Mental Health and Wellbeing – whose job is it anyway??

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Outcomes of this session

✓ What the audit told us
✓ What do school’s said they need to support students with mental health issues?
✓ What we are now doing to support schools?
WA scene


- 23% of 0 to 14 year olds are affected by mental health disorder
- 1 in 6 aged between 4 & 17 years old experience mental health problems
- Real problems in rural and remote communities and access to services
Mental health affects 1 in 4 young people

75% of all severe mental illnesses occur before age of 25 years

“EVERY CHILD DESERVES A CHAMPION — AN ADULT WHO WILL NEVER GIVE UP ON THEM, WHO UNDERSTANDS THE POWER OF CONNECTION, AND INSISTS THAT THEY BECOME THE BEST THAT THEY CAN POSSIBLY BE.”

RITA PIERSON
Why the increase?

- Trauma
- Cyberbullying
- Poor physical health
- Body dissatisfaction
- Drug and alcohol
- Changes to family structure
- FIFO
- Education pressures e.g. NAPLAN
- Social/cultural changes
- Economic factors
Whose job is it anyway?

- Parents/carers?
- Government?
- Department of Health?
- Schools?
- Family?
- Grandparents?

It is easier to build up a child than it is to repair an adult.
For children and young people it is the capacity to enjoy and benefit from a satisfying family life, interpersonal relationships and educational opportunities.

- Develop – effective coping skills, secure attachments and positive social relationships
Why the Catholic Education Audit?

- Increase in numbers of students diagnosed with mental health disorder
- Highest groups – anxiety; PTSD; ODD & depression
- HOWEVER – formal and informal reporting showed increases in numbers of students with difficulty and the IMPACT of this
Why the Catholic Education Audit?

• Schools unsure of their role – assumptions, values, beliefs and attitudes
• How much did teachers understand about mental health?
• How confident are schools in identifying and supporting students?
"Students who are loved at home, come to school to learn, and students who aren't, come to school to be loved.

-Nicholas A. Ferroni

The Audit

- All schools invited to participate in Audit – 156 responses (97%)
- Audit – Demographics, Staff views, Whole school planning, Family role, Outside agencies/resources accessed
- Part I – schools only
Audit results -

- 60% of schools definitely see it as part of their role in supporting students with mental health needs
- Only 3% said not their role but 37% unsure
- Diagnosed and undiagnosed students (20%) have large impact on student achievement and learning
- 49% high link between behaviour and academic progress
Audit results – identification & support

- 73% somewhat confident in detecting early signs of MH problems
- 49% schools said had clear processes to support students
- 10% had minimal processes
- 73% schools said mental health and well being is a high priority in their school
- 24% somewhat of a priority
- 3% said not a priority
The kids who need the most love will ask for it in the most unloving of ways.
Specific groups with higher needs – those with medical issues; other disability, CALD, Aboriginal students sees as having higher risk

81% of schools has accessed professional learning on mental health mainly on mental health prevention and promotion and anxiety but said needed more
SCHOOLS -
- 71% of schools said they can impact on the mental health of a student
- 23% not sure
- 6% said schools had no influence
Audit – what school’s said their role was.....

- Identification of students in need
- Support of promotion and prevention
- Linking & liaising with agencies
- Prevention role by creating positive learning/caring school environment
- Case management
- Partnerships/support for parents
What schools said they wanted:

- Professional learning for staff – how to identify and support students
- External specialised support e.g mental health nurses, psychologists to visit
- Flexible funding for students
- Better access to and communication with external agencies – CAMHS
What schools said they wanted:

- More support from agencies, Department of Health
- Help in regional and remote schools
- Parent support groups
- Wrap around services needed
What schools said they wanted:

- Greater number of school psychologists
- Case management support and time in schools
- Whole school processes

“...if kids come to us from strong, healthy functioning families, it makes our job easier. If they do not come to us from strong, healthy, functioning families, it makes our job more important.”

- Barbara Colorose
What schools want from CEWA

- Expert assistance on site
- Professional learning
- Awareness of the difficulties schools face/advocacy
- More resources for extra support
- Timely support when crisis
- Policy and guidelines
How we responded?

- Trauma Informed Schools projects across the state
- Increased professional learning for CEWA staff and schools
- Partnerships across three Education sectors in WA
- Development of system policy/procedures to guide best practice in schools
How we responded?

- Suicide Prevention planning and training
- Joined up support for our CARE schools and schools at high risk
- Beginning to source agencies that can partner with us to provide training and support for families
- Identifying lighthouse schools
Teachers can make a difference – we need to enable them....