Giving them WINGS:
Professional development for supporting children’s social and emotional wellbeing.

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Overview

- Wings: Social and Emotional Wellbeing in the Early Years 0-5 years (WINGS), is a program of professional development to support educators in early years services to improve outcomes for children.
- It is a strengths-based approach, supporting educators to understand the impact of their interactions and to use communication strategies in developing the capacity of children.
- The pilot was examined using realistic evaluation principles (Pawson and Tilley, 1997).
- The pilot of the WINGS program was an opportunity to review the impact of the professional development of educators within early learning centres.
Wings

- The program is divided into ten modules
- Focusing on the importance of interactions, communication and the learning environment for fostering children's development of skills and strategies for wellbeing and resilience.
Introduction

- Wings provides a platform for educators to critically reflect upon – *How will I be with children*
- Every interaction with a child impacts upon their wellbeing and mental health
- Hardwiring of the brain
Training delivery

- Whole of service
- 10 hours of training customised to suit the context
- Mentoring
- Manual
- Resources – puppets, children’s books to explore the learning components
Methodology

- Pilot program implemented in five child care centres in Queensland.
- Each centre involved has different demographics.
- The data set has provided deep insights and informed future program development.
# Theoretical approach – Realist Evaluation

## Phase 1
- Context
- Mechanism
- Outcome (CMO)
- Systematic Reviews, Interviews with Pathways staff

## Phase 2
- Testing Program Theory
  - Most significant change
  - Pre and post surveys
  - Follow up interviews
  - Journals

## Phase 3
- Refining program theory
- Analysis and interpretation
- Refined CMO configurations
Most Significant Change

- Module 1 - 35% of participants remarked about talking and listening to babies

“I remember the trainer said put something in every child’s emotional cup. This has been a goal of mine – I am more mindful of creating more pleasant nappy changing experiences.” (Participant 52)
Most Significant Change cont.

- Module 3 - The techniques on calmness, breathing, relaxation and sensory awareness received the highest satisfaction rating across the centres.

*I am more aware of how we say and do things and the effect they have on children, on how we can develop their thinking and being.*

(Participant 51)
Changes in Knowledge and Confidence

![Graphs showing changes in knowledge and confidence](image)
Outcomes for children

- Ability to self regulate
- Articulate feelings and fears
- Changes to the environment

Within one week of using the WINGS strategies, the fight/flight response usually used by [child] changed. [child] started to use more descriptive communication. It was amazing to see a two-year-old focus. (Participant 2)