

## From Wisdom to Ways: Enhancing Student Well-Being - Abstracts



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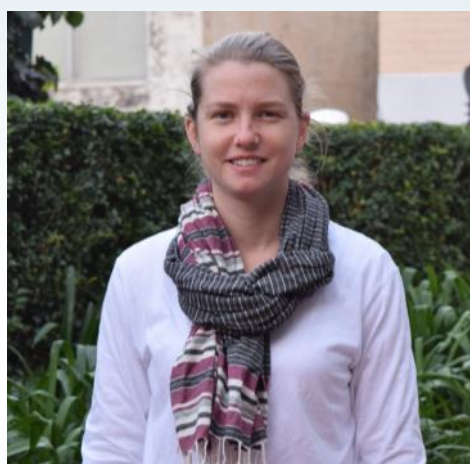
**Presentation Title:** Positive education: Learning and teaching for well-being and academic growth

**Abstract:** Over the past decade, positive education has emerged as a rapidly growing arm of positive psychology that has attracted both interest and critique. Successful positive education programs blend evidence-based learning from the science of positive psychology, best practices in learning and teaching, whole school strategy, and evaluation, and consider pedagogy, philosophical assumptions, and a school's culture. However, many schools rush towards positive education without considering the knowledge required, application, and how to manage this development responsibly, as there is also potential that attempts are ineffective or do harm. Through a case study, this presentation will outline that positive education can positively impact students, teachers.

Learning outcomes

By the end of the lecture, delegates will:

- be able to identify and discuss current global trends in positive and well-being education
- be able to identify and address the philosophical underpinning of the field and its potential impact on professional practice.



**Dr Victoria Rawlings**

*Academic Fellow, School of Education and*

**Presentation Title:** On the Straight and Narrow: Gender, Sexuality and School Violence

**Abstract:** Teachers and school staff continue to rely on fixed definitions of 'bullying' to address anti-social behaviour in school. While these definitions were formed in the 1970s, they still closely inform the definitions at work in NSW schools and the DET. This session will review these definitions of 'bullying' and how they often fail to capture the realities of violence in school. In addition, it will explore the ways that gender and sexuality are central features of violence that takes place in school, and the reasons why this type of violence remains largely unaddressed. Finally, it will provide information about the young people who experience this violence and its affects on them.

Learning objectives of the presentation

This presentation will encourage participants to:

- Review their own understanding of 'bullying' and interrogate which violence 'fits' and which does not
- Recognise the integral place of gender and sexuality within school violence
- Identify that violence polices the gender and sexuality of all students in a range of ways
- Strategise about confronting gendered violence in a range of settings



**Jocelyn Brewer**

*Registered Psychologist, Teacher and  
founder of Digital Nutrition™*

**Presentation Title:** Understanding the Seduction of Screens: Exploring Young People's Use of Technology for Leisure

**Abstract:** This session will help participants understand the mechanisms by which screen-based media use has become such a central part of youth cultures, the impact of these online behaviours and ways of working with young people for whom technology use has become problematic.

It will look at the impacts of digital distraction and digital dependency with reference to both social media and video games, alongside the benefits and opportunities of online communities and provide strategies from the Digital Nutrition™ framework to help guide healthy digital habits.

Learning outcomes:

- Understand the seduction of screen-based media use for young people and the benefits young people report from being online
- Explore some of the features of social media and videogame design which exploits the vulnerabilities of an underdeveloped brain
- Apply principles of Digital Nutrition to communicate savvy digital habits and help young people maintain mastery over their digital device use and online



**Dr Michelle Tye**

*Research Fellow, Black Dog Institute,  
University of New South Wales*



**Dr Aliza Werner-Seidler,**

*Research Fellow & Clinical Psychologist,  
Black Dog Institute*

**Presentation Title:** Suicide prevention in the classroom: How to do it, and do it well

**Abstract:** Suicide is a leading cause of death among those aged 10 – 19 years, and rates of youth suicide are growing at almost twice the rate of the general population. This unprecedented increase in youth suicide is occurring despite ongoing prevention efforts, highlighting that we need more effective suicide prevention to stop young people from reaching a crisis point. Early prevention is an important part of reducing young people's risk of suicide, with evidence suggesting that suicide prevention programs implemented in schools can effectively reduce rates of suicide, as well as major mental health risks (depression, anxiety) which are associated with suicide.

In this workshop, we will review the research literature on what is effective in schools-based suicide prevention, with a consideration of why the school environment is the optimal setting in which prevention efforts should be directed. Key risks and warning signs of youth suicide will be discussed. We will then walk the audience through evidence-based suicide prevention programs for schools that are currently available, or will become available to schools soon, and e-health online programs that are for mental health more broadly, and which have evidence for reducing suicidal thinking. We will then briefly address some of the key barriers to the implementation of prevention programs in schools. Engagement and the ways that technology can overcome these some engagement issues will be considered. We will conclude the workshop by talking to the practical ways in which teachers can access, promote, and deliver, prevention programs to improve wellbeing and prevent suicide risk in their school communities.

At the end of this workshop, participants will be able to:

- Describe what the risks for suicide among young people are;
- Understand what role teachers have in addressing the problem of youth suicide
- Recognise, and explain, the importance of choosing evidence-based programs for suicide prevention;
- Identify practical ways to improve suicide prevention efforts within their school community
- Understand how they can access expertise and support to deliver suicide prevention initiatives within the school environment
- List important considerations for the implementation of programs in schools
- Identify ways to improve communications between educational and wellbeing staff and students to reach at risk students early enough to prevent crisis.

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**Jeannette James**

*National Advisor- Service Development,  
headspace in schools*

**Presentation Title:** Mentally Healthy School Communities: New Government initiatives

**Abstract:** Many young Australians experience mental health concerns, which can have lifetime impacts.

- 1 in 7 children in Australia has experienced a mental health condition in the last 12 months
- Only 1 in 6 of these children are receiving help
- Half of all mental health issues emerge before the age of 14

Research shows that supporting children and young people to develop social and emotional skills helps them to successfully socialise, manage conflict, form intimate connections, express empathy to others, and develop a positive sense of self. Early intervention strategies can address mental health concerns experienced by children and young people, and improve lifelong outcomes for adults.

Drawing from the National Mental Health Commission Review in 2014, and with funding from the Australian Government Department of Health, beyondblue will lead a new National Education Initiative launching in Term 4 2018 with delivery partners headspace and Early Childhood Australia.

This new initiative will provide a single end-to-end school and service-based mental health framework. Covering the continuum from early childhood to secondary school, and pre-service teachers, to support mental health promotion and suicide prevention.

The National Education Initiative will integrate and build on the strengths and evidence based principles of key existing Commonwealth Government mental health initiatives currently being delivered in education settings such as, KidsMatter Early Childhood, KidsMatter Primary, MindMatters, headspace school support and Response Ability.

Apart from the National Education Initiative, headspace in schools will also be working on other services including a pilot project funded by the Commonwealth Department of Health targeting rural, regional and remote school communities with a focus on self-harm and suicide prevention, to reduce the number of young people attempting suicide.



**Shaun Nemorin**

*School Liaison Program Team Leader,  
NSW Service for the Treatment and  
Rehabilitation of Torture and Torture  
Survivors (STARTTS)*

**Presentation Title:** Partnership with NSW schools to improving well-being amongst refugee students: The experience of the STARTTS School Liaison Program

**Abstract:** As a result of the influx of students pertaining to the enhanced Syrian Intake of 12,000 extra arrivals, the STARTTS School Liaison Program (SLP) was established in 2017 to act as an interface between schools across NSW and the NSW Service for the Treatment and Rehabilitation of Torture and Trauma Survivors (STARTTS). The key directions of the program have been both strategic and responsive to school need. Strategic in its partnership to establish collegial networks/clusters amongst schools in pertinent geographic locations NSW wide with high refugee resettlement, building upon the resources of local schools, the cluster strategy is seen as a way to drive systemic change within schools has brought together partnership between STARTTS, Government and Non-Government Schools, promoting whole school approaches and establishing action plans to looks at the specific needs of refugee students.

The program has furthermore been responsive to the psychosocial needs of students through the facilitation of direct services within schools premises, including both clinical and community development interventions. At present, STARTTS works in over 160 school's across NSW.

This presentation will look at some of the outcomes for refugee learners as a result of these clusters and interventions, and some of the unique challenges as per geographic location represented. It will furthermore look at the framework which STARTTS uses in working with young people with practical examples on how individuals and schools can promote recovery in the classroom and playground.

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**Marianne Fernandes, Sallwa Hourani,  
Donna Gurka**

*Back on Track, The Sydney Children's  
Hospital Network (Westmead)*



**Trisha Donovan**

*Back on Track, Sydney Children's Hospital  
Network (Randwick)*

**Presentation Title:** Wellness n illness: Strategies for support

**Abstract:** Understanding a child's illness and the consequences of treatment is imperative in supporting students with a serious/chronic health condition.

A cancer diagnosis is devastating for young patients and their families. What follows is overwhelmingly emotional and fraught with uncertainty. The illness, the treatment and the effects of both, are compounded by the loss of 'normal life.' Everything is thrown into turmoil: friendships, school, learning, sport and even careers. The child is anxious about missing school, falling behind and being left behind. Parents fear for their child for the same reasons and schools have their concerns too. Teachers worry about the student and his or her ability to keep up with learning and with their peers and struggle with what's too much... concerns for the child's wellbeing are often raised and finding a balance between must dos and can dos isn't easy. Friends, classmates and the wider school community are affected as well and often struggle to understand how they can support. Siblings, if any are also caught in a whirlpool of complexities.

'Connectedness' is critical in minimising the stress around missed learning, academic growth and the loss of social connections that result from the illness, repeated hospitalisation and treatment.

The Back on Track team will workshop 3 cases to provide participants the opportunity to understand, test and take home strategies that are evidence based best practice.

Learning Objectives:

Participants will leave with:

- a deeper understanding of whole school approaches to support
- a bank of support planning strategies for each stage of learning and treatment
- a thorough knowledge of current practices to support students in their senior years of schooling
- confidence to use the vast range of techtools available to improve connectedness
- an exhaustive list of external support agencies and processes for accessing their services
- skills to review and evaluate support against the background of the Disability Act and the Well-being Framework.