

School Processes and Practice



Consistent and deliberate processes are crucial, avoiding reactive approaches. They should be linked strategically to current practices, chosen based on evidence, and tailored to the specific needs of students in each setting. Schools should prioritise policies, practices, and procedures that have been thoroughly assessed within an Australian context. Utilising a school's own data and research is essential for making informed decisions about enhancing wellbeing and other aspects of policies and practices. This approach ensures that interventions are not only evidence-based but also tailored to address the unique needs of the school community. Include both staff and student wellbeing data to guide decision-making.

Impact

"High functioning schools ensure their wellbeing actions are integrated, whole-school, evidence-based and coordinated strategy led by a trained wellbeing leadership team who benchmark, monitor and assess the impact of these actions on their whole-school community."
(Cross and Lester, 2020, p3)

High-impact processes and practices will have undergone a comprehensive assessment of existing resources and engage all stakeholders, pinpointing strengths, areas of overlap, and deficiencies in policies and procedures. This assessment should be aligned with up-to-date student wellbeing data to evaluate its relevance and effectiveness in relation to the school's wellbeing objectives. It is crucial to consider the appropriateness and combination of these practices, while also prioritising student input. Adequate professional learning opportunities should be provided and embraced by dedicated staff who grasp their roles and obligations, as suggested by Cross and Lester (2020).

Practices

- Policies are proactive and practices established that include teaching methods, based on reliable evidence that has proven effectiveness.
- Universal strategies are put in place to aid all students, nurturing a shared culture of wellbeing ingrained into the school's functioning. This includes policies, practices, and elements like school atmosphere, curriculum, teaching methods, and organisational frameworks.
- Targeted interventions are designed to provide support to higher-risk students identified as needing additional support with their wellbeing. This stage aims to address challenges at an early stage, preventing the escalation of difficulties.
- Intensive interventions are reserved for a smaller group of students requiring treatment-based support to thrive. This level of intervention may involve input from allied health professionals and access to external services beyond the school context (Runions & Cross, 2022).

Resources

This article, [A Systematic Review of the Long-term Benefits of School Mental Health and Wellbeing Interventions for Students in Australia](#) synthesises the evidence for several school-based health and wellbeing programs available in Australian schools. It highlights the common features of the efficacious programs to assist staff in making informed decisions when selecting programs.

The [Collaborative for Academic and Social and Emotional Learning \(CASEL\)](#), provides a range of resources for supporting the integration of social and emotional learning in education.

[What Works Best: 2020 Update \(CESE\)](#), provides a summary of research for the most effective quality teaching practices to improve student outcomes.

[The review. Evidence for Learning: Student Health and Wellbeing](#) examines effective student wellbeing in schools and the link to academic and non-academic outcomes.