

# Kids Matter

Australian Primary Schools  
Mental Health Initiative



Australian Government  
Department of Health and Ageing



beyondblue



APS

Australian  
Psychological  
Society

Principals  
Australia  
Institute  
*Learning. Leading.*

# Why Currumbin Cares?

Mental health and wellbeing is vital for learning and life. Children who are mentally healthy learn better, benefit from life experiences and have stronger relationships with family members, school staff and peers.

At Currumbin we want to educate happy, healthy and confident children together.



## Why Currumbin Cares?

School is the most significant developmental context, after family, for primary school-aged children.

Schools play a crucial role in building children's self esteem and sense of competence.

They can also act as a safety net and assist in protecting children from circumstances that affect their learning, development and wellbeing.

# Research into Kids Matter

KidsMatter was extensively evaluated in 2009 by Flinders University.

The [evaluation](#) found clear benefits for students, school staff and for schools.



# Research into Kids Matter

## **Benefits for students included:**

Increased positive mental health (eg optimism and coping)

Reduced mental health difficulties (eg emotional symptoms, hyperactivity, conduct problems and peer difficulties)

Improvements in behaviour and motivation for students already experiencing mental health challenges

# Research into Kids Matter

## Benefits for staff included:

Increased staff satisfaction

Professional learning opportunities

Improved student learning and behaviour



# Research into Kids Matter

## Benefits for schools included:

Stronger parent engagement and parenting capacity

More effective partnerships with community

Improved student educational outcomes



## Research into Kids Matter

A subsequent analysis of the data found that

“...KidsMatter appears to be positively associated with the level of student academic achievement,

**equivalent to 6 months more schooling by Year 7,**

over and above any influence of socio-economic background.”



# Guiding Principles of Kids Matter

Seven principles underpin the KidsMatter Primary framework.

They have been informed by research and the experiences of primary schools that successfully implemented KidsMatter.

# Guiding Principles of Kids Matter

1. The best interests of children are paramount
2. Respectful relationships are foundational
3. Diversity is respected and valued
4. Parents and carers are recognised as the most important people in children's lives
5. Parents and teachers support children best by working together

# Guiding Principles of Kids Matter

6. Students need to be active participants
7. Schools, health and community agencies work together with families.

# Components of Kids Matter

1. Positive school community
2. Social and emotional learning for students
3. Working with parents and carers
4. Helping children with mental health difficulties.

*Each component is unpacked into more specific target areas and goals to help schools with their planning.*

# Whole School Approach

To ensure success, at Currumbin we want all school community members (teachers and school staff, parents and carers, and health and community agencies) to work in collaborative partnerships.

That is why it is so important to us that you are all here today.



## How it works – the journey?

The KidsMatter Primary journey is about school improvement.

KidsMatter is also a cyclical process of improvement and renewal. It will take between 18 months and 3 years to complete the first cycle.

# Shared Vision

We are all here today because we are passionate in ensuring the students of Currumbin are:

- Happy
- Healthy &
- Confident.



# Admin Action Team

## **Admin Action Team**

Meet fortnightly  
Wednesday before  
school.

Julia Hoy  
Gail Rosemond  
Mary Hughes  
Yvette Grant  
Rena Monaghan  
Nick Kennon

## **Full Team**

Meet once a term  
(First time - Monday  
24<sup>th</sup> August 3pm).

Staff and Parents



# Whole School Initiatives to develop Mentally Healthy Kids

National Day of Action Against Bullying

Fill your Bucket & Friendship Focus

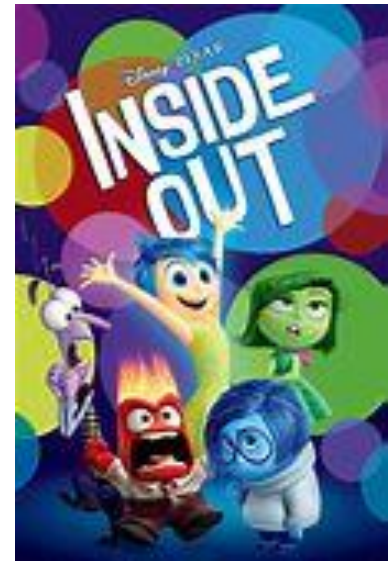
Julie Cross & Sparkle initiative



# Whole School Initiatives to develop Mentally Healthy Kids

Inside Out movie – student sessions with Pam Day from Ed Link – Assembly Term 3 week 8 & 9 and parent session week 9 at 3pm.

Mental Health Week – week 1 Term 4 –  
Tuesday lunch breaks – EdLink  
to run workshops with students



# Whole School Initiatives to Link with Families

Kids Matter promoted on the school website

Staff and Parents surveyed to guide our action plan.  
Around 70 parents responded.

Kids Matter Launch – 20 October at 8am for parents

School Chaplain employed

# Links with Community Agencies

Palm Beach Neighbourhood Centre

Ed Link

Accoras Unique

Kids Matter

Reachwise

Act for Kids

Community Development Services

# Targeted Programs

Employed two Youth Workers to work with targeted students

Art Therapy each Friday

Rock and Water for year 4-6

Sensibility Program for Year 6 in term 4 run by Accoras Unique

Lunch time programs for students expanded to Reader's Chair, Craft Club, Spanish Club, Friendship Club.

# Targeted Programs

Grip Leadership Conference for Year 6 leaders

Semester 1 Year 6 Leadership Program – weekly

Semester 2 Year 5 Leadership Program – weekly

Young Leaders - weekly

# Overview – Working Together

It Takes A  
**Whole**  
Village to  
Raise a  
Child  
- African Proverb



[peaceproject.com](http://peaceproject.com)

## NURTURING



## THE WHOLE CHILD

## Session 1 summary

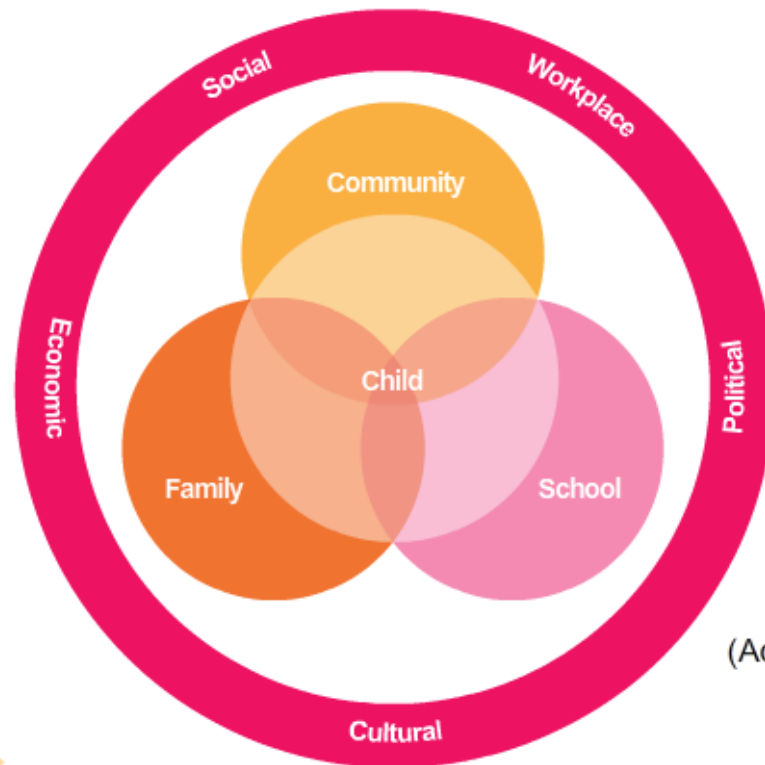
- Mental health is:
  - how we think or feel about ourselves and what is going on around us
  - how we cope with the ups and downs of life.
- Academic results and educational outcomes are enhanced when we support mental health and wellbeing.



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# Influences on children's mental health



(Adapted from Bronfenbrenner, 1977)

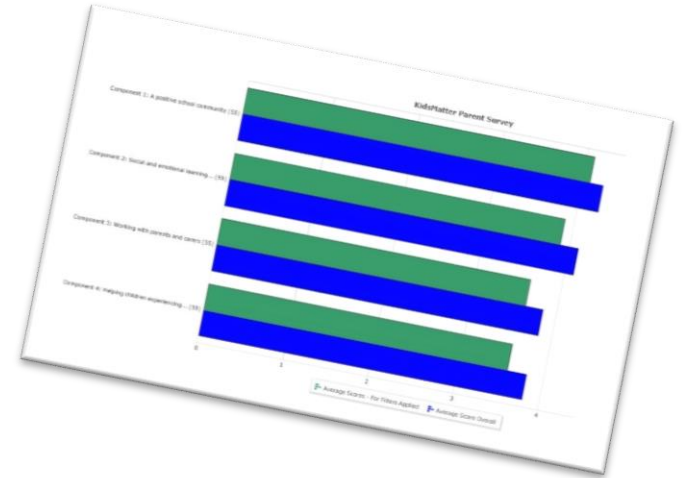
# How parents can get involved

- ✓ Get informed about kids mental health and well being and spread the word
- ✓ Develop relationships with staff
- ✓ Get involved with the Action Team
- ✓ Ask staff how KidsMatter Primary is being implemented
- ✓ Participate in school activities
- ✓ Respond to school requests for ideas or information
- ✓ Talk to other parents and carers about ways the school can support needs.
- ✓ Let the school know what skills or talents you are happy to share

# Gathering information

## Parent survey

- ❖ Working collaboratively with parents and cares
- ❖ Helping children with mental health difficulties



## What we are aiming for:

- ❖ Contribution from our parent body about what we need to work on and ideas for improving our performance in the four components of KidsMatter
- ❖ Proactive participation from parent community in support of the KidsMatter initiative

Components	Things that stand out to me	Things I'd like my school to explore further
<i>Component 1: Positive school community</i>		
<i>Component 2: Social and emotional learning for students</i>		
<i>Component 3: Working with parents and carers</i>		
<i>Component 4: Helping children with mental health difficulties.</i>		

# Save the date:

## Kids Matter Launch

- When: Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> October 8-9am
- Where: School hall
- What will be happening:
  - Sausage sizzle brekky with Chappy Shannon
  - Coffee van will be there 😊
  - Displays from Reachwise, Palm Beach Neighbourhood Centre, Accoras Unique, ChristChurch(youth/community) and more!
  - Choir will sing an item
  - Guest Speaker

# How can I help?

- Spread the word – invite parents and community through flyers or word of mouth
- Put your name down to help set up/pack away the tables/displays (some of this can be done the day before).
- Put your name down to help Chappy with the BBQ set up/cooking/serving/pack up.
- Volunteer to assist organisations on the day with their display set up.

# Upcoming Meeting Dates

Preparation for KidsMatter Launch: Monday 12 October 3- 4 pm

KidsMatter Launch: Tuesday 20 October 7.45 am

KidsMatter Full Team Meeting: Monday 16 November 3- 4 pm