

ABSTRACT SUBMISSION AIC 2016: #30

1. Title:

KidsMatter as a driver of effective implementation for children's mental health in education

2. Author(s):

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3. Key words: Mental health; education; framework; children

4. Abstract text:

a. Background and aims

KidsMatter is the national mental health promotion, prevention and early intervention initiative based in schools and early childhood education and care (ECEC) services. The KidsMatter Initiatives have been developed in collaboration with *beyondblue*, the Australian Psychological Society, Principals Australia Institute, Early Childhood Australia and, with funding from, the Australian Government Department of Health and *beyondblue*.

KidsMatter provides schools and ECEC services with a framework to understand and support children's mental health and wellbeing and engage effectively with child and family services to enhance referral pathways.

b. Methods

KidsMatter, since 2006, has expanded in various roll out phases since the pilot evaluations. Ongoing efforts have been made to maintain and strengthen those implementation success factors which were identified as critical in terms of children's mental health outcomes. This has included embracing technological mechanisms to enable expansion while also maintaining the human element to manage competing priorities. Adaptations to incorporate feedback from end-users to streamline the initiatives have also been undertaken to create linkages between KidsMatter Early Childhood and KidsMatter Primary and to also strengthen the initiatives for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families.

c. Conclusion

As a significant national mental health initiative in education settings, KidsMatter provides an opportunity to identify key factors in the upscaling of initiatives which are essential to effective implementation.