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To whom it may concern

This is a letter of endorsement for Mind Matters Youth Empowerment Process (or YEP).

Developing a consistent and comprehensive approach to improving the intellectual, physical and mental health of all young Australians is one of our electoral priorities.

No one can dispute that healthy students learn better and that schools can make a substantial contribution to improving student's health and well-being especially when they work in partnership with students, families, medical practitioners including psychologist sand psychiatrists as well as the broader community.

It is not something that we can do to students; it is about providing them with the tools to better manage their own health and well being, and to support their peers in the management of their health. Mind Matters Youth Empowerment Process (or YEP) provides students with the knowledge, skills and understandings that help to build confidence and competence. It provides a framework for building trust, encouraging communication and reducing the stigma that is typically associated to many of the issues faced by adolescents.

The Youth Empowerment Process provides a real context for increasing student voice. Student empowerment must become part of the school principal's business. It is first and foremost about education and improving student outcomes. It sits alongside clinical intervention and is proactive as opposed to reacting to changing health needs.

Principals and school leaders must provide teachers with access to the high quality professional learning and resources within the Mind Matters and Mind Matters Youth Empowerment Process so that they can develop a deep understanding about the issues and the most appropriate response to the situation. In turn the leadership team must commit the resources and work to develop a whole school approach.

Health, and indeed mental promotion, is a shared responsibility and each partner must be clear about their role, their capabilities and their responsibilities.

This is not a short term commitment however the evidence from ASPA members who are involved in the Youth Empowerment Process is clear, when fully implemented it makes a difference.

Yours

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading 'Sheree Vertigan', is located at the bottom of the letter.