

Cette présentation a été effectuée le 28 novembre 2011, au cours de la Rencontre internationale *La prochaine décennie pour les écoles favorisant la santé, le bien-être et la réussite éducative* dans le cadre des 15^{es} Journées annuelles de santé publique (JASP 2011). L'ensemble des présentations est disponible sur le site Web des JASP à la section *Archives* au : <http://jasp.inspq.qc.ca/>.


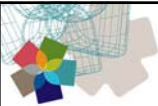


Supporting children's and young people's resilience in schools

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Paper presented at JASP - 15es Journées annuelles de santé publique (15th Annual Public Health Days) 28 November to 1 December 2011 in Montreal, Quebec, Canada
Other Views, Other Ways: Health Promoting Schools - Schools that Promote Health, Well-being and Educational Success in the Next Decade

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Resilience

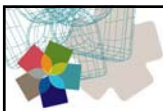
- Complex and multifaceted concept
- A human capacity that can be developed and strengthened in *all* people
- **Resilient children/young people** are 'those who thrive and develop despite challenging circumstances'
- Resilience as dynamic and contingent

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Supporting resilience: the study

- **Aim:** to investigate the phenomenon of resilience in depth within the context of significant periods of transition for children and young people who live in disadvantaged areas
- Following three cohorts (initially resilient) through key transitions
- Findings will expand knowledge about role of environment, relationships within educational settings and inter agency relationships in promoting and protecting resilience
- Explore differences: metropolitan, regional, rural
- Funding – Australian Research Council linkage project
- Industry partners :
 - Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (DEECD)
 - VicHealth (statewide health promotion agency)
 - Community Connections (a statewide NGO)



Cohort demographics (age and sex)



Cohort	Males	Females	Total	Age range
Early	7	19	26	4-6
Middle	4	7	11	11-13
Post-compulsory	4	14	18	17-28
Total	15	40	55	4-28

Data sources

	Early	Middle	Post-compulsory
Children/ young people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pretend play assessment, CHIPPA, yearly • Peer play assessment, PIPPS, yearly • Observations at school (every term) • Creative writing sample • Transition statements (yearly) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interviews • Ecomap • Health related quality of life (AQoL) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interviews • Ecomap • AQoL
Parents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interviews (yearly) • Social networks/resource mobilisation (Ecomap) 	?	?
Teachers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interviews (yearly) 	•interviews	•interviews
Other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interviews with relevant agencies that schools interact with/ children/young people/ families use • Social and demographic data on school and residential locality 		

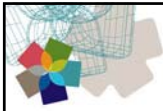
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Early childhood: supportive relationships with teachers

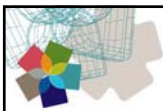
- communication with parents and children, establishing an understanding of the child's family situation
- being aware when children need time to be listened to and have their feelings acknowledged
- being available for children when needed

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Other strategies used by pre-school staff

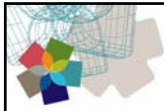
- Supporting development of self-regulation
- Promoting social-emotional learning
- Structuring pre-school environment to support these strategies



'Calm out' – pre-school sensory based program

- 'Well I think it's very calming to start with. And well you learn so much through touch, and sight and feel, and sound, so I just think that the more that we can bring nature into the classroom, it's realistic. You know it's sustainable'. Sarah
- Uses elements of the ALERT program to encourage self-regulation, including strategies such as
 - fiddle toys in a quiet corner of the room
 - breathing exercises with music.
 - children have access to the quiet corner at all times
 - children create and use a vegetable garden
 - use of more natural resources such as glass jars for painting

Williams, M.S., & Shellenberger, S. (1996). How does your engine run? A leader's guide to the Alert Program for self-regulation. Albuquerque, NM: TherapyWorks, Inc.



Primary school programmes

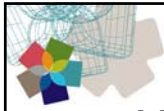
- 'Bounce back'
- 'Four keys'
- 'Jump right in'
- 'You can do it'
- 'Diversity'



Early childhood cohort – supporting resilience

- Pre-school staff strategies
- Families strategies
- Use of community resources





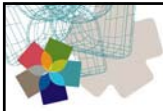
Middle Years cohort – Principals' messages around resilience

- Social isolation vs social capital
 - In country towns, a lack of family involvement in sports causes children's social isolation (especially from their peers) and has health implications
 - Peer conflicts at school often stem from out-of-school incidents
- Diversity and Inclusiveness
 - minority ethnic backgrounds in country towns, feel ostracised, need to be supported and included
- Child Development (nutrition, clothing, basic skills)
 - Increasingly, children with poor language skills are presenting to school, needs to be mitigated with toy libraries, reading groups, school library visits and book borrowing for home readings
 - Breakfast and lunch provisions for those who need food
 - Second hand uniforms and financial subsidies for school camps



Middle Years cohort – Teachers' and Welfare staff's messages around resilience

- Spend a lot of time building relationships with children
- Give students a 'tool box' through creative classes (i.e. drawing, painting) which can be therapeutic if students can't articulate issues:
 - Cognitive skills (critical and rational thinking)
 - Emotional dimension (greet them with a smile each day, positive role modelling)
 - Physical activity (playing with children on yard duty, model interactions)

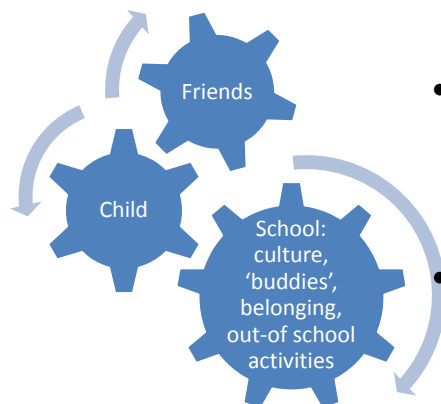


Middle Years cohort – Students' messages around resilience

- Ask for help
- Get a teacher to come and fix it 'cause you don't want to get in trouble or get hurt
- When you get bullied, go to see the teacher
- When you get bullied, just ignore it
- Friends are important
- Always voice your opinions



Middle years



- Friends first for support, advice
- Importance of strong school culture, constancy and sense of belonging, 'identity'
- Family mentioned least



Post-compulsory - Establishing Pathways - I

- Ms M, rural student is undertaking studies towards Year 12 VCE as well as a Dental traineeship Certificate III course. The Certificate III in Dental Assistance is a two year traineeship program which involves a triadic collaborative agreement between the secondary school, employer and a vocational institution. For her Certificate III, M was trained on the job one day per week, undertook training via online tuition, and attended 4 x 1 week block training at a TAFE college which was approximately 150 km away. M undertakes the requisite subjects required for VCE over the same two years. Upon completion Year 12, M will also be qualified as a dental assistant.
- Ms R, rural student is studying the Certificate II in Animal Studies which is a VET in School program organised by the secondary school in conjunction with TAFE institution. This involves one half day of training at a TAFE institution approximately 50 km away over a two year period as well as studies towards her VCE. This study will position R to articulate and receive credits into further study in this area. R currently works in a pet store and her employer is keen to retain her employment after Year 12 and Cert II



Post-compulsory - Establishing Pathways - II

- Ms K, regional student is doing a Certificate III in Child Care conducted by a vocational school whilst undertaking VCE studies. This line of study is undertaken independently, not organised through her secondary school.
- Ms B, metro student notes that she is not academic and struggles. She wants to become a PE teacher. She claims this requires an ENTER score in mid 80s and is uncertain she'll get that score. So B is also doing a Certificate III in Personal Training. If her ENTER score isn't high enough then her intent is to work as a personal trainer and apply in the future. Her background research has revealed that work experience in a relevant field will assist her entry into university.
- Six young people (five who attended the metropolitan secondary school and one at TAFE who formerly attended a secondary school) undertook accelerated learning options (completed year 12 subjects during year 11) that would assist them in getting a better VCE result. One rural student also completed Yr 12 Studio Arts whilst in Year 10.



Importance of school: what are students saying

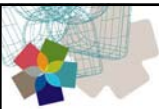
Mr A – Metro student “...to get an education and make something of my life so I establish something, have something left for my kids when I pass away and live a happy life and not have to worry about financial problems and those kinds of thing”

Ms M – Rural student who is doing VCE and Certificate III in Dental Assistant
“At the end of year 12 I’ll be qualified”

Mr S- Metro student – Liberian ethnicity has been in Australia for five years
“...I like school. Yeah I want to do something in life. That’s my dream”.

Ms A- Regional student and young mother

“...when I was 17 and I was a bit stupid back then so I dropped out. I did Year II but half way through Year 12 I just left. Then I had my daughter so I thought I better go back and set a good example and get my Year 12 so I came back”





Principal talks about building up resilience

Mr L – principal of a regional school

“...it’s not that we’re going to try and groom kids to have this belief that life is going to be rosy, it’s life, is not going to be rosy, there’s going to be a hurdle or an obstacle there somewhere but the idea is, is that we help you either develop or find within yourself the skills to rather than making it look like a 11 out of 10 on the Richter scale in terms of crisis, to actually break it down so it’s really only about 4 out of 10 and manageable. Not that the crisis will go away, but to make it manageable.”

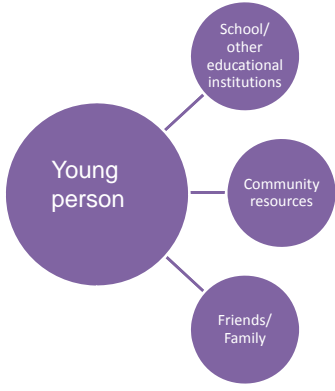
Mr L talks about engaging parents

“...that’s such a challenge because often those parents have had negative school experiences themselves and because of that some of them would not come to school in a fit. They’d rather blast you over the phone and get you to a point where you just have to hang up, rather than coming in, in person.”





Post-compulsory

- Active agency in utilising resources
- Prepared to travel to support goals
- Plans and contingency plans



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Resilience and health promoting schools

- Provides a useful concept for teachers, parents and young people
- Puts (positive) ability of child/young person at the centre
- Strengths based rather than risk and deficit focused
- Empowering
- Worthy of more specific and explicit attention in health promoting schools frameworks and principles

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