

MINDMATTERS SPOTLIGHTS

STAFF WELLBEING ACTIVITIES

Sharing



Staff wellbeing activities: Sharing

What's it about?

Everyone has a role to play in creating mentally healthy work environments. Working with your colleagues to build and maintain a mentally healthy workplace pays off in so many ways – less sick days due to stress, clearer roles and responsibilities and more support when times are tough. Sharing positive ideas is also a great way to learn some new tips.

Sharing is about finding ways to come together to create a school environment that supports staff wellbeing. It may involve developing a common language around staff wellbeing, and working together to define strategies and resolve issues.

The activities

The activities in this focus area can be undertaken with your colleagues. The example activities also include ideas for leadership teams preparing to start the conversation about workplace wellbeing in safe and supportive ways. It is important to consider the context of your school and staff group and plan for the range of experiences that staff may bring to such conversations.

Conversations around mental health in the workplace can be sensitive, so carefully planning and preparing for activities with staff is essential.

1. Activity – Reflective questions for school leaders and action teams

Ensure school leadership and action teams have a shared understanding of the school's relevant policies, approaches and processes prior to engaging the staff in wellbeing conversations.

2. Activity – Starting the conversation about workplace mental health


Ensure school leadership and action team members are well equipped to facilitate safe and supportive staff wellbeing discussions.


3. Activity – What Enables Us To Bounce Back? Discuss resilience in the workplace and avenues for seeking support.


4. Activity – Wellbeing top-ups vs energy leaks Identify opportunities to maximise personal wellbeing and minimise workplace stressors by sharing wellbeing tips with colleagues.



 **TIME:** 30 minutes

 **TARGET:** School leadership and action team members

 **PURPOSE:** For school leadership and action teams to reflect on their important role in leading the climate and culture of the school. To guide discussions to gain a shared vision and commitment to improving staff wellbeing prior to engaging school staff groups in wellbeing conversations.

 **MATERIALS:**

- [MindMatters Spotlight: Staff wellbeing](#)
- Online device
- Relevant school policies and procedures

1. Reflective questions for school leadership and action teams

Instructions:

1. Familiarise yourself with the [MindMatters Spotlight: Staff wellbeing](#) content including example activities and resources.
2. Examine your school's current policies and procedures relating to staff wellbeing.
3. Discuss where the school could make progress in improving staff mental health.
4. Discuss which external agencies may be able to assist.

Debrief: What action do we need to take? Who might we need to consult with and inform? How will we continue this conversation with the school staff, gain their input and build shared ownership?

Related resources:

- **The Energy Project: The human era @ work** Findings from The Energy Project and Harvard Business Review 2014 showing investing in employees pays off.
http://documents.kenyon.edu/humanresources/Whitepaper_Human_Era_at_Work.pdf
- **Creating Mentally Healthy Workplaces - A review of the research** A review of research around mental illness, sickness absence and long-term work incapacity in Australia.
<http://tinyurl.com/mentally-healthy-workplaces>



🕒 **TIME:** 30 minutes

👤 **TARGET:** School leadership and action team members

❓ **PURPOSE:** To ensure school leadership and action team members are well equipped to facilitate safe and supportive staff wellbeing discussions.

📄 **MATERIALS:**

- Online device

2. Starting the conversation about workplace mental health

Instructions:

1. School leadership and action team staff review the [How to Facilitate MindMatters Modules Facilitator Guide](#) including important information on preparing for and delivering staff professional learning such as How to: Develop an agreement for working together (page 8).
2. Discuss your aims for engaging staff in conversations relating to improving workplace mental health.
3. Review the [Heads Up - Training package for all workplaces](#) including the:
 - [Educator's guide](#)
 - [Participant handbook](#)
 - [Mental health in the workplace PowerPoint presentation](#)
4. Consider your school context and discuss how these or other resources might support your aims.

Debrief: What action do we need to take? Who might we need to consult with and inform? Who could support us with this? What will be the best approach to continue this conversation with the school staff, gain their input and build shared ownership?


Related resources:


- **Mental health training packages for workplaces** A toolbox package designed to equip anyone managing staff with the knowledge, skills and confidence to deliver mental health toolbox talks to their team. <https://www.headsup.org.au/training-and-resources/toolbox-talk-training-packages/toolbox-talk-training-package-for-all-workplaces>



 **TIME:** 20 minutes

 **TARGET:** School staff
(or individual)

 **PURPOSE:** To discuss resilience
in the workplace and avenues
for seeking support.

 **MATERIALS:**

- Note paper and pens

3. What enables us to bounce back?

Instructions:

1. Ask participants to take a piece of paper and reflect and write down what enables them to bounce back when things get tough. Have participants think about the additional personal strategies that they might use to cope.
2. Ask participants to reflect on how many strategies they use and circle the strategies they are currently using.
3. Invite participants to think about how to build others positive coping strategies this week and to highlight one or two they will focus on.
4. Show or provide participants a list of relevant support services. For an example see the list of support services at the [National Mental Health Commission](#). Discuss the range of avenues for individuals to seek support.

Debrief: What action do we need to take? Who might we need to consult with and inform? Who could support us with this? What will be the best approach to continue this conversation with the school staff, gain their input and build shared ownership?

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🕒 **TIME:** 20 minutes

👤 **TARGET:** School staff
(or individual)

❓ **PURPOSE:** To discuss resilience
in the workplace and avenues
for seeking support.

📄 **MATERIALS:**

- Note paper and pens

Related resources:

- **Mindhealthconnect - Building resilience** Online resources providing useful tips and FAQs about how to build your resilience and cope with unexpected challenges.
<http://www.mindhealthconnect.org.au/resilience>
- **Lifeline** Lifeline provides all Australians experiencing a personal crisis with access to online, phone and face-to-face crisis support and suicide prevention services. Find out how these services can help you, a friend or loved one. https://www.lifeline.org.au/Get-Help/Get_Help
- **beyondblue Support Service** Call, email or chat online with trained mental health professionals if you, a friend or loved ones are experiencing troublesome thoughts or actions.
<https://www.beyondblue.org.au/get-support/get-immediate-support>
- **ReachOut Breaking down barriers to help-seeking** This resource discusses current research, including information on what the help-seeking process is and they key barriers to seeking help.
<http://au.professionals.reachout.com/breaking-down-barriers-to-help-seeking>.



🕒 **TIME:** 15 minutes

👤 **TARGET:** School staff
(or individual)

❓ **PURPOSE:** To identify opportunities to maximise personal wellbeing and minimise workplace stressors. To share wellbeing tips with colleagues.

📄 **MATERIALS:**

- Poster paper and markers

4. Wellbeing top-ups vs energy leaks

Instructions:

1. Using the metaphor of the full glass, invite participants to consider the things that fill their cup (improve their personal wellbeing). Have participants list or discuss these with colleagues, for example sleep, exercise, healthy eating and positive relationships.
2. Next, invite participants to list their energy leaks, or the things that drain their cup (reduce their wellbeing). Have participants list or discuss these with colleagues, for example negative thoughts, worry, family issues and ill health.
3. Have pairs discuss any strategies they have found useful to minimise energy leaks. Also discuss any other supports available to assist during tough times.

Debrief: As a group, consider how your school staff give and receive supports. What actions could your school take to reduce stigma associated with asking for support. What positive things do you do together to enhance and maintain staff wellbeing?

Related resources:

- **Take action** Small things can cause big positive changes, so choose from the range of positive actions listed on the Action for Happiness website. <http://www.actionforhappiness.org/take-action>
- **Five ways to wellbeing** A set of evidence-based actions which promote people's wellbeing. <http://www.fivewaystowellbeing.org/>

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

This information is to be used as a guide only and is not intended as a substitute to formal training or professional medical advice on mental health or suicide prevention. Staff are advised to always refer to school policies and procedures in the first instance. This information is provided by Beyond Blue Limited in good faith and on an 'as is' basis. While every care has been taken in preparing this information, Beyond Blue Limited makes no representation or warranty as to the reliability or completeness of the information contained in this document. You must make your own assessment of the information contained in this document and if you choose to rely on it, it is wholly at your own risk. To the extent permitted by law, Beyond Blue Limited will not be liable to you or anyone else for any loss or damage, however caused, which may be directly or indirectly suffered arising from the use of, or reliance upon this information.