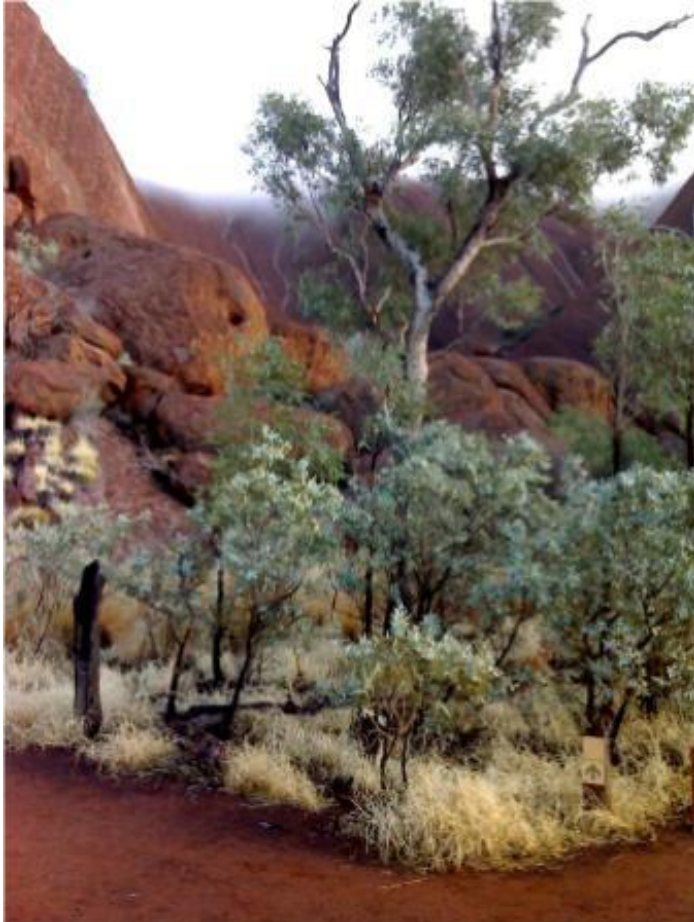




Mental health initiatives for children in early childhood settings and schools



Jo Cole & Chris Champion



I would like to acknowledge the traditional custodians of this land and pay my respects to Elders past, present and future, for they hold the memories, the traditions, the culture and hopes of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians.

Session outline

What?

How?

Context

Outcomes

Kids Matter 



What do we do?

KidsMatter aims to contribute to:

Improve the mental health and wellbeing of children.

Reduce mental health difficulties among children.

Achieve greater support for children experiencing mental health difficulties and their families.

Children who are mentally healthy...

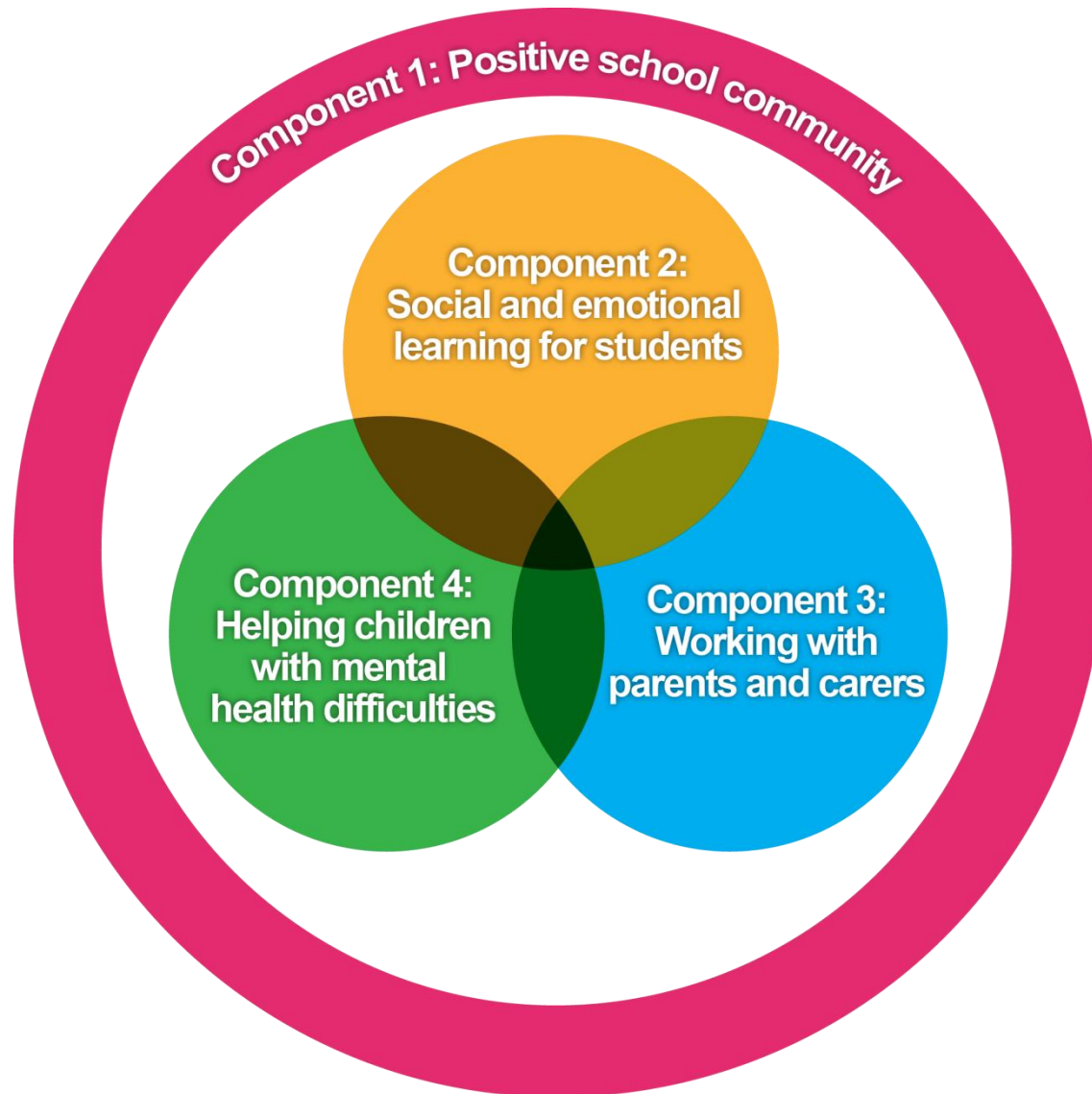
- Learn better and achieve more
- Are motivated and committed
- Have positive relationships
- Are better able to meet life's challenges
- Can contribute to their families, friends and society in ways that are appropriate for their age
- Manage the transition to school, adolescence and adulthood more successfully

(Raphael, 2000)

Risk factors – Increase the likelihood of a child experiencing mental health difficulties or a disorder.

Protective factors – Act to strengthen a child's mental health and wellbeing and improve resistance to risk factors, making it less likely that they will develop mental health difficulties.

The four components

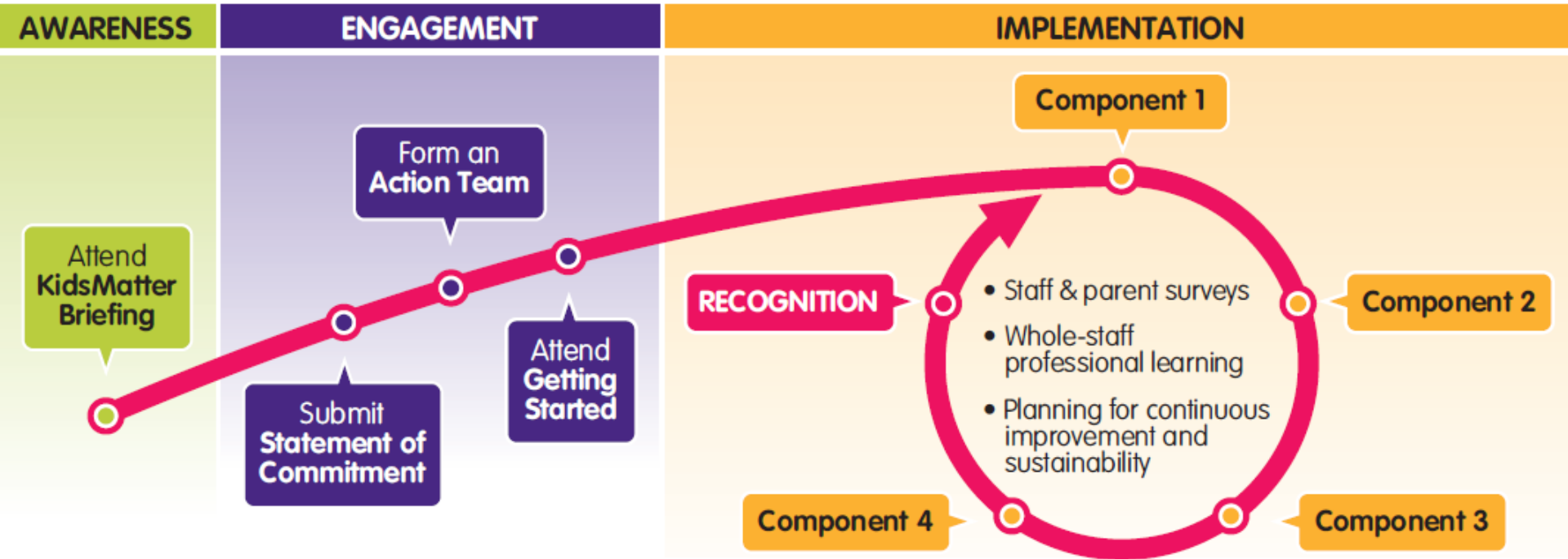


Kids Matter 



How is it done?

KidsMatter Primary Implementation Map



Implementation success factors

- Flexible framework and tools
- Support by KidsMatter staff in each state and territory
- Leadership by the Action Team (schools) or Leadership Team (ECEC services)
- Requires leaders to commit to whole-setting change
- Evidence-based

Implementation success factors

- All staff professional learning
- High quality resources
- Step-by-step planning process
- Assists schools & services to connect with external support
- Link to existing frameworks in health, education and ECEC

Kids Matter



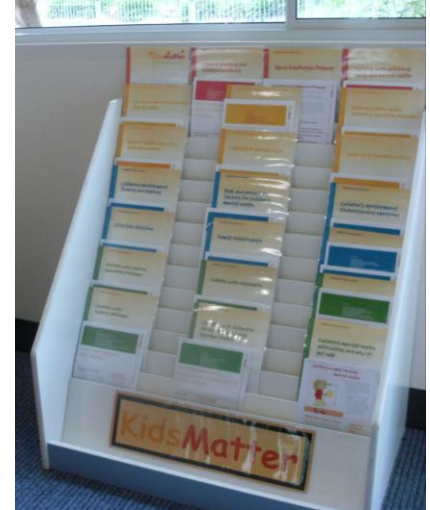
Where is it done?

Whole school celebrations



All students and staff wore a red shirt on the last day of term to celebrate their work with Component 1

Welcoming and resourcing parents



Some schools provide a parent space where information is shared and parents feel welcome



Westlawn Pre-school



CALEB Bartick, 5, holds up the weighty bag of coins, totalling \$400, that fellow Westlawn pre-school kids raised for the Orangutan Project.

Monkey business

Adopted 8 orangutan babies as a part of implementing component 1 *creating a sense of community* and component 2 *developing children's social and emotional skills* at the service



Kids Matter



What are the outcomes?

Benefits: schools and community

KidsMatter provides:

- an umbrella for bringing together existing wellbeing policies and practices
- processes for building a school mental health and wellbeing strategic plan
- a common language for the whole community
- stronger parent engagement and parenting capacity
- more effective partnerships with community
- improved student educational outcomes.

(Flinders University, 2009)

Positive outcomes for:

Children

Families

Early Childhood Education and Care Services

Staff have described:

KidsMatter is “transformational”

A calmer, more settled atmosphere and transition process from one year to the next

More engagement and better relationships with families

Increased capacity to support children’s social and emotional development and to assist children experiencing difficulties

www.kidsmatter.edu.au



- Schools
- Early Childhood Education and Care
- Families
- Health and Community



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ADVANCED SEARCH

Growing healthy minds

Childhood is a crucial time for growing healthy minds. All children need care and support to develop and learn. Some children need additional help to reach their potential. KidsMatter is a mental health and wellbeing framework for primary schools and early childhood education and care services, and is proven to make a positive difference to the lives of Australian children.



[View transcript of video](#)

Schools



Early Childhood
Education and Care



Families



Health and
Community



Questions

