

## BRAIN GYM

### 'We took out all the group work': School's instructional shift lifts literacy outcomes

#### Key Takeways

- Replace low-impact group rotations with explicit, teacher-led instruction because novice learners need clear modelling and guidance.
- Use whole-class teaching with carefully sequenced scaffolding so students master each skill before progressing.
- Implement a consistent, evidence-based literacy approach (phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and rich texts) across all year levels.
- Drive change through external expertise and early adopters who model success and build staff buy-in.
- Adapt proven practices to your context and commit to long-term implementation, recognising that meaningful improvement takes time.

AITSL Standards: 2.5, 3.2 & 3.6

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### An unbroken night's sleep is a myth. Here's what good sleep looks like

#### Key Takeways

Sleep disorders are common. Up to 25 per cent of adults have insomnia, a sleep disorder where it may be hard to fall or stay asleep, or you may wake earlier in the morning than you'd like.....

.....Understanding your sleep patterns may help identify and adjust behaviours that negatively impact your sleep, such as your bedtime routine and sleeping environment.

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## This Week's Mini PD

# Building Strong Children An Investment That Lasts a Lifetime

Every adult, especially those who work in schools, knows the weight of watching a young person struggle – not just academically, but emotionally, socially, and mentally. Too often, our systems are designed to respond to crisis rather than prevent it. We should be sure we have shifted our focus. Rather than spending our greatest resources repairing broken adults, we must invest in building strong children from the very beginning.

Schools are uniquely positioned to lead this movement. Children and teenagers spend thousands of hours within school walls during their most formative years. That time is not just an opportunity to value the teaching of mathematics, literacy and other subjects – it is a chance to build resilience, emotional intelligence, self-worth, and a sense of belonging.

Research consistently shows that children who develop strong social-emotional foundations are less likely to experience mental health crises in adulthood, more likely to maintain healthy relationships, and better equipped to handle life's inevitable setbacks. Prevention, quite simply, works.

This does not require abandoning academic rigour. It means weaving wellbeing into the fabric of school culture through mentoring programmes, open conversations about feelings, teaching conflict resolution, and ensuring every young person feels seen and valued.

The cost of neglect dwarfs the cost of early investment. Addiction services, mental health wards, and prisons are filled with adults whose suffering began in childhood – pain that, with the right support at the right time, might never have taken root at all.

Schools get it. Strong children grow into capable, compassionate adults – and that's the most powerful lesson an institution can teach. They work tirelessly to build young people up precisely so society doesn't have to piece them back together later. The rest of the world needs to take note.

## Wellbeing Spotlight

### Competence

The world trusts schools to demonstrate and develop competence, individually and communally. The ongoing development of competence is a key wellbeing indicator in education - not only for students but staff as well.

## Drop of Wisdom

I am not what  
happened to me.  
I am what I choose to  
become.

Carl Gustav Jung

## Happy, Silly Thoughts

God gave us mouths that  
close and ears that don't.



That must tell us something.

**Disclaimer:** This information is not intended to replace the advice of appropriate relevant qualified practitioners.

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