

Brain Building in Education Forum

Brought to you by the Tim Fairfax Family Foundation

Tuesday 24 June 2025

Acknowledgement of Country

The University of Queensland (UQ) acknowledges the Traditional Owners and their custodianship of the lands on which we meet.

We pay our respects to their Ancestors and their descendants, who continue cultural and spiritual connections to Country.

We recognise their valuable contributions to Australian and global society.

*The Brisbane River pattern from A Guidance Through Time
by Casey Coolwell and Kyra Mancktelow.*



Welcome

Grant Webb, University of Queensland

Aunty Jeanette Wyles

Zoltan Sarnyai, James Cook University



Thriving Queensland Kids Partnership

Michael Hogan, Convenor





Thriving Queensland
Kids Partnership
connect • catalyse • learn



every child thriving
aracy

We are all Brain Builders:
experiences, relationships
and capabilities - for all kids
to thrive



TQKP's portfolios



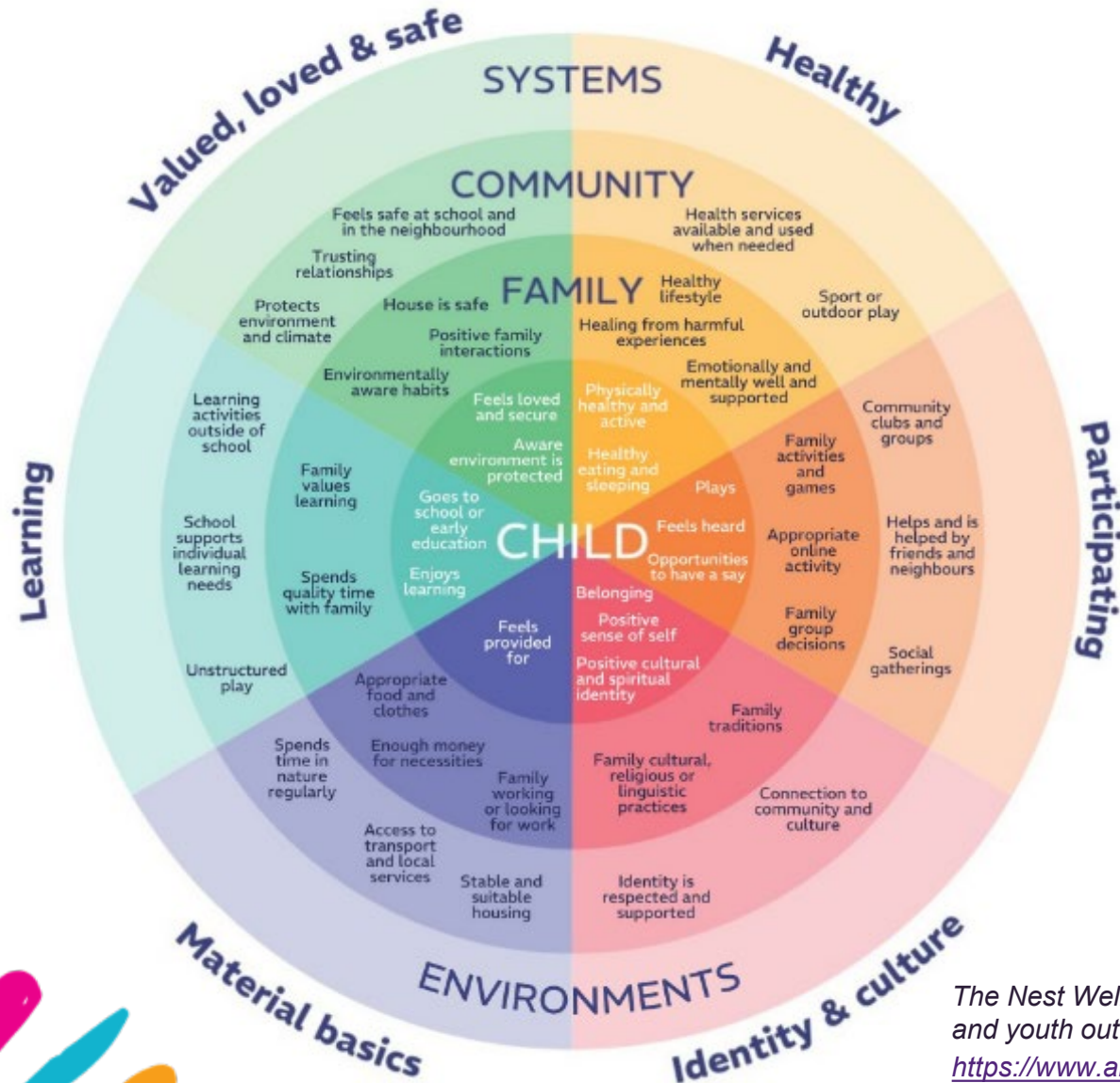
www.tqkp.org.au

Thriving Queensland Kids Partnership is a systems-focused coalition and broker.

Our vision is every young Queenslander thriving.

TQKP works by 'connecting, catalysing and learning'.

The Nest



We take an ‘all systems and all environments’, child-centred approach, based on *The Nest child and youth wellbeing outcomes framework*

The Nest Wellbeing Wheel: Australia's child and youth outcomes framework:

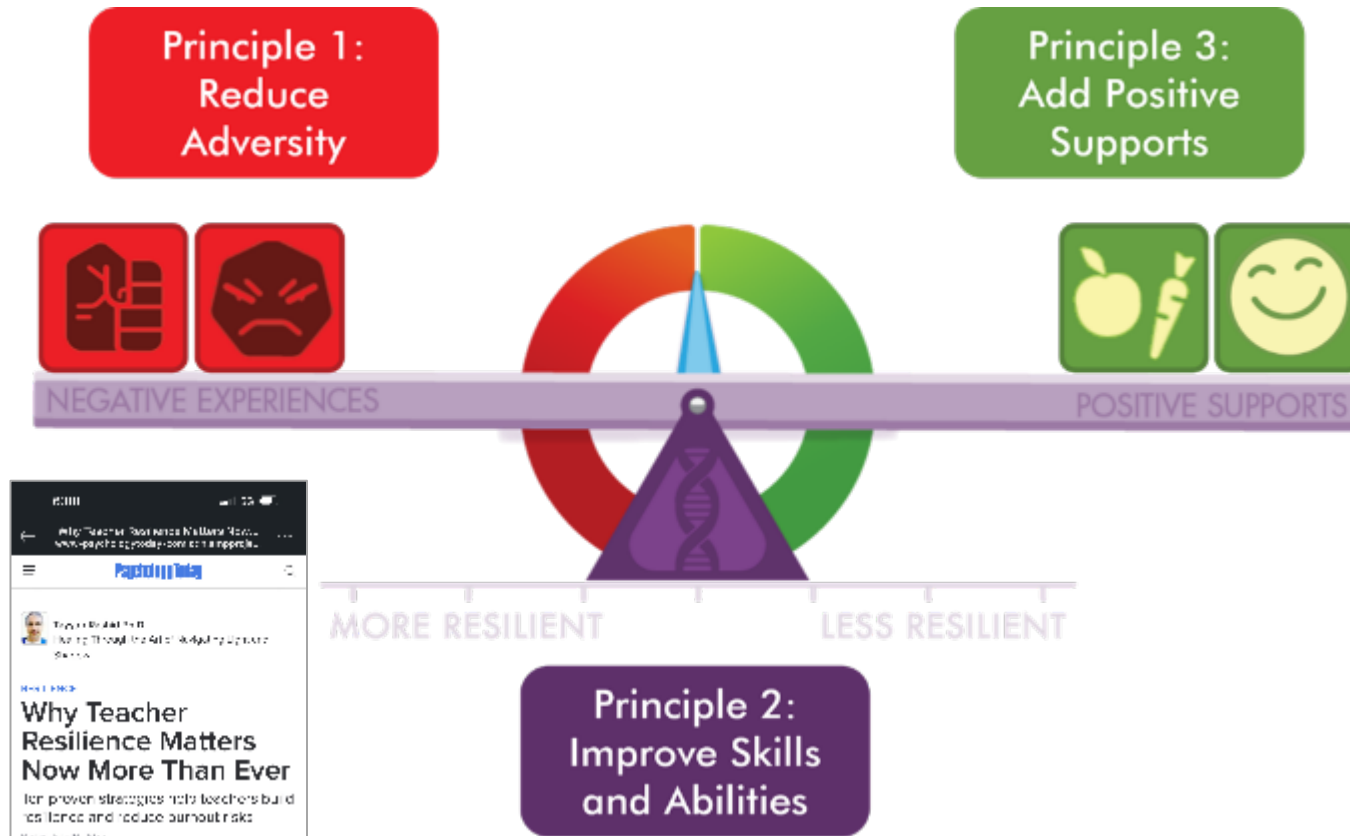
<https://www.aracy.org.au/the-nest-wellbeing-framework/>



Thriving Queensland
Kids Partnership
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The Resilience Scale

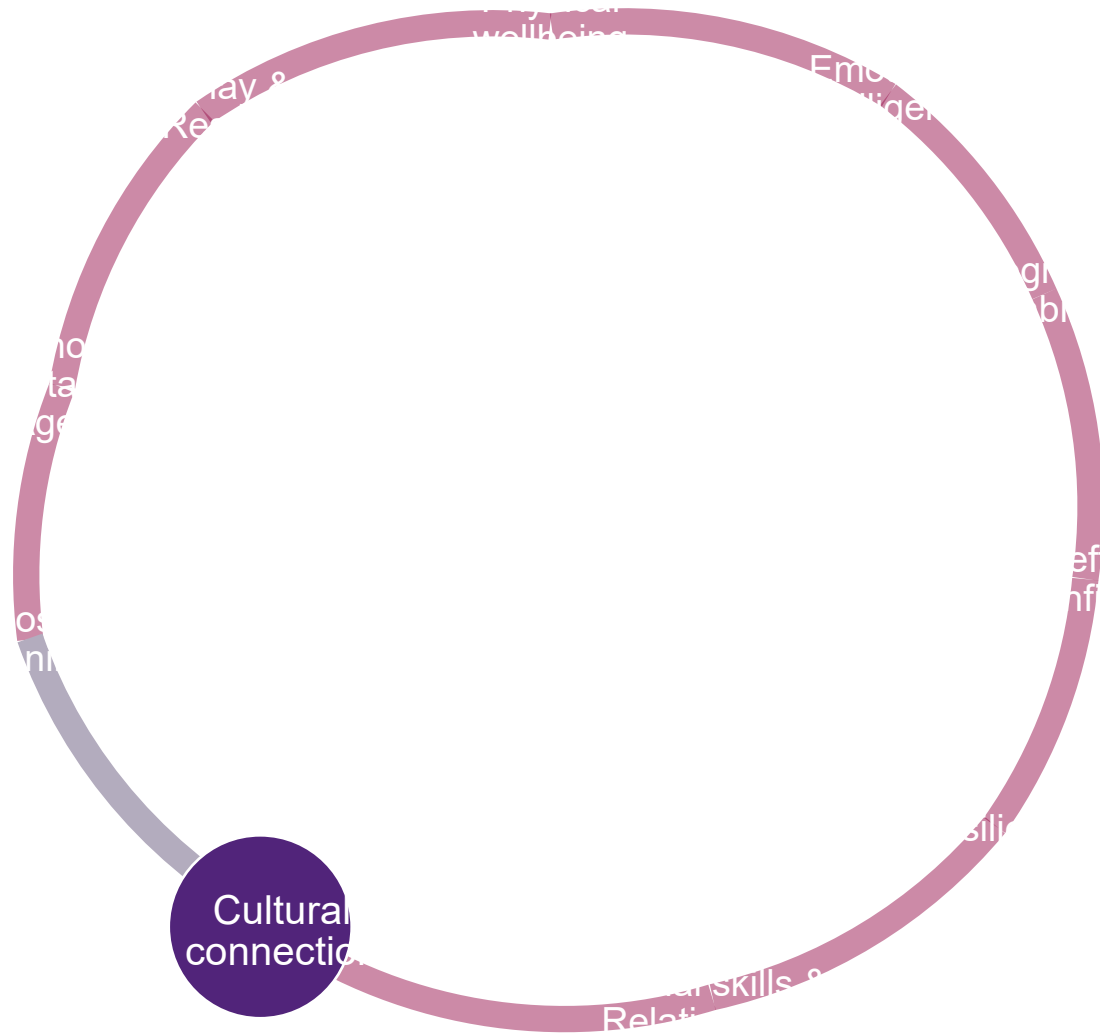


See more at the Harvard Center on the Developing Child at <https://developingchild.harvard.edu/resources/inbriefsinbrief-the-science-of-resilience/>, AFWI at www.albertafamilywellness.org and TQKP at <https://tqkp.org.au/what-does-thriving-look-like-2/>

We promote
The Resilience Scale
as a tool to =

- ❖ enable better life outcomes, and
- ❖ support practitioners, organisations and systems.

Capabilities for Life

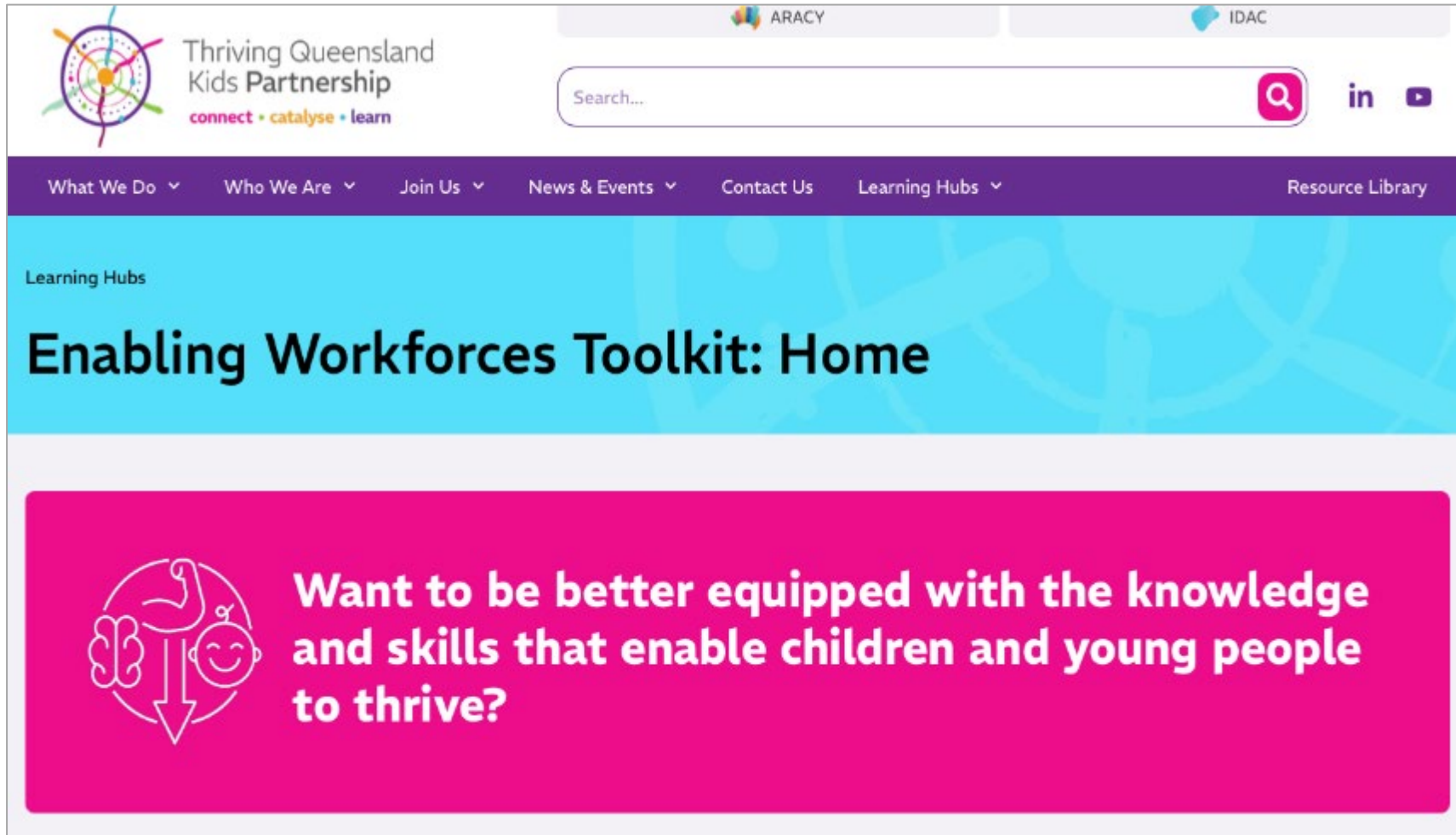


We need systems and services to be more:

- ❖ relational and
- ❖ developmental.

= with practitioners and caregivers enabled to build kids capabilities!

TQKP's Enabling Workforces Toolkit



The screenshot shows the homepage of the 'Enabling Workforces Toolkit' on the Thriving Queensland Kids Partnership website. The header includes the TQKP logo, navigation links (What We Do, Who We Are, Join Us, News & Events, Contact Us, Learning Hubs, Resource Library), and a search bar. The main content area features a large blue banner with the title 'Enabling Workforces Toolkit: Home'. Below this is a pink box with a circular icon containing a brain, a heart, and a person, and the text: 'Want to be better equipped with the knowledge and skills that enable children and young people to thrive?'.

Thriving Queensland Kids Partnership
connect • catalyse • learn


ARACY IDAC

Search...

What We Do ▾ Who We Are ▾ Join Us ▾ News & Events ▾ Contact Us Learning Hubs ▾ Resource Library

Learning Hubs

Enabling Workforces Toolkit: Home

 **Want to be better equipped with the knowledge and skills that enable children and young people to thrive?**





Thriving Kids Brain Builders Initiative



THE UNIVERSITY OF QUEENSLAND AUSTRALIA

Study Research Partners and community About


Search

Queensland Brain Institute

Home About Our people Research Study The Brain Engage News Give Contact


Thriving Kids Brain Builders Initiative

Research / Research groups / Thorpe Group / Thorpe Projects

 **Thriving Queensland Kids Partnership**
connect • catalyse • learn

Thriving Kids Brain Builders Initiative (TKBBI) is led by [Thriving Queensland Kids Partnership \(TQKP\)](#) and ARACY, in conjunction with the Queensland Brain Institute (QBI) at The University of Queensland as well as other research, government, NGO and social enterprise partners across Queensland

Quick links



Let's equip and enable all our parents, caregivers, communities, educators, practitioners and leaders to be brain builders ... to help every young Queenslander thrive!



Thriving Queensland
Kids Partnership
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every child thriving
aracy



Email: tqkp@aracy.org.au



LinkedIn: [company/thriving-queensland-kids-partnership](https://www.linkedin.com/company/thriving-queensland-kids-partnership)



YouTube: [@ThrivingQldKids](https://www.youtube.com/@ThrivingQldKids)



tqkp.org.au



Queensland Brain Institute, UQ

Brain Builders Initiative overview

Sally Staton, Program Leader



Thriving Kids Brain Builders Initiative



Thriving Queensland
Kids Partnership
connect • catalyse • learn



<https://qbi.uq.edu.au/brain-builders>

The Thriving Kids Brain Builders Initiative

Aims and Objectives

Aims 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.



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

Breaking down the silos

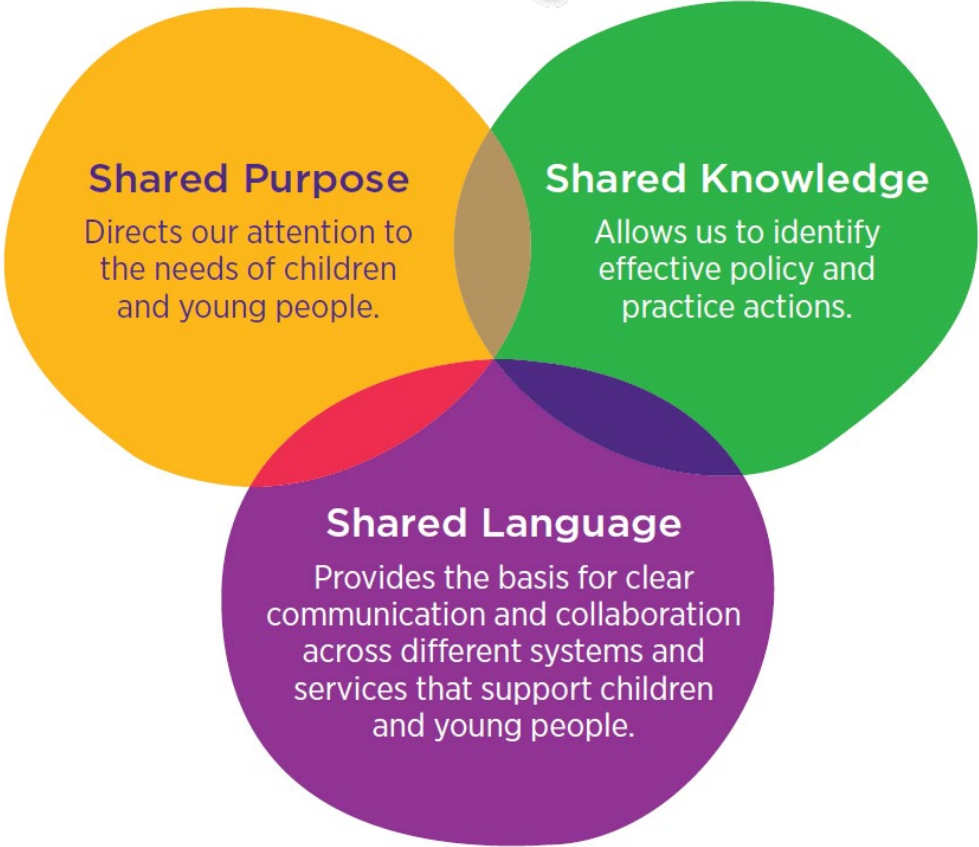
Across and within systems



Depth



Breadth



Building understanding of brain development



BLACKPOOL
BETTER START

Integrating Brain Story Science into Policy,
Practice and Evaluation

Oxford Brain Story
BUILDING BRAINS FOR
LIFELONG HEALTH



SEEN Oxford

SECONDARY EDUCATION
AROUND
EARLY NEURODEVELOPMENT



Breadth

Across the child and youth system in Qld



- Neuro-informed Policy and Practice **Definitions, Knowledge Bases, Framework**
- **ECHO Communities of Practice**
- Understanding Brain Development **Modules**
- **Stories of Implementation** for Brain Building in Qld
- **Curricular Reviews** with tertiary organisations
- **Implementation Strategies** for workforces in Qld
- Professional Development **Tools and Resources**
- Brain Building **Summits, Forums, and Workshops**
- **Dictionary** of Brain Building Words

Common
Language

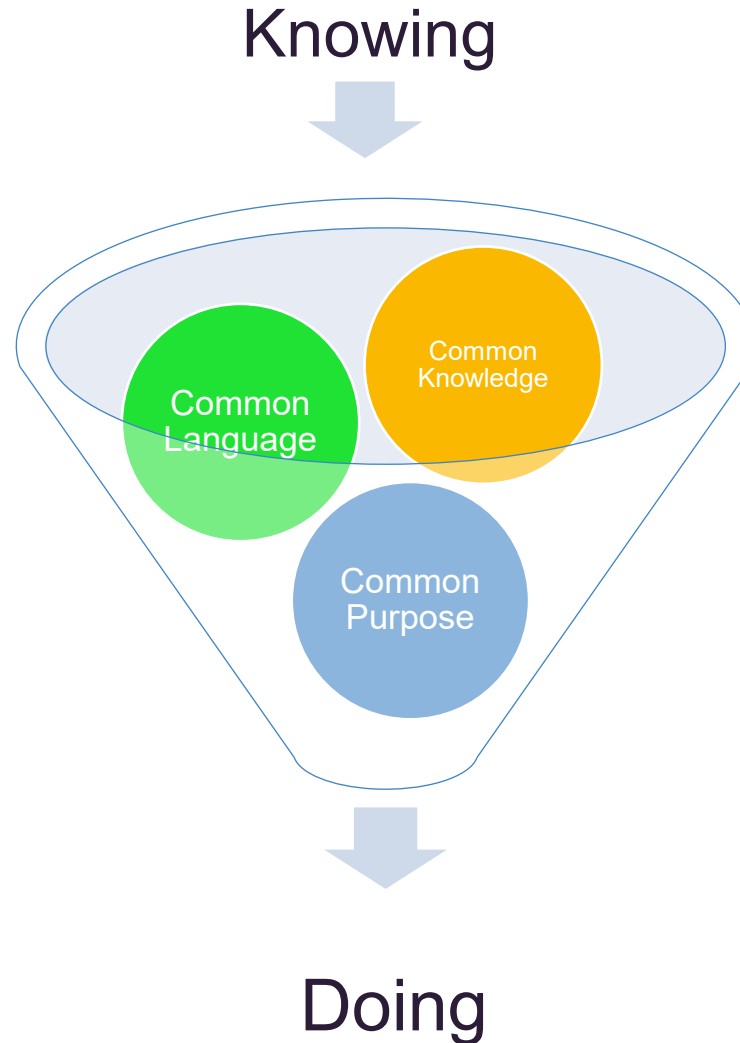
Common
Knowledge

Common
Purpose

Depth

Within the child and youth system in Qld

Early Childhood Development Workforces



Primary and Secondary School Workforces



Tim Fairfax Family Foundation

Brain Health in Queensland Schools Initiative

Gina Fairfax AC, Trustee
Katie Norman, Senior Program Manager



Tim Fairfax Family Foundation

A Connected, Resilient and Futureproof Community



CONNECTED

Connections matter. Strong ties with family, friends and the community provide us a sense of purpose, happiness, security, and a place to belong.



RESILIENT

Resilient communities can survive through challenging times. A resilient not-for-profit sector is better equipped to meet the dynamic needs of communities.



FUTUREPROOF

Future focused philanthropy invites innovative solutions. Futureproof initiatives are collaborative and strategic, centred on long-term sustainable change.



LEADERSHIP

Effective leadership combines expertise and social acumen, which is required to strengthen connected, resilient, and futureproof communities.

Where did we start....

Policies, frameworks, data, research partnerships & supports

For example:

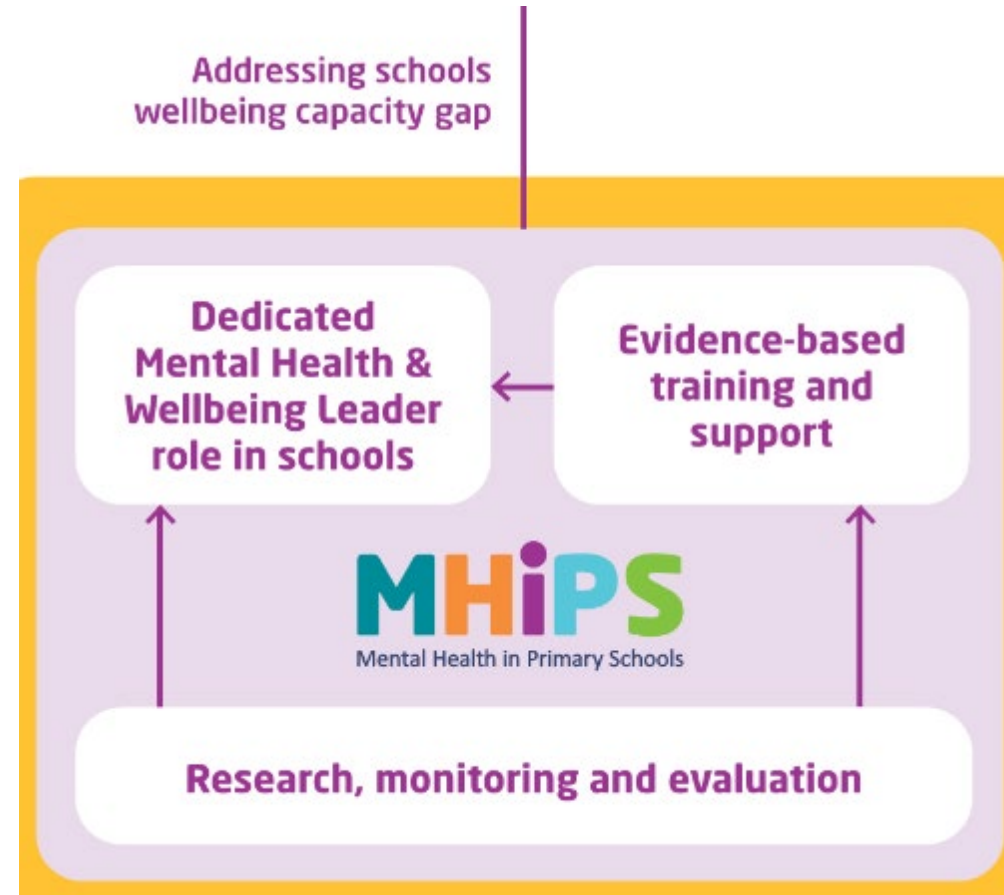
- National Children's Mental Health & Wellbeing Strategy
- Australian Curriculum
- Queensland Equity & Excellence Strategy
- Queensland Student Learning
- Queensland Engagement and Wellbeing Survey
- Putting Queensland Kids First

School delivery of curriculum, programs and support for learning and wellbeing

Brain Health in Queensland Schools

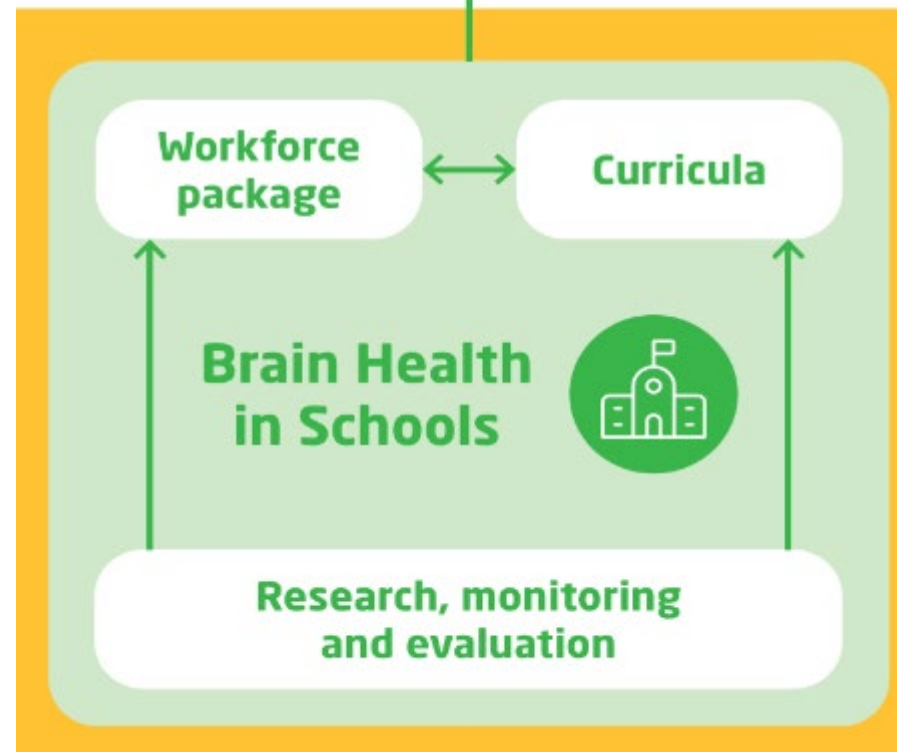
STRATEGIC INITIATIVE LAUNCH

We are curious about...



And what would happen if we...

Addressing brain health
teaching & learning gap



Policies, frameworks, data, research partnerships & supports

For example:

- National Children's Mental Health & Wellbeing Strategy
- Australian Curriculum
- Queensland Equity & Excellence Strategy
- Queensland Student Learning
- Queensland Engagement and Wellbeing Survey
- Putting Queensland Kids First

School delivery of curriculum, programs and support for learning and wellbeing

Addressing schools
wellbeing capacity gap

Addressing brain health
teaching & learning gap

Dedicated
Mental Health &
Wellbeing Leader
role in schools

Evidence-based
training and
support

MHiPS
Mental Health in Primary Schools

Research, monitoring and evaluation

Workforce
package

Curricula

Brain Health
in Schools

Research, monitoring
and evaluation

Brain Health in Queensland Schools

- Mental health and wellbeing services and supports more accessible for schools and families
- Schools more equipped to promote student learning and wellbeing and support teacher wellbeing
- Families empowered to advocate for their child's learning and wellbeing needs

Students
equipped for
lifelong learning
and wellbeing

Thank you



Murdoch Children's Research Institute

Mental Health in Primary
Schools in Queensland

Bella Laidlaw, Senior Coordinator,
National Expansion MHiPS





The Mental Health in Primary Schools (MHiPS) Initiative



Where the journey began...

- **Deterioration in Australian children's mental health and wellbeing**
 - >600,000 children and young people with mental health problems
 - Past 3 years increases in social anxiety (45%), ADHD (42%), peer relationship difficulties (42%), school behaviour & engagement problems....
- **Service system unable to meet need, access delays**
 - Pediatricians (70% of new patients have mental health related conditions, waiting lists up to 12 months)
 - Psychologists (In 2022, one in three not accepting new referrals)
- **Increased policy attention to child mental health**
 - All highlight schools as central to addressing child mental health



The importance of schools

- Universal system – non stigmatising
 - 99% of Australian children attend formal schooling
 - 1000 hours per year in class vs 1-6 hours per year with a health professional
- Potential for early identification and intervention
 - Observe children in class, in interaction with peers, on the playground
 - Relationships with parents and family
 - Understanding of classroom interventions – support, modification of curriculum, scaffolding, counselling
- Can help move the dial to prevention, early detection, early intervention
- Structure already exists – **every community has a school**



MHiPS: Planning, co-design and needs analysis

- 12 months planning
 - Meeting stakeholders, lit review, other jurisdictions
 - Needs analysis – 330 schools, 1000 teacher surveys
- Model begins to take shape
 - Detailed analysis of findings – clear preference for designated person in every school to build capacity plus targeted professional development to build capability, common language
- 10 ‘pioneer’ schools
 - Focus groups and first co-design workshop with 10 ‘pioneer’ schools
 - Second co-design workshop – describe model, Professional Learning program (design, content, expected learning outcomes, preview of resources), evaluation plan and process



MHiPS Model



Codeign



MHWL role



Professional
Learning and
community of
practice



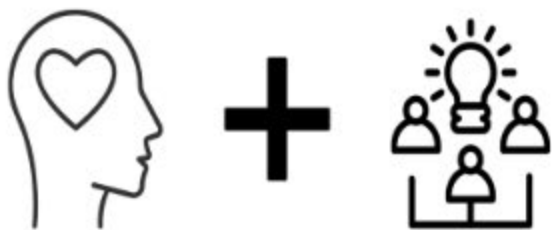
Learning from evaluation

Collaboration with education governing bodies



MHiPS role and Professional Learning

- Pairs a **dedicated school-based teacher qualified role**
- with an **evidence-based professional learning program**



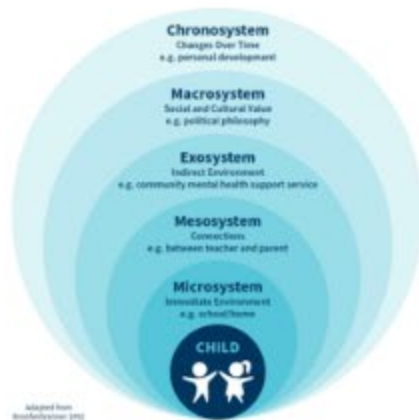
- Build **school and staff capacity and capability** to support student mental health and wellbeing
- Promote a **whole-school approach** aligned with need
- Identify and implement **evidence-based** and **context appropriate** strategies
- **Strengthen linkages**, with external support services and **co-ordinate clear referral pathways**

**Improved
child mental
health and
wellbeing
outcomes**



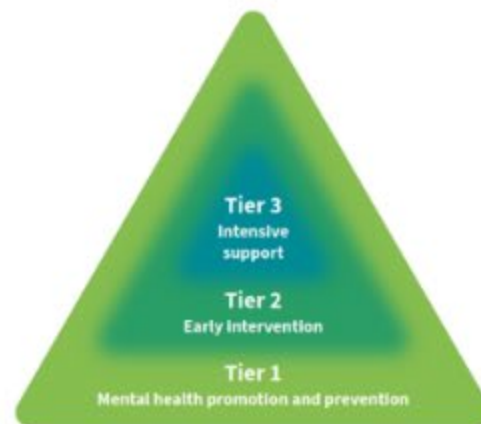
Principles and frameworks underpinning MHiPS professional learning

Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory of Development



Adapted from Bronfenbrenner (2005)

Multi-Tiered System of Support



Adapted from Department of Education and Training, 2020

Cycle of Inquiry



Adapted from Department of Education and Training, 2020

The Children's Wellbeing Continuum



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Implementation timeline - Victoria

Timeline





MHiPS – Evaluation Findings

Professional learning program and role integration:

- Professional learning program strongly supports the role
- MHWL role is accepted by teachers
- Important for MHWL to be teacher-qualified

Staff report:

- Increased teacher confidence to support student mental health and wellbeing
- Increased capacity of the whole school to support mental health and wellbeing
- Support from MHWL role enhances ability to identify and support students with mental health concerns



Training for MHWLs

96%

agreed training
enhanced skills

97%

applied learning
in their role



Integration of the MHWL role

87%

agreed the MHWL
role was accepted by
classroom teachers

95%

considered it important
for the MHWL to have an
education background



90%

agree the MHWL model

**INCREASED
THE
CAPACITY**

of the whole school to
support student mental
health and wellbeing



90%

agree the MHWL model

**INCREASED
THE
CONFIDENCE**

of teachers to support
student mental health
and wellbeing

(Staff survey n=1322)



Support provided by MHWLs

95%

agreed MHWL-provided
professional development
enhanced their ability to
identify and support students
with mental health concerns

93%

of teachers
received support
from MHWLs in
the previous
4 weeks



MHiPS – Evaluation Findings

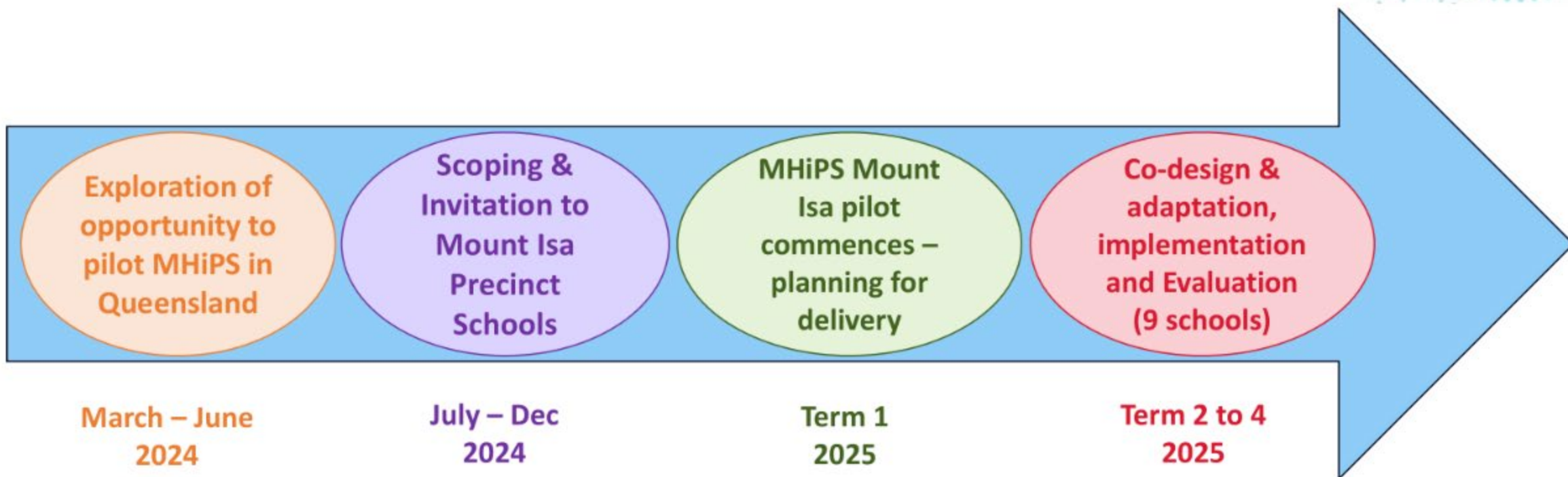
MHWLs report:

- Increased prioritisation of student mental health and wellbeing
- Reduction in stigma (among school staff and families)
- Change in language
- Improved access to services
- Improved student mental health and wellbeing





Mount Isa MHiPS Journey

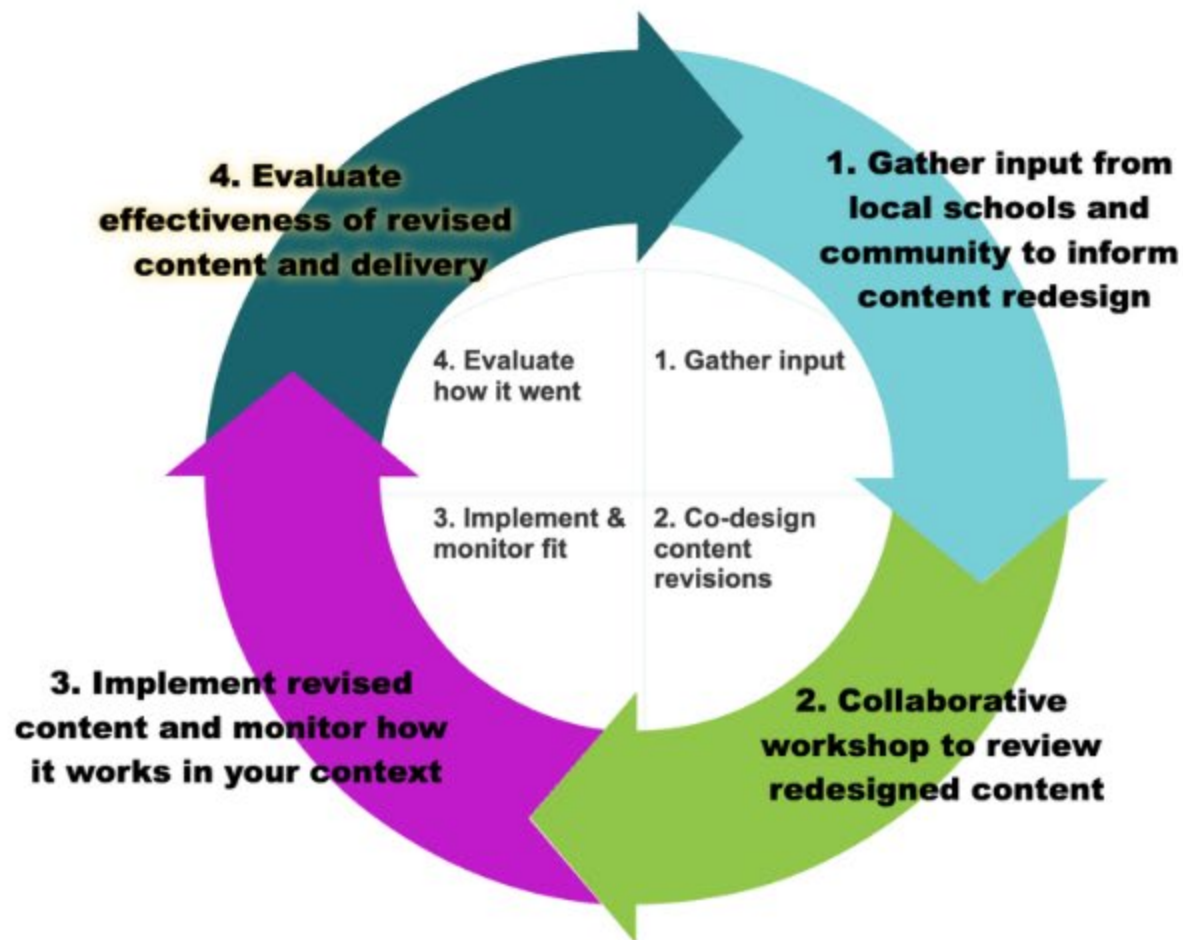




Co-design – Using PAR to adapt MHiPS for Mount Isa context

1. Agreement need to co-design and adapt MHiPS for the Mount Isa & Queensland context
2. Commitment to share learnings
3. Who's involved

(Precinct – all 9 schools, DoE, First Nation Services and Community, DoH, external health and community support services, council)





MHiPS – Further Information



SCAN ME

Bella Laidlaw

Senior Coordinator, National Expansion MHiPS

Centre for Community Child Health

Murdoch Children's Research Institute

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Mental Health in Primary Schools, or MHIPS, is a partnership between the Centre for Community Child Health (CCCH) at the Murdoch Children's Research Institute (MCRI), the University of Melbourne Faculty of Education.

MHiPS would like to acknowledge the Victorian Department of Education, Ian Potter Foundation and the Helen Macpherson Smith Trust, SALT Catalyst, Bupa, the RE Ross Trust and the R.M. Ansett Trust for their support in establishing the initiative.

MHiPS would like to acknowledge The Tim Fairfax Family Foundation and the Queensland Department of Education for the opportunity to adapt and pilot MHiPS Mount Isa.

The Centre For Community Child Health
The Royal Children's Hospital Melbourne
50 Flemington Road
Parkville 3052 VIC

www.rch.org.au/ccch

The Centre for Community Child Health is a department of The Royal Children's Hospital and a research group of the Murdoch Children's Research Institute.



Melbourne Children's
A world leader
in child and
adolescent
health



Queensland Brain Institute, UQ

Brain Healthy Schools

Sally Staton, Program Leader



Brain Healthy Schools



Brain Healthy Schools



Brain Health

Definition

“The state of brain functioning across cognitive, sensory, social-emotional, behavioural, and motor domains. It allows a person to realise their **full potential** over their life course, **irrespective** of the presence or absence of disorders.”

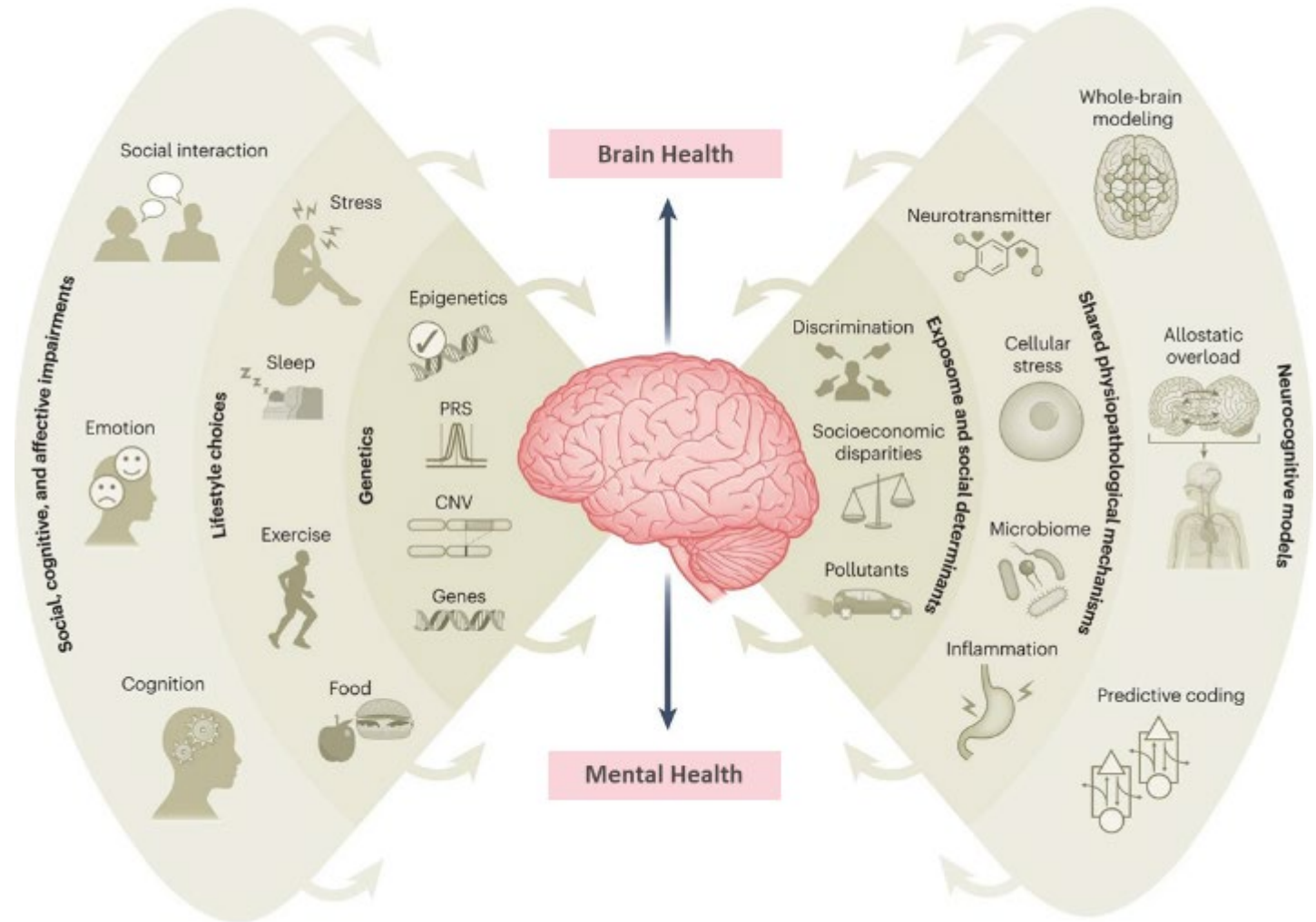


**World Health
Organization**



Inter-connected

Creating the individual, social
and environmental
conditions to allow all people
to thrive



Neuro-informed Policy and Practice

Definition

“The method and outcome of translating and applying current **evidence from neuroscience** and related fields about the processes underpinning **human development and behaviour** to guide **policy and practice actions**.”

“The intent of neuro-informed policy and practice is to create and **promote optimal conditions for Brain Health*** and(or) related positive physical, social, and community outcomes.”

Source: Staton, Coles et al., 2024. Neuro-informed policy and practice framework.



Widening the Frame



Frame 1
The brain
in isolation



Frame 2
The individual
in isolation



Frame 3
The brain
in context

Neuro-informed Policy and Practice

The Brain in Context

Does not

- View the brain and individual in isolation
- Adopt a one size fits all approach
- Disregard individual differences and circumstances
- Overlook the role of systems and environments in supporting brain health.

Does

- Connect current evidence from science with practice and policy
- Consider the complexities of human relationships and contexts
- Promote the importance of system, family and community-level supports



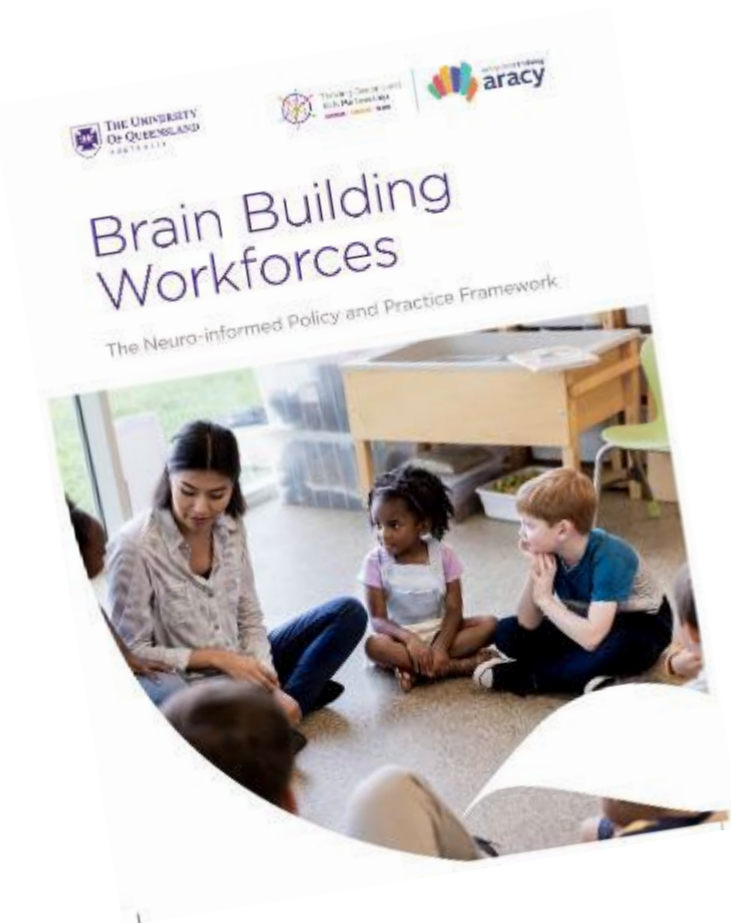
The brain
in context



Based on ARACY's The Nest's six areas of wellbeing: Loved and Safe, Healthy, Participating, Positive Sense of Identity & Culture, Material Basics and Learning © ARACY 2023. The Common Approach® and The Common Approach Training® are registered trademarks of ARACY. Common Approach® resources may only be used following official Common Approach Training®. Please visit www.aracy.org.au for training details.

Neuro-informed Policy and Practice Framework

12 Key Knowledges Area – from Cells to Society



Cells



- 1 Brain Development**
 - Gene x environment interactions
 - Early phases of brain development
 - Adolescent brain development
- 2 Brain Architecture**
 - Neurons, synapses and circuits
 - Physiological arousal
- 3 Brain Functions & Systems**
 - Brain systems involved in cognition and emotion
- 4 Neuroplasticity**
 - Brain reorganisation
 - Influences of experiences & environments on brain architecture

Person



- 5 Individual Difference**
 - Neurodiversity
 - Developmental variability
 - Understanding of disability
- 6 Sensitive Periods**
 - Importance of the early years
 - Adolescent periods of brain development
- 7 Brain-Body Connections**
 - Nutrition
 - Sleep
 - Physical activity
 - Effect of drugs on brain function
- 8 Stress**
 - Types of stress
 - Effect of stress on the brain & body

Society



- 9 Trauma / Adversity**
 - Effects of trauma
 - ACEs
 - Adversity & children's development
- 10 Positive Relationships**
 - Serve & return interactions
 - Importance of stable, supportive relationships with caring adults
- 11 Resilience**
 - Balancing positive, adverse & skill development experiences
- 12 The Whole Person**
 - Biopsychosocial influences
 - Physical environments
 - Protective & risk factors



Brain Healthy Schools

Brain Healthy Schools

Program of work

Brain Building in Education Events



Programs and Resources Evidence Hub



Brain Health Workforce Development Package



Guiding Principles

Brain Healthy Schools Project



Genuine co-design – including listening to and enacting the perspectives of students, teachers and system leaders



Respectful partnerships – with 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 & implementation science



Focusing on pragmatic solutions – recognising the real-world challenges faced across schools, communities, places, and systems within Queensland



Identifying opportunities for scaling and sustainability – to ensure the best chance of the greatest impact of this project within the short and long-term

Brain Building in Education Events

South and North Qld

- Connect key stakeholders from across the education system in Queensland with a focus on brain health
- Share information on current resources and approaches for applying neuroscience within education settings
- Map current activities and opportunities for implementing Brain Health in schools in Queensland
- Invite opportunities for collaborative research, implementation, and curricular development



Program and Resource Evidence Hub

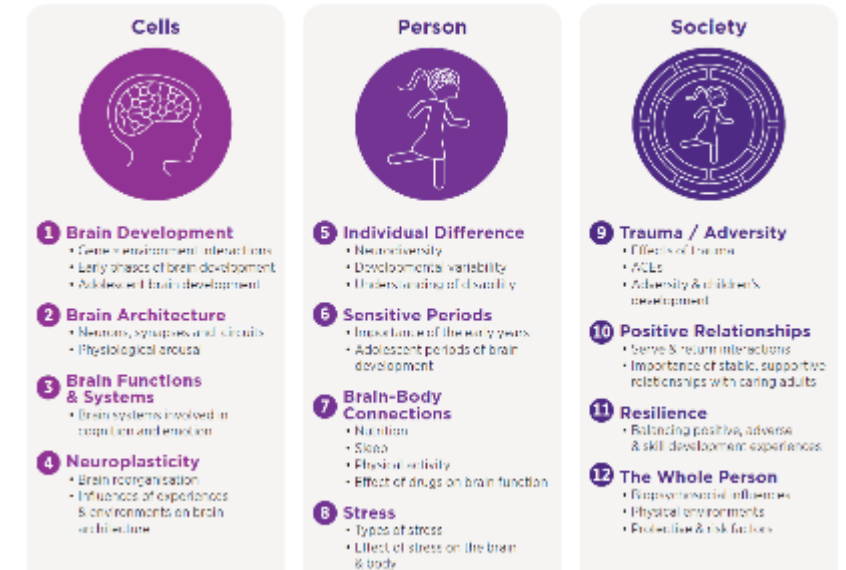
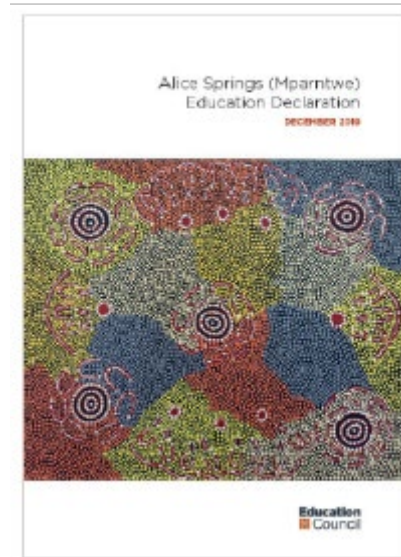
Evidence Hub

Scope

existing and
emerging curricula,
practice, and
innovation
opportunities

Collate

an evidence hub of
neuroscience
focused programs
and resources for
students and staff



Brain Health Focused Package

With the Education System in Qld

Co-design

An embedded and fit-for-purpose workforce development package with key stakeholders across Queensland



Frame and Engage



Explore and Connect



Imagine and Create



Make and Test

Implement

Implementation and evaluation in schools with key stakeholders within Queensland

**Independent
Schools
Queensland**

**Catholic
Education
Townsville and
Rockhampton
Diocese**



**Department of
Education**

Neuro-diversity and
individual difference

Opportunities for Play

Core understanding of
Brain Development

Engagement and
Belonging

Transitions P-1,
Yr 6-7

Teacher well-being and
co-regulation

Sensitive periods for Brain
Development



Brain Healthy Schools Team

Brains Trust



Brain Healthy Schools
Research Fellow NQ
Dr Veronica Graham



Brain Healthy Schools
Research Fellow
Dr Shaun Kanowski



Brain Healthy Schools
Senior Project Manager
Dr Grant Webb



Brain Builders Initiative
Program Manager
Rebecca Crompton



Brain Builders Initiative
Brain Trust Collaborative
Lucy Bryce

Department of Education

Education Context in North Queensland

Julie Warwick, DoE, North QLD Region



Department of Education

North Queensland Region
Brain Health in Education Forum
24 June 2025

Julie Warwick
Acting Regional Director



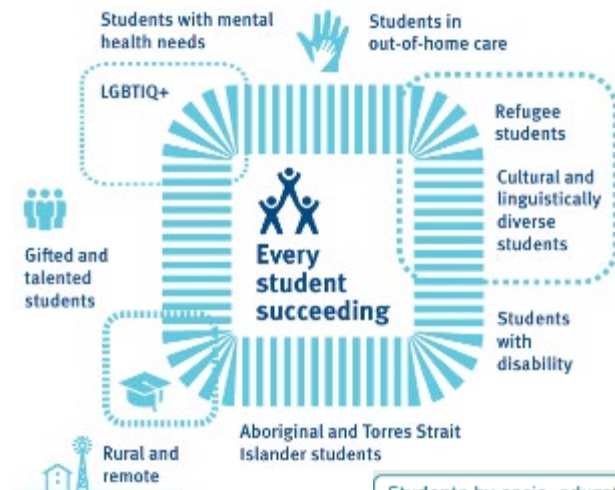


Acknowledgement of Country

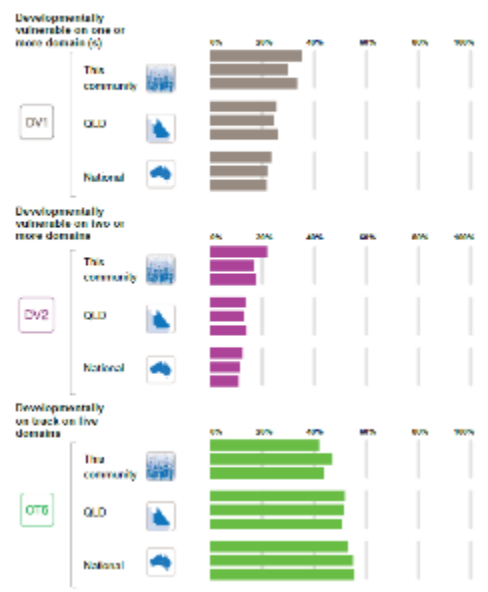
We acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the lands, seas, skies and waterways from across Queensland. We pay our respect to the Elders, past, present and emerging, for they hold the memories, traditions, the culture and hopes of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples across the state.

A better understanding and respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures develops an enriched appreciation of Australia's cultural heritage and can lead to reconciliation. This is essential to the maturity of Australia as a nation and fundamental to the development of an Australian identity.

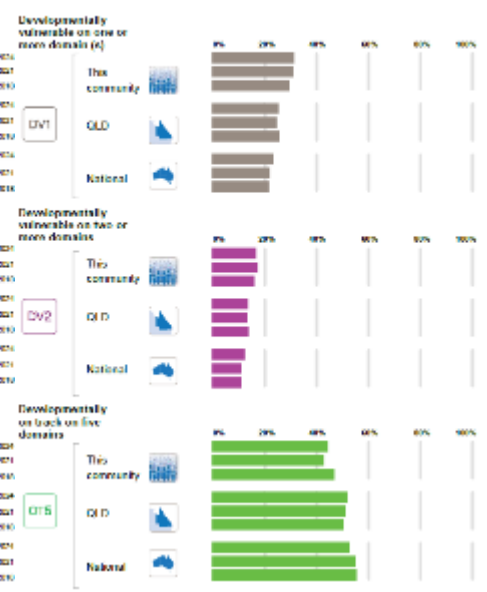
Orientate to place



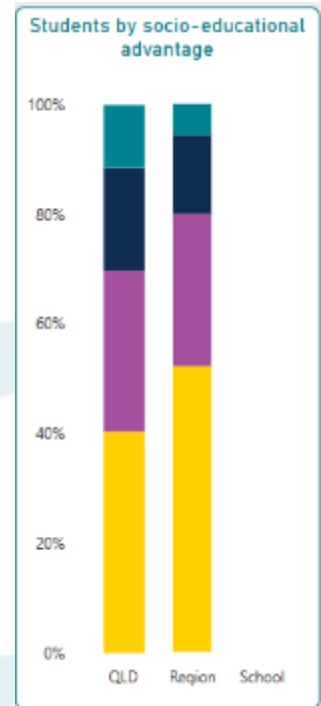
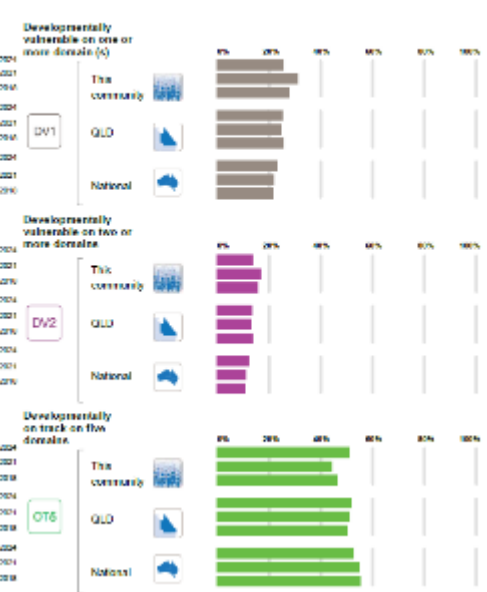
Mount Isa QLD



Thuringowa QLD



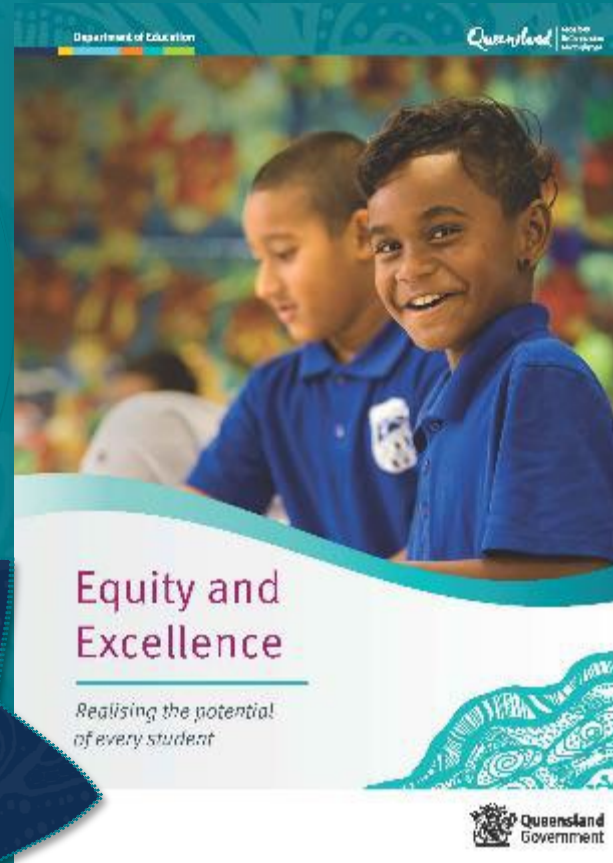
Townsville QLD



Equity and Excellence

‘One plan, one strategy, for one system.’

For learning



Equity and Excellence

A progressive, high performing education system realising the potential of every student.

Our focus areas



Educational achievement



Wellbeing and engagement



Culture and inclusion

Our system initiatives



Educational leadership and teaching expertise



Digital innovation in teaching and learning



Educational performance and support



Integrated responses and educational precincts



Revitalised educational infrastructure

Our school priorities

Underpinned by curriculum, teaching and learning



Starting Strong
Kindy to Year 2



Building on foundations
Years 3 to 6



On track for success
Years 7 to 9



Ready for the future
Years 10 to 12

Embedding First Nations outcomes across every priority

Student Learning and Wellbeing Framework

“Wellbeing is a state in which every individual realises his or her potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully and is able to make a contribution to his or her community.”

– World Health Organisation, 2014

Wellbeing – our approach



Wellbeing – connected to learning

Our young people are growing up in a world driven by new technologies and economic globalisation. Their future means they need a new set of cognitive, social and emotional skills for success.

Responding to individual and group differences, promoting collaborative learning, connecting to the hearts and minds of every student, and teaching students how to manage their wellbeing, are just

Healthy, o
can succe
vital for Q
We know
combines
learning d
not happ

DoE Staff
Wellbeing Framework



Our approach to student learning and wellbeing across the whole school



1 Creating safe, supportive and inclusive environments

Schools do this by:

- providing safe environments where diversity is valued, positive social interactions are promoted, and risk of injury or harm is minimised
- developing an approach to wellbeing that supports the collective action of parents, support services and the wider community
- demonstrating and communicating positive respectful relationships between staff, students, parents and members of the community
- explicitly teaching and modelling social and emotional skills, values and expectations for behaviour to support student wellbeing
- making sure the physical environment and school policies and practices are accessible and inclusive of students and families
- planning for opportunities to promote and celebrate the traditions, values and cultures of the school community
- providing learning opportunities and environments that promote healthy lifestyle choices.



2 Building the capability of staff, students and the school community

Schools do this by:

- providing health and wellbeing learning opportunities for students through curriculum focused on mental health, relationships and sexuality, alcohol and other drugs, food and nutrition, benefits of physical activity, and safety
- identifying opportunities to build the capabilities of teachers and school leaders to support a whole school approach to student wellbeing and its connection to learning
- communicating information and advice on the benefits of supporting young people to be healthy, confident and resilient
- responding positively to the needs of different groups within the school community
- strengthening connections with parents to support early intervention for students whose wellbeing is at risk
- increasing visibility of local support services to families whose children have higher levels of need
- supporting staff health and wellbeing and recognising the resulting benefits for students
- committing to continual improvement using evidence-based strategies to improve student wellbeing, seeking ways to develop and share new ideas.



3 Developing strong systems for early intervention

Schools do this by:

- planning and documenting school processes to support staff to respond appropriately to students at risk
- recognising the early signs that a student's wellbeing is at risk and responding appropriately by noticing, inquiring, planning
- sharing responsibility for supporting students at risk by:
 - seeking support from Guidance Officers and the Leadership team as first responders
 - encouraging students and families to access support services
 - using a wrap-around approach for students involving parents, school support services, health professionals and other agencies.

“More learning occurs in a joyous classroom where children feel safe, secure and accepted, and where they feel the teacher sees them for who they really are.”

– Diamond, 2010

References
1. World Health Organisation (2016), Mental health: a state of wellbeing, Geneva (12 December 2016), <http://www.who.int/news-room/factsheets/detail/mental-health> (viewed 10/10/2017)
2. Diamond, A. (2010), 'The Guidance Base for Improving School Outcomes by Addressing the Whole Child and by Addressing Skills and Attitudes, Not Just Content', Early Education and Development, vol. 21, no. 6, pp. 789-794.
3. Office of Queensland Improvement Studies (2016), <http://www.oqis.edu.au/>
4. Queensland Department of Education (2016), <http://www.qed.qld.gov.au/>

Procedure

Supporting students' mental health and wellbeing procedure

Version: 3.4 | Version effective: 12/01/2019

Audience

All state schools

Purpose

This procedural describes the responsibilities of school staff when supporting the mental health and wellbeing of all students in state schools and the processes that all state schools use to support students' mental health and social and emotional wellbeing across a continuum of support from promotion to specialised intervention and case management.

Overview

The department's *Student Learning and Wellbeing Framework* (the Framework) guides schools as they develop a whole school approach to learning and wellbeing. The Framework guides schools to provide inclusive and supportive environments that nurture students so they become lifelong learners and healthy, confident and resilient young people.

This procedure, which supports the Framework, focuses specifically on students' mental health and social and emotional wellbeing and the responsibilities and actions associated with it.

- Mental health and wellbeing promotion** – developing a whole school approach to promoting mental health and wellbeing, including targeted curriculum activities, to create a supportive school environment that develops and sustains students' social and emotional capabilities and promotes positive mental health and wellbeing.

Quick links

- [DoE Staff Wellbeing Framework*](#)
- [Child and student protection policy](#)
- [Parent and community engagement framework](#)
- [The Evidence Hub](#)
- [Positive Behaviour for Learning framework](#)
- [Inclusive education policy statement](#)
- [Supporting students' mental health and wellbeing](#)
- [Diversity in Queensland schools](#)
- [Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education](#)

*Available to departmental employees only



Minister for Education, Minister for Industrial Relations and Minister for Racing
The Honourable Grace Grace

Away for the day campaign paves the way for school mobile phone ban

- A new website and social media education campaign have been launched to ensure a smooth transition to new mobile phone arrangements in schools from Term 1 2024.
- Campaign will highlight the important role that parents and carers play in students' safe and responsible use of mobile devices, both during and outside school hours.
- 'Away for the day' will commence in Term 1 2024 – student mobile phones will be switched off and put away.
- Certain wearable devices like smartwatches must have notifications switched off.

A website and social media campaign has been launched today to help support families and students in the lead up to the 2024 school year when students will be required keep their mobile phones 'away for the day'.

The campaign highlights the important role parents and carers play in students' safe and responsible use of mobile devices, both during and outside school hours.

"Putting mobile phones 'away for the day' will encourage face-to-face social interactions between students as well as promoting their health and wellbeing by providing more opportunities for physical activity during break times."



Queensland Engagement & Wellbeing survey

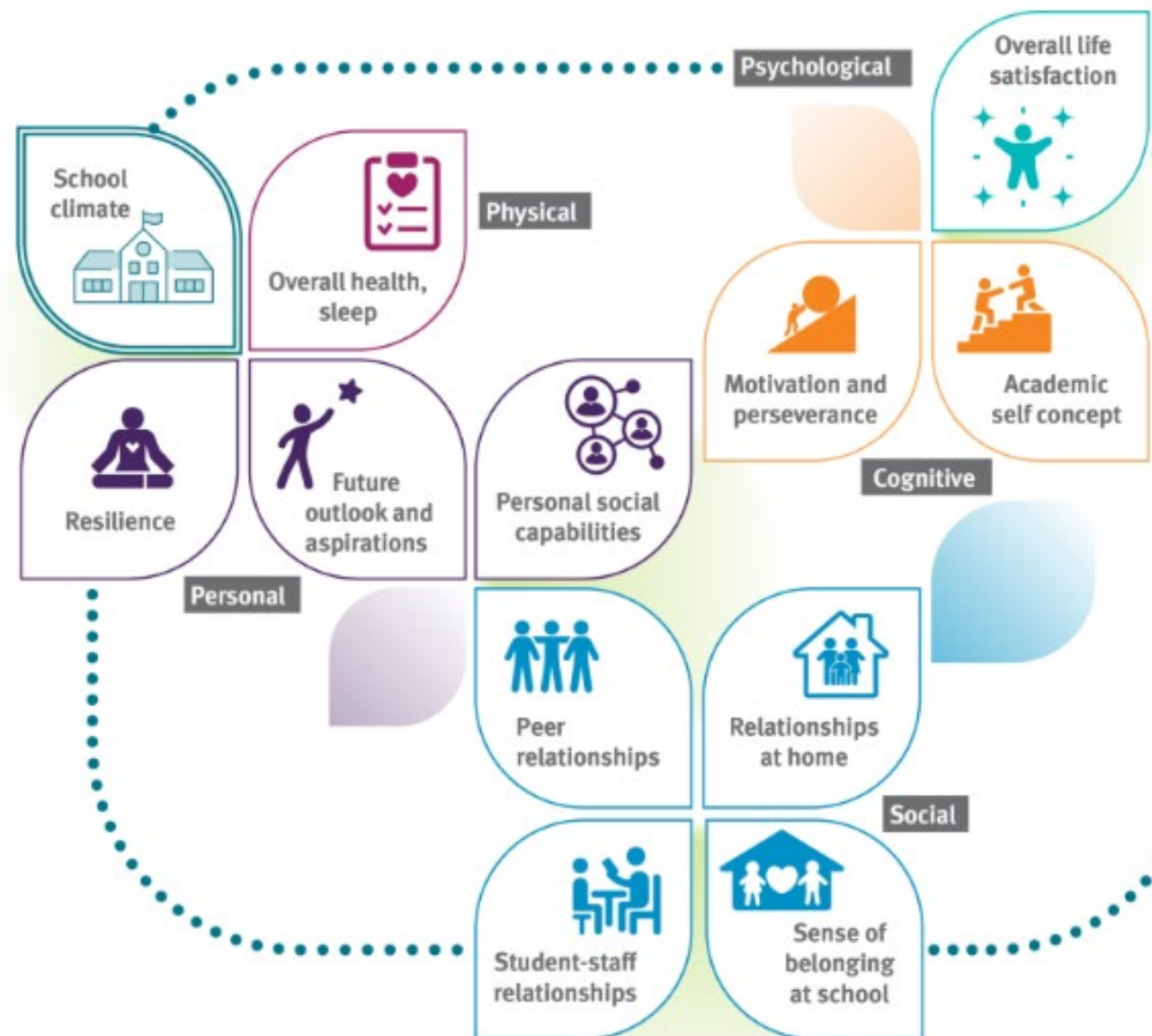
In 2024, 52 of 68 registered schools in NQR completed the survey

Secondary

- 11 registered; 9 completed
- average of 57.8% of secondary students invited participated

Primary

- 69 registered; 52 completed
- average of 67.8% of primary students invited participated



QEW Trends

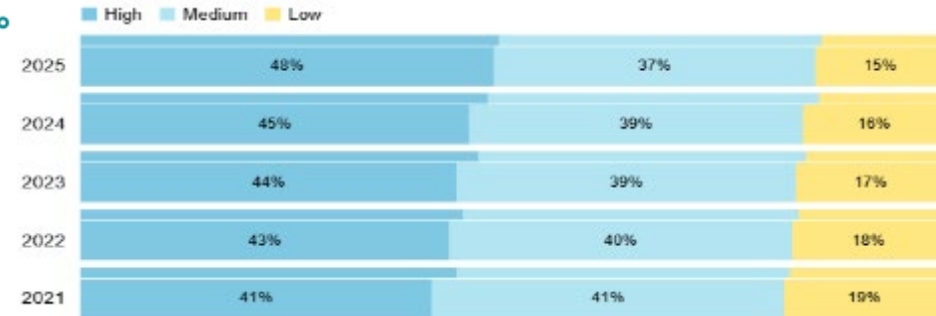
Number of Students

5,430



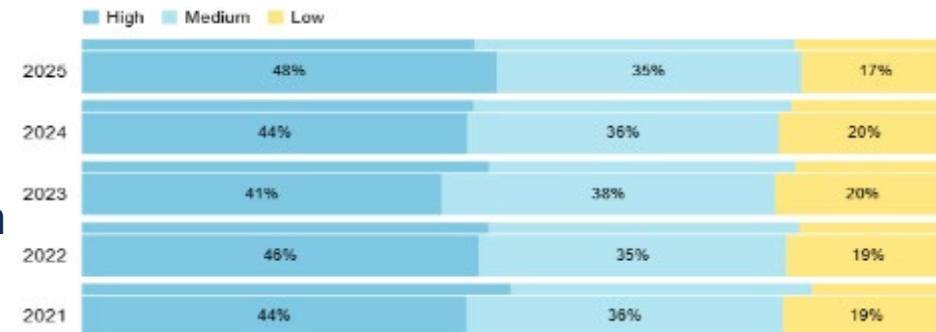
★ Overall Life Satisfaction continues an upward trend

Overall Life Satisfaction



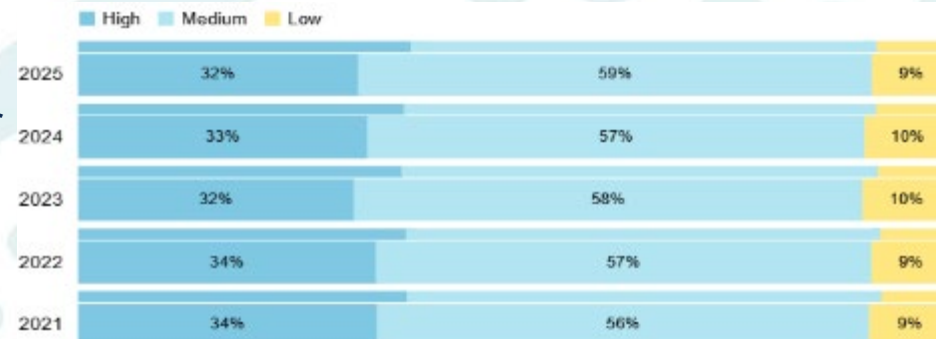
★ Sense of Belonging has recovered since 2023 and is regionally higher than the state average.

Sense of Belonging



★ Resilience remains consistent, however is behind the state average

Resilience





GPs in State Schools Program

Heatley Secondary College
Spinifex State College

Health Practitioners in Primary Schools Program



Heatley State School



Encouraging confident steps as children grow and develop, from early learning and across key phases of learning to set them on positive pathways for the future.

We are investing:

- **\$26.23 million** to extend free kindy to up to 30 hours per week for four year olds in discrete communities.
- **\$10.73 million** for health practitioners in 20 priority primary schools.
- **\$67.33 million** for Behaviour specialists in priority primary schools to support engagement in learning.
- **\$42.66 million** for Family Support Coordinators in primary schools to support transitions from early childhood for a confident start to learning at school.

School-based support staff

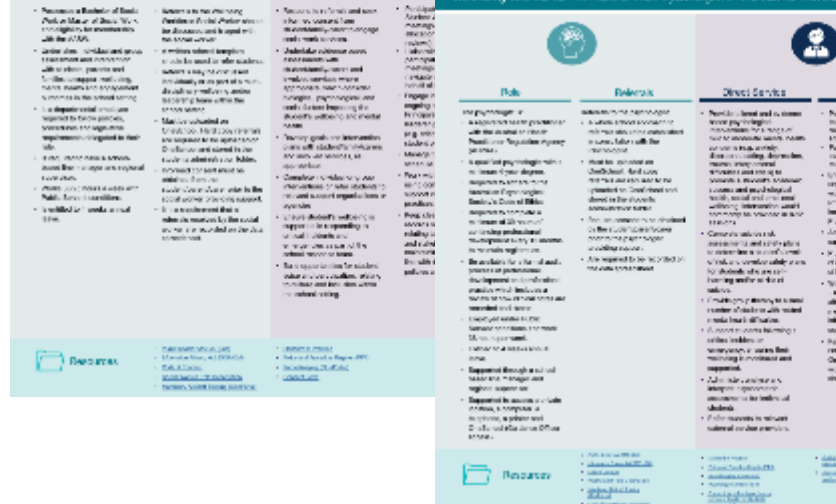
- Guidance officers
- Guidance officers—wellbeing
- Guidance officers—mental health
- Psychologists
- Social workers
- Youth workers

Regional support staff

- Principal advisors—mental health
- Senior guidance officers
- Senior advisors—psychology
- Senior advisors—social work

External support staff

- School based youth health nurses



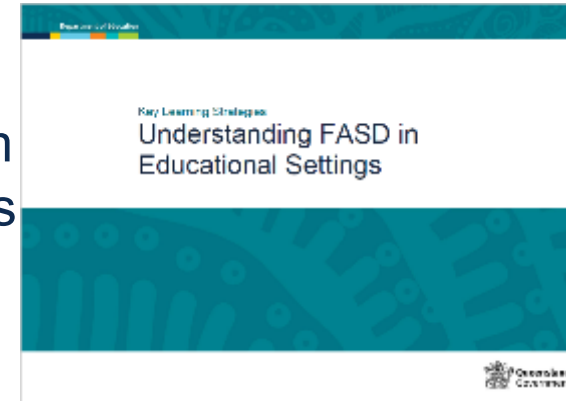
Region-initiated Projects to Support Student Wellbeing

Ready Together



Supported Transitions Project

Foetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) Forums



Hearing, Language & Literacy Project

Project 1000



Mental Health in Primary Schools Initiative



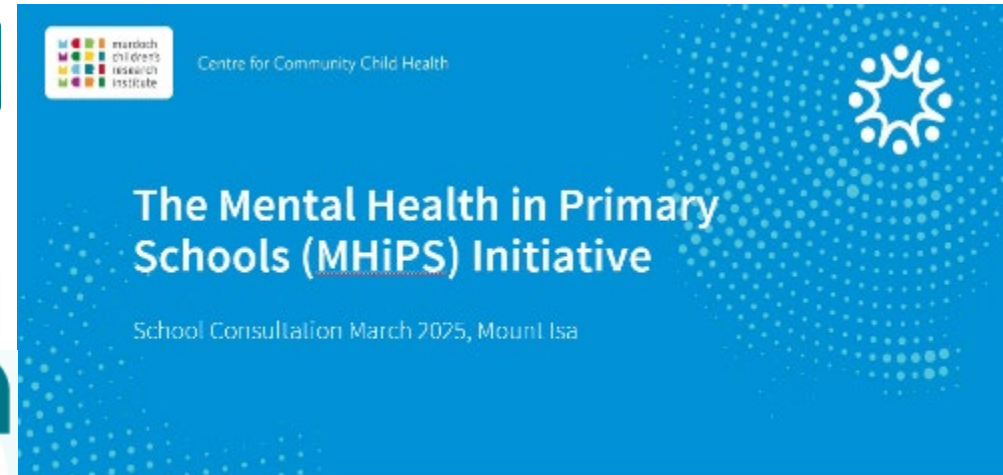
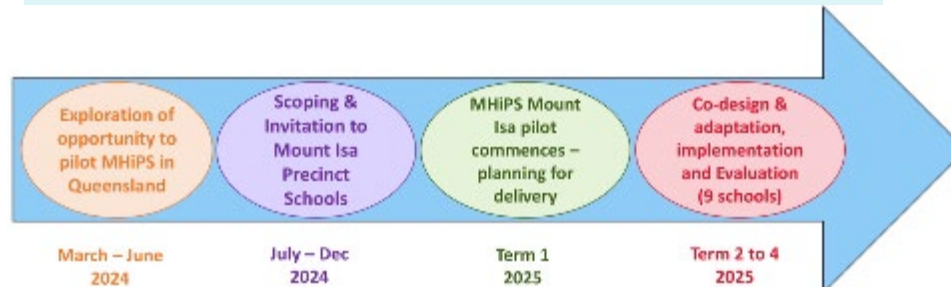
Educational precincts

A structured cross-agency approach to collective planning and resourcing across school communities to address community challenges that drive disparities or present opportunities to improve educational outcomes.

Key features

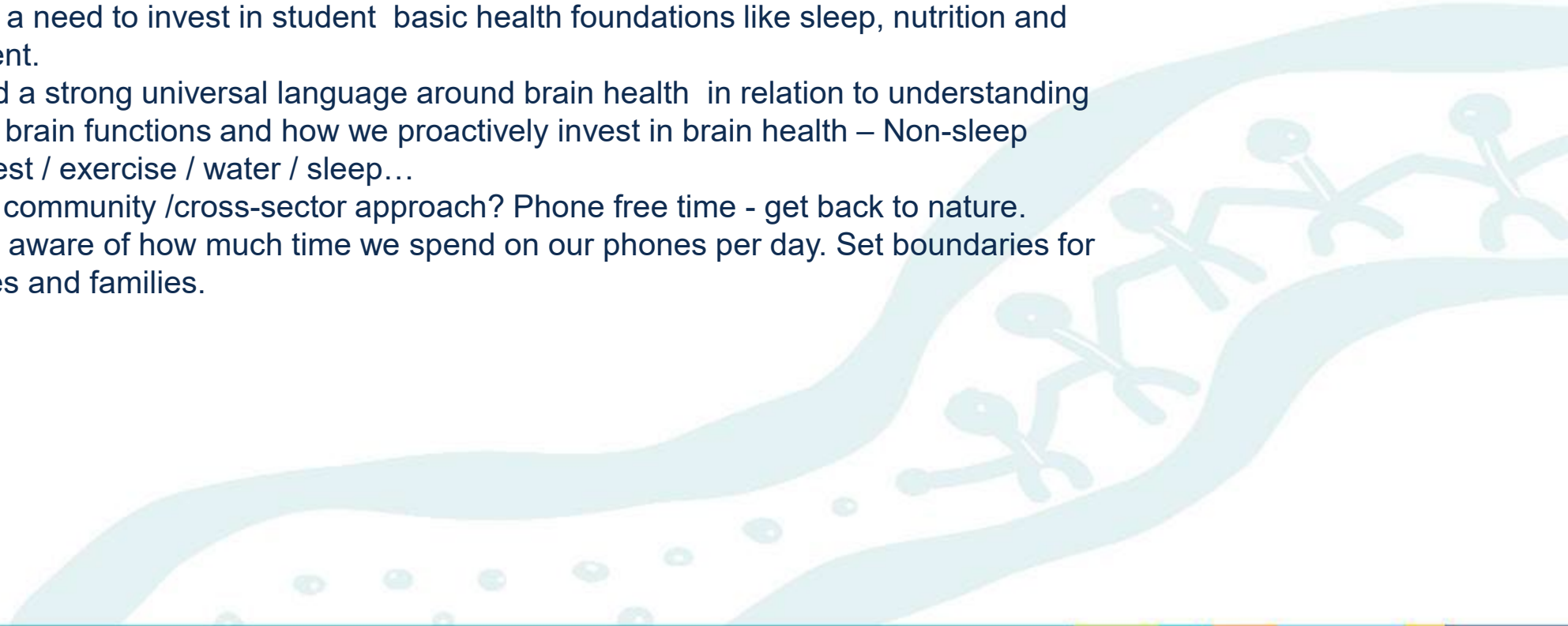
Key features of an educational precinct include:

- a shared understanding of challenges impacting the precinct
- dedicated resourcing, including a precinct facilitator (Senior Principal) to coordinate collective planning and support the 'backbone' team to monitor the precinct's impact over time
- backbone support team to maintain momentum
- formalised precinct establishment and governance
- a focus on partnerships and bringing together key stakeholders
- whole-of-government responses
- data- and evidence-informed, with shared monitoring systems.



Moving forward- Personal Observations

- Sleep deprivation due to phone use / anxiety and the impact on the brain's ability to focus and emotionally regulate.
- The decrease in the level of focused attention in young people - short sharp info rather than deep periods of concentration. Huge impacts on learning capability and capacity.
- Dopamine and social media - what is the first thing we do in the morning? Grab our phone and decrease our dopamine - that decreases our motivation.
- There is a need to invest in student basic health foundations like sleep, nutrition and movement.
- We need a strong universal language around brain health in relation to understanding how our brain functions and how we proactively invest in brain health – Non-sleep Deep Rest / exercise / water / sleep...
- A whole community /cross-sector approach? Phone free time - get back to nature. Become aware of how much time we spend on our phones per day. Set boundaries for ourselves and families.



Julie Warwick

Julie.warwick2@qed.qld.gov.au

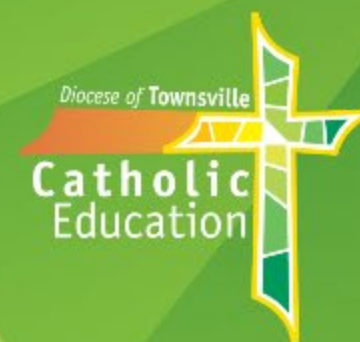


Townsville Catholic Education

Education Context in North Queensland

Jacqui Francis, Catholic Education





Townsville Catholic Education:

A snapshot of our Diocese

Our Diocese

The Townsville Catholic Diocese spans an area of more than 435,000km² across North and West Queensland.



2,700
Staff
Members



18
Primary
Schools



6
Secondary
Schools



13,300
School
Students



5
P-12
Schools



1
P-9
School

Our Footprint

The Townsville Diocese offers a lifestyle for everyone.

From the beach to the rainforest, the city to the outback, our 30 schools are located across 15 communities.



Our School Communities

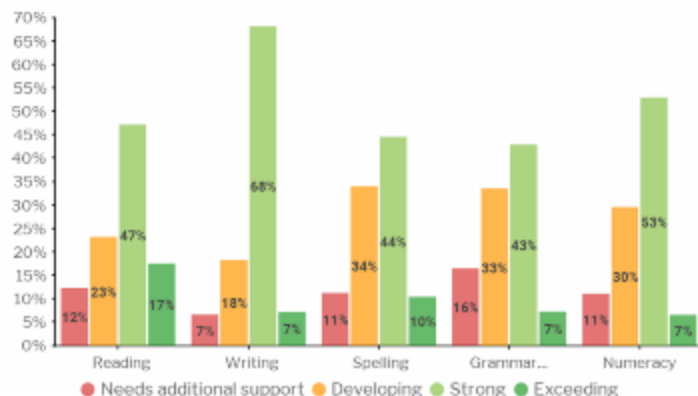
SCHOOLS BY REGION	NCCD STUDENTS (NATIONALLY CONSISTENT COLLECTION OF DATA)	LBOTE STUDENTS (LANGUAGE BACKGROUND OTHER THAN ENGLISH)	FIRST NATIONS STUDENTS
The Whitsundays Region	166	72	101
The Burdekin	113	22	55
Townsville & Palm Island	1,579	897	1,012
The Hinchinbrook Region	117	89	149
Western Region	268	220	379
TOTAL	2,243	1,300	1,696

Key Learning Achievements

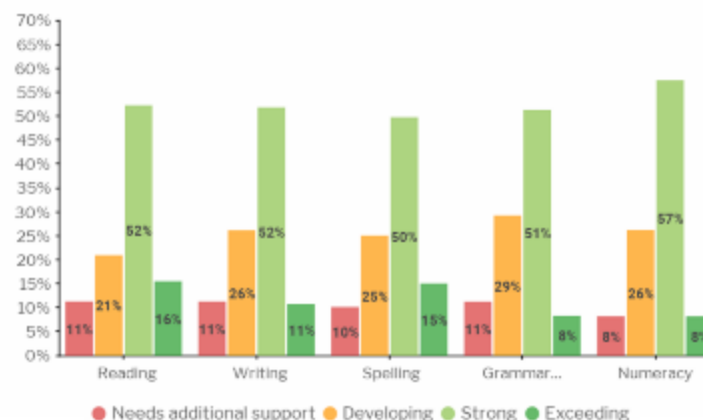
2024 NAPLAN Results



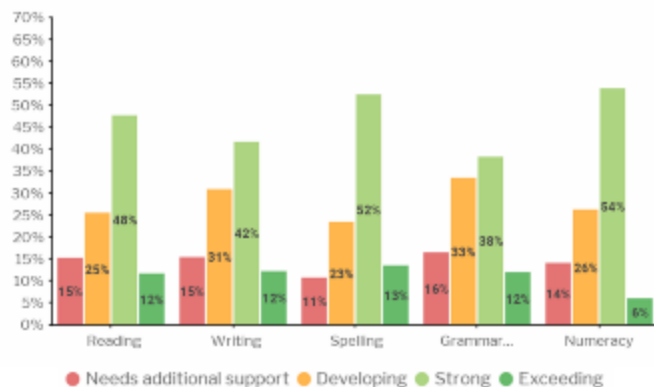
Year 3



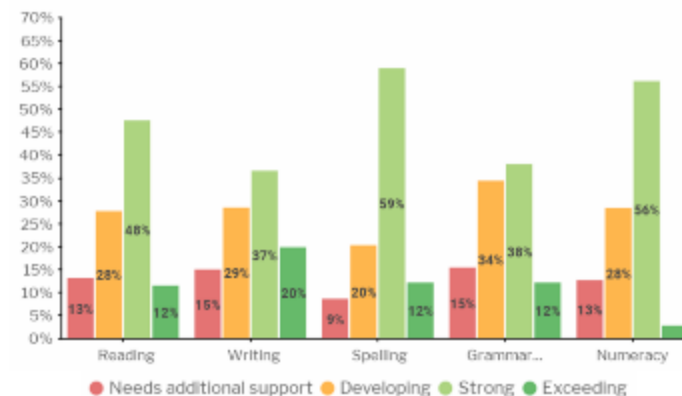
Year 5



Year 7



Year 9



ALL TEAMS

BLUE

ORANGE

YELLOW

NAPLAN vs ICSEA

School Name And Area

Multiple selections

Year

2024

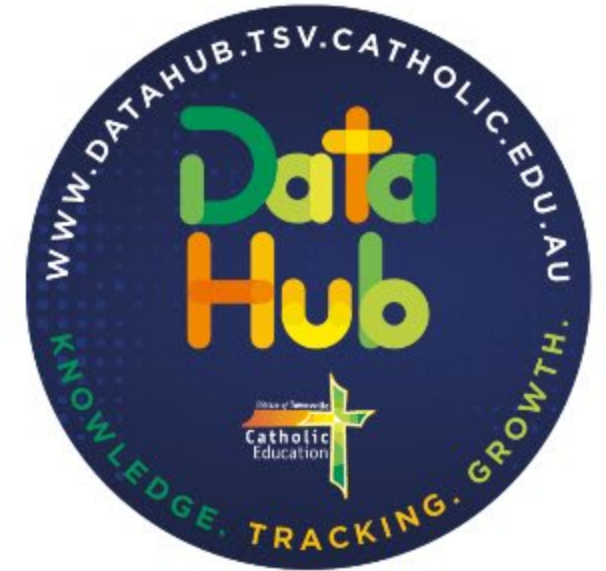
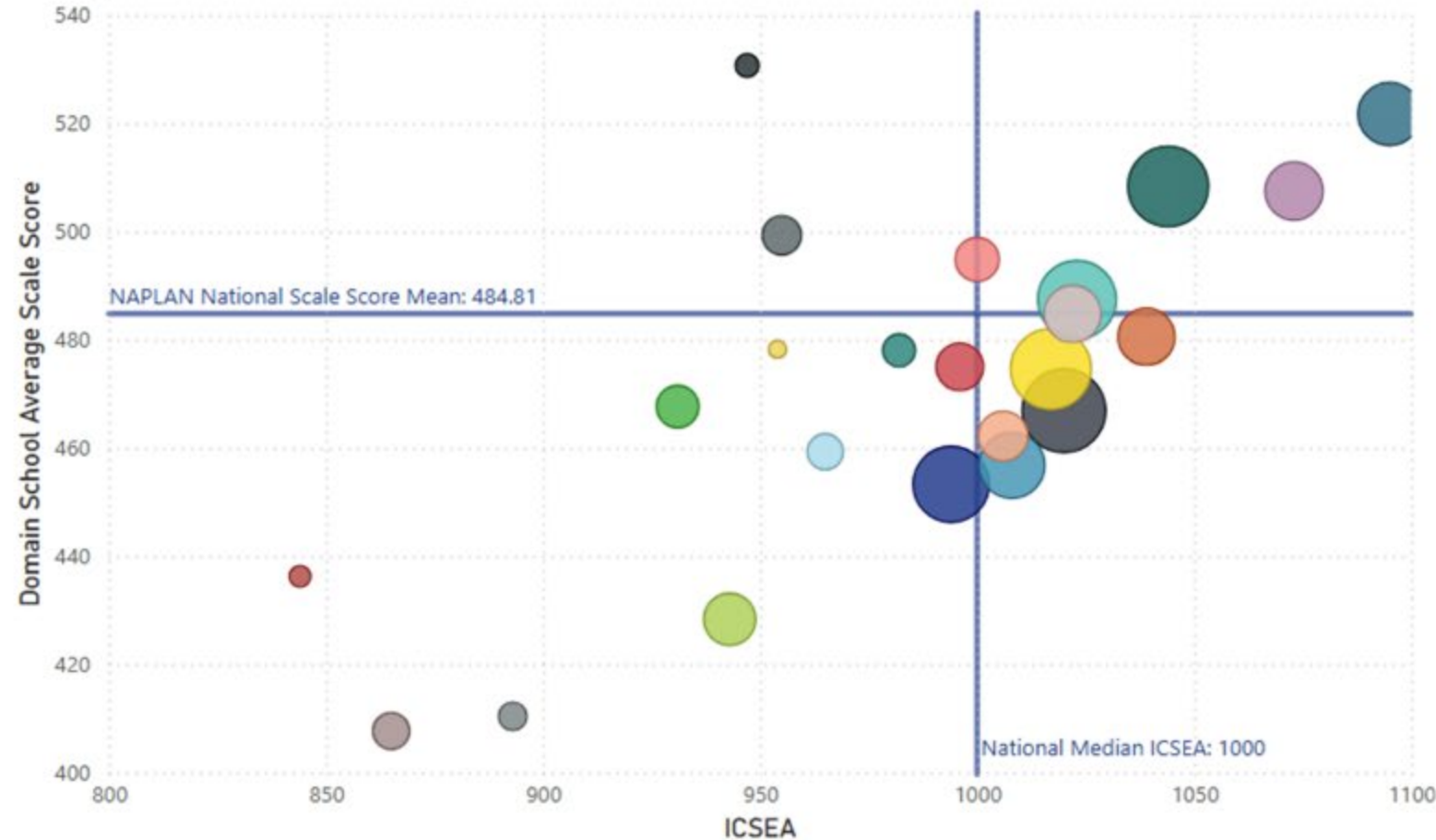
NAPLAN Domain

Writing

Year Level

Year 5

Average Scale Score vs ICSEA



Senior Outcomes 2024 Summary



736

Total Students
Selected



52.3%

Total % of Students
who completed a
Vocational Pathway



94.8%

Total % of students
who graduated with a
QCE
State average is 93%



99.8

Highest ATAR
*38 QLD Students
attained 99.95
**Only 38 students in
QLD attained a
99.95 ATAR**



76.8%

Total % of students
graduating with at
least 1 Cert
State average is 60%

2022 - 2026 Strategic Directions



Learning and Teaching

which inspires each student's high expectations.

It's about:

- Knowing our students and how they learn.
- Creating inviting and inclusive learning environments that dignify all learners.
- Engaging with evidence to known the impact of teaching and improve student learning.

An experience of Faith and Mission

which enriches student's lives and futures.

It's about:

- Enhancing and celebrating our Catholic identity.
- Encouraging dialogue between our students' personal context and what the Catholic Church believes, celebrates, lives and prays.
- Educating and forming students who are challenged to live the gospel of Jesus and become literate in the broader Christian tradition.

Authentic Faith Leadership

which inspires all the witness the Mission.

It's about:

- Creating meaningful pathways and formation for leadership.
- Deepening the spiritual, scriptural and theological capacity of our staff in leadership roles.
- Recognising and developing leaders in professional practice.

Diversity and Wellbeing

practices which prioritise care and dignity for all.

It's about:

- Creating safe, collaborative, inclusive and welcoming learning environments.
- Connecting with key health and wellbeing agencies to enable a proactive, coordinated and impactful response to manage risk and increase wellbeing.
- Supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander learners to reach their full potential.

Strengthening Capabilities and Partnerships

to foster community.

It's about:

- Developing a talented, committed and high performance culture through attracting, supporting and retaining high-achieving employees.
- Building the capability of all staff to achieve supportive, professional relationships.
- Providing safe, welcoming and collaborative working environments.

Governance and Sustainability

to manage stewardship of resources.

It's about:

- Striving for system-wide initiatives and improvements that align with best practice.
- Strengthening responsibility mechanisms through accountable and transparent measures.
- Using resources sustainably by caring for our natural and built environment.

Strategic Direction

Learning and Teaching



High-Expectation Teaching, Inclusive Practice, Real Growth

- Student-centred planning, teaching and assessment
- Literacy, Numeracy and Curriculum support
- First Nations Education strategies and high-expectation relationships
- Evidence-based teaching and inclusive practice
- Literacy, numeracy and curriculum development
- Science of Learning alignment
- Student Pathways Framework across all schools



Strategic Direction

Diversity and Wellbeing

Wellbeing that supports learning

- Safe, inclusive, and collaborative school environments
- Data-informed responses to student needs
- Respectful Relationships Education rollout
- Case noting and referral systems
- Onboarding for pastoral leaders



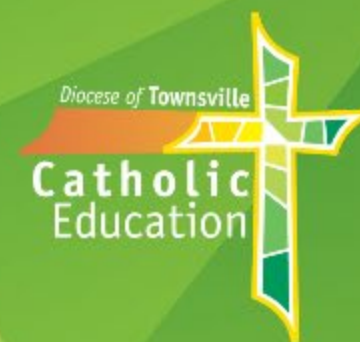
Strategic Direction

Capabilities and Partnerships

Supporting teachers to support students

- Early Career and Permission to Teach mentoring programs
- Professional Learning through EC Premium
- Supporting teachers toward HAT/LT status
- Data-led retention strategies
- Building the future workforce through scholarships





Thank you.



Panel: Translating Evidence from Neuroscience for Education

Translating understanding of brain development and brain health in education

Facilitator: Alexandra Trollope, JCU

Panel: Zoltan Sarnyai, JCU

Ernest Hunter, Schools Up North Project

Donna Dowling, Townsville Hospital and Health Service



Panel: Application of Neuroscience in QLD Schools

How schools are thinking and applying neuroscience into practice

Facilitator: Raoul Adam, JCU

Panel: Brett Holter, Catholic Education

Christopher Evers, Bwgcolman Community School

Simon Midson, The Cathedral School of St Anne & St James

Wendy Fox, Mission Beach State School



Brain Healthy Schools Poll



Presenter's link

<https://auth.slido.com/eu1/api/latest/the-auth/user/lifecycle-process/shareable-link/init?token=70413fe7df9c3d45d2c68476514ff7b5d008ab3b82bec8824ed9ffe900ffceb0>

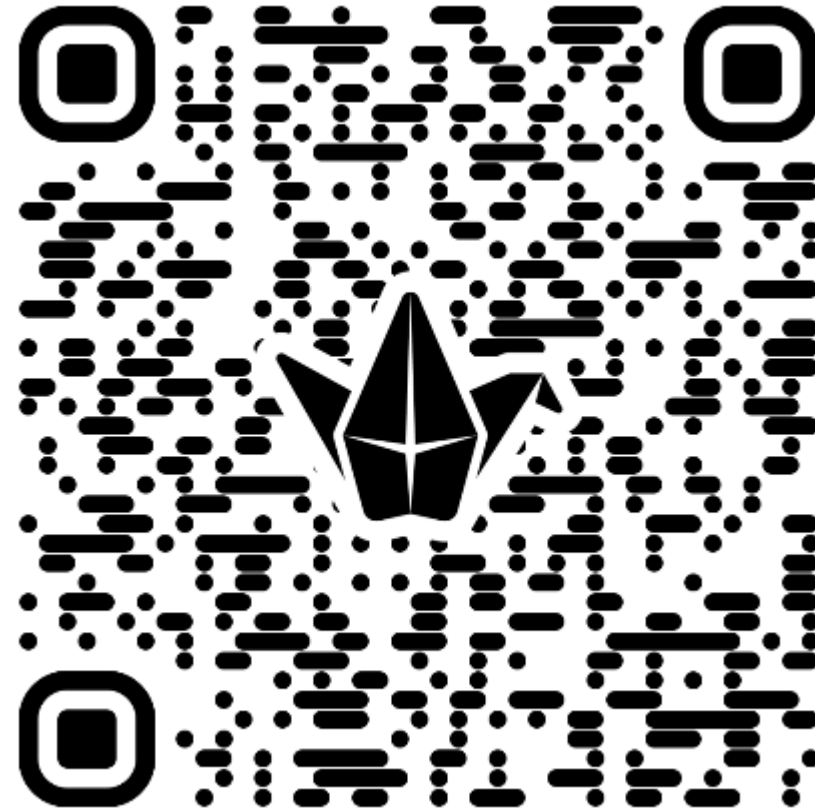
Next steps: Implementing Brain Building in Education in North QLD

How schools are thinking and applying neuroscience into practice

Facilitator: Veronica Graham and Bec Shaw, UQ

Padlet Link & QR Code

[Padlet: Brain Building in Education Forum Townsville 2025](#)





**Tell us what you do without using
your job title.**

Brain Builders Slido



Brain Building in Education Symposium

Brisbane, October 2024



What we heard in October 2024

Key take-home messages

There is a ground swell of momentum for this work progressing across departments and organisations.

Think about how schools operate and be thoughtful about how to engage with them on implementing and embedding insights about neuroscience.

Start with leveraging OLD opportunities/ programs - but with a new common narrative

What we heard in October 2024

What would you like to see the Thriving Kids Brain Builder's Initiative focus on in the future?

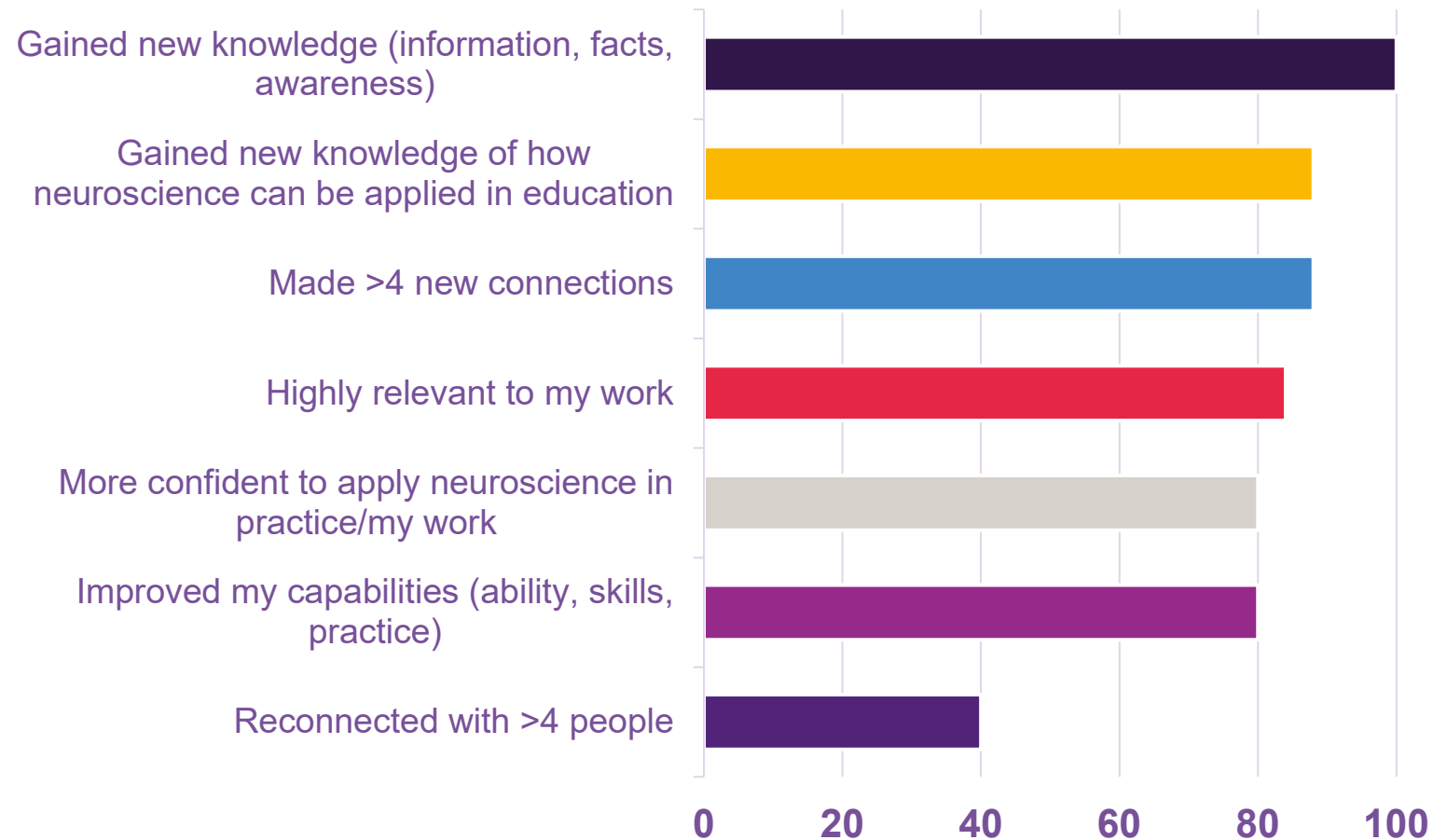
Being clear how neuroscience applies to educators in their day-to-day work e.g. map to the Australian Curriculum.

We have a quite a lot of evidenced based school age programs ready to go. Need to get them out. Partner and connect.

Whole community information and guidance, not just school based/students and staff. More buy in and knowledge will lead to increased effectiveness.

What we heard in October 2024

Feedback on the workshop



Collaborative learning

Expert Jigsaw

Our purpose:

To reflect on what the Brain Healthy School of 2027 would look like.

Our question:

What are the most feasible and needed Brain Healthy school-based strategies and outcomes, and how do we achieve them?

It is now 2027 and your school community has been asked to reflect on two years of creating Brain Healthy Schools and to showcase how you did it.



**Tell us what you do without using
your job title.**

Collaborative learning

Expert Jigsaw

Approach:

- Teams of 6-7 people adopt school organisational roles
- Define how your Brain Healthy School looks, sounds and feels
- Split into groups by role to reflect through that lens
- Rejoin your school team to propose a set of strategies

Principal

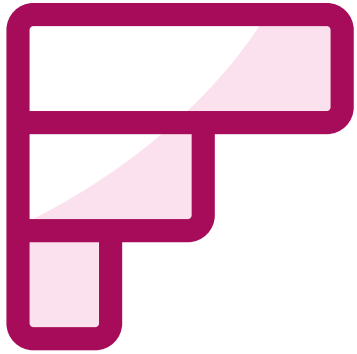
HOD Curriculum

HOD Student services/Wellbeing/HOSES

Teacher/s and/or other educators (aides, VET, youth worker)

Pre-service/beginning teacher (scribe for Padlet)

External Service Provider (health, or others)



What do you see as the most important barriers to implementing Brain Healthy School policy & practice?



I feel I can be effective in my role in translating and embedding Brain Healthy policy & practice in Queensland schools.



I feel optimistic about translating and embedding Brain Healthy policy & practice in Queensland schools (1 not at all to 5 feeling very positive indeed)

Step 1.3

Describe your Brain Healthy School

- How do the students feel and behave?
- How does it look, sound and feel to be at this school?
- What are some of the challenges you had to overcome to become brain healthy?

Step 2

Join Your Expert Reflection Group

- Consider outcomes identified by your school.
- Relate your own experience of what can work or is needed.
- How does the role you're in today plays a part?

Cells



- 1 Brain Development**
 - Gene × environment interactions
 - Early phases of brain development
 - Adolescent brain development
- 2 Brain Architecture**
 - Neurons, synapses and circuits
 - Physiological arousal
- 3 Brain Functions & Systems**
 - Brain systems involved in cognition and emotion
- 4 Neuroplasticity**
 - Brain reorganisation
 - Influences of experiences & environments on brain architecture

Person



- 5 Individual Difference**
 - Neurodiversity
 - Developmental variability
 - Understanding of disability
- 6 Sensitive Periods**
 - Importance of the early years
 - Adolescent periods of brain development
- 7 Brain-Body Connections**
 - Nutrition
 - Sleep
 - Physical activity
 - Effect of drugs on brain function
- 8 Stress**
 - Types of stress
 - Effect of stress on the brain & body

Society



- 9 Trauma / Adversity**
 - Effects of trauma
 - ACEs
 - Adversity & children's development
- 10 Positive Relationships**
 - Serve & return interactions
 - Importance of stable, supportive relationships with caring adults
- 11 Resilience**
 - Balancing positive, adverse & skill development experiences
- 12 The Whole Person**
 - Biopsychosocial influences
 - Physical environments
 - Protective & risk factors



Step 3 Return to your school team

Join Your Expert Reflection Group

Strategies	Staff capability (All staff, specific roles, PD, induction etc)	Supporting policy
Student-centred outcome <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Routines • Classroom management • Wellbeing and pastoral care • Curriculum, pedagogy, differentiation & assessment • Family & community engagement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Which staff? • When? • Specific programs? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School-based • Education system • Health System • Other

Wrap up - Most significant change

Record this in the Padlet for review with the room

- What has been the most significant positive change you've seen since becoming a Brain Healthy School?
- What advice would you give other schools starting out in this area?

Exploring Brain Healthy Policy & Practice

Expert Jigsaw

**Padlet: Brain Building in Education Forum
Townsville 2025**

**Slideshow: Brain Building Education Forum
Townsville 24 June 2025**



After participating in this afternoon's discussion, please review your earlier response to this statement: 'I feel optimistic about translating and embedding neuro-informed practice in Queensland schools' (1= not at all to 5=very positive)



I feel I can be effective in my role in translating and embedding Brain Healthy policy & practice in Queensland schools.



Feedback survey

Thank you for attending today's event. Your feedback is welcome.



Thank you

The Tim Fairfax Family Foundation
Thriving Kids Brain Builders Initiative

Queensland Brain Institute

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