



# Contents

<b>Introduction</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Rationale</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Purpose</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>DECS Learner Wellbeing Framework for birth to year 12</b>	<b>4</b>
Dimensions of wellbeing	5
Influences on wellbeing	6
Domains of practice	7
<b>What is inquiry?</b>	<b>8</b>
Why inquire?	8
<b>What are the implications for practice?</b>	<b>10</b>
What are the links to South Australian Curriculum Standards and Accountability (SACSA) Framework?	12
Connections and coherence	12
<b>How do we know we are making a difference?</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>References</b>	<b>14</b>

## > Acknowledgments

The DECS Learner Wellbeing Project Steering Committee comprised of:

Sherry Thompson, Executive Director, Early Childhood and Statewide Services  
Sherylee Dawe, Manager, Learner Wellbeing Project  
Helen Wildash, Director, Learning Improvement and Support Services  
Italia Parletta, Lecturer, Early Childhood, TAFE SA  
Julienne Muirhead, Director, Warradale Kindergarten  
Steve Adams, Principal, Mitcham Primary School  
Paul Wilson, Principal, Christies Beach High School  
Greg Petherick, Director, East District  
Alan Green, Director, Accountability and Strategic Futures  
David Rathman, Executive Director, Aboriginal Education and Employment Strategies  
Margot Foster, Manager, Learning to Learn Project  
Sue Weir, Student Inclusion and Wellbeing Manager, Riverland District.

The invaluable contribution is acknowledged of the following groups to the development of the DECS Learner Wellbeing Framework for birth to year 12:

Learner Wellbeing Project Matrix Team  
Learner Wellbeing Project Reference Committee  
DECS District Student Inclusion and Wellbeing Managers  
Learner Wellbeing Project Critical Friends and  
2006 Learner Wellbeing Project Inquiry Sites (see website for complete lists of members).

Particular thanks to the Learner Wellbeing Project Team:

Victoria Buchanan  
Gaynor Quinn  
Inara Gehling  
Robyn O'Dea  
Jan Warren  
Brenda Hosking-Brown.

Through the input of all these groups, across all levels of DECS, including learners, parents and agency partners, the DECS Learner Wellbeing Framework for birth to year 12 is both theoretically sound and grounded in practice.

**W** indicates that further information is available on the Learner Wellbeing website:  
[www.schools.sa.gov.au/schlstaff/pages/learnerwellbeingproject](http://www.schools.sa.gov.au/schlstaff/pages/learnerwellbeingproject)

*Quote  
from  
literature  
review*

**Findings  
from  
sites**

**Inquiry  
questions  
from sites**



Every attempt has been made to trace the copyright holders. If you have any information, please contact the DECS Learner Wellbeing Manager.

National Library of Australia  
Cataloguing-in-Publication entry:  
DECS learner wellbeing framework for birth to year 12.

Bibliography.  
ISBN 9781921233043.  
ISBN 1 921233 04 4.  
1. Students - Health and hygiene - South Australia. 2. Students - Mental health - South Australia. I. South Australia. Dept. of Education and Children's Services.  
371.71099423

© 2007, The State of South Australia, Department of Education and Children's Services

Produced by Office of Early Childhood and Statewide Services, Level 5, 31 Flinders Street, Adelaide, SA

Edited by Infoquest Pty Ltd  
Designed by She Creative Pty Ltd  
Printed by fivestargrafex

ISBN 978 1 921233 04 3  
1 921233 04 4  
R4929/2

## Introduction

> The *DECS Learner Wellbeing Framework for birth to year 12* is the outcome of an extended inquiry, involving sites, Central and District offices and partners, including families, other agencies and experts.

A forum for leaders was held in 2004 to generate views about a framework for learner wellbeing and a working paper entitled *Wellbeing is central to Learning* (DECS 2005a) was then developed by the DECS Learner Wellbeing Matrix Team for broad circulation in 2005. Responses to the working paper were used to construct a draft framework, entitled *Towards a Learner Wellbeing Framework for birth to year 12* (DECS 2006). During 2006, 53 sites and clusters of sites used the draft to guide their own inquiries into a locally relevant aspect of learner wellbeing.

This framework is a summary of current knowledge about learner wellbeing that is strongly grounded in local practice. It has been developed to support sites from child care to senior secondary schools to take an inquiry-minded approach to the improvement of wellbeing for all learners, beginning with a particular focus in Site Learning Plans in 2007.

## Principles

- Wellbeing is central to learning and learning is central to wellbeing.
- Educators make a positive contribution to learner wellbeing.
- Wellbeing is built on the strengths of individuals, groups and communities working together.



## Rationale


> The strong and mutual interconnection between wellbeing and learning has meant that learner wellbeing has always been an integral part of educators' work. The influence of continuous and rapid change upon today's learners and the consequent complexity of their lives require educators to inquire into new ways of working that support the wellbeing and learning connection. The DECS Learner Wellbeing Framework supports educators to build upon and improve on current effective practice through the use of an inquiry approach.

Consistent with the *Declaration of the Rights of the Child* (United Nations 1959) and the *Adelaide Declaration on National Goals for Schooling in the Twenty-first Century* (MCEETYA 1999), the *DECS Statement of Directions 2005–2010* (2005b) identifies wellbeing and learner engagement as key directions for educators: 'Staff in all sites...play an important role in fostering engagement and wellbeing so that each child and student is able to achieve their best and enjoy their educational experience' (p. 8).

One target in the DECS Statement of Directions, under Goal 3: Wellbeing and engagement, is to 'develop and implement a Learner Wellbeing Framework for birth to year 12 by the end of 2007' (p. 8).

## Purpose

> The DECS Learner Wellbeing Framework is designed to support the development and improvement of the wellbeing of all learners by:

- promoting a common understanding, consistent approaches and shared commitment to the development of learner wellbeing
- providing a strategic framework that connects and makes coherent a range of initiatives, projects, policies and practices, including the South Australian Curriculum Standards and Accountability (SACSA) Framework (DETE 2001)
- providing a tool that can be used to map, audit and strengthen site and educator capacity to support and improve the wellbeing of all learners
- encouraging the participation in an inquiry approach to the improvement of learner wellbeing of all site community members: leaders, educators, learners, parents and other partners
- assisting sites to identify learners whose wellbeing may be at risk and allocating appropriate support
- promoting collaborative and cross-agency pathways of support to improve wellbeing. 

### Educators

*All people working with children and students in care and education settings.*

### Families

*includes parents, care-givers and extended family members.*

### Framework

*An overarching policy direction; a blend of principles, beliefs and policies that broadly set the boundaries for consistent and appropriate action at all levels.*

### Learners

*Children and students from newborns to adults re-entering education. While educators are also learners, the focus of this Framework is on children and students.*

## DECS Learner Wellbeing Framework for birth to year 12

*Wellbeing... is used loosely to imply a generalised state of feeling valued, socially, emotionally, intellectually and, eventually, economically.*

(Gammage 2004, p. 2)

*Wellbeing is... a holistic subjective state which is present when a range of feelings, among them energy, confidence, openness, enjoyment, happiness, calm, and caring, are combined and balanced.*

(Stewart-Brown in Roberts 2005, p. 6)

*Child wellbeing is more than the absence of problems.*

(Pollard & Davidson 2001, p. 13)

Wellbeing provided us with a clearer focus and an 'umbrella project' that drew in all of the different programs in a coordinated and articulate way... providing a paradigm for other initiatives.

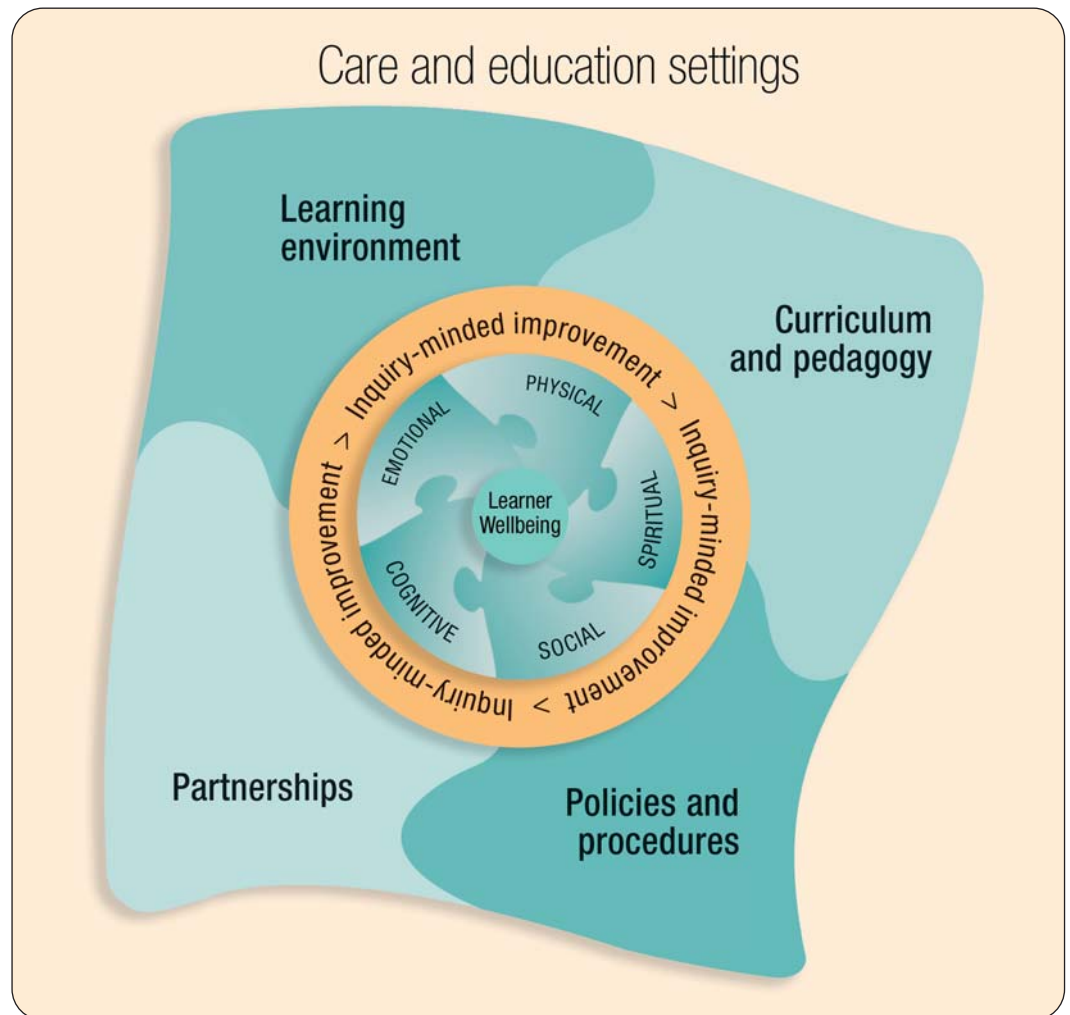
Burra Community School

> Wellbeing is integral to the learning process. A learner will engage readily with learning when in an optimum state of wellbeing. There are learned skills, abilities and understandings important to the development of wellbeing, for example:

*Gaining the ability to understand our own emotions and using it to shape our own actions are competencies that are not only essential for our mental and emotional health: they are meta-abilities that are highly linked to school and career success (Goleman, cited in Weare 2000, p. 69).*

The DECS Learner Wellbeing Framework for birth to year 12, as illustrated, shows the dimensions of wellbeing within a care or education setting. An inquiry-minded approach links care and education practices to the wellbeing of learners. This approach enables sites to improve their practices to enhance learner wellbeing.

Figure 1: DECS Learner Wellbeing Framework for birth to year 12



How do we increase children's level of involvement or engagement in the curriculum to increase their emotional wellbeing?

Newland Park Kindergarten

Wellbeing can be characterised in the following ways:

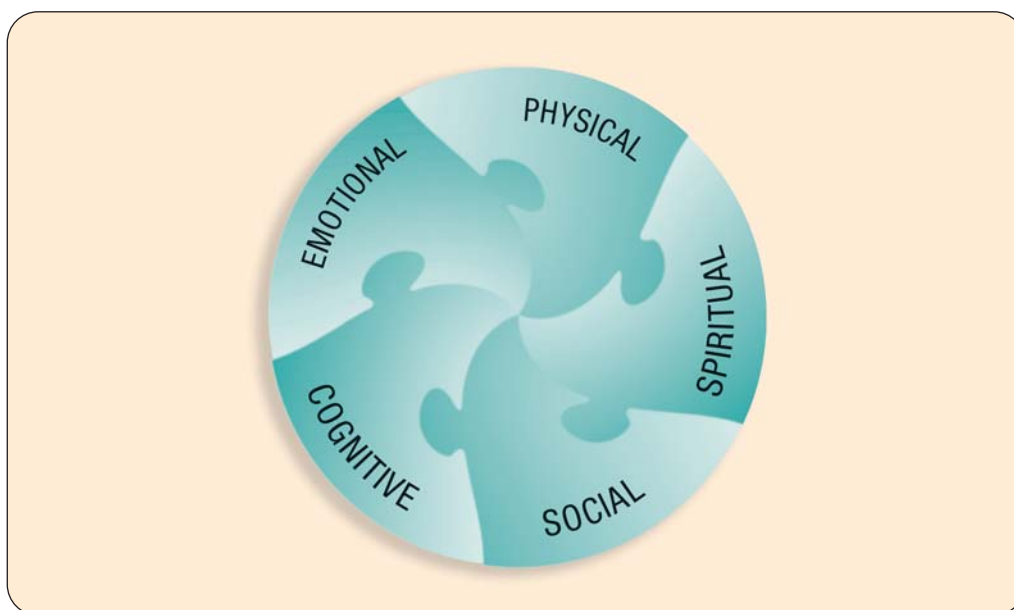
- Wellbeing is dynamic and changeable.
- Wellbeing may be enacted differently in different cultures.
- Wellbeing is about feeling well and functioning well.

## DECS Learner Wellbeing Framework for birth to year 12

### Dimensions of wellbeing

In this framework there are five dimensions to wellbeing that overlap and interconnect with each other: cognitive, emotional, physical, social and spiritual. Collectively these dimensions provide learners with resilience and confidence in their ability to influence their world. In their work on the foundations of wellbeing for UNESCO, Pollard and Davidson (2001) expand on some of the dimensions and their various aspects.

Figure 2: Dimensions of wellbeing



- **Cognitive** aspects include information processing, memory, curiosity, mastery, motivation, persistence, thinking and intelligence.
- **Emotional** aspects are closely linked with social aspects and include emotional development and control, coping, autonomy, positive self-development, trust and attachment.
- **Physical** aspects include nutrition, physical activity, physical safety, preventive health care, reproductive health and substance abuse.
- **Social** aspects include parent-child relationships, sibling relationships, peer relationships, positive social behaviour, empathy and sympathy.
- **Spiritual** aspects include beliefs, values, morals and ethics; a sense of meaning and purpose; altruism; and a sense of connectedness to something larger than oneself.



*Mental health is another term for the social and emotional aspects of wellbeing—it refers to our thoughts, feelings, behaviour and relationships*

(Hunter Institute of Mental Health 2006)

The Framework enabled us to look at our inquiry question while keeping all dimensions of wellbeing in view. It served as a good checkpoint.

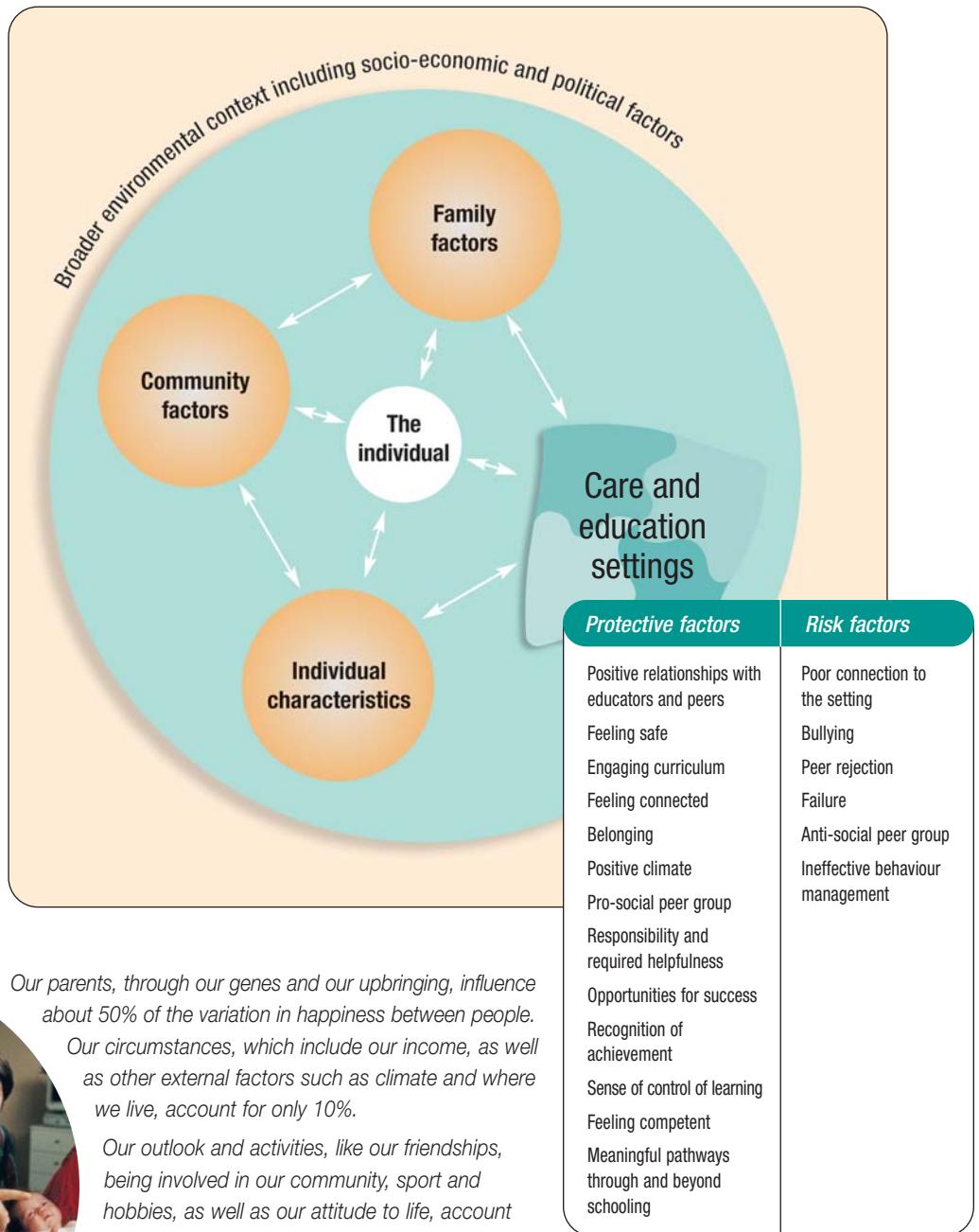
Nuriotpa Primary School

## DECS Learner Wellbeing Framework for birth to year 12

### Influences on wellbeing

All children and students have the potential for high levels of wellbeing. The broader environmental context contains a range of factors which influence wellbeing for each individual. These factors are either protective or risk factors and the dynamic relationship between them means their impact will vary for each individual. Educators have the greatest potential to positively influence the range of factors within care and education.

Figure 3: Influences on wellbeing



*Our parents, through our genes and our upbringing, influence about 50% of the variation in happiness between people.*

*Our circumstances, which include our income, as well as other external factors such as climate and where we live, account for only 10%.*

*Our outlook and activities, like our friendships, being involved in our community, sport and hobbies, as well as our attitude to life, account for the remaining 40%. This is where we have the most opportunity to make a difference to wellbeing.*

(Shah & Marks 2004, p. 2)

(Adapted from National Crime Prevention 1999, pp. 136 & 138)

What methodologies and literacy practices best support learning achievements for humanitarian refugees from different parts of Africa?  
Woodville High School

How does pedagogy influence the wellbeing of children who are ESL and/or Indigenous students from birth–8 years?  
Sturt Street Community School



## DECS Learner Wellbeing Framework for birth to year 12

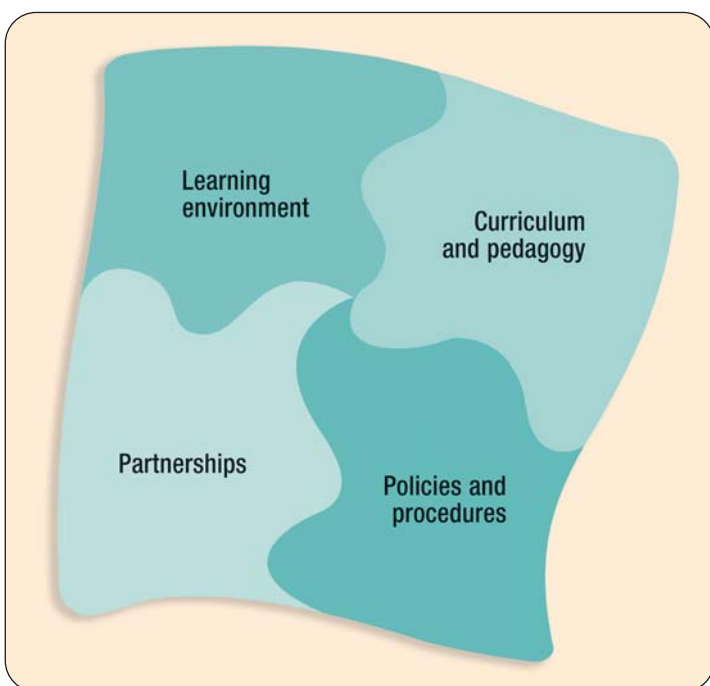
Examples of individual characteristics identified as risk factors include low birth weight, disability, and low self esteem, but protective factors include attachment to family, and social and intellectual competence. Risk factors associated with family include young maternal age, abuse, and lack of warmth and affection, while protective factors are supportive, caring parents, responsibility for chores or required helpfulness, and family harmony. Community risk factors include socio-economic disadvantage, social or cultural discrimination, war or natural disasters, and population density and housing conditions. Community protective factors include access to support services, a strong cultural identity, and community norms against violence (National Crime Australia, 1999).



### Domains of practice

The dimensions of wellbeing need to be considered in the context of four domains within the site or service as a whole. The learning environment, curriculum and pedagogy, partnerships, and policies and procedures interact and are interdependent. What is learned through the curriculum will be practised in the learning environment, supported by partnerships with family and other agencies, and made explicit in the policies and practices of the site.

Figure 4: Domains of practice in care and education settings



The inquiry process has enabled sites to develop their own pathways, seek answers or direction to their own questions, and tailor their work in the field of wellbeing to meet the needs of their entire community.

Student inclusion and wellbeing manager

When we develop a common understanding of what an emotionally safe learning environment is, will that lead to changes in pedagogy?

Kimba Area School

What changes do we expect to see from teaching about respect and anti-bullying?

Allendale East Area School

- **Learning environment:** the ethos/culture of a site or service and the aesthetics, infrastructure and physical environment
- **Curriculum and pedagogy:** the twin processes of teaching and learning, which create involvement and success
- **Partnerships:** the numerous relationships that need to exist to support learners and their learning within and between sites, services, families, agencies and community members
- **Policies and procedures:** system and local statements and directions on significant issues that affect learner wellbeing, such as how particular situations will be managed and which values are promoted.

It is most effective to take a whole of site or service approach. This approach acknowledges that everything has the potential to influence wellbeing and, within any site, it is important that attention be paid to each of the four domains.

## What is inquiry?

### > Why inquire?

*Inquiry is a process of systematic, rigorous and critical reflection about professional practice, and the contexts in which it occurs, in ways that question taken-for-granted assumptions.*

(Reid 2004, p. 4)

*Inquiry... is a fancy way of saying let's study what's happening at our school and make it a better, more equitable, place.*

(Bay Area Coalition for Equitable Schools, cited in DECS 2005c)

Using a rigorous inquiry approach allows educators to reflect deeply on learner wellbeing as a component of a continuous improvement cycle. This facilitates learning sites to develop strategies to respond to specific local circumstances.

There are a variety of inquiry models to assist and facilitate:

- identification of an area of focus
- formulation of an initial inquiry question
- translation into an inquiry cycle
- refinement of the initial inquiry question if needed.

Each step requires dialogue and documentation leading to consensus.

A culture of inquiry allows site reflection, which both affirms existing good practice and highlights dimensions and domains of practice that need improvement. To build a culture of inquiry, educators need to scrutinise their practices and their impact on learner wellbeing. Inquiry can be messy and confronting, but can lead to new learnings, insights and new questions: time spent by educators inquiring together, building on strengths, being willing to take risks, being open to new ideas and change, also ensures improvements will be significant and sustainable. This approach supports educator wellbeing.

**Inquiry-minded improvement recognises** that each site has specific issues relevant to their context. It is a process of continuous improvement involving each educator's commitment to:

- **Reflect**, by examining one's work to challenge familiar ways of viewing issues
- **Question**, by gathering data, mapping current practice, making connections and sorting out thinking
- **Plan**, by utilising data to make informed decisions and demonstrate change
- **Act** based on reflection, questioning and planning.

*The basic [inquiry approach is to] look, think, act [which] should be read as a continually recycling set of activities.*

(Stringer 1999, pp. 18–19)

*Inquiry is an active search for understanding which is facilitated by carefully constructed questions.*

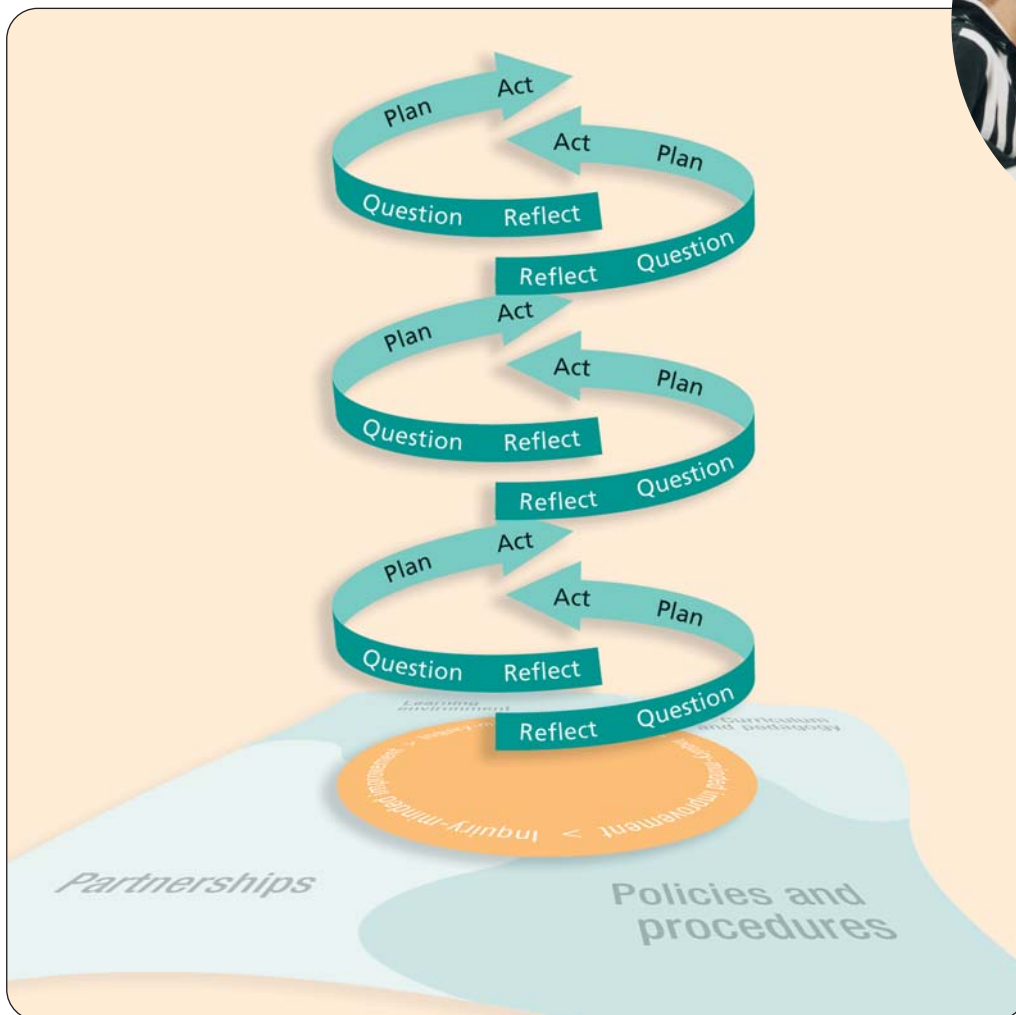
(Yorke-Barr et al 2001, p. 27)

When we explicitly teach about respect, will that lead to greater mutual respect between staff and students?

Fregon Anangu School

## What is inquiry?

Figure 5: Inquiry-minded improvement



(Modified from DECS 2005c)

There are a number of models one can use in inquiry-minded improvement. The model used by 2006 inquiry schools was the 'structured inquiry model', which provides a series of stepped questions:

### Structured inquiry model

- Step 1:** Have we clarified our thinking about learner wellbeing?
- Step 2:** Site analysis: What are we doing well? Where can we improve? What data do we have?
- Step 3:** What is our area of explicit focus for improvement?
- Step 4:** Using data, what is our initial reflection on our area of focus?
- Step 5:** What is our overarching inquiry question for our area of focus?
- Step 6:** Does our strategic action plan include monitoring and documentation?
- Step 7:** Is it time to reflect?

A number of other models can be found on the Learner Wellbeing website.



When we change the way in which we interact with students in the classroom, will levels of engagement improve?

Mawson Lakes Primary School

Every time we focus on our practice, we change things and improve and this always increases the quality (of relationships) for children.

Clare Valley Children's Centre

## What are the implications for practice?

- > Research has indicated there are many connections between learning and wellbeing. The process of learning is dependent upon the learner making complex neural connections. The ability to build these connections is constrained in a state of prolonged or high anxiety or when subject to distracting outside influences. Within safe, secure learning environments, where basic needs are met and, furthermore, wellbeing is addressed, stress and anxiety lowers (Caine & Caine 1994; Goleman 1996).

Positive learning environments allow the connections to be made within learners' brains and, consequently, learning flows (Sylwester, cited in Weare 2000). Achieving mastery in an area of learning increases feelings of wellbeing. There are also skills, abilities and understandings important to the development of wellbeing. Collectively, these may be referred to as 'capabilities for wellbeing' and they can be learned and taught explicitly. Directly related to the dimensions of wellbeing, these might include, for example, problem solving, resilience, diet and exercise, effective communication skills and explicitly teaching altruism.

A state of relaxed alertness and a balance of low threat and high challenge are the ideal states for higher order functioning and the optimal emotional climate for learning (Caine & Caine 1994).

Early experiences influence the development of these brain pathways, especially in the areas of memory, learning and behaviour. There is 'increasing evidence that the early period of child development affects cognition, learning and behaviour in the later stages of life' (Mustard, 2002, p.23). Further significant neural development occurs in adolescence as a learner matures into adulthood.

Our society is continually changing and becoming increasingly complex. The challenge for educators is to think and act responsively in their changing world. Learning needs to provide learners with skills and strategies to cope with and respond to change; to have a say; and to develop agency that allows them to influence their current and future world.

It was not until we put wellbeing into the core that we were able to see how it impacted on everything we do.

Mawson Lakes  
Primary School

*Positive educator to educator relationships are the most influential factor for improvement within education and care settings.*

(Hart et al 2006)

**Positive relationships are paramount.** Educators who are respectful, interested and caring build positive relationships with learners and those associated with them. Partnerships are fostered through reciprocal communication and sharing of information. These relationships create optimum conditions for wellbeing and successful learning. In positive relationships, learners will interact with others; participate; ask questions; seek help; take risks; and be reassured of their capabilities and worth. These interactions are central to any new learning. Positive student to student relationships are also influential in fostering wellbeing.

**A whole of site approach to inquiry and improvement in education is the most effective.**

Learning is scaffolded with consistent approaches and inclusive policies and practice. A common and agreed approach will have the greatest educational influence on the future of a learner. At the same time it also maximises conditions of security and safety. 'It takes a village to raise a child.' (African proverb)

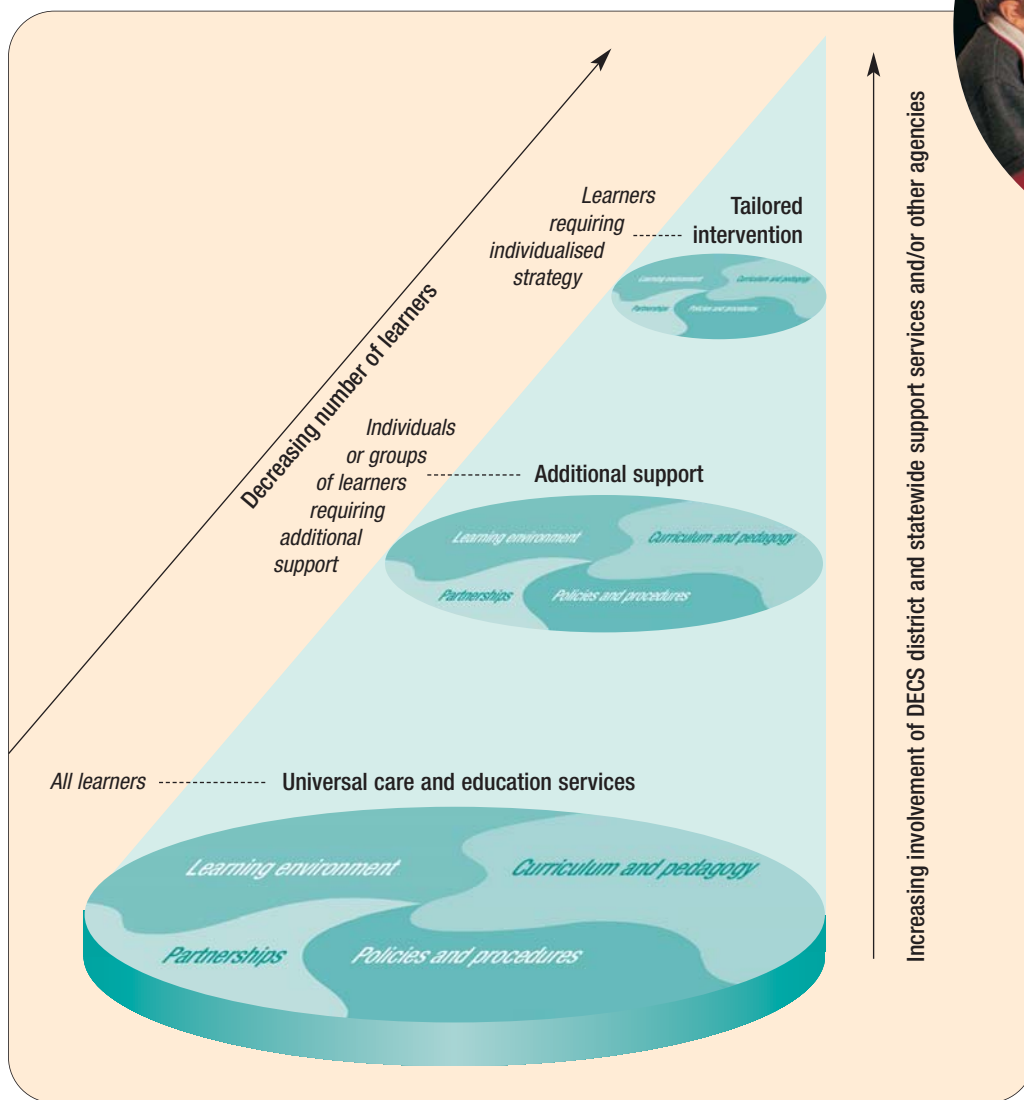
When we introduce a variety of socially inclusive strategies and programs, will this empower our children and families to be more socially inclusive?

Poonindie Community  
Kindergarten



## What are the implications for practice?

Figure 6: A holistic approach to promote learner wellbeing



**A holistic approach to wellbeing ensures maximum benefit for individual learners.** It assists educators to map and inquire into the effectiveness of their practice across the domains and within the dimensions of wellbeing for individuals, classes and a whole site. Some learners require additional support and others an individualised strategy to address their wellbeing and learning needs. These needs may be short term or ongoing. Additional support and tailored strategies build on the universal approaches that promote the wellbeing of all learners in a site. Figure 6 illustrates a holistic approach to the promotion of learner wellbeing.

**An educator's wellbeing impacts on their ability to influence learner wellbeing.** An educator's wellbeing is central to their own learning, and continuous learning is central to educator wellbeing. How an educator deals with their own stress or high anxiety can impact on their ability to create safe, secure learning environments for their learners.

**Everything educators do has the potential to influence wellbeing.**

## What are the implications for practice?

### What are the links to South Australian Curriculum Standards and Accountability (SACSA) Framework?

How does our focus on wellbeing contribute to an effective play-based curriculum?

Murray Bridge South Kindergarten

Wellbeing is an integral aspect of curriculum and pedagogy. The processes used for curriculum delivery have the ability to improve or hinder wellbeing. **Constructivist learning is the optimum process for promoting wellbeing.** This process builds on and respects a learner's prior knowledge, experiences, interests, differences and culture. It encourages learner dialogue, questioning, initiative, creativity and reflection. The learner makes choices in their learning and is an active participant, both in the learning and in the assessment of their progress and achievement. This learning cycle model, whilst it takes time, also assists learners to make learning connections and accept differing perspectives.

In particular, the Essential Learnings within the SACSA Framework outline capabilities crucial to developing learner wellbeing:

- **Futures:** developing the flexibility to respond to change and have a say in one's future
- **Identity:** developing a sense of self, and respect for other individuals and groups
- **Interdependence:** developing the ability to work in cross-cultural harmony with others for common good
- **Thinking:** developing the ability to question, appraise, make decisions, and to be innovative and creative
- **Communication:** developing the ability to communicate across a range of media.

One of the most positive aspects of a wellbeing inquiry is that it acts as a catalyst for so many other questions...about resilience, connectedness, mentoring, induction of staff and students, self-esteem, problem-solving...

Tintinara Area School

### Connections and coherence

The Wellbeing Framework assists sites to draw together, connect, and make coherent a range of DECS policies, programs and projects that equip learners to act for their own and others' wellbeing. Some are listed below and sites may add their own:

- health promotion
- being active
- mentoring/buddying/cross-age tutoring
- behaviour management
- learning and transition pathways
- individualised learning plans/learning styles
- child protection
- attendance
- student voice/community projects/citizenship
- beliefs and values
- drug strategies
- safe schools

What are the preferred learning styles of our present year 8 students? What methodologies and learning experiences are engaging students at present?

Waikerie High School



- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

## How do we know we are making a difference?

Evaluation is an element throughout the inquiry process. As the word suggests, evaluate means placing a value, a standard or making a judgement of worth on information gathered (Smith & Lovat 1990). Effective site-based evaluation will demonstrate the improvement or the 'distance travelled' in a rigorous inquiry into learner wellbeing. It allows a site to collect evidence, reflect on changes achieved and to be accountable to their community. Key components of change include improvement in outcomes for learners, educator practice, and site policy and practice.

Evaluation can incorporate existing, site adapted, and/or site developed material and tools such as:

- audits
- mapping
- rubrics
- data collection
- socio-grams
- surveys
- questionnaires
- video records
- photographic records
- observations
- learning stories
- professional journals
- dialogues
- reports
- vignettes
- and more

Existing data collection tools include the following:



- social and emotional wellbeing surveys
- audits of site practices
- levels of involvement indicators, for example, from Ferre Laevers
- annual report surveys, for example, in the DECS Improvement and Accountability Framework (DIAF)
- behaviour and attendance data, for example, from EDSAS and Dux Assists
- achievement software, for example, in SACSA.

Using both qualitative and quantitative forms of data will deepen an inquiry. Data collection needs to respond to the local context: it is most useful and relevant when developed inside the inquiry process. It can be used to inform and document significant learning in the inquiry journey. Dialogue about developing evaluation processes, the information a site decides to collect and what it implies can be as important as the actual data collected.

Examples of **reflective questions** to deepen the dialogue are:

- What is the most effective way to gain the information we need for our inquiry?
- What is actually happening here?
- What are we doing well?
- Are all voices being heard: leaders, educators, learners, parents and other partners?
- Who is being advantaged and/or disadvantaged?
- What is the evaluation telling us?
- How do we build sustainability into our change practice?

In conclusion **we will know we have made a difference** when our indicators and evidence show:

- Learners are engaged in learning and their wellbeing is optimised.
- Educators are professionally excited and engaged in their work together.
- Community partnerships are strongly interconnected.
- Curriculum and pedagogy, policy and practice are congruent and coherent.
- Wellbeing initiatives and changes are ongoing and sustainable.

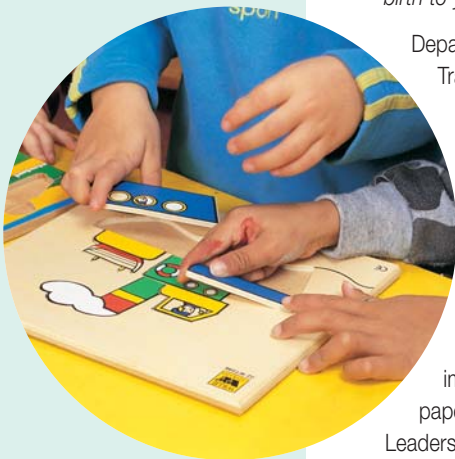


By bringing to life our values, will it improve our staff and student relationships?

McDonald Park School

## References

- > Caine R & Caine G (1994) *Making connections: teaching and the human brain*, Addison-Wesley, Menlo Park, CA: also available through Cain Publications at [www.cainelearning.com](http://www.cainelearning.com) (accessed 15 November 2006)
- Department of Education and Children's Services (2005a) *Wellbeing is central to learning*, DECS, Adelaide
- Department of Education and Children's Services (2005b) *Statement of Directions 2005–2010*, DECS, Adelaide
- Department of Education and Children's Services (2005c) *Moving forward with SACSA Strategy*, CD-ROM, DECS, Adelaide
- Department of Education and Children's Services (2006) *Towards a Learner Wellbeing Framework for birth to year 12*, DECS, Adelaide
- Department of Education, Training and Employment (2001) *South Australian Curriculum, Standards and Accountability Framework*, DETE, Adelaide
- Gammage P (2004) 'Well-being and visible pedagogies: making the implicit explicit', unpublished paper delivered at DECS Leaders Forum on Wellbeing, November 2004
- Goleman D (1996) *Emotional intelligence*, Bloomsbury, London
- Hart PM, Lewis M, McIntosh M & Dingle R (2006) 'Using staff, student and parent opinion surveys to drive school improvement: a diagnostic and development guide', unpublished manuscript, Insight SRC, Melbourne
- Hunter Institute of Mental Health (2006) 'Social and emotional wellbeing' Response ABILITY: Mental health resources for tertiary education, website initiative of the Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing. Implemented by the Hunter Institute of Mental Health available at [www.responseability.org](http://www.responseability.org) (accessed 22 November 2006)
- Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs, 1999, *The Adelaide Declaration on National Goals for Schooling in the Twenty-first Century*, Curriculum Corporation, Victoria, available at [www.mceetya.edu.au/mceetya/nationalgoals](http://www.mceetya.edu.au/mceetya/nationalgoals) (accessed 20 November 2006)
- Mustard F (2002) 'Early childhood development and the brain—the base for health, learning and behaviour throughout life' in ME Young (Ed) *From Early Childhood Development to Human Development*, The World Bank, Washington
- National Crime Prevention (1999) 'Pathways to prevention: Developmental and early intervention approaches to crime in Australia', Attorney-General's Department, Canberra
- Pollard E & Davidson L (2001) 'Foundations of child well-being', Action Research in Family and Early Childhood Monograph Series, UNESCO, Paris
- Reid A (2004) *Towards a culture of inquiry in DECS*, Occasional Paper No 1, Department of Education and Children's Services, Adelaide
- Roberts R (2005) 'Companionable learning from birth to three years: the foundation of resilient wellbeing?', paper delivered to the 15<sup>th</sup> annual conference of European Early Childhood Education Research Association, Dublin
- Shah H & Marks N (2004) *A well-being manifesto for a flourishing society*, New Economics Foundation (nef), London
- Smith DL & Lovat TJ (2003) *Curriculum—action on reflection*, (4<sup>th</sup> edition), Social Science Press, Sydney
- Stringer, ET (1999) *Action research*: 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, SACE Publications, Thousand Oaks, Cal
- United Nations (1959) *Declaration of the Rights of the Child*, available at [www.un.org/cyberschoolbus/humanrights/resources/child.asp](http://www.un.org/cyberschoolbus/humanrights/resources/child.asp) (accessed 10 November 2006)
- Weare K (2000) *Promoting mental, emotional and social health: a whole school approach*, Routledge, London
- Yorke-Barr J, Sommers WA, Ghre GS & Montie J (2001) *Reflective practice to improve schools: An action guide for educators*, Corwin Press, California







Wellbeing is the combined physical, social, emotional, cognitive and spiritual state of being. Positive wellbeing includes being optimistic and engaging with life. It means having a sense of purpose, self-acceptance and positive relationships.

The DECS Learner Wellbeing Framework for birth to year 12 has been constructed in response to and with the input of stakeholders across all levels of DECS. It is both theoretically sound and grounded in practice. Through an inquiry-minded approach, the DECS Learner Wellbeing Framework for birth to year 12 will assist sites in laying the foundations for ongoing sustainable improvements in learner wellbeing, both now and in the future.