



2018–2021 Child and Student Wellbeing Strategy

Safe, Well and Positive Learners



“Academic ability, financial difficulty, mental health and job requirements were the four most commonly cited barriers to young people’s post school goals.”

**(TAS) MISSION AUSTRALIA
YOUTH SURVEY 2017**

“We must regularly reflect on the data that we collect, to identify and address those areas where we lack data about child and youth wellbeing. We must continue to evaluate how this information is used to improve our knowledge, decision-making, program and service interventions and, ultimately, the health and wellbeing of Tasmania’s children and young people.”

**DAVID CLEMENTS, INTERIM COMMISSIONER
FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE**

Foreword

When we think about the future of Tasmanian children, we want to ensure that all children and young people are supported to succeed as connected, resilient, creative and curious thinkers. There are many challenges that can impact on an individual's wellbeing, which can change over time depending on different situations and circumstances. Wellbeing is an important part of our learners succeeding and flourishing in their learning environment.

The Tasmanian Government is committed to the wellbeing of Tasmanian children and young people. The *Tasmanian Child and Youth Wellbeing Framework* commits all parts of Tasmania's service system to a shared responsibility for the wellbeing of children and young people. The Department of Education is a key partner in this collective effort.

In recognition of this, the Department of Education has identified Wellbeing as a Goal under the *2018–2021 Department of Education Strategic Plan, Learners First: Every Learner Every Day*. The Strategic Plan is guided by the Department of Education's Values of aspiration, courage, respect and growth.

Our Wellbeing Goal is that: learners are safe, feel supported and are able to flourish, so they can engage in learning. A strong sense of wellbeing enables children to explore, experiment and actively engage in their learning environment with confidence and optimism. The way a child sees themselves and their wellbeing influences their attitudes towards their learning, their connectedness to school, family and community, and their ability to withstand life's challenges.

The *2018–2021 Department of Education Child and Student Wellbeing Strategy: Safe, Well and Positive Learners* has been developed to deliver on the Wellbeing Goal and will continue to build on the *Tasmanian Government Child and Youth Wellbeing Framework*. Through a common narrative around what we mean by wellbeing and targeted action, we will align our effort to deliver improved wellbeing for children and young people.

Ensuring the wellbeing of all learners requires collaboration between our schools, colleges, Child and Family Centres, libraries, families, communities, other government agencies and service providers.

Wellbeing means that children and students feel loved and safe, they are healthy, they have access to material basics, they are learning and participating, and they have a positive sense of culture and identity. This holistic approach acknowledges the many factors that contribute to the wellbeing of our children and students.

The Department of Education is building a system which supports every learner in a meaningful way. We need to plan how to best achieve our Wellbeing Goal and address the factors impacting on learner wellbeing. Support and guidance will be provided to inform wellbeing improvement planning and establish clear expectations. Action plans will be released annually over the life of the Strategy, focusing on mental wellbeing; physical wellbeing and the environment; and wellbeing guided by the student voice.

We acknowledge and are grateful to those who contributed to the development of this Strategy. With the future of Tasmanian children and students in focus, I am proud to present the *2018–2021 Department of Education Child and Student Wellbeing Strategy: Safe, Well and Positive Learners* to guide us towards strengthened wellbeing for our children and students.



Tim Bullard
Secretary, Department of Education

A shared approach

We have a responsibility to our learners to provide them with the tools to live a fulfilling and productive life. To achieve this, positive wellbeing is a critical component. We know that there are many competing factors that impact on a learner's quality of life, which affect their ability to be present and contribute positively within their community. Some of our learners face significant challenges that influence their sense of meaning and purpose. Through the Department of Education's commitment to wellbeing, we aim to ensure that our learners have the confidence and resilience to be in their best position to learn.

The 2018–2021 Department of Education Child and Student Wellbeing Strategy: Safe, Well and Positive Learners (the Strategy) is shaped by a holistic notion of wellbeing and sets out what wellbeing means for children and students (learners) in an education setting. The Strategy seeks to achieve a common language and shared understanding of wellbeing within the Department of Education. The Strategy outlines processes that will be undertaken to enhance our understanding of the wellbeing of learners in Department of Education schools, colleges, Child and Family Centres (CFCs), services and libraries (learning environments).

Through the Strategy, we aim to achieve:

- » Improved child and student wellbeing in the voice of the learner, linked to improved learning outcomes
- » A common understanding of the impact of wellbeing on learning and a shared purpose for improving wellbeing
- » Valid and reliable measures of child and student wellbeing to inform future effort and planning
- » Stronger and more consistent alignment of agency effort to improve child and student wellbeing
- » Resource allocation and support informed by wellbeing evidence and data.

PUTTING THE CHILD AT THE CENTRE

A child is influenced by their immediate environment (including in their learning environment and home), the relation between those settings, and by events occurring where the child may not even be present.¹

Events that negatively impact a child's wellbeing may occur within or external to their education setting and this may in turn affect their ability to learn and thrive.

We must be mindful of this as a system and, guided by an ecological model of human development, place the child at the centre of our efforts to build the wellbeing of children and students in all learning environments.

ECOLOGICAL MODEL

Together we work better

The significant time that a learner spends in an education setting provides an opportunity for the Department of Education to positively impact on their overall wellbeing and life outcomes.

However, we must also acknowledge that not everything is within our control or influence. Recognising our strengths and capabilities will help us to contribute positively to learner wellbeing.

Families are respected and recognised for the vital role they play in the ongoing wellbeing of their children. Collaborating, connecting and authentically engaging with parents, care givers and families is critical to positively impacting learner wellbeing.

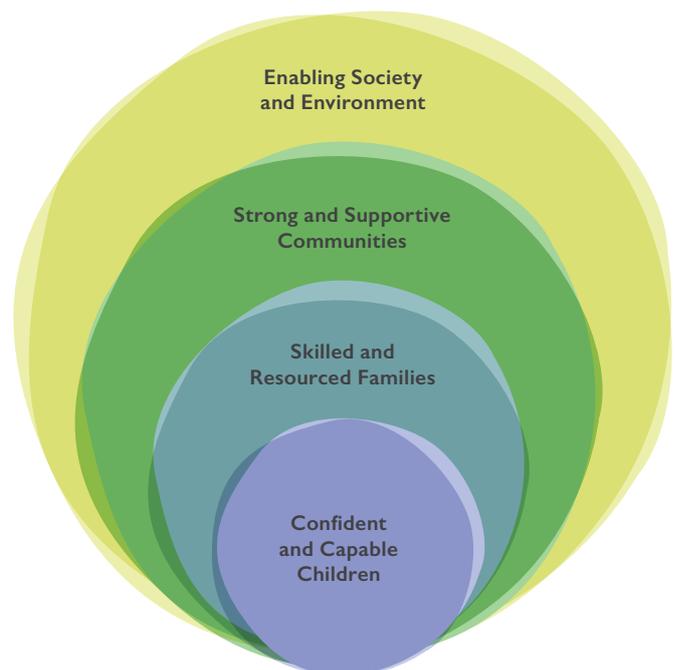


FIGURE 1: ECOLOGICAL MODEL

CFCs are deeply committed to working in partnership and they demonstrate quality practice in family engagement and working collaboratively across agencies and organisations.

Partnerships between CFCs, schools, colleges and service providers are important where our ability to respond to a certain situation or issue can be strengthened with the support of others. In some instances, external providers with appropriate expertise will be best placed to address and support the wellbeing needs of our learners.

Libraries actively seek ways to enhance learning and wellbeing by partnering with parents, carers and families, other services, business and community organisations.

All learning environments are working in different ways to identify how best to support learner wellbeing, including our libraries who engage with families and children through specific programs that foster participation in learning.

“If you focus on the problem, you lose sight of the child...”

SAFE HOMES, SAFE FAMILIES COORDINATION UNIT

SPHERES OF INFLUENCE

The Department of Education recognises that all schools and colleges are at different stages in terms of their activity under wellbeing. What wellbeing looks like will depend on the context of the learning environment, with issues addressed in different ways. A learner’s wellbeing may change over time, and as a system we must be flexible to respond and to support our learners.

In the development of this Strategy, examples were shared that highlight CFCs, schools, colleges and libraries working collaboratively for the wellbeing of learners. A common theme for highlighting quality practice in this area was the emphasis on embedding a whole of service approach, responding to local needs and with a clear purpose to addressing wellbeing.

Through quality practice and quality teaching, and by working in partnership with families, communities and service providers, we will be best positioned to support a positive state of wellbeing, where a learner’s needs are met. This will support their growth and development, and place them in the best position to learn.

There is no one-size-fits-all approach to address wellbeing. Responsibility for ensuring child and student wellbeing does not rest with a single entity. We are committed to supporting whole of school and system approaches to guide wellbeing effort and planning by leaders and school communities.

Throughout this Strategy there will be references to a ‘sphere of influence’ model and examples of how to approach certain wellbeing issues within your learning environment by domain – be it in partnership or by referral to those with expertise external to us. These examples are not fixed and can be used as a guide within your context.

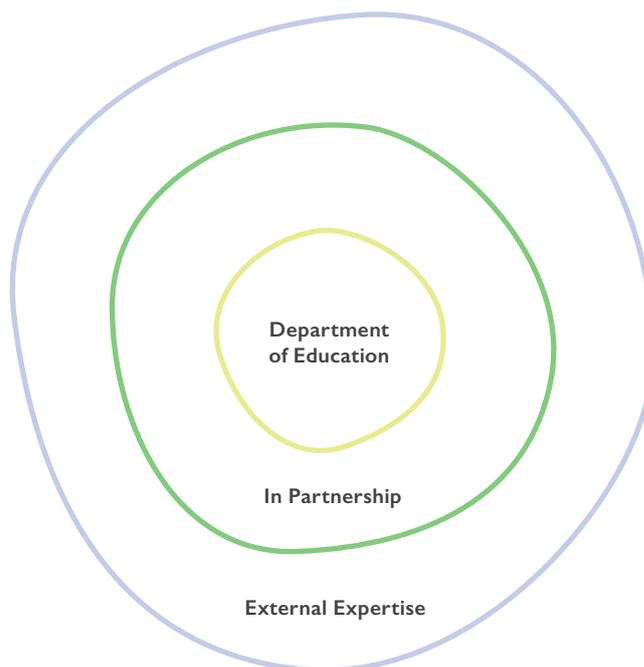


FIGURE 2: SPHERES OF INFLUENCE DIAGRAM

Alignment of effort

The Department of Education recognises that it is part of a whole-of-government effort to contribute to the wellbeing of Tasmanian children and acknowledges the vast array of work already underway within learning environments and across Tasmania.

Within the Department of Education, the Strategy will align with current commitments including the *Australian Curriculum and General Capabilities*, *Respectful Relationships Education Package*, work to implement the *Education Act 2016*, the *Early Years Learning Framework* and *Tasmania's Strategy for Children – Pregnancy to Eight Years 2018–2021*.

The Department of Education is also committed to the wellbeing of Tasmanian children through whole-of-government initiatives such as the *Child and Youth Wellbeing Framework*, and other actions being progressed under the *Strong Families, Safe Kids Implementation Plan 2016–2020*, *Youth at Risk Strategy* and *Healthy Tasmania Five Year Strategic Plan*.

Through whole-of-government initiatives such as *Safe Homes*, *Safe Families: Tasmania's Family Violence Action Plan 2015–2020* we are working more collaboratively across whole-of-government to identify children who may not be safe at home, and are sharing data to ensure the safety and support of learners in need within our schools, colleges and CFCs.

While approaches and definitions of wellbeing vary across states and territories, all jurisdictions have a commitment to, and policies regarding, student wellbeing in schools which centre around the importance of a whole school approach and the interdependence between learning and wellbeing.²

Our work is to reflect the Department of Education's wellbeing commitment in the context of these initiatives, and to ensure alignment of effort and prioritise where we can have the greatest impact.

Through consultation, focus areas over the life of the Strategy have been identified and will be further explored through an action plan for each year from 2019 to 2021. The Strategy will guide a collaborative, coordinated and strategic approach to learner wellbeing across the Department of Education.

Child and student wellbeing refers to a state where learners feel loved and safe; have access to material basics; have their physical, mental and emotional needs met; are learning and participating; and have a positive sense of culture and identity.

This definition comes from the *Tasmanian Child and Youth Wellbeing Framework* and encompasses the six wellbeing domains of the *Australian Research Alliance for Children and Youth: The Nest*.³ The term 'domain' refers to the elements that contribute to wellbeing. We want to ensure that all learners have the resources they need to withstand life's challenges irrespective of where they are on the wellbeing continuum, and that they have the resilience to bounce back. The wellbeing continuum, for the individual and for the system, extends from students with the greatest need to those who are largely functioning well across several domains. The purpose of the Strategy is for all students to feel safe, well and positive, regardless of where they are on the wellbeing continuum.

The wellbeing domains are deliberately broad and will have differing emphases across learning environments. The *Tasmanian Child and Youth Wellbeing Framework* contains a set of descriptors against each domain. To embed the six wellbeing domains in an education context, a statement has been developed for each domain relevant to learners and additional descriptors will be developed over the life of the Strategy.

While all elements of wellbeing are relevant to the work of the Department of Education, not all are within our sole control or influence. In recognition of this, the whole-of-government descriptors for each domain are presented throughout this Strategy using the 'spheres of influence' to suggest what is within the Department of Education's ambit, what we do in partnership and when it may be appropriate to refer to those external to us with relevant expertise.

Wellbeing domains

THE NEST WELLBEING DOMAINS

TASMANIAN DESCRIPTORS FOR CHILD AND YOUTH WELLBEING



Being loved and safe

-  Have a safe, stable and supportive home environment
-  Feel safe, secure and protected at home and in the community
-  Feel valued and respected
-  Have positive, trusted relationships with other people
-  Have a voice and the ability to raise concerns and have these concerns addressed



Having material basics

-  Have access to adequate, stable housing
-  Have access to nutritious food and clean water
-  Have access to education and training materials
-  Have access to adequate clothing and footwear
-  Have access to materials to support participation in activities
-  Have access to adequate heating and cooling



Being healthy

-  Are mentally and physically healthy
-  Are emotionally well, happy and supported
-  Are as physically active as they can be
-  Have access to appropriate health and care services
-  Are immunised



Learning

-  Are attending and engaging in education, training or employment
-  Are participating in early childhood education
-  Are developing literacy and numeracy skills appropriate to age
-  Are supported to learn by their caregiver and education providers
-  Receive assistance for additional needs



Participating

-  Are engaging with peers and community groups
-  Are taking part in organised activities, including sport
-  Are an active participant in their own life; including being able to have a say and have their opinion heard and valued
-  Have access to and use technology and social media

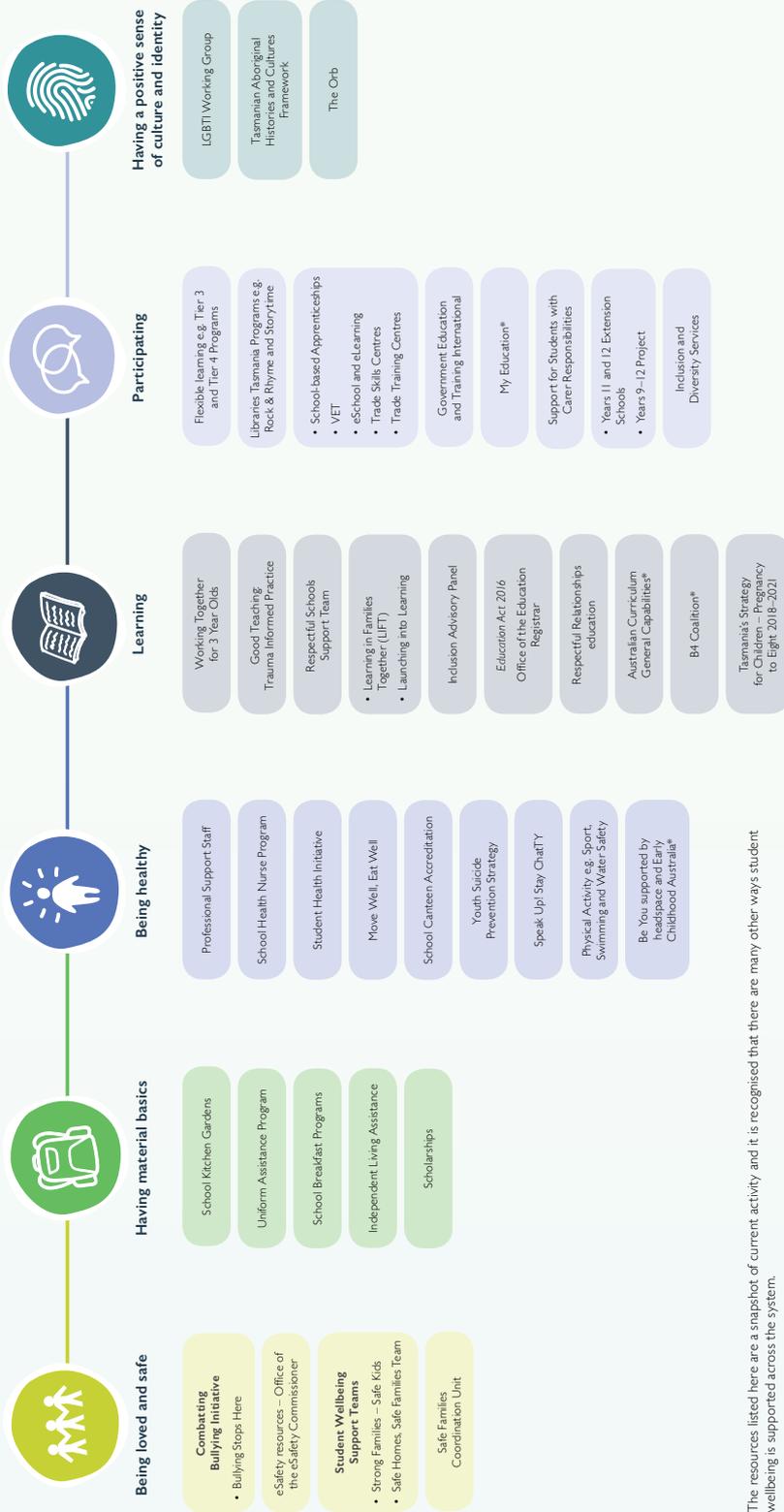


Having a positive sense of culture and identity

-  Can find out about family and personal history and are supported to connect positively with their culture
-  Feel like they belong
-  Have a positive sense of self-identity and self-esteem
-  Are in touch with cultural or spiritual practices and have these practices valued and respected

Child and Student Wellbeing Strategy

Current wellbeing activity



The resources listed here are a snapshot of current activity and it is recognised that there are many other ways student wellbeing is supported across the system.

* Many programs cross multiple wellbeing domains, however for the purpose of this activity map they have been placed under one priority domain.

- CHILD AND FAMILY CENTRES
- SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES
- LIBRARIES



"He cared for the lessons he was teaching, but more importantly he cared for me... He nurtured my imagination and encouraged it to grow."

T SCULTHORPE, FIRST STEPS TO NEW ADVENTURES COMMUNICATING: THE HEART OF LITERACY INITIATIVE 2018 ⁴



“Children feel safe by creating environments where they can play and explore independently, where they can see their parents and find a familiar face... Families are co-contributors influencing decisions made in the CFC, which creates a sense of trust, ownership and connection, enabling children and families to feel safe.

Children and families are supported to move between the CFC and the schools with co-visits to Launching into Learning and providing transport when required. Services work across schools and the CFC sharing key parenting and wellbeing messages, which assists with a smooth transition to school.”

CHIGWELL CHILD AND FAMILY CENTRE

Being loved and safe

Learners have positive relationships and connections with others, feel safe in their learning environments, and are resilient to withstand life's challenges.

All learners deserve to be loved and safe, and are entitled to being loved by a caregiver in their world – including their family and community – who show affection, care and concern. This is not the experience of all children and young people. While safety is commonly agreed as being fundamental to wellbeing generally, what do we mean by being 'loved' in a learning environment?

"Love is about being safe, predictable, attuned to the child's needs and co-regulating with the child...that you are showing the child...that you see them, you hear them, you get them, at their best and their worst." ⁵

Within the Department of Education, we have a shared responsibility to ensure that a child and student has positive and trusted relationships within a supportive education setting. Learners should have access to trusted supports where they can raise their concerns and have them addressed.

For some learners, there may be additional supports required to ensure they are safe and well before they can engage in learning. This may include receiving support from their teacher or aide, support teacher, a school social worker, nurse or psychologist. Access to these services helps to ensure that our learners feel valued and respected, and are supported to overcome barriers to learning.

"Greater collaboration between the Student Wellbeing Support Team, the Safe Families Coordination Unit and schools has seen processes established that focus on the wellbeing and safety of the child and their school environment. The collaborative approach has fostered a positive and respectful relationship between agencies."

STUDENT WELLBEING SUPPORT TEAM

The child and student voice needs to inform quality practice. A key part of the domain of loved and safe is that learners have a voice, have the ability to raise concerns, and have them acted upon.

WHAT WE KNOW

- » In 2017, over 55 per cent of young people in Tasmania said that they did not know where they could access support or advice if they needed help for family violence. ⁶
- » Not all children are currently living in, or come from, home environments where they are loved and safe. In Tasmania, there are approximately 1100 children in Out-of-Home-Care. ⁷
- » In 2017, the majority of our students responded positively that they feel safe at school. ⁸
- » Friendships are valued highly by 79 per cent of young people in Tasmania aged 15–19 years old – this is higher than family in this age group. ⁹



Being loved and safe

WHAT WE HEARD

- » Learners experience many challenges throughout their life and need the tools to feel safe in their world. These challenges range from being bullied by a peer, being impacted by trauma, lacking confidence to raise concerns and family instability.
- » Even though we have policies in place, we need to ensure as a system that all learners feel safe, not just that we provide an environment that is seemingly safe.
- » Support for staff through professional development on issues such as trauma informed practice are important for raising understanding of issues experienced by learners, and how to respond to these.
- » Professional support staff, including school social workers, speech and language pathologists, and schools psychologists, provide immediate and ongoing expertise to students.
- » Opportunities in curriculum and programs also prioritise our students being loved and safe in their learning environment. This includes the *Respectful Relationships Education Package* and *Combatting Bullying* initiatives.

SNAPSHOT

“To ensure children and students feel safe, we work in building relationships with families over a long time. This involves genuine community engagement and empowerment, which has been part of the school and CFC culture for over eight years now.

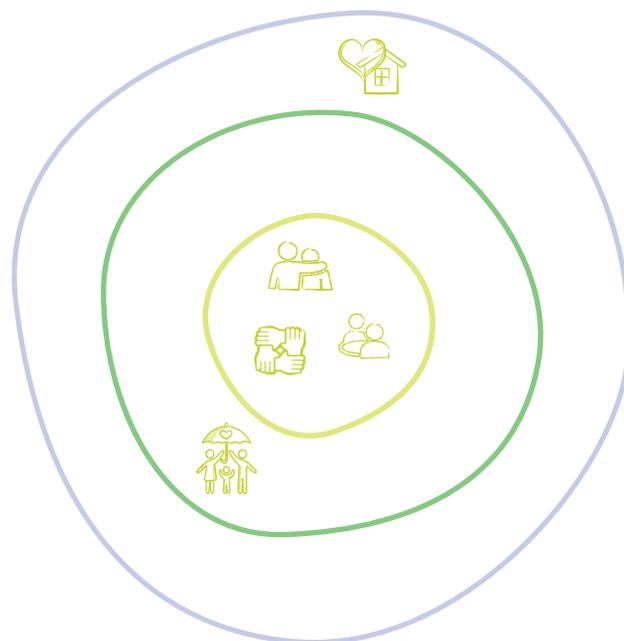
We have also done a lot of work with external lighting, pathways and boundary fences in partnership with the Clarence City Council, Mission Australia Housing, Clarendon Vale Neighbourhood Centre, Tas Police and the community as part of One Community Together, a Collective Impact project that focuses on Community Safety.

The proximity of the school to the CFC enables easy movement of children and families between both sites. Parents and children participate in programs run in both places and sometimes by the same staff. Staff of the CFC and the school are often in the other place for meetings, celebrations, events and professional development.”

CLARENDON VALE PRIMARY SCHOOL AND CLARENCE PLAINS CFC

DOMAIN DESCRIPTORS:

	Have a safe, stable and supportive home environment
	Feel safe, secure and protected at home and in the community
	Feel valued and respected
	Have positive, trusted relationships with other people
	Have a voice and the ability to raise concerns and have these concerns addressed



DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

IN PARTNERSHIP

EXTERNAL EXPERTISE



"Every student wants to go to school and feel safe..."

**STUDENT, YOUR SAY ON
SCHOOL SESSION, 2017
TASMANIAN YOUTH FORUM**



"We had noticed many students coming to school without breakfast or eating their lunchbox foods as soon as they arrived at school. We also noticed many students exiting the classroom or exhibiting poor behaviour in the first learning block of the day. Breakfast Club has meant a calmer, more settled start to the day as students are not starting the day hungry or fuelled on sugary foods.

Teachers report that students are more focused and able to engage in their learning. Families have been overwhelmingly supportive of the Breakfast Club and they often send donations to help out (eg bread or spreads). Some of our parents volunteer and help out with the daily running of the Breakfast Club. The comments on our school Facebook page demonstrate the value families place on this support for our students. A number of community organisations also support our Breakfast Club by providing donations. This really draws the community together – it takes a village!!"

BREAKFAST CLUB – BRIGHTON PRIMARY SCHOOL

Having material basics

Learners have materials to access and fully participate in education, and the resources to function well and actively engage

Education is not delivered in isolation from the learner's whole world experience. As the ecological model of the child demonstrates, key aspects of the child's life interconnect.

To have material basics is to have material resources to lead a 'normal life'. Although in the context of education this tends to focus on having the materials to participate in early years programs, schooling and training, it is also important for children and students to have access to conditions outside of their learning environment that enable them to learn.

A learner's wellbeing can shift along a continuum of wellbeing depending on their circumstances and the resources available to them at that point in time.

The Department of Education has a role to play in ensuring that the basics are in place for learners to access and fully participate in education. This includes a role in providing the resources for a child or student to function well and actively engage.

Schools, colleges and CFCs take different approaches to providing the material basics for a learner's broader wellbeing in terms of their life and within the learning environment, and have different levels of responsibility based on need.

Although family and care givers, and other providers are responsible for material basics such as housing, clothing and food, the Department of Education also works in partnership to ensure a child or student has the material basics they need to learn in their environment. We support students by ensuring our learning environments are warm, inviting, and have the equipment for learning, and provide assistance to those students living independently or experiencing financial hardship. We provide technological resources for engagement, and equipment for play and learning.

WHAT WE KNOW

- » 52 per cent of Tasmanian children aged 14–18 meet the daily recommended fruit intake. Only 6 per cent of these children meet daily recommended vegetable intake. ¹⁰

- » In 2017, approximately 22,000 students in Tasmanian Government schools were receiving help under the Student Assistance Scheme (STAS). The majority of schools support STAS students to participate by waiving levies and making alternative arrangements for activities with an additional charge. ¹¹
- » In 2017 there were 1.5 computer devices (desktops, laptops and netbooks) per student in Tasmanian Government schools. ¹²
- » Youth (0–24 years old) represent 38 per cent of homeless people in Tasmania. ¹³

“Love in a Lunchbox is a partnership between the school, the school nurse, the local CFC, a number of Health and Wellbeing representatives such as the Tasmanian Canteen Association, Move Well Eat Well, Oral Health, Family Food Patch, and many local sponsors that highlights how easy, affordable, and yummy a healthy lunchbox can be.”

**CLARENCE PLAINS CFC AND
CLARENDON VALE PRIMARY SCHOOL**



Having material basics

WHAT WE HEARD

- » There is a growing expectation for schools to take responsibility for a range of issues previously regarded as community or family responsibility, and that for some this is a challenge. But a challenge we accept in partnership with others, as wellbeing is a shared responsibility and a foundation to learning.
- » What material basics look like varies in different learning environments. This may include breakfast clubs to set students up for a day's learning, tools for learning such as laptops and books, a school uniform to connect students to their school community, and transport to get to and from school.
- » There are many approaches to kitchen gardens, which teach our students the importance of healthy eating, their understanding of the food cycle and the importance of nutrition. Kitchen gardens and school breakfast clubs can bring school communities together, engaging students, families and local business.

DOMAIN DESCRIPTORS:

	Have access to adequate, stable housing
	Have access to nutritious food and clean water
	Have access to education and training materials
	Have access to adequate clothing and footwear
	Have access to materials to support participation in activities
	Have access to adequate heating and cooling

SNAPSHOT

“Through Hilly Tuckerbox we are supporting parents to make healthy lunch boxes. Our school newsletter features tuckerbox tips to promote fresh and healthy food options, which encourage families to eat well. Many of our canteen food and drink options are created from scratch and we have also earned Gold Canteen Accreditation.”

HILLCREST PRIMARY SCHOOL

“The instability of being homeless often results in a young person becoming disengaged from school, training and employment and other support networks within their community.”

YOUTH AT RISK STRATEGY



A young girl with blonde hair and blue eyes, wearing a dark school uniform with green accents and blue gardening gloves, is smiling and holding a small potted plant. She is in a greenhouse or school garden setting with other plants and a second child visible in the background.

“Access to a school garden provides a myriad of benefits to students and the wider community. It helps children to learn about how to grow, harvest and cook their own seasonal, fresh, tasty food and provides access to life skills and teamwork. It helps students to understand how access to healthy food choices impacts on their lifestyle.”

**SCHOOL GARDEN – BRIGHTON
PRIMARY SCHOOL**



"The need for the Wellbeing Expo was identified by the number of students reporting and showing signs of/for being treated for anxiety, depression and other related issues.

Resilience was identified as a focus for students in the College plan. The Expo is one initiative that endeavours to address this priority.

It provides students with the opportunity to become aware of the services that are available to support them in our community, if and when they require assistance. It will also provide external services with an opportunity to alert young people to the services that they offer.

The enthusiasm by the external providers and the contact Elizabeth College has received as word of the Expo spread has been very affirming and suggests that the Expo is meeting a need for young people in our school community."

ELIZABETH COLLEGE – WELLBEING EXPO

Being healthy

Learners have their physical, developmental, psychosocial and mental health needs met, with resources provided to support their growth.

Learners are considered healthy when they achieve their expected milestones, and for this to happen they need their psychological, physical and developmental needs met.

Physical and mental health is a key element of wellbeing. We want to see our learners emotionally well, positive and supported to grow and learn.

Being healthy includes adequate nutrition, physical activity, an ability to cope with stress and access to services to meet physical and mental health needs. The role of a school, college or CFC can in some instances extend across providing nutritional foods through to managing expectations with academic performance and achievement.

There is an increasing understanding of the importance of mental health and the preventative practices we can put in place to strengthen resilience. Positive and respectful approaches to physical health, including sexual health and relationships, are important to holistic wellbeing.

“Research shows that high levels of mental health are associated with increased learning, creativity and productivity, more pro-social behaviour and positive social relationships, and with improved physical health and life expectancy”.¹⁴

“The students feel confident to seek information and support. Students recognise there are a range of sources of help for them and that information can be accessed in a range of ways.”

TEACHER COMMENT ABOUT THE SCHOOL NURSE PROGRAM 2017

WHAT WE KNOW

- » Coping with stress was the top issue of personal concern with 41.9 per cent of young people in Tasmania aged 15–19.¹⁵
- » About one third of young people in Tasmania aged 15–19 identified mental health and alcohol and drugs as important issues.¹⁶
- » In 2015, 77 per cent of Tasmanian students in government schools were on track under the physical health and wellbeing domain under the Australian Early Development Census data.
- » Hearing, vision, oral health, speech pathology and GP services were identified by our school nurses as having a potential flow on effect in terms of referrals to internal and external agencies and on the learner’s overall school progress.¹⁷

“Promoting positive health during adolescence is critical for the prevention of health problems into adulthood.”

TASMANIAN CHILD AND YOUTH WELLBEING FRAMEWORK



Being healthy

WHAT WE HEARD

- » A child's wellbeing must be considered in the context of their parent or care giver. This is particularly important for our CFCs.
- » Partnerships are particularly important in the CFC context, for example working with the Child Health and Parenting Service and Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services to support the health and wellbeing needs of children and their families.
- » In all contexts, collaborative planning is important for early intervention and prevention to meet immediate and emerging health needs of learners.
- » It is important for learners to know where to go to receive help and that all are able to seek care or information to be healthy and well.
- » Pressure to achieve academically is contributing to anxiety in students as early as primary school.
- » Educating learners on the importance of nutrition and healthy lifestyles can lead to positive life-long learning and flow on effects for families and the community, particularly through kitchen garden initiatives.

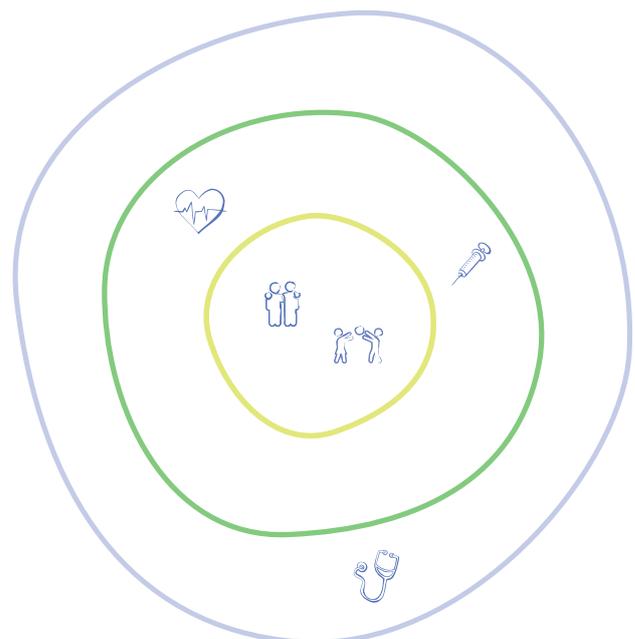
- » We have a curriculum that embeds health and physical education in our schools. This is an area where schools use many programs, including healthy initiatives such as *Move Well, Eat Well* and school Gold Canteen Accreditation.
- » The *Australian Curriculum* and *General Capabilities* clearly identify personal and social learning as a priority. Schools are adapting their own materials to align the elements and bring wellbeing into their context.

"We give them the information and, while we might not see the benefits immediately, it will help them down the track."

SCHOOL HEALTH NURSE

DOMAIN DESCRIPTORS:

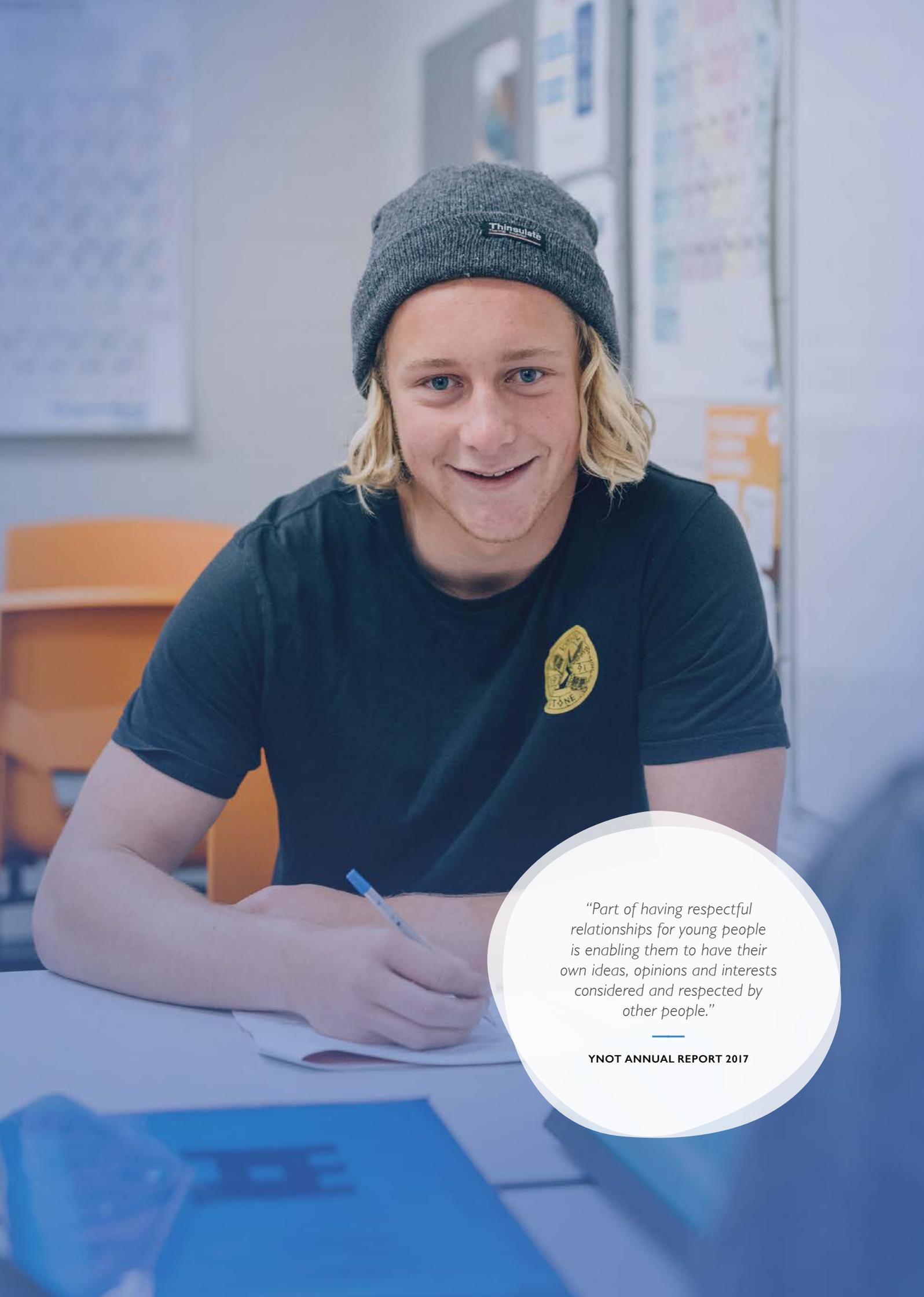
	Are mentally and physically healthy
	Are emotionally well, happy and supported
	Are as physically active as they can be
	Have access to appropriate health and care services
	Are immunised



DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

IN PARTNERSHIP

EXTERNAL EXPERTISE



“Part of having respectful relationships for young people is enabling them to have their own ideas, opinions and interests considered and respected by other people.”

YNOT ANNUAL REPORT 2017



"We posed the question to the Lansdowne Crescent Primary community 'how do we want the children we teach to be like as adults?' From this, 'The Assets of a Lansdowne Learner' evolved. These now influence and guide the way in which we teach.

The Assets now provide us with a common language to use when teaching wellbeing across the curriculum. They also provide us with common language for describing student development in our reporting to parents.

The Health and Wellbeing Curriculum and the General Capabilities underpin the teaching and learning at Lansdowne Crescent Primary School and directly influence the Assets of a Lansdowne Learner.

Our recent use of a wellbeing survey has informed this year's focus around self-regulation – how to deal with our emotions – and our further focuses on physical exercise and sleep as key ways to build wellbeing."

LANSDOWNE CRESCENT PRIMARY SCHOOL

Learning

Learners are supported to be curious, creative and empowered life-long learners.

Learning and wellbeing are deeply interrelated. A strong sense of wellbeing enables learners to explore, experiment and engage actively in their learning environment with the confidence to take advantage of new opportunities. Learners with higher levels of wellbeing are eager to learn and better able to participate, which can lead to higher rates of attendance and engagement, and improved overall performance.

A whole-child approach to wellbeing considers the learning, social and health needs of the learner in the context of their family and community. The culture and values of a learning environment also influences a child or student's wellbeing and their capacity to learn.

Wellbeing and a strong sense of connection, optimism and engagement enable children to develop a positive attitude to learning.

There is a growing understanding of the importance of social and emotional wellbeing, and the role of effective social and emotional competencies in learning and educational achievement.

“Social and emotional learning is about learning how to manage feelings, manage friendships and solve problems. ... Children who have developed social and emotional skills find it easier to manage themselves, relate to others, resolve conflict, and feel positive about themselves and the world around them.”¹⁸

A number of schools are developing whole of school approaches to social and emotional learning and have worked in partnership with their staff, students, families and broader community to develop key social and emotional wellbeing goals, and alignment with the *Australian Curriculum* and personal and social capabilities.



“We have done some work to link the Health and Wellbeing curriculum and the Respectful Relationships Education Package with our school's own Hilly Kids emotional/ social learning program. It was affirming for our staff in the way it linked together”.

HILLCREST PRIMARY SCHOOL

WHAT WE KNOW

- » The middle years between 9 and 14 years is a key developmental stage. During this time, being genuinely engaged in learning and developing high self-esteem has a lasting impact on learning and life outcomes.
- » 74 per cent of our students responded positively that their teachers motivate them to learn.
- » 74 per cent of our students responded positively that their school is preparing them for their future.
- » In 2015, 76.6 per cent of Tasmanian students in government schools were on track under the social competence domain under the Australian Early Development Census data.

Learning

WHAT WE HEARD

- » We need to focus our efforts and actions for particular age groups, and the issues impacting on wellbeing at different stages of a learner's life. For example, some secondary schools identified the emerging impact of social media and an emphasis on cyber safety as a priority.
- » Transition points are particularly challenging for some students where they face new learning environments and the need to establish new relationships with peers and staff.
- » There is an absence of data and measurements to further understand the impact of wellbeing on learning.
- » In addressing wellbeing, schools and colleges have expressed concern over the range of information, programs and approaches being promoted by external providers.
- » Schools would be assisted by greater alignment of wellbeing approaches to the *Australian Curriculum* and to other commitments such as the *Respectful Relationships Education Package*.

“Our partnership has enabled staff, both teaching and non-teaching, to work together collegially, to learn from and with each other to share ideas and resources on social and emotional learning, and to motivate and inspire each other to build wellbeing in themselves, students and others.”

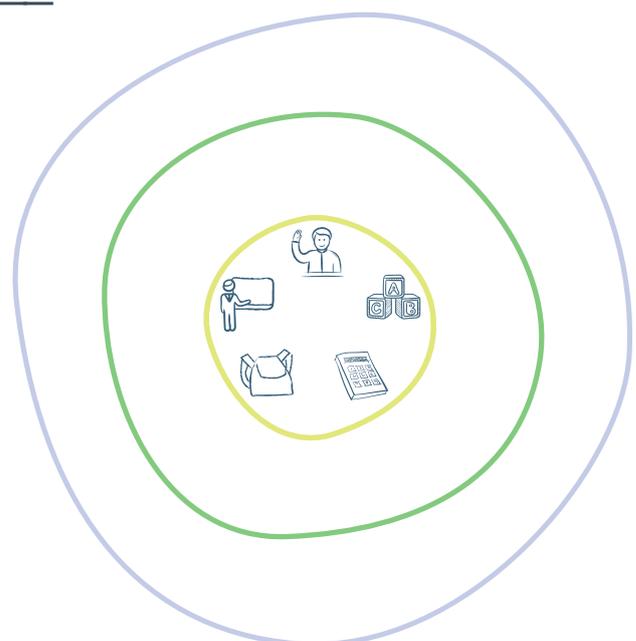
GOULBURN STREET, ALBUERA STREET, LINDISFARNE NORTH AND CAMBRIDGE PRIMARY SCHOOLS

“Launching into Learning is based on the belief that parents are their child's first, ongoing and often most influential teachers. Schools and families work together to give children the best start, leading to a smooth transition into Kindergarten. All schools use the Early Years Learning Framework to plan strategies and programs to support the growth of the whole child including social and emotional development and early literacy and numeracy.”

EARLY YEARS, DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

DOMAIN DESCRIPTORS:

	Are attending and engaging in education, training or employment
	Are participating in early childhood education
	Are developing literacy and numeracy skills appropriate to age
	Are supported to learn by their caregiver and education providers
	Receive assistance for additional needs



DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

IN PARTNERSHIP

EXTERNAL EXPERTISE



“Consistent with the ACF framework we believe our students need a calm, predictable environment and consistent and repetitive opportunities to develop connection and belonging, experience and trust, and success and control in their learning.”

FLEXIBLE LEARNING, RADAR



"We wanted the approach to give students greater agency, to be individualised and incorporate the student voice. It also had to be something that teachers felt comfortable teaching and using, have common language and support a whole school approach.

Many students are now able to self-select when they need to use the Yellow Track, do so with responsibility and return to class more settled and ready for learning. Doing something physical seems to help students re-focus. Also being able to choose for themselves seems to be having a positive effect on their ability to self-regulate.

We want students to understand that making mistakes is an essential part of learning and this doesn't just apply to academic learning but social and emotional learning as well. We foster resilience and persistence and want to encourage students to keep trying and understand that they may not be able to manage themselves in the first instance but will need to keep trying and adopt new ways to succeed."

YELLOW TRACK – EXETER PRIMARY SCHOOL

Participating

Learners are able to have a voice with their views taken into account and are involved in decision-making that affects them and their learning.

Learners are participating when engaging in community and school events, informing themselves, forming opinions and being respected when expressing their points of view.

For positive wellbeing, learners must be active participants in their own learning. Not all learners are confident or are able to make a verbal contribution, but having a voice is more than this; it's about opportunities to be involved in decision-making that affects them.

Safe, well and positive learners are able to engage with their peers and others when their learning environments provide the opportunities and mechanisms to do so. This can be as broad as a sports team, a Facebook page, a volunteer program, a cultural activity or a student representative body. It could be a student survey that they complete that is used to guide planning.

Participation of children and students is strongly influenced by their parents and care givers, their capacity to engage, and their access to the material resources needed to contribute.

“Through songs, action rhymes and short stories, Rock & Rhyme engages children, parents and caregivers in an interactive early childhood learning development.”

ROCK & RHYME PROGRAM – LIBRARIES

For some students their challenges are external to school, but are significant barriers to learning. For these students to be in the best position to learn, we need to put in place significant supports to address these barriers. For example, we need to be aware of the importance of ensuring students with caring responsibilities are supported to participate in learning. We also have a range of students with additional needs and from diverse backgrounds that may need individual responses to support their

learning, including assistance from support teachers or access to the Early Childhood Intervention Service.

Each student is entitled to make progress within relevant curriculum frameworks, in a learning program that is responsive to their needs and aspirations, and within an environment that is safe and inclusive. This may include access to flexible learning through Tier 3 and 4 programs. It may also include access to *My Education*, which supports learners to make decisions about their future learning, work and life opportunities.

For some learners, transitioning into Years 11 and 12 involves a decision to move from their local community. Years 11 and 12 extension schools provide a choice to students to remain at their local high school, offering learners opportunities to be involved in decision making regarding their learning.

“Anyone can do anything if they believe in themselves. The obstacles in our lives are often there to make us stronger. Strength doesn't come from what you can do. It comes from overcoming the things you couldn't do. Everyone is different but special in their own way.”

YEAR 5 STUDENT, INTERNATIONAL DAY OF PEOPLE WITH DISABILITY EVENT (2017)



Participating

With the growth of social media and technology, participation can take on new meaning and provide options for learners who have struggled to engage and participate in the past. However, with this opportunity comes challenges to ensure cybersafety and to protect learners from the misuse of social media.

WHAT WE KNOW

- » In 2017, 8 in 10 young Tasmanians reported being involved in a sport. 55 per cent were involved in arts/cultural/music activities. ¹⁹
- » Young Tasmanians aged 15–24 volunteer on average 12.5 hours per month. ²⁰
- » 54 per cent of our students feel that their school takes their opinion seriously. ²¹
- » 60 per cent of our students feel that they can talk to their teachers about their concerns. ²²

“Learning in Families Together provides care givers with opportunities to be actively involved in their child’s learning so they can give them the very best start in their education.”

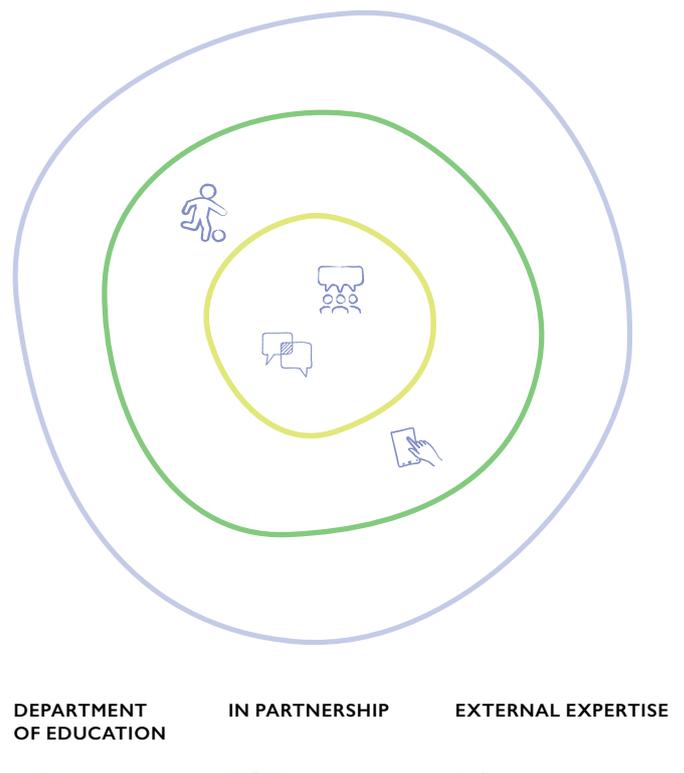
EARLY YEARS, DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

DOMAIN DESCRIPTORS:

	Are engaging with peers and community groups
	Are taking part in organised activities, including sport
	Are an active participant in their own life; including being able to have a say and have their opinion heard and valued
	Have access to and use technology and social media

WHAT WE HEARD

- » Not all learners have a voice or are able to express their concerns in the same way.
- » Life challenges are a barrier to participation (eg family conflict, transport, housing, cost of living).
- » Some students have not engaged over a long period of time and will need targeted and consistent support to engage, including flexible learning.
- » We are increasingly aware of the impact of trauma on the learner’s ability to participate.
- » The transition to different learning environments can be a real risk to participation and engagement.
- » We need to work closely with parents and families in partnership to sustain participation, and encourage learners to be active participants in their learning.







The Tunnerminnerwait project established a positive sense of culture and identity within the school and Circular Head community.

The project assisted students to have a positive and optimistic view of their future by enhancing their learning in a way that fostered collaboration and community links.

Year 9 and 10 students took part in the project with local council, UTAS, BigHART and the Circular Head Aboriginal Corporation, along with community members with expertise relating to the indigenous history of the local area.

The project took students from the classroom to explore a largely hidden history of Aboriginal people in their region and empowered the students to tell the important story of Tunnerminnerwait informed by research.

They also learnt about collaborating with many different stakeholders and the sensitivities required when working on a project focused on Indigenous history. It made the community see the achievements of our young people and perhaps changed the opinion of some members of our community about teenagers and their positive contributions to the community.

TUNNERMINNERWAIT PROJECT – SMITHTON HIGH SCHOOL

Having a positive sense of culture and identity

Learners have a positive sense of identity and belonging, and are optimistic about their future and success in learning.

Having a positive sense of culture and identity is central to the wellbeing of learners. This relates to both cultural and individual identity, and is influenced by the culture we create in our learning environments. For our learners to be well and succeed, they must feel that they belong, and have a safe, valued and respected place in our system.

Children and students bring to their learning environments diverse backgrounds and experiences, including international students and those from a culturally or linguistically diverse home environment. Connection and a sense of belonging within their learning environment and community is critical, particularly for students as they move into adolescence.

Throughout their learning journey, children and students develop their own sense of identity, exploring who they are, their sexual orientation and for some, their gender. Building resilience, positive self-image and self-esteem are important qualities for all learners.

Reinforcing support, a positive school culture and living the values of our school and agency are critical, while at the same time providing learners with a right to challenging and engaging learning opportunities in appropriate settings.

Our learning environments provide a culturally diverse community for students to participate in and flourish.

“I feel proud about my culture and identity. I feel accepted by friends and others. My past experiences are valued, people ask about my culture and life in Nepal.”

COLLEGE STUDENT, EAL

WHAT WE KNOW

- » 61 per cent of our students responded positively that they feel they belong at their school. ²³
- » 8 per cent of children and young people aged 0–19 in Tasmania identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander. ²⁴
- » 4.9 per cent of our students identify as coming from a language background other than English. ²⁵
- » Body image was an important issue of concern for approximately 52 per cent of young people. ²⁶



Having a positive sense of culture and identity

WHAT WE HEARD

- » We have an opportunity to lead discussion within our school communities around the importance of valuing and respecting diverse cultures and identity, in an inclusive way.
- » Learners are increasingly faced with pressures around learning outcomes and expectations to succeed and perform, while seeking to define who they are as a person and their place in the world.
- » Opportunities for learners to celebrate and learn from their differences help to reinforce a positive sense of identity and school community, and some examples of this being done include through school values and events such as NAIDOC week, Harmony Day, International Day of People with Disability and local events run through Working It Out.

“At Hobart College, you can always be calm and take time to think and learn...Students have more time and energy to discover their real talents here. You only live once, so you shouldn’t waste your gifts.”

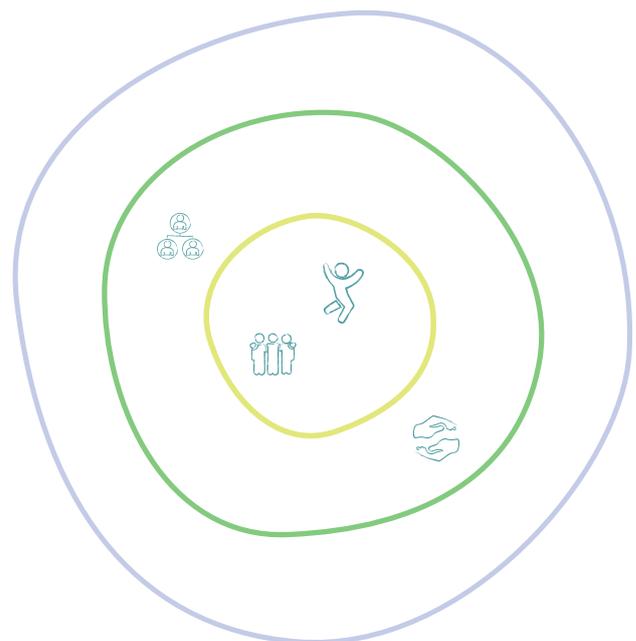
INTERNATIONAL STUDENT, HOBART COLLEGE

“More females than males reported mental health (14% compared with 8.6%)... as a barrier which may impact on achievement of their study/work goals after school.”

MISSION AUSTRALIA YOUTH SURVEY REPORT 2017

DOMAIN DESCRIPTORS:

-  Can find out about family and personal history and are supported to connect positively with their culture
-  Feel like they belong
-  Have a positive sense of self-identity and self-esteem
-  Are in touch with cultural or spiritual practices and have these practices valued and respected



DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

IN PARTNERSHIP

EXTERNAL EXPERTISE

Having a positive sense of culture and identity

WHAT WE HEARD

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- » We recognise that a range of cultural and spiritual practices are valued and respected, for example engagement with Student Welfare Officers.

“At Hobart College, you can always be calm and take time to think and learn... Students have more time and energy to discover their real talents here. You only live once, so you shouldn’t waste your gifts.”

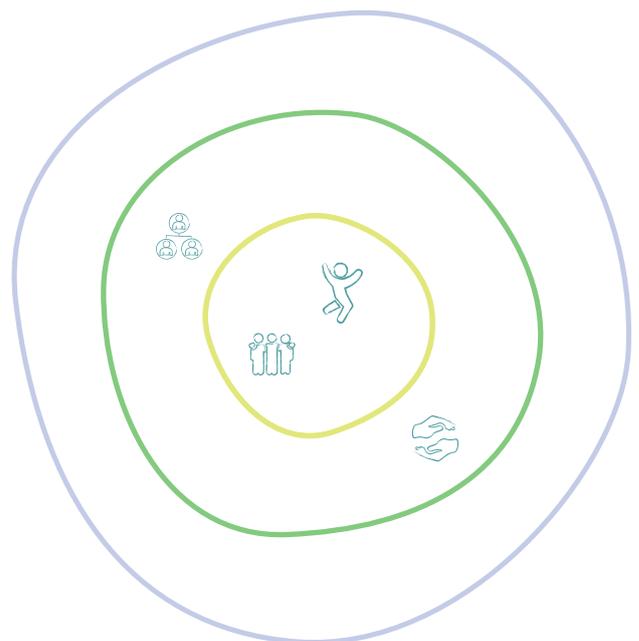
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DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

IN PARTNERSHIP

EXTERNAL EXPERTISE



Measuring wellbeing

Research tells us that wellbeing and learning are interconnected. There are many studies that identify the links between wellbeing and a student's ability to learn effectively.²⁷

Across the Department of Education, we aim to have a common purpose and understanding of the wellbeing of our learners.

The Child and Student Wellbeing Unit will identify a number of objectives across the six domains of wellbeing against which the Department of Education will hold itself accountable for supporting learner wellbeing.

Over the life of this Strategy, indicators and measures of wellbeing will be developed that will guide our effort to support learner wellbeing and system improvement. This will begin with the trial of wellbeing surveys within a range of schools in the second half of 2018.

In measuring wellbeing, we will seek to understand, for example, if students feel safe in their learning environment, whether they have the materials they need to learn, if they have a sense of belonging within their learning environment and are optimistic about their future.

Data taken from the corporate survey in 2018 and the 2017 School Satisfaction Survey will provide the benchmarks against which we will measure our efforts.

"This is a journey of five years or more with these families and we can see how wellbeing is not a stationary state of wellbeing. It's complex. The more you do the more you realise it's difficult to measure."

RAVENSWOOD CFC

WHAT WE HEARD

- » Wellbeing is one of the five outcomes identified as central to children's learning and development in the Australian Early Years Learning Framework and is used by CFCs along with Australian Early Development Census and qualitative data to inform an understanding of child wellbeing.
- » There is currently limited robust, coordinated and consistent data on learner wellbeing to inform planning and effort.
- » There is a need for an evidence-based and data informed approach to addressing student wellbeing. This needs to be flexible to suit the learning environment context. Not one size fits all.
- » When administering student surveys, involvement of Professional Support Staff is important, particularly when planning and communicating with parents.
- » Providing adequate support to students and teachers during and following survey participation may assist with addressing student concerns.

Schools and colleges:

- » are already using a number of data sources to understand wellbeing in their context, including attendance data, the School Satisfaction Survey, information in the Student Support System and other wellbeing surveys
- » are seeking to have a true indicator of learner wellbeing and be able to use this to report to families and care givers
- » want a consistent way to measure student wellbeing and to identify the particular issues affecting them to help inform approaches and programs
- » require data to target effort and to reflect on progress over time
- » would benefit from shared approaches and learning from the experience of others.



“The survey has been useful in identifying common trends, themes and needs across the Connect 6 Cluster.

We can use aspects of the survey to measure motivation towards learning and student attitudes towards being connected to school. These can be used as measures of student engagement.

The survey provides another lens to confirm or challenge our own perceptions of our school culture and our own students’ wellbeing. Working together we have been able to organise some professional learning sessions to learn about the importance of sleep and share this with all staff in Connect 6.

Our wellbeing team took a longitudinal approach to determine trends in year levels and as a whole school. We have used the survey to develop different systems and resourcing in our school to support both wellbeing and learning needs.

Our Connect 6 also changed the timeline for administering the survey to better inform the class placement process, transition to high school and school resourcing for the following year based on potential cohort needs/trends. We also use the survey to help Kings Meadows High School better understand the unique needs of the cohorts transiting.

Working with our parent community is a key priority – using our newsletter and Facebook page are useful strategies. We have worked with all Connect 6 schools to unpack the data collectively.”

CONNECT 6 – KINGS MEADOWS HIGH SCHOOL AND EVANDALE, GLEN DHU, LONGFORD, PERTH AND YOUNGTOWN PRIMARY SCHOOLS

Next steps

In 2018 a scan and assess of current ways of measuring wellbeing across learning environments will be undertaken to inform a trial of student survey tools. This will ultimately provide recommendations for embedding measuring wellbeing across our system and as part of improvement planning.

Over the life of the Strategy, the action planning will be informed by the student voice, and open and authentic collaboration with families and communities. Through this commitment we will develop a shared purpose to improve learner wellbeing.

Effort to address key wellbeing issues identified through consultation will be maintained throughout the duration of the Strategy. Action plans will be developed and released each year and will be structured by wellbeing domains.

WAYS OF ENGAGING WITH THE STRATEGY IN YOUR LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

- » Introduce the definition and domains of wellbeing and consider what this looks like in your context.
- » Engage staff, learners and parents with the Child and Student Wellbeing Strategy.
- » Consider current wellbeing effort under each domain and identify gaps for future focus (eg using [activity mapping resource](#)).
- » Identify qualitative and quantitative measures of wellbeing in your context.
- » Consider how to best involve student and school community input into improvement planning around learner wellbeing.

TAKING ACTION

In 2018 the following will be undertaken to implement the Strategy:

- » Continue the data trials in a range of learning environments, overseen by the Wellbeing Data Working Group.
- » Develop recommendations for embedding measuring wellbeing in school and system planning.
- » Share quality practice and approaches to address the six domains of wellbeing.

- » Use the Inquiry Cycle to develop a Mental Wellbeing Action Plan for 2019.
- » Identify critical questions/principles for selecting wellbeing resources (eg independently evaluated, evidence informed).

FOCUS – 2019 MENTAL WELLBEING

Areas for action:

- » resilience
- » social and emotional wellbeing
- » depression and anxiety
- » cybersafety
- » help seeking
- » trauma.

FOCUS – 2020 PHYSICAL WELLBEING AND THE ENVIRONMENT

Areas for action:

- » sexual health
- » physical activity
- » the learning environment
- » nutrition
- » drugs and alcohol
- » sleep hygiene.

FOCUS – 2021 WELLBEING AND ME

Areas for action:

- » self-esteem and valuing diversity
- » body image
- » social media
- » connectedness and belonging.

For further information or engagement with this Strategy, contact the Child and Student Wellbeing Unit email: wellbeing.unit@education.tas.gov.au.

Useful links and resources

The following resources have been identified through consultation and may provide information useful in learning environments to meet an identified wellbeing need. This is not an exhaustive list and there are other evidence informed resources available. Over time, this list will be updated and critical questions will be developed to assist in identifying quality approaches that achieve positive wellbeing outcomes.



STUDENT WELLBEING HUB



ARACY – THE NEST



OFFICE OF THE E-SAFETY COMMISSIONER



RESPECTFUL RELATIONSHIPS



CHILD AND ADOLESCENT MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES



MOVE WELL, EAT WELL



CHILD HEALTH AND PARENTING SERVICE



SCHOOL CANTEEN



SPEAK UP! STAY CHATTY



BEYOND BLUE



BE YOU



EARLY CHILDHOOD AUSTRALIA



HEADSPACE



ALLANAH AND MADELINE FOUNDATION



STUDENT HEALTH INITIATIVE RESOURCES



WORKING IT OUT



FAMILY PLANNING SCHOOL PROGRAMS



MY EDUCATION

2018–2021 Department of Education Child and Student Wellbeing Strategy

Safe, Well and Positive Learners

OUR GOAL Children and students are safe, feel supported and are able to flourish, so they can engage in learning

WHAT GUIDES US 2018–2021 Department of Education Strategic Plan

Tasmanian Child and Youth Wellbeing Framework

UN Convention on the Rights of the Child

WHAT WE AIM TO ACHIEVE

Children and students feel loved and safe; have access to material basics; have their physical, mental and emotional needs met; are learning and participating; and have a positive sense of culture and identity



Being loved and safe

Learners have positive relationships and connections with others, feel safe in their learning environments, and are resilient to withstand life's challenges.



Having material basics

Learners have materials to access and fully participate in education, and the resources to function well and actively engage.



Being healthy

Learners have their physical, developmental, psychosocial and mental health needs met, with resources provided to support their growth.



Learning

Learners are supported to be curious, creative and empowered life-long learners.



Participating

Learners are able to have a voice with their views taken into account and are involved in decision-making that affects them and their learning.



Having a positive sense of culture and identity

Learners have a positive sense of identity and belonging, and are optimistic about their future and success in learning.



OUR FOCUS AREAS

2018 | IMPLEMENTATION DESIGN

2019 | MENTAL WELLBEING

2020 | PHYSICAL WELLBEING AND THE ENVIRONMENT

2021 | WELLBEING AND ME

SYSTEM PRIORITIES

A common understanding of the impact of wellbeing on learning and a shared purpose for improving wellbeing

Valid and reliable measures of child and student wellbeing to inform future effort and planning

Stronger and more consistent alignment of agency effort to improve child and student wellbeing

Resource allocation and support informed by wellbeing evidence and data

Improved child and student wellbeing in the voice of the learner-linked to improved learning outcomes

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The 2018–2021 Department of Education Child and Student Wellbeing Strategy: Safe, Well and Positive Learners is based on *The Nest*, the Australian Research Alliance for Children and Youth (ARACY) national initiative on child and youth wellbeing, and the *Tasmanian Child and Youth Wellbeing Framework*. *The Nest* is supported by a significant evidence base and was a product of collective action involving more than 4,000 Australians. Further information on *The Nest*, including the Action Agenda, Technical Document and Literature Review is available at www.aracy.org.au.

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