



Making it work: strengthening schools' implementation of practices to minimise student bullying behaviour

Abstract:

Implementation refers to the deliberate actions a school can make to improve practices that support student wellbeing and behaviour. Putting a program into practice, even with a strong evidence-base and enthusiastic staff, requires strategic support to bring about enduring change.

Implementation science tells us that this change does not occur as a single event, but rather as a learning process involving four stages: exploring, preparing, delivering, and sustaining a new policy or practice within a school. Each stage requires the development of unique capacity-building supports for staff, as well as activities that build a 'pathway to success'.

Since 2000, over 300 schools have participated in *Friendly Schools* research projects involving the development and implementation of the whole-school intervention to reduce student bullying and build social skills.

This presentation unpacks the formula for successful implementation: The What (evidence-based practice) + the How (evidence-based implementation) + Fit to local context = Significant student outcomes. Key formula inputs will be discussed including: evidence-based practice, data to support a fit to local school context, leadership, organisational structures, staff capacity-building, and the role of duration and intensity in effective school-based interventions.

Key messages:

1. The implementation of interventions to improve school bullying policy and practice is a process, not an event.
2. Formula for successful implementation: The What (evidence-based practice) + the How (evidence-based implementation) + Fit to local context = Significant student outcomes

The What		The How		Fit		Significant
<i>Evidence-Based</i>	+	<i>Evidence-Based</i>	+	<i>Local School</i>	=	Student
<i>Practice</i>		<i>Implementation</i>		<i>Context</i>		Outcomes

3. Putting evidence to work: good implementation of school bullying policy and practice equals good student outcomes.