he held for 4 years. Dr Webb has also served as Chair of the National Early Childhood Policy Group (ECPG). Currently he is an independent consultant working and volunteering across a number of projects in schools, education systems, NGOs and universities.



## **Christopher Lassig – Assistant Director-General - Reviews, Curriculum, Teaching and Learning, Department of Education Queensland**

Chris is responsible for overseeing the Department of Education's program of school reviews supporting continuous improvement in Queensland state schools as well as leading curriculum implementation and development of digital and virtual resources. He is a passionate advocate of school improvement and improved outcomes for all students and school communities.



## **Robyn Albury – Assistant Director-General, Disability, Inclusion and Student Services, Department of Education Queensland**

As the Assistant Director-General, Disability, Inclusion and Student Services, Robyn is responsible for leading the policy development and implementation of key initiatives relating to student engagement, mental health and wellbeing, student protection, support and resourcing for students with disability, student behaviour and inclusion. Robyn is committed to supporting the Department of Education's policy and operations are aligned to the implementation of the Equity and Excellence strategy to realise the full potential of every student.



## **Michael Hogan – Executive Convenor, Thriving Queensland Kids Partnership, ARACY**

Michael Hogan is the Executive Convenor of the ARACY-hosted Thriving Queensland Kids Partnership (TQKP). Michael Hogan has over 38 years' experience in public purpose work in the government and non-government sectors. That includes over 6 years as a Director-General of two Qld Government agencies, and 5 years as CEO of a community-based public interest advocacy organisation. Michael is an Industry Fellow at the Queensland Brain Institute at UQ, and an Adjunct Professor at the Centre for Justice at QUT. Michael is also on the Board of Directors of the Torres Indigenous Health Corporation, the Board of Directors of Gold Coast Hospital and Health Service, and the Council of the Queensland Library Foundation.



## **Associate Professor Sally Staton – Senior Research Fellow and lead of BBI, Queensland Brain Institute, UQ.**

Sally Staton is Associate Professor and program lead for the TQKP Brain Builders Initiative at UQ's Queensland Brain Institute. As a developmental scientist, Sally has a strong commitment to research that can inform and ensure positive early life experience for all children. Her research focuses on the role of education settings in supporting children's immediate and ongoing development. Sally has published over 170 outputs, and her research spans a range of study designs and methodologies, including evaluation studies in educational and community settings. She has a strong track record in research translation and community engagement; delivering reports for government and non-government organisations and producing professional development resources, presentations, workshops, videos, and articles for regulatory officers, parents, and communities. Sally has a strong commitment to research translation aimed at achieving positive impact. Her contribution to science translation and engagement has been recognised by several prestigious awards, including a Queensland Young Tall Poppy Scientist and Research Partnerships Excellence Award.



### **Katie Norman – Senior Program Manager, Tim Fairfax Family Foundation**

Katie Norman brings her education and health sector experience to the TFFF team as the Senior Program Manager. Previously the CEO and Co-Founder of the Sustainable Schools Network (SSN), Katie curated the Educating for Sustainability in Queensland: Discussion Paper 2019-2020 to enable the environmental education sector to advocate for enhanced support. The SSN was recognised in 2020 as a Banksia Awards finalist and delivered nineteen journals and numerous professional development events to educate and connect regional and rural Australian schools. Prior to her engagement with the education sector, Katie spent her early professional years as a therapeutic program facilitator and drug and alcohol counsellor in community and custodial corrections. Often this work was conducted in rural and remote communities in the Northern Territory and Queensland. Katie is passionate about ensuring locally relevant early intervention and understands education is a critical pathway to the healthy and vibrant futures of young people. Katie has a Bachelor of Science (Psychology) with Honours from University of Newcastle.



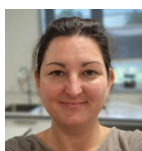
### **Professor Frank Oberklaid AM – Group Leader, Murdoch Children’s Research Institute.**

Professor Frank Oberklaid AM was the Foundation Director of the Centre for Community Child Health at The Royal Children’s Hospital Melbourne. He is currently Co-Group Leader of Child Health Policy, Equity and Translation at the Murdoch Children’s Research Institute. He has written two books and over 150 papers in scientific journals. Frank has long standing clinical, research and policy interests in children’s health, development and wellbeing, and has chaired or been a member of numerous expert working groups at a state, national and international level, as well as being a consultant for the World Health Organisation and UNICEF. Frank was co-chair of the National Children’s Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy which outlines a detailed policy and service framework for child mental health in Australia. Frank’s work has been recognised by a number of prestigious awards, and he has been the recipient of invited lectureships and visiting professor appointments in over 20 countries.



### **Sophie Morson – Senior Partnerships Officer – Integration and Investment**

Sophie Morson’s role as Senior Partnership Officer with Thriving Queensland Kids Partnership manages its portfolios focused on integrated service delivery and smarter investment. As a Psychologist, she brings to the team more than two decades’ experience implementing innovative paediatric mental health promotion, prevention, early intervention and integrated care initiatives. Sophie’s career spans clinical interventions, capability building, project management, policy and leadership. She is driven by a passion for social justice, authentic collaboration and amplifying the voices of service users and communities to achieve dignity and wellbeing for all.



### **Veronica Graham – Post Doctoral Research Fellow, Queensland Brain Institute, UQ**

Veronica Graham has recently come on board with Brain Builders as the northern representative for the project. Raised between the bush and Townsville, Veronica is a secondary science teacher with a keen interest in adolescent mental health. While completing her PhD in Implementation Science at JCU, she worked on various projects focussed on regional and remote health services in northern Queensland. From 2017 she was the evaluation consultant with the Schools Up North Project as they developed with Tagai, Western Cape College and Kowanyama. She currently teaches science at Carinity Education Shalom in Townsville, giving her invaluable direct experience learning from and teaching First Nations young people.

# Expert panels



## **Lindy-lou Brown – Principal, Deception Bay North State School**

Lindy-lou Brown began her education journey in 1985, teaching Home Economics and Maths in high school with Education Queensland. In 2004 I gained my first leadership role as Head of Senior Schooling, then transitioned to Deputy Principal at North Rockhampton High. In 2009 I moved to Baralaba State School (P-10) as principal. This led to my transition to primary school and passion for early intervention. During the next 12 years across three schools, I continued to develop my knowledge of neuroscience for leadership, then learning and the importance for all to be brainwise to support self-regulation, wellbeing and learning



## **Angela Raven – Year 12 Deputy Principal, Centenary State High School**

Angela Raven is the Year 12 Deputy Principal and also the leader of our neuroscience team in the Positive Education Community of Practice at Centenary State High School. She has a love of learning and a keen desire to learn more about the teenage brain to build staff capacity and collective efficacy in the context of the School's two strategic priorities: Pedagogy and Positive Education. Angela is a recognised leader in the school community and has played a pivotal role in advocating for how we can apply the latest neuroscience research to our pedagogical approach, new Wellbeing Framework, and through conversations and interactions in the school environment. Angela holds a Masters in Education and has worked in schools across Queensland and the United Kingdom for more than 30 years. She is a qualified yoga teacher with an interest in using mindfulness and yoga techniques to inform trauma-based practices.



## **Sarah Callinan – Lead, Thriving Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children**

Sarah Callinan is a Wangkangurru woman whose people come from the Simpson desert area of Queensland. For over a decade Sarah has worked across several key early childhood initiatives for the Department of Education and in the early childhood sector. Her role of Strategic Partnerships Lead (Early Childhood) at Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Protection Peak (QATSICPP) lead the development of the Thriving Kids First Nations Strategy in partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations and leaders. Sarah is passionate about bringing First Nations knowledge and lived experience together with neuroscience research to help children thrive.



## **Michelle Cole – Senior Partnership Officer, Learning and Development, Thriving Queensland Kids Partnership**

Michelle Cole has extensive experience leading learning and development initiatives across the education, community, and child safety sector. She was a school leader and teacher for 20 years, working in schools in Australia and England. Leading implementation of brain building in schools and communities through workforce capability building, curriculum reviews and setting up a wellbeing social enterprise underpinned by neuroscience in 2019. She has an in-depth knowledge of the education ecosystem and leading collaborative partnerships between sectors. Supporting a preventative approach to safety and wellbeing through collaborative consultation and co-designed initiatives is at the core of her professional practice.



## **Wendy Fox – Guidance Officer, Department of Education Far North Qld Region**

For the past 18 months, Wendy Fox has been a guidance officer based at Mission Beach State School and services four other smaller schools in the area. With over 25 years' experience as a teacher for the Department of Education, Wendy is passionate about teaching children, especially in regard to social and emotional learning. As one of the inaugural Wellbeing Champions for the Department of Education in 2017 Wendy was given the opportunity to develop a program which taught primary school children about key parts of their brain and mindfulness. She holds a bachelor's degree in early childhood and primary education from James Cook University and a Masters in Education Guidance and Counselling from University of Southern Queensland. Outside of work, Wendy enjoys long beach walks, photography and spending time with her family.



### **Dr Geraldine Harris – Executive Director, Pathways to Resilience**

Geraldine Harris is a qualified teacher, author, accredited NME trainer (Child Trauma Academy), with qualifications in ECEC, Playwork, Perinatal-Infant Mental Health and Collective Action, and a PHD in place-based leadership. Geraldine brings 30 years of experience in education, neuroscience, leadership and management of place-based approaches, and collective action both from an Australian and an English context. Her work as the Executive Director of Pathways to Resilience focus' on enhancing workforce capability, by working together to better understand the impact of Early Life Adversity (ELAs); and how the use of applied neuroscience can enhance Early Life Opportunities that support young children to feel safe, connected and ready to learn. Geraldine is an Adjunct Research Fellow at Griffith University.



### **Dr Stephanie MacMahon – Science of Learning, Lecturer, School of Education; Program Director -UQ Learning Lab, School of Education, HASS Faculty, UQ**

Dr Stephanie MacMahon is a Lecturer in the Science of Learning and Arts Education, and the Science of Learning Field of Study Coordinator. She is the Co-Founder and Program Director of the UQ Learning Lab, a multidisciplinary group that engages in collaborative research with education and industry, addressing industry-identified challenges of learning, teaching, and training using the Science of Learning as a lens. As Program Director Steph oversees multidisciplinary projects that investigate and advance learning across the lifespan and in diverse contexts. Steph is passionate about the REAL science of learning and of building a positive narrative around learning through valuing and engaging the voices and experiential wisdom of educators and industry partners.



### **Laureate Professor Karen Thorpe – ARC Laureate Fellow and Group Leader. Queensland Brain Institute, UQ; Chief Investigator ARC Centre of Excellence for Children and Families across the life Course**

Professor Karen Thorpe's research is grounded in the understanding that early learning experiences shape brain development and are critical in establishing trajectories of health, social inclusion and learning across the lifespan. Karen leads a multi-disciplinary team of developmental scientists undertaking large scale longitudinal studies with embedded studies to identify mechanisms that enable or limit children's life chances. A particular focus of her work is early care and education environments. Her current research, as a chief investigator on the ARC Centre of Excellence for Children and Families across the life course, and through an ARC Laureate fellowship, is to examine barriers to providing high quality early learning services in developmentally vulnerable communities. In 2013 and again in 2019 Karen was named by the Australian Financial Review as among Australia's 100 Women of Influence for the impacts of her research on educational and family policy. Karen is a Graduate of the Australian Institute of Company directors, a board member of Australian Research Alliance for Children and Youth and member of the National Advisory Council for Beyond Blue - Be You.



### **Scott Taylor – Be You State Manager, Queensland, headspace Schools & Communities**

Scott is the Be You State Manager for Queensland for headspace Schools & Communities division, having joined the organisation after 22 years with the Department of Education in Queensland. Throughout his time in schools, Scott held several roles from PE/ classroom teacher through to school leadership and for 10 years was the Deputy Principal of a Primary school in Townsville. Scott also spent 3 years in the Departments Regional Office as a Regional Co-ordinator. Scott's role at Be You spans the state of Queensland, with 10 staff/ consultants, and encompasses areas of stakeholder engagement, service delivery, content review, sector insights and ensuring that Be You remains in touch and responsive to the needs of school communities.



### **Professor Zoltán Sarnyai, M.D., Ph.D – Professor and Head, Laboratory of Psychiatric Neuroscience, James Cook University**

Professor Zoltán Sarnyai is a medically trained neuroscientist with an internationally recognised expertise in the neurobiology of stress and mental health disorders. University. Before moving to James Cook University where he is Professor of Neuroscience, he was University Lecturer in the Department of Pharmacology, University of Cambridge and a Fellow of Pembroke College, where he was Director of Studies for Medicine. He trained at McLean Hospital at Harvard Medical School and at The Rockefeller University, supported by the DuPont-Warren Award and a NARSAD Young Investigator Award, respectively. His group described the role of stress neuropeptides oxytocin and corticotropin-releasing factor in addiction, for which he was awarded the Richter Prize by the International Society of Psychoneuroendocrinology and the efficacy of ketogenic diet in preclinical models of schizophrenia. Zoltán was appointed Lady Davis Visiting Professor at Technion-Israel Institute of Technology to study the neuro-metabolic aspects of schizophrenia. He currently serves as Chief Scientific Advisor for the Tropical Brain and Mind Foundations and is on the Executive Committee for the International Society for Nutritional Psychiatry Research. He is Associate Editor for Nutritional Neuroscience and Frontiers in Neuroscience, and editorial board member of Stress.

# Thriving Kids Brain Builders Initiative

Thriving Kids Brain Builders Initiative (TKBBI) is an initiative led by TQKP and ARACY, in conjunction with The University of Queensland's Queensland Brain Institute and other research, government, NGO and social enterprise partners across Queensland.

TKBBI is designed to generate, translate, and apply knowledge from neurosciences and related child and adolescent sciences for the benefit of Queensland children, young people and their families and communities.

As the Thriving Kids Brain Builders Initiative's key knowledge and implementation collaborator, QBI is supporting TQKP and ARACY to:

1. Build workforce, organisational, caregiver and public understanding of neuroscience for children and young people;
2. Build practice, community, and systems capabilities and collaboratives to embed neuroscience across places, spaces, and workforces;
3. Leverage the expertise and efforts of academics, leaders, practitioners, and organisations across Queensland to enable large scale and sustainable practice and systems change.



Figure: Key TKBBI Elements



**UQ's Queensland Brain Institute** is a leading Australian centre for brain research, devoted to a fundamental understanding of how the brain works from its smallest components through to the integrated networks that underpin human thought and behaviour. QBI's vision is to improve lives through a deeper understanding of the brain in health and disease.

Our investment in discovery and translation, and in nurturing tomorrow's research leaders, is directed at making these possibilities a reality. QBI recognises the early years of life as critical in brain development, and positive early experiences across childhood as setting the foundation for lifelong health, learning and wellbeing.

**TKBBI is delivering six research, development, and translation activities (elements):**



**Brain Builders Modules**

In collaboration with Emerging Minds and other partners, we are delivering foundational eLearning modules and resources aimed at increasing the awareness, knowledge, and understanding of foundational concepts of neuroscience and child development. We are working with organisations across systems, programs, and communities to support children and families to thrive.



**Deadly Brains**

In collaboration with Yiliyapinya Indigenous Corporation, we are supporting the research and development of place-based neuroscience initiatives for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. Working with Yiliyapinya, we are collecting and building knowledge about the evidence base, approach, value, and impact of the program's work.



**Brain Healthy Places and Spaces**

In collaboration with place-based initiatives in Queensland, we are investigating the driving forces, enablers, and barriers to implementing place-based, neuro-informed practices. We are developing resources, best practice frameworks, and examples to support set up and strengthening of practices in place.



**Brain Builders Community of Practice**

In collaboration with Children's Health Queensland, and other partners, we are implementing Neuroscience Communities of Practice to establish shared knowledge, learning and supports. We are supporting and investigating the delivery of neuroscience focused communities of practice, across and within sectors in Queensland.



**Brains Trust Collaborative**

In collaboration with diverse government, non-government, philanthropic and academic partners, we are convening events, establishing critical networks, and generating new collaborative opportunities. We are advancing the knowledge and implementation of neuroscience to support children and their families.



**Brain Building Workforces**

In collaboration with government, non-government, and tertiary training organisations, we are supporting the development of neuroscience-informed training programs and implementation across sectors and workforces. We are sourcing, developing, and sharing key frameworks to guide curricula reviews and implementation into frontline practice.

# Launch of New Initiatives for Queensland Schools



The Brain Health in Queensland Schools (BHiQS) strategic initiative focuses on schools as critical sites to optimise brain development and promote good mental health among Queensland children. Understanding the developmental significance of the school years, The Tim Fairfax Family Foundation (TFFF) has funded BHiQS for two years through their Futureproof stream.

Project components are led by **Queensland Brain Institute** (QBI) and a partnership between **Murdoch Children's Research Institute** (MCRI) and the **University of Melbourne** (UoM) and are supported by the intermediary expertise of Thriving Queensland Kids Partnership (TQKP).

The initiative will strategically promote enabling environments for healthy development through the school years. With a clear potential benefit for all young people in Queensland schools, BHiQS will prioritise rural/remote contexts to develop and pilot its three components:

1. a rural pilot of the Mental Health in Primary Schools initiative (MCRI/UoM)
2. a workforce Brain Healthy Schools development package for primary and secondary schools (QBI), and
3. a complementary set of Brain Healthy Schools resources for students (QBI).

Together these three elements aim to:

- promote, trial and evaluate whole school wellbeing approaches
- build the education workforce neuro-informed capability and common language to support healthy child development and future mental health
- collate, map and synthesise existing resources and neuro-informed practice
- create curriculum resources where stakeholders say they are needed, to support student learning about brain development.

This combination of processes, resources and knowledge will promote the healthy environments, decision making and relationships critical to healthy brain development.

## Brain Healthy Schools Project



### Brain Healthy Schools

The Brain Healthy Schools Project responds to high interest from across the system to examine opportunities for embedding understanding of, and supports for, Brain Health within primary and secondary school in Queensland. This project leverages from the significant momentum, learnings, partnerships, and opportunities emerging as part of the Thriving Kids Brain Builders Initiative (TKBBI) in Queensland.

QBI, working with partners across Queensland, will produce a flexible, modular **Brain Health workforce development package** that enables teachers and schools to tailor professional learning to their specific contexts.

Facilitating immediate translation to practice within schools, the **Brain Health resources for students** will include resources directly accessible by students to support their learning and wellbeing as well as lesson plans aligned with the Australian Curriculum and the very best resources packaged for Queensland teachers.

Following the Thriving Kids Brain Builders guiding principles (Box 1) this project is committed to ensuring that genuine workforce development and student needs are met, and that, where available and appropriate, existing practice and resources are recognised, integrated, and amplified.

#### Box 1: Guiding Principles

- **Genuine co-design** – including listening to and enacting the perspectives of children and young people, and teachers;
- **Respectful partnerships** – with children, families, communities, schools, staff, service providers and government and non-government organisations;
- **Non-replication** – utilising and drawing from, where available, existing resources, tools, and opportunities;
- **Application of the highest quality scientific knowledge and evidence** – regarding brain health, education, learning, neuroscience, and implementation-science;
- **Focusing on pragmatic solutions** – recognising the real-world challenges faced across schools, communities, places, and systems within Queensland; and
- **Identifying opportunities for scaling and sustainability** – to ensure the best chance of the greatest impact of this project within the short and long-term.

## Project Design

The project will be rolled-out in three phases focused on scoping, co-design and meaningful delivery:

### Phase 1: Scope

Existing and emerging opportunities for embedding Brain Health for workforces and students in primary and secondary schools.

- Identify, collate, and review current national and international examples of Brain Health curricular resources and materials for primary and secondary schools.
- Analyse current education curricular documents.
- Map outcomes to identify key gaps/potential leverage points Brain Health curriculum/resources in schools.
- Host events in Brisbane and North Queensland to share, present, consult with key stakeholders.

### Phase 2: Co-design and develop

Tools, materials, and approaches for embedding Brain Health via a workforce development package and related resources for students in primary and secondary schools.

- Co-design a workforce development and student resource package with key stakeholders (including teachers and students) across Queensland, applying four steps to co-design:
  1. **Frame and Engage**
  2. **Explore and Connect**
  3. **Imagine and Create**
  4. **Make and Test**
- Develop workforce development training packages with implementation partners to support translation of Brain Health science into everyday practice.
- Create student resources, include practical based, hands-on Brain Health materials, face-to-face learning opportunities/supports, curriculum and/or online resources.

### Phase 3: Deliver

Implementation and evaluation of the co-designed workforce development packages and resources across schools within Queensland.

- Try, Test and Learn – trial the implementation of the workforce development package and student resources co-designed in Phase 2.
- Evaluate the process of delivery and initial outcomes for workforces and students.
- Provide access to the co-designed resources/tools to schools.

## Contact us

For more information about the Brain Healthy Schools project or to get involved, please contact:

### **Bec Shaw Crompton**

Senior Program Manager - Thriving Kids Brain Building Initiative  
brainbuilders@uq.edu.au

### **Veronica Graham**

Brain Health in QLD Schools, North Queensland  
brainbuilders@uq.edu.au

# MHiPS

Mental Health in Primary Schools in Queensland



**MHiPS:** Building the capacity of primary schools to prevent, identify and respond to student mental health and wellbeing needs

Developed by paediatricians, educators, psychologists and researchers at Murdoch Children's Research Institute and the University of Melbourne, and codesigned with teachers and school leaders, MHiPS is a capacity-building initiative. Its aim is to increase mental health and wellbeing resourcing in schools (in the form of a dedicated Mental Health and Wellbeing Leader - MHWL), and enhance student mental health and wellbeing support, both within and outside the school gate.

Key areas of focus include:

- Increasing trained mental health and wellbeing staff to alleviate the burden on teachers.
- Providing staff with evidence-based professional development and support to help them identify and manage mental health issues in the classroom more effectively.
- Enhancing care pathways to mental health providers.
- Implementing systemic changes that prioritise mental health and wellbeing, enabling schools to identify and invest in evidence-based preventative mental health strategies and programs aligned with their school need.
- Embedding social-emotional learning across all school curricula.

## Contact us

For more information or to get involved, please contact:

**Megan Keyes**

Manager, Engagement and Impact (MHiPS)

**P:** 0439 631 331

**E:** [megan.keyes@mcri.edu.au](mailto:megan.keyes@mcri.edu.au)

An extensive evaluation of MHiPS shows it is having a significant impact at scale, with MHWLs and school staff observing:

- changes in school culture (more positive language around mental health and wellbeing and less stigma)
- greater confidence to identify and respond to student mental health and wellbeing needs
- increased school prioritisation of student mental health and wellbeing
- better access to services
- increased whole-school capacity to support student mental health and wellbeing
- improved student mental health and wellbeing.

The findings from the MHiPS evaluation resulted in a statewide implementation of MHiPS in Victoria, where it was initially piloted. While MHiPS has received overwhelming support and demonstrated significant impact on schools, teachers and students in Victoria, we understand that a one size-fits-all approach won't meet the unique challenges faced by different regions in Australia. Thanks to the generous support of the Tim Fairfax Family Foundation, we have the opportunity to scope and pilot what an adapted model of MHiPS might look like for regional and remote communities in Queensland. With MHiPS providing a robust evidence-based framework and strong foundation, we are excited to collaborate with Queensland schools and communities to tailor and pilot the MHiPS initiative in Queensland.

**Bella Laidlaw**

Senior Coordinator, National Expansion MHiPS

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**E:** [bella.laidlaw@mcri.edu.au](mailto:bella.laidlaw@mcri.edu.au)





# Thank you for attending and supporting QBI and TQKP in our efforts to:

1. Build widespread neuroscience understanding for children and young people
2. Build capabilities to embed neuroscience across places, spaces, and workforces
3. Leverage expertise across Queensland to enable large scale and sustainable practice and systems change.

The early years of life are critical in brain development, and positive early experiences across childhood is setting the foundation for lifelong health, learning and wellbeing.

## How to Get Involved

We invite you and your organisation to stay in touch and engage in the Brain Builders Collaborative, be a Brain Builders Champion and/or share your Brain Building story.



**'Understanding Brain Development' learning modules** Complete the modules and share with your networks



Join the Brain Building **Community of Practice** through the Project ECHO platform



**Brain building in your organisation** How is your organisation embedding brain building within your workplaces, service delivery or practice?



Join the **Brain Builders event and mailing list**



**Thriving Kids Brain Builders Initiative website** [qbi.uq.edu.au/brain-builders](http://qbi.uq.edu.au/brain-builders)



Get engaged with **Thriving Queensland Kids Partnership**

## Contact us

**Queensland Brain Institute**  
[qbi.uq.edu.au/brain-builders](http://qbi.uq.edu.au/brain-builders)  
E: [brainbuilders@uq.edu.au](mailto:brainbuilders@uq.edu.au)

**Thriving Queensland Kids Partnership**  
[www.aracy.org.au/the-nest-in-action/thriving-queensland-kids-partnership-tqkp](http://www.aracy.org.au/the-nest-in-action/thriving-queensland-kids-partnership-tqkp)  
E: [TQKP@aracy.org.au](mailto:TQKP@aracy.org.au)



