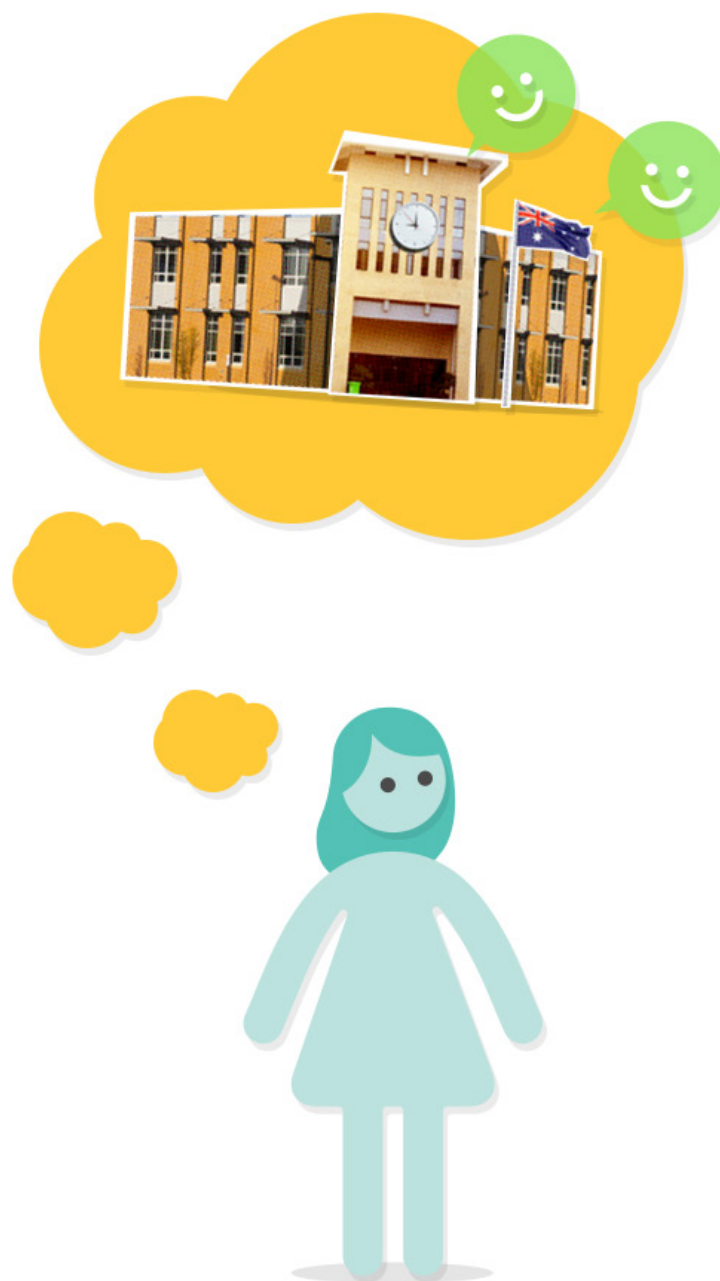


MODULE 1.3

QUICK WINS

Quick wins

Positive mental health is a big topic, and MindMatters is a big framework. But just one module of MindMatters can make a big difference to your school or class and you don't have to wait long to see results. Here are some simple things you can start doing right away that will make a big impact on your experience at school.

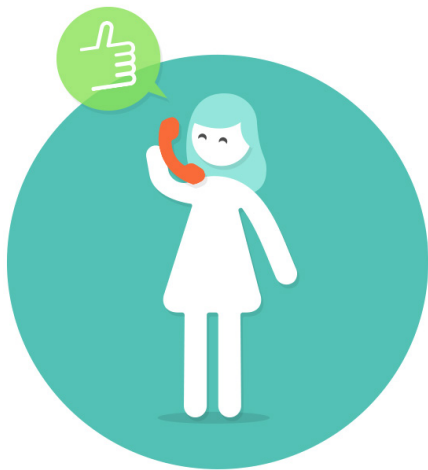


Acknowledge your students

Developing relationships and a sense of connectedness with students, staff and families is one of the most powerful strategies in MindMatters. An easy way to begin is by finding ways to acknowledge your students' strengths:

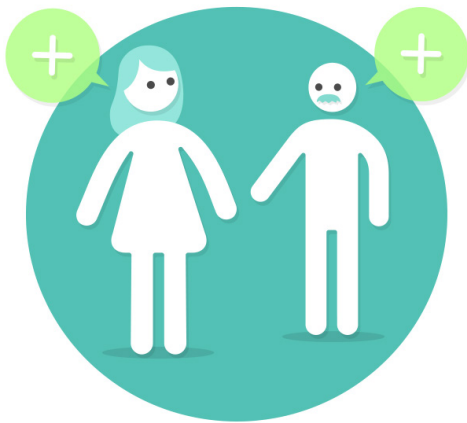
- Acknowledge students not just on school performance, but about their interests and achievements outside of school, their relationships and their behaviour.
- Help students to identify and develop their strengths.
- Acknowledge where students have successfully dealt with setbacks or stress – to build their confidence that they can cope with life's challenges.
- No acknowledgement is too small — even the tiniest thing can be worthy of positive comment and can make the recipient's day.
- Be generous with your acknowledgements — behaviour can be shaped by experiences and reinforcement —but be sensitive to those students who don't like receiving too much attention, which singles them out from their peers.
- Find ways to acknowledge each and every student – including the ones you find more challenging. This is sometimes the toughest step to take, but is the one that can make the biggest difference.





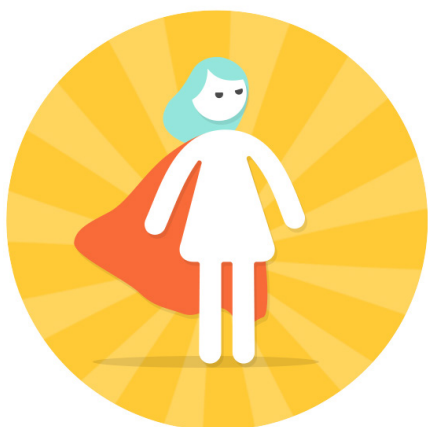
Ring families and carers to give positive feedback

Families and carers rarely hear from teachers unless there is a problem. Take the opportunity to contact families to give positive feedback on their child. As with acknowledging student strengths, you can find all sorts of reasons to offer families positive feedback about their children.



Connect with colleagues

MindMatters isn't just about establishing connections with students and families. Consider what you share with your colleagues, both positive and negative. It's often easy to complain about other people, including students and staff, but we are not always as open about positive things we've seen in our colleagues. Try building stronger connections with staff by sharing more of your own perspectives.



Take the power back

Caring for yourself is as important as caring for others. If you are feeling reactive and overwhelmed by your day-to-day experience at school — too many requests for your attention, too much work, not enough time — find a way to take some power back. This could be anything from committing some time to do something you like, through to taking a brain break or enforcing limits on what you can take on.

Appreciate your power as a role model for good mental health – talk to your students about how you manage stress and what works for you.

MindMatters is a national mental health initiative for secondary schools developed by *beyondblue* with funding from the Australian Government Department of Health.

See more MindMatters resources at www.mindmatters.edu.au