



mindmatters



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Did You Know?

MindMatters is the most used mental health promotion, prevention and early intervention resource for secondary schools in Australia.

MindMatters has successfully placed mental health and wellbeing on the education agenda and is providing sound educationally-based ways of undertaking this within their structures and curriculum.

ISSUE

01

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NATIONAL
NEWSLETTER

MindMatters News

Mental health and wellbeing for young people in schools



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MindMatters is a national mental health initiative for secondary schools funded by the Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing and managed by Principals Australia. MindMatters promotes a whole school approach to mental health and wellbeing.

Happy New Year

Welcome back to 2010. We hope your new year has started in a positive way.

This newsletter will be distributed each term and provide you with the latest developments and opportunities in MindMatters and related areas.

MindMatters has developed training to provide knowledge, skills, tools and planning support for specific mental health related outcomes in individual school settings:

- o free workbooks are provided at each workshop so that content and ideas for action can be more easily reported back to the school.
- o measurable outcomes are developed by attendees to work on once back in the school environment

- o follow up contact and visits by project officers are available to support continuing work to improve mental health and wellbeing across the school.

MindMatters workshops consistently receive outstanding ratings by participants – an average of 4.5 on a 5 point scale. Participant knowledge, as well as confidence to take action about mental health and wellbeing, improves dramatically as a result of MindMatters workshops.



www.mindmatters.edu.au

Did you know?

Since the year 2000, over 124,000 people have been involved in MindMatters

Workshops in Focus Communities Do Matter Focus Module

For staff and community working together.

Culture, community, identity and family contribute to a sense of identity, wellbeing, connection and self worth.

This module explores the diversity within communities and considers how schools can work in respectful partnerships to enhance school and community mental health and wellbeing planning and action.

The module leads on to a series of seminars and workshops for community leaders, health agencies, Indigenous Education workers, Aboriginal young people and others interested in community development.

REGISTER NOW

www.mindmatters.edu.au



On the horizon. . .

Draft copies of new MindMatters resources are with the Department of Health and Ageing and when approved will be available at all MindMatters professional development.



Keep in touch on-line www.mindmatters.edu.au

School involvement in MindMatters is steadily increasing as leaders and educators realise the depth of tools, resources, learning and processes associated with the MindMatters initiative.

The level two processes and content being rolled out across Australia is proving relevant to a myriad of state and national directions with which schools are either mandated for interested to implement.

Since the roll out of the comprehensive MindMatters Level Two process in July 2007, more than 2000 organisations have attended workshops. This participation includes 1374 schools with secondary enrolments.

Schools are developing diverse outcomes during the Level Two Planning workshop. These demonstrate, increasing understanding of mental health in schools, particularly for students experiencing high support needs. Example outcomes:

- o 'develop a practical communication system that informs staff of brief general history, proven strategies and attendance for students with high needs by the beginning of term 2, 2010'

- o 'strengthen pastoral care by examining referral pathways (internal and external),
- o 'implement a student services core team and start meetings to plan how to meet mental health needs of school community',
- o 'improve student outcomes by examining engagement of students'

"Involvement is increasing as leaders realise the depth of learning associated with MindMatters"

Many schools send waves of individuals and groups to the Level One Introductory workshop as they increase their understanding of, and focus on, whole school approaches to mental health and wellbeing.

There has been an increase in executive leadership, new teacher and support staff attendance, as well as people beyond schools such as youth workers, counsellors and health agency workers.

The issue of replacement staff in some schools is being overcome by the flexibility of the delivery of MindMatters workshops. In-school delivery over time, as well as school holiday workshops, are proving popular.



Student Empowerment

In leading mental health promotion



There has been a steady growth in schools re-creating the MindMatters Youth Empowerment Process (YEP) within their school community.

During 2009, a second national MM Youth congress was held in Sydney and Minister Kate Ellis invited a briefing about MM and Youth Empowerment.

A student Empowerment Summit was held in Adelaide in September 2009. This summit

Youth Empowerment Presenters:

- o deliver the MM YEP 2-day student workshop with support from MindMatters Officers.
- o co-present the Student Empowerment Focus Module.
- o assist with in-school support and Taking Action meetings.

produced a number of suggestions for an ongoing national roll out of YEP including moving towards a regional implementation model.

Regions have been identified. These regions either have an existing YEP school or an experienced leader who has agreed to play a key role in overseeing the introduction and implementation throughout their region.

Community Partnerships

Schools and communities working together

Aaron Ken and Gina Milgate have joined the MindMatters team to further the work in Community Partnerships.



Filming of Community Partnership Journeys DVD. The DVD will be available later this year.

The team has been redeveloping Community Partnerships material, to keep it up-to-date from 2010 and beyond. For further information contact: jo.mason@pa.edu.au

In Schools

How schools are using MindMatters

- o Students are completing senior school subjects using MindMatters curriculum. They are gaining accreditation towards their Senior Certificate of Education.
- o Using student engagement in learning data to monitor levels of student wellbeing before and after implementing MindMatters-based curriculum..
- o Addressing levels of bullying and harassment by exploring a range of strategies as part of a whole school approach. Collecting data to measure improvements.

Principals Australia News New CEO

Principals Australia has appointed a new CEO, Ms Liz Furler who takes up her new role on March 1st. Please see www.pa.edu.au for more information.

Congratulations KidsMatter!

The contract for Kids Matter has been extended to 2012 with funding of \$12.2million over 3 years from the Federal Government.

Did you Know?

MindMatters has been working with the national Children Of Parents with a Mental Illness (COPMI) initiative to develop another package of ideas for middle school teachers using *Helicopter Man* and or *Lockie Leonard, Legend* as class texts and who are interested in the following potential outcomes for students:

- o increasing students' understanding of mental illness and it's potential affect on families
- o reducing stigma associated with mental illness.