

# SCHOOL SURVEY 2021

Schools Plus is a national charity that helps children facing disadvantage succeed at school. Our purpose is to close the education gap and ensure all young Australians reach their potential through access to a great education.

Each year, Schools Plus asks our community of schools to identify their greatest areas of need for additional support. 81 schools across Australia responded this year, with a clear emphasis on mental health and wellbeing.



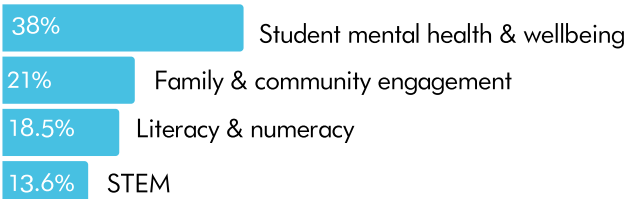
## Students and schools need additional support



### THREE IN FOUR SCHOOLS

intend to apply for a grant in our upcoming round.

The highest priority for schools this year:



**75% of schools intend to apply for additional funding through a Smart Giving grant this year, demonstrating a significant need for support.**

**Responses indicated that initiatives to support mental health and wellbeing were the highest priority for schools, followed by initiatives to promote family and community engagement in student learning.**



## Does COVID-19 play a part?

### OVER 70%

of schools say the priority area of need is directly linked to the impact of COVID-19 to some extent

### OVER 90%

of schools say the events of the last 12-18 months have impacted the mental health and wellbeing of their students

Of the schools most significantly impacted by COVID-19,

## ALMOST 50%

say mental health initiatives are their top priority.

"In 2020, mental health issues were very prevalent among students - fear of the unexpected, the need for consistency in an ever-changing world. In 2021, this continues with a higher number of students diagnosed with mental health issues, especially anxiety."

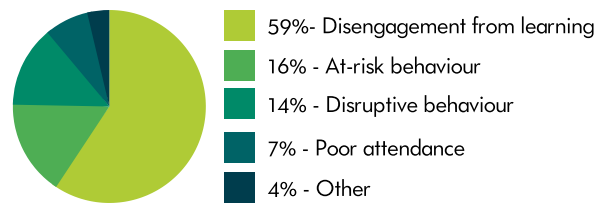


## How is poor mental health and wellbeing impacting students?

82%

believe poor mental health significantly impacts a student's success at school.

How does poor mental wellbeing manifest?

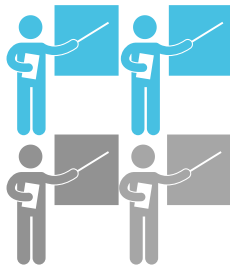


**Teachers overwhelmingly believe that student mental health and wellbeing significantly impact a child's success at school. The majority of respondents believe the most prevalent manifestation of poor mental health is disengagement from learning.**

"Disruptive, unhappy and frustrated students who demonstrate increasing levels of verbal and physical violence/abuse are the order of the day. I have worked for over 30 years in public education and this will probably end up being the hardest year ever (2021)."



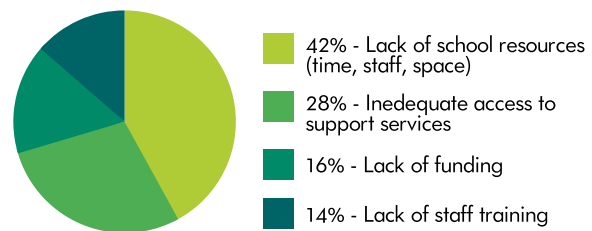
## Challenges facing teachers in addressing wellbeing



**OVER HALF OF TEACHERS**

do not feel well-equipped to recognise and respond to students' mental health issues.

Challenges include:



**53% of respondents do not feel well-equipped to deal with mental health issues and the primary challenge is in lack of resources (time/staff/space), followed by inadequate access to support services.**

"In 2020, my staff worked strongly to provide the positive, safe caring environment, preparing online and face to face lessons, preparing for the worst and presenting the best... We were tireless. In 2021, staff feel isolated, the workload seems insurmountable, they cannot look outside the square to create a solution."



## Teacher mental health and student wellbeing



**LESS THAN 40%**

of teachers feel they are given adequate support to manage their own mental health and wellbeing

Of teachers who do not feel adequately supported to manage their own mental health,

97%

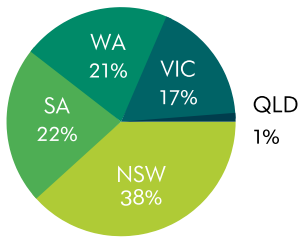
also claimed they did not feel equipped to manage the mental health of their students

**This demonstrates that supporting teachers' mental health and wellbeing has a direct correlation with their capacity to support their students.**

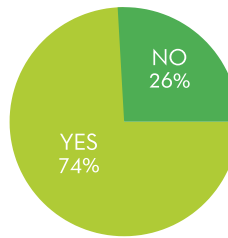
"We have seen a continual decline in our student's mental health over the past several years. As well as disengagement and attendance concerns, poor mental health consumes a significant amount of time at an executive level. This stretches school resources ... and causes a decline in the mental health of our senior executive, who are stretched to capacity in their roles."

# THE FULL RESULTS

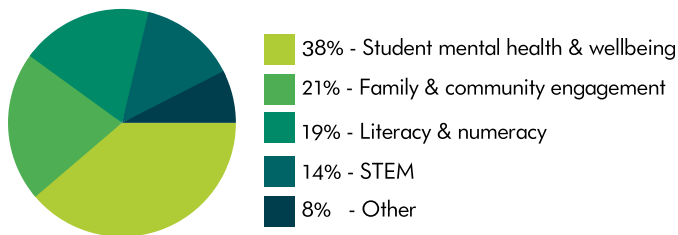
Which state is your school located in?



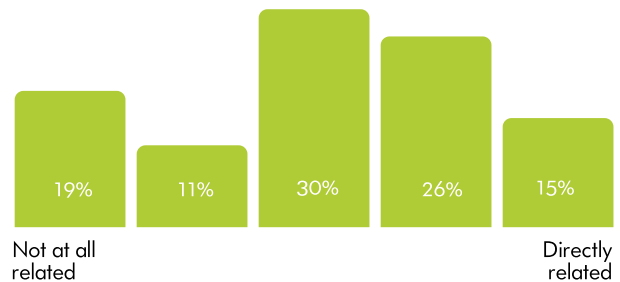
Do you plan to apply for a grant in our 2021 application round?



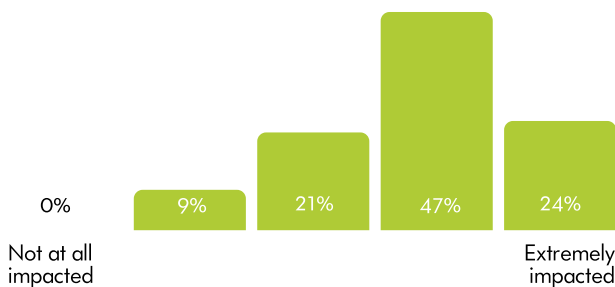
Which of the following areas of need is the highest priority for your school this year?



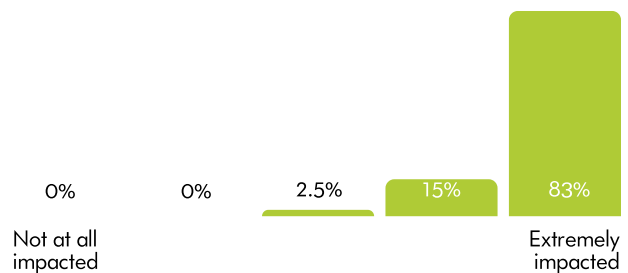
To what extent is this area of need directly related to the ongoing impact of COVID-19?



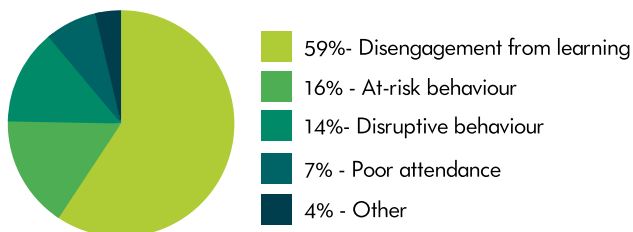
To what extent have the last 12-18 months impacted the mental wellbeing of your students?



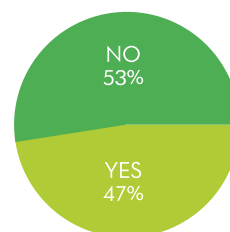
To what extent do you think students' mental health and wellbeing impacts on their success at school?



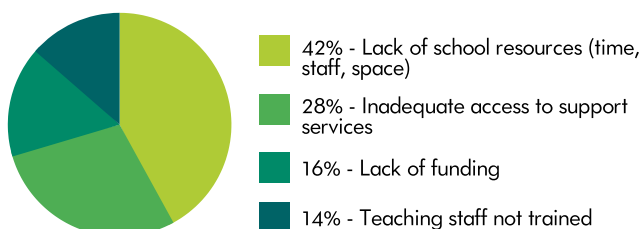
How does poor mental wellbeing manifest in your students?



Do you feel well-equipped to recognise and respond to mental health issues in your students?



What is the biggest challenge you face in supporting your students' mental health?



Do you feel you are given sufficient support to help manage your own mental health and wellbeing?

