

BRAIN GYM

Connection counts: Teacher-student relationships matter for teacher wellbeing

Key Takeways

- Positive teacher-student relationships enhance teacher wellbeing.
- Good relationships foster emotional balance and professional motivation.
- Poor relationships increase stress and risk of burnout.
- Strengthening relationships should be a school-wide priority.
- Teachers can nurture connections through everyday gestures.

[AITSL Standards: 1,3,4,7](#)

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Why Your School's Lead Indicators Aren't Leading

Key Takeways

- The goal isn't to make schools more corporate. It's to make them more **conscious** and aware of the actions that are likely to create better outcomes tomorrow.
- Schools confuse evidence with impact.
- Without the right indicators, schools end up tracking what's visible instead of what's valuable.

[AITSL Standards: 1, 3, 5 and 6](#)

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This Week's Mini PD

The BEAR Method A Clear Framework for Giving Constructive Negative Feedback

Giving negative feedback to colleagues or students can feel uncomfortable, yet it is essential for growth, performance, and strong relationships in a school. The BEAR method was developed by *P.L. Harms* and *D.B. Roebuck* and offers a structured and compassionate way to deliver feedback that is clear, fair, and actionable.

BEAR stands for **B**ehaviour, **E**ffect, **A**lternative, and **R**esult, with each step supporting productive communication. The method can be adapted to help you work more effectively with either colleagues or students.

Behaviour describes what you saw or heard, not assumptions about personality. State exactly what happened in simple, concrete words. For example, instead of a vague criticism, note that an agreed deadline was missed. Clear wording helps avoid defensiveness and confusion.

Effect shares how the behaviour impacted you or others. This links actions to outcomes and lets you express concerns such as extra stress, delays, or added pressure on colleagues or students.

Alternative moves the discussion toward improvement. Here, you clearly describe what you would like to see done differently and offer practical suggestions. Including expectations, timeframes, or specific actions ensures the feedback is actionable and achievable.

Result highlights the positive outcomes of change. This might include smoother workflow or habits, reduced pressure on self or others or improved trust and performance. It reinforces motivation by showing how change benefits both the individual and the wider group.

Used with either colleagues or students, the BEAR method can turn negative feedback into a constructive, respectful dialogue that supports accountability, clarity, and continuous improvement.

Student Spotlight

If students can imagine catastrophe, they can imagine possibility. Overthinking is energy, not a flaw. We can help redirect it toward curiosity, planning, and hope. Teach students to question fears, rehearse success, and practice compassion. The same mind that spirals can also strategise, create, and grow with guidance and patience.

Health Spotlight

A 24-Year-Old's Death From Dementia Shows It's Not Just A Concern For The Elderly

In [healthy aging](#), the brain changes slowly.....But in aggressive forms of dementia, whole brain networks collapse at once.

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Happy, Silly Thoughts



Jim takes a moment to review his career choices.

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