

WHOLE-SCHOOL WELLBEING STRATEGY & PLANNING GUIDE

HOW TO MAKE THE CASE

Life Skills Group



WHOLE-SCHOOL WELLBEING

Making the case for your executives

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

You may be a principal or a wellbeing advisor or a teacher that wants to implement whole-school wellbeing, but need some evidence and support to make a convincing proposal for your executive team to consider investing in a whole-school wellbeing implementation.

ABOUT THIS PLANNING GUIDE

This planning guide will cover the wellbeing challenges facing schools, the benefits and outcomes of implementing an effective whole-school wellbeing program, how to measure success, and how to budget costs and find funding to implement this type of program.

The guide is broken up into:

- Statement of Need - answering Why?
- Goals & Objectives - answering What are the outcomes?
- Methods & Strategies - answering How?
- Plan of Evaluation - Assessing & Measuring
- Budget - answering Cost and finding funding
- Life Skills Group - How we can help you

BENEFITS [1]

- Improved Academic Results
- Reduced disruptive behaviour incidents
- Reduced absenteeism
- Higher levels of academic engagement & participation
- Higher staff and student retention rates
- Stronger social & emotional skills
- Greater levels of self-control

COSTS

- Wellbeing training for teachers and staff
- In-class wellbeing lessons and curriculum
- Digital Learning platform for wellbeing lessons
- Dedicated resources to lead wellbeing program implementation and assessment
- Time to implement, assess and measure progress

ABOUT LIFE SKILLS GROUP

Life Skills Group has over 12 years of wellbeing teaching & curriculum development experience. Over 600 schools in Australia use Life Skills Group programs to support their whole-school wellbeing frameworks. Our programs are Be You Assessed & Approved and selected programs are NESAC accredited and all are aligned to the Australia Curriculum (ACARA), CASEL, and skills for 21st Century Learning (WEF).



STATEMENT OF NEED

"Given that 120 million new first-time learners attended school in the last ten years [2], that youth spend on average 30 hours a week in school and school is the only universal institution in our young people's lives, schools represent a key opportunity to equip young people with the ways of thinking and acting that science suggests promote healthy functioning and protect against mental illness." [3]

More than 300 million people globally suffer from depression, while mental illness is predicted to be the greatest cause of disability by 2030, meaning many of today's school entrants will likely be affected by the time they graduate from school. [4]

The widespread interest in wellbeing in schools is motivated by two positive reasons: a) the large amount of robust research indicating the desirable outcomes associated with higher levels of personal wellbeing (these include better physical health/longevity, relationships, academic, career and societal benefits) and b) preliminary research findings indicating that aspects of wellbeing and resilience can be taught and learned [5, 6, 7].

Studies have demonstrated that students with higher levels of wellbeing perform better academically, reporting higher levels of self-control and lower procrastination than students who are either moderately mentally healthy or languishing [3] and that students with the highest wellbeing levels at the start of the year showed the strongest academic performance at the end of the school year. [8]

Disengaged students are at elevated risk for missing classes, dropping out, academic failure and a variety of antisocial behaviours, while studies have shown that engaging in wellbeing interventions in school can enhance school engagement and retention. Where whole-school wellbeing promotion has been practiced over time, assessments suggest that students have benefitted, with at-risk students benefitting the most. [9]

Students who are taught social and emotional learning skills experienced a significant improvement in grades, on average by 11%. Young people with strong social emotional skills are more likely to have higher income and better jobs. [10]

GOALS & OBJECTIVES

Implementing whole-school wellbeing takes time, dedication, and a clear vision for what you want to achieve. The best performing schools typically take time to plan, implement and measure the effectiveness of their wellbeing framework. Partnering with an expert like **Life Skills Group** can make this process simple and easy.

1 Start with defining what wellbeing means for your school by discussing with staff, parents, board, students and all stakeholders. Outline why, what and how of your wellbeing change.

2 Next, conduct a wellbeing audit - identify what wellbeing work is being done now. Identify your school strengths, values, vision for the future, priorities for action, and wellbeing outcomes desired (for example: belonging & connection, feeling safe & secure, resilience, student voice, etc.)

3 Spend time to get buy-in from all stakeholders, including staff, parents, the students, and the community. Establishing the 'why' is really vital - we know from psychology that understanding and being personally committed to the 'why' increases the likelihood of change being both successful and sustained.

Focus on making the case for whole-school wellbeing, identify who your early adopters or passionate leaders for wellbeing may be and listen attentively to wellbeing sceptics to make the change process easier in the future.

4 Invest in staff training on the principles and practices of wellbeing education. Failure to educate staff about wellbeing can result in a lack of knowledge and a reluctance to teach wellbeing. Establish wellbeing literacy and a shared language of wellbeing among staff, students and parents/caregivers.

5 Finally, choose a wellbeing model that fits your school. Most wellbeing models include elements of physical, emotion/mental, social/relational and spiritual wellbeing. Using a clearly defined wellbeing model helps develop a shared language of wellbeing within the school, assists in communication with parents, students and the wider school community, provides a framework against which you can track progress, and provides guidelines for prioritising and decision-making to assess activities that fit within the model.

METHODS & STRATEGIES

Once you have a clear vision and goals for your whole-school wellbeing strategy and have selected a wellbeing model, begin to plan how you will implement activities and assess their effectiveness.

1 First, select wellbeing leaders who will lead the charge in integrating wellbeing into the school's routines, structures, common language and organisational habits. Ensure those leaders and the entire staff is trained in wellbeing foundations based on your chosen wellbeing model.

2 Next, select a wellbeing curriculum that aligns with your school context and values. Embed the curriculum at the beginning of your term, ensure dedicated class time with regular intervals of lessons at least 1-2x a week, and focus on deliberate planning, scope and sequencing.

3 Give the staff and students time to trial the new programs and work out any issues. Encourage staff and classes to take some risks and try something new and provide opportunity for feedback for regular improvements. Figure out what works, what you have learned, and what needs to be done differently.

"Have strategy, but let people run with a good idea: There will be good learning from these ideas whether they work or not. Let people go ahead and try out the ideas they are very enthusiastic about. Allow the process to be emergent: Certain practices and models take on a life of their own. Make use of it and encourage people to implement new practices." [3]



ASSESSING & MEASURING

Take time to reflect on what's working and what needs to be changed. Discuss among staff, parents and students. Conduct student and staff surveys, assess and measure impact and make improvements.

Some key metrics to consider tracking:

- Number of behaviour incidents (e.g. suspensions over time)
- Rate of absenteeism among students
- Qualitative teacher observations (student behaviour trends in classroom, playground, assemblies)
- Academic/achievement data impact
- Student and staff evaluative surveys
- Wellbeing measurements- baseline and longitudinal anonymous surveys*

*<https://www.annafreud.org/media/4612/mwb-toolki-final-draft-4.pdf>

For a lot of schools, wellbeing measurement has not been a priority. Schools are focusing on the work they want to do rather than on the measurement. It's always useful in schools to ask, 'What does success look like?' and 'How else might wellbeing change be tracked?' The stories that a school tells about itself are important markers of change and can be useful in showing how a school has moved forward. How can you curate stories? The language and vocabulary of young people around their use of strengths is another indicator of wellbeing change in a school.

Partnering with a wellbeing partner like **Life Skills Group** will ensure that wellbeing programs are evaluated and impact is measured with regular reporting and feedback summaries.

A good example of how one school has evaluated their wellbeing programs has been Guildford West Public School.*

*<https://www.lifeskillsgroup.com.au/impact-stories/story/guildford-west-ps>

COSTS & FUNDING

When estimating costs, consider not only the wellbeing training (staff professional development) and the wellbeing program cost, but also the time and resources needed from dedicated staff to design, implement and evaluate an effective whole-school wellbeing strategy.

Most schools have found funding whole-school wellbeing can be secured via the alignment with the Personal development, health and physical education (PDHPE) programs. Some states have provided sporting program funding, while most Australian states have wellbeing strategy initiatives and appropriated funding to serve these goals.

Other schools have raised funds via their communities and parents who feel a whole-school wellbeing program is critical to support for their students.

Most organisations and wellbeing program providers will work with almost any school to ensure they are able to get what they need, especially if there is a clear vision and dedicated time and resources to implement an effective wellbeing program.

Useful Links:

- [Australian Government School Funding](#) information
- [NSW guidelines for using funding for student wellbeing](#)
- [VIC AIP guidelines for 2021](#) and requirements for wellbeing in schools: 'Happy, active and healthy kids'
- [Sporting Schools Plus](#) Funding can be used for wellbeing programs
- [Grants Hub for finding, tracking, and managing available grants](#)
- [Schools Plus offers a crowd funding platform for schools](#)

LIFE SKILLS GROUP

YOUR WELLBEING PARTNER

With over 12 years of experience in teaching and supporting wellbeing in over 600 schools across Australia, we have expertise and proven success in developing, implementing and measuring whole-school wellbeing. Our programs are evidence-based, curriculum-aligned and Be You assessed & approved.

We offer both FREE and paid services, programs and resources for teachers, students, parents and school communities. Setup a FREE wellbeing strategy meeting with us TODAY!



PROGRAMS

- **Professional SEL Training for Teachers** (in-person, online, or pre-recorded) led by wellbeing experts
- **In-School Student Programs** teaching social, emotional and physical health and wellbeing led by an expert educator
- **Life Skills GO** is our online social, emotional learning platform with evidence-based, curriculum aligned lessons, videos, resources with flexible in-class or suitable for remote learning



ADVANTAGES

- ✓ Social Emotional Learning foundation is established to support staff and student wellbeing.
- ✓ Students and staff learn social, emotional and physical skills together with a tailored wellbeing program suited for specific age groups, tracked with regular feedback to ensure effectiveness
- ✓ From the individual to the entire school - the platform provides, measures and reports, social, emotional and physical learning in a blended learning environment which aims to embed a consistent language and improve wellbeing across the whole school.



BENEFITS

- Draws on the core competencies established by CASEL in their social emotional learning framework, while also incorporating mindfulness science and positive psychology principles, together with effective pedagogical practices.
- A whole-school wellbeing framework and reporting
- Shared wellbeing vocabulary
- Increased self-regulation and resilience skills
- Improved school wellbeing

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WHAT WE DO

Life Skills Group can support you in designing and implementing your whole-school wellbeing strategy and framework. We offer 3 types of services and programs:

Teacher Professional Learning

Wellbeing. It's Not Just a Policy

- Workshop combining interactive, practical and theory based learning
- Specially trained facilitator and expert in wellbeing and social/emotional learning
- Evidence-based strategies & resources
- 6 hours NESA registered professional development
- Learn the key building blocks for staff well-being and leadership: mindfulness-based emotional intelligence, self-awareness, mental and emotional resilience and engagement.

In-School Programs

Healthy Skills for Life

- Students build awareness of their social, emotional and physical health and wellbeing through movement, focused attention and mindfulness
- Delivered by expert educator
- 6, 8, or 10 week program taught in-school side-by-side with your classroom teacher

- 6 hours NESA registered professional development
- Students improve concentration, communication, listening, resilience, confidence and self-regulation skills. Improved balance, spatial awareness & motor skills

Online Blended Learning Platform

Life Skills GO

- Transforms 21st-century learning by delivering measurable social and emotional learning through education technology.
- 200+ Age appropriate social, emotional & physical learning content including lessons, videos, printed resources, quizzes and engaging activities
- Evidence-based (CASEL, OECD), science-backed, and curriculum aligned lessons (ACARA, NESA, VCAA).
- Executive reporting with real-time feedback on student progress and wellbeing
- Flexible lesson delivery - teacher led mode, in class, remote learning capable, and individual student lesson assignments
- Students improve their social, emotional and physical wellbeing, concentration, communication, listening and self-regulation skills. Improved self-esteem, self-image, resilience and confidence.

Book a FREE wellbeing strategy meeting today: [CLICK HERE](#)



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WHOLE-SCHOOL WELLBEING ROADMAP

Setup a Wellbeing Assessment and Strategy Meeting

Meet with our expert team to help you plan your Wellbeing Strategy and rollout

Teacher Professional Learning

Insert the Wellbeing Teacher Professional Learning during the term (2 sessions) to provide the foundations for social and emotional learning

Pre-Program Term Planning

In-School Program Support Pack

- Classroom resources
- Curriculum Document
- Classroom Manual
- Permission Slips
- Family Day Letter
- Weekly Newsletter snippets
- Life Skills Teacher coordinator sets up program with your stage leaders

Life Skills GO Setup

- Identify school coordinator for each stage
- Add Teachers to platform
- Students & classes setup
- Lessons assigned to match the in-school program
- Training and platform demo for teachers

Week 1-2

In-School Program

- Life Skills Group Teacher on site
- All program equipment supplied
- Classroom teachers watch and learn, register for NESA PD hours

Life Skills GO

- Students start lessons/activities

Weeks 3-7

In-School Program

- Life Skills Group Teacher on site
- Feedback Surveys on program
- Changes implemented as needed

Life Skills GO

- Students continue lessons
- Weather report and executive reporting check-in

Family Day (btw weeks 4-6)

- Opportunity for parents to participate in Life Skills Class
- Take home wellbeing resources
- Newsletter snippets supplied

Week 8

In-School Program

- Final program feedback
- Feedback collated and supplied to principal
- Next step evaluation completed by Life Skills Wellbeing Advisor
- NESA hours logged

Life Skills GO

- Executive report on wellbeing check-ins, lesson progress

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HOW TO GET STARTED - WELLBEING RESOURCES

Ways to get started:

- Start with [Teacher Professional Learning](#) - invest in a workshop to help build a social emotional learning foundation for your teachers
- Get your school on a [30 day free trial of Life Skills GO](#) - let us prove to you how effective our wellbeing online learning platform can be
- Watch our [free webinars](#) to learn tips and tricks on implementing whole-school wellbeing.
- Download FREE classroom wellbeing resources
- Get a [FREE wellbeing assessment](#) and strategy session with Nikki Bonus, our CEO and Founder
- Discuss with us your goals and budget, and we'll work with you to ensure your whole-school wellbeing strategy is cost-effective and impactful.
- Ask us about our latest promotions to save you time and money. Book before December 18, 2020, and get major discounts on training and Life Skills GO!

FREE Resources:

- [NSW Whole-School Wellbeing Case Study](#)
- [VIC Whole-School Wellbeing Case Study](#)
- [Webinar - Best Practices in Implementing Whole-School Wellbeing](#).
- [Webinar - From A to Z: How to Implement Whole-School Wellbeing](#).



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