

# Acknowledgment of Country

Today we are delivering this program from Gadigal Land – Eora Nation

Paying respect to The Elders past, present and future of this place and all the locations we are broadcasting to today



# Mental Health and Wellbeing Conference Webinars

NSW Department of Education Early Childhood  
Directorate

# Welcome



safer  
COMMUNITIES

01

## **Educator Wellbeing**

12pm to 1pm

*We will look at some Mental Health and Wellbeing considerations for the ECEC workforce.*

# **Topics**

02

## **Mental Health in Childhood**

1.15pm to 2.15pm

*We will look at Mental Health and Wellbeing considerations for the age group 0-12.*

03

## **Communication**

2.30pm to 3.30pm

*We will look at Communication in the staffroom and community*



# About Safer Communities

We deliver Mental Health Education with the aim of improving the *Mental Health Literacy* of schools, workplaces and communities.

We are a leader in the delivery of **Mental Health First Aid** programs in Australia. We are able to deliver engaging and evidence based training programs on any topic related to mental health, disability, education or leadership.

Today we are joined by Alena Farrugia who is a colleague and friend from Beyond Limits Learning Clinic. Another Master MHFA provider.



# Your Safety

Today we are exploring Mental Health and Wellbeing

*If this material brings up distress for you*

- Take time out from the presentations
- Check in with a colleague, family member or friend
- See a health professional – Your GP, local hospital
- Contact Mental Health Access Line (NSW) – 1800 011 511
- Contact Lifeline Australia – 13 11 14



# Links to learn more

Anything that has an UNDERLINE in this presentation is a LINK!

- This presentation is a resource for you to use back in your workplace to explore Educator Wellbeing with your colleagues
- The links will take you to activities we undertake today and to resources you can use later.
- You will receive a PDF copy of this presentation with active links
- This presentation will be available to re-watch for 12 months

# Wellbeing for Early Childhood Educators

Let's just start with – **You are amazing!**

This session is time to focus on **your wellbeing!**

Our work as educators and caregivers is a privilege. However, it comes with some extraordinary and unique stressors.

Attach your own oxygen mask before attempting to assist others!





# Three Key Messages

01

The Job of an Educator is never finished

02

There are ways to manage the negative aspects of the role

03

Focus on the things you can **change** or **influence**  
**Accept** the things you cannot

# Your Mask at Work Activity

01

How do you like others to perceive you at work? (The Mask)

02

How do you really feel at work? (Behind the Mask)  
First draw your mask and what is behind

[Describe your drawings at this Google Form](#)

Remember your responses are **100% anonymous** – allow yourself to respond honestly and openly to these questions.

[MASK ACTIVITY LINK](#)

# **Collected responses to the Mask at Work Activity**

# A tough question all educators must ask ourselves!

Do you still **enjoy** the job?

Passion turns stress  
into challenge!



# What brings stress to the educator role?

- Vicarious Trauma
- Emotional Overload
- Community and family expectations are huge
- Diversity in staffroom and community
- Time constraints
- Changing regulatory frameworks
- Self-regulation
- Pay and Conditions

Why is one a different colour?

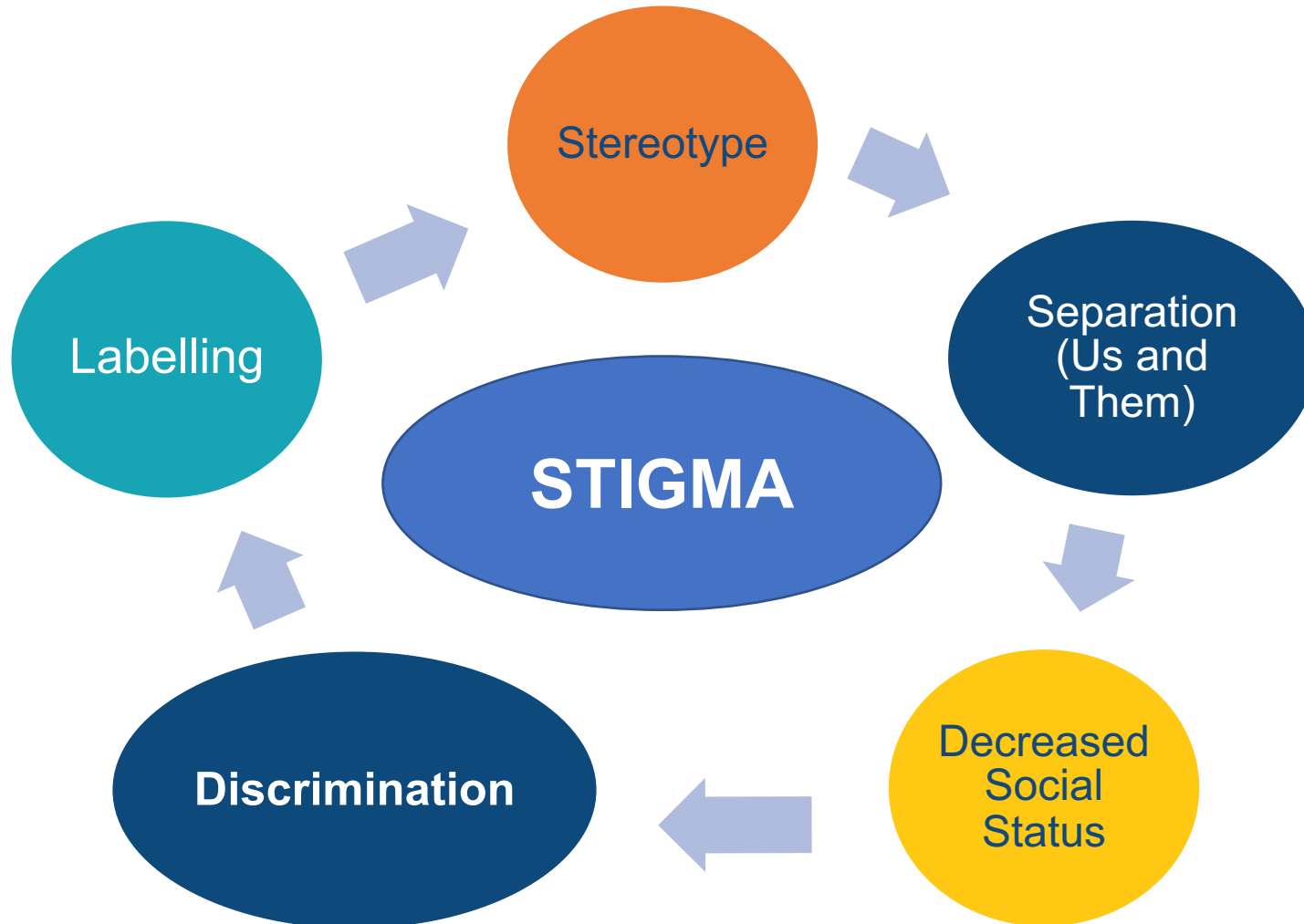
# Video Analysis - Can stress be a good thing?



Psychologist Kelly McGonigal discusses the benefits of stress

- People who understand stress to be a challenge experience positive emotions around stress
- Stress responses involve release of **OXYTOCIN** – a hormone that assists us in social interactions
- Learn more at Kelly's Ted Talk ["How to make stress your friend"](#)

# Compounding all this is stigma around Mental Illness





# Annie and Mary

Both Annie and Mary have needed to take time off work due to ill health

## Mary

has developed breast cancer, she has had a mastectomy and follow-up chemo and radiation therapy after some cancer cells were also detected in her nodes

## Annie

has developed a severe form of depression, she is taking mood-stabilising medications and doing an intensive Cognitive Behaviour Therapy program with her psychologist

Disseminated Breast Cancer and Severe Depression have a similar **DISABILITY EFFECT**

*Disabling to the same extent, just in different ways*

# The job of an educator is never ever done!

Trying to fit everything in by the end of the year be like...



**Prioritise  
your work**

**Collaborate  
and share**

**Set limits  
(and stick to  
them)**

**Be gentle on  
yourself and  
others**

**Never  
neglect  
relationships**

**Self-care  
everyday**

# Sharing at Work

*Collegiality is a powerful way to manage workloads*

- Tasks and routines need to be meaningful and efficient
- When you find a task efficiency – share share share
- Have a mentor and be a mentor!
- Develop team plans that recognise diversity of skills and preferences in the team



# Taking care of relationships

## Family

the most precious relationships we have – if we neglect these relationships then the impact can be very big

*If you burn out at work another worker will replace you – you cannot be replaced at home*

## Friends

often our most supportive relationships

*We need people who share our interests and with whom we enjoy spending time*

## Workmates

we spend significant time at work – building positive working relationships makes our work-life more satisfying

*Take the work seriously, be light with each other!*

# Transition - finishing a working day

- When there is no end point of the work, you need to define some limits - no one is likely to manage this for you!
- How do you 'switch off' from work?
- Working to live, not the other way around!



# Self Care needs to be deliberate

- If you want to experience physical strength and well-being, then you might ... ?
- How can you build emotionally restorative practices into daily routines?
- Self-Care takes effort. However, it should be FUN!
- The hard part is starting a new routine



# Self-Care Everyday

- **You must enjoy the time** – is the time flying? Does it distract you from stress in your life?
- You should feel a **sense of accomplishment** or achievement when you undertake self-care
- The activity should **not do any harm!**

Plan your Self-Care:

**01**

**Daily Routines –**  
At least 10 - 30 minutes each day

**02**

**Big things on the horizon –**  
At least one of these  
in the next 12 months!



Grab a PEN and PAPER for this  
quick exercise

**1 Minute Brainstorm - Spend 30 Seconds on each  
question that follow**



# Question 1

What are the challenges in my workplace?

## Question 2

What is working well in my workplace?

# Quick Poll

Was it easier for you to respond to Question 1 or 2?



# There will be negative aspects to the job

*We feel stress more acutely when we have low levels of control*

- Many things that occur in our working lives are out of our control
- Finding a positive way forward when things don't go our way is a healthy way to build resilience and reduce frustration
- Beware of any “Should-da” frustration you experience – ultimately you can only control what you do – others will have different perceptions, priorities and motivations!

# Focus on what you can change!

Now lets categorise your list of 'not working well' items into:

Control

or

Influence

or

Accept

# Negative Aspects of the Job – Positive ways forward

Negative Aspect of The Job	Positive Way Forward – Personal Actions
Programming Documents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Acknowledge the value and importance of this task to children and their families – acceptance it is a “non-negotiable” part of Educator role and responsibility ( A )</li><li>• Plan-ahead to have other tasks completed – Be more organised ( C )</li><li>• Follow timelines set by Centre policy – keep supervisor aware of Issues ( C and I )</li></ul>
Cleaning and Tidying	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Acknowledge it’s a duty of care, safety and hygiene issue – “non-negotiable” ( A )</li><li>• Highlight any inequity in the process to appropriate person – give them some time to respond ( I )</li><li>• Engage children in the task and make it a learning opportunity or a game ( C )</li></ul>

# The Healthy Mind Platter - a balanced diet for your brain!

- Sleep Time
- Physical Time
- Focus Time
- Time In
- Down Time
- Play Time
- Connecting Time

## Activity – Wisdom of the Crowd

1. Identify up to 3 of the areas in this model that you do well in
2. Identify three actions do routinely (daily or weekly) that keep you doing well in these areas
3. [Share your information on this google form](#)
4. Identify an area you don't do so well with
5. [Have a look here at what others do – maybe you'll find something inspiring to add to your routines!](#)

# Five key areas of Wellbeing ...

## Emotional Wellbeing

How are you managing stress?

## Cognitive Wellbeing

How is your thinking?

## Physical Wellbeing

How is your eating, sleeping and moving?

## Spiritual Wellbeing

Do your values and beliefs guide your purpose – does this lead to meaningfulness in your life?

## Social Wellbeing

How do you connect with others?

These are the key ingredients to create **Resilience!**



# Activity - Building a wellbeing plan

Self-Assessment of Wellbeing - Rule – Only allowed 3 of each number (1-5) Process - For the 4's and 5's – Evidence (BIG Celebrate) // For the 1's and 2's - Way Forward (SMALL Plan)						
Score 1 = Needs attention! 5 = Going well!	Work		Home		Community	
	Score	Evidence / Way Forward	Score	Evidence / Way Forward	Score	Evidence / Way Forward
Physical Wellbeing						
Spiritual Wellbeing						
Emotional Wellbeing						
Social Wellbeing						
Cognitive Wellbeing						

# The Science of Visualisation

- Our brain filters out a lot of information it is not expecting – *The Reticular Activating System* - Confirmation bias
- If we believe we will fail - our brain filters out information that supports success
- This promotes giving up on something
- If we believe we will succeed then the opposite occurs
- When we experience positive feelings we persevere and move towards success

## The Process of Visualisation

Think of a goal you wish to achieve

List three actions that are likely to help you achieve your goals

### For 30 seconds everyday

1. Close your eyes
2. Imagine yourself doing the actions
3. Imagine and feel the positive emotions you will get doing these actions

# Sharing Session

## Staff Wellbeing Strategies in ECEC Workplaces

What is fun at your workplace – what is deliberately planned to address wellbeing?

Before attending today you were asked to share something your workplace does to address staff wellbeing

Need more inspiration? - [Community Early Learning Australia Website](#)



# Categories

- Social Occasions
- Mental Wellbeing Activities
- Physical Wellbeing Activities
- Professional Learning
- Management Practices



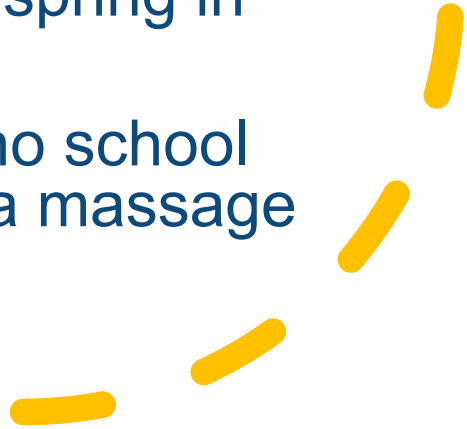
# From previous sessions

What do some education workplaces do that is innovative to manage staff wellbeing?

I made a **sunshine trolley** for the staff to use. It is full of healthy and not so healthy goodies... the staff have loved it...



## And a few more ...

- We have a relaxation class booked in instead of a staff meeting then some drinks and nibbles
  - Secret Angel.... each participant draws out another's name and has to do something helpful and thoughtful for a week... It is anonymous but the 'warm fuzzies' it creates are uplifting....
  - We have real stage meetings in even weeks and coffee shop meetings in odd weeks. The rule is. "No shop talk at the cafe". We talk travel, family dramas , renovations and funny stories. We get to school right on 8.30 with a spring in our step.
  - Our brand new beautiful staff room (no school materials anywhere to be seen) has a massage chair.
- 
- A series of five yellow, curved dashes arranged in a loose arc in the bottom right corner of the slide.

# And more!

- We do a staff '**Shout Out**' wall in the staff room. People can write a little shout out of thanks for someone else who has done something great/helpful/inspiring and pin it on the board.
- We introduced staff wellbeing week last term and plan to run it every term. We started the week with staff fancy dress and then provided a week of indulgence... bbq breakfast, coffee van, candy buffet, grazing board, pizza, daily affirmation cards, board games/music in the staffroom, additional release, no meetings for the week and off-site drinks to finish the week. Last term was a huge success and we look forward to celebrating again this term.





# 4, 7, 8 Breathing

- A good **RESET** activity – 1 or 2 cycles – grounding effect
- Good for insomnia – 5 cycles, in a lying position!
- Warning - Don't operate heavy machinery! This one can make you a little giddy. Don't do this if you have blood pressure problems or faint easily.
- 4 seconds – Breath in deeply – Through your nose
- 7 Seconds – Hold breath
- 8 Seconds – Release – slowly – through your mouth



# Apps for Wellbeing



- 10000 apps are available to assist with Anxiety or Depression, only some are evidence based or good quality
- A lot suggest non-evidence based strategies
- The Calm Schools Initiative – currently on hold
- Reachout.com - A good place to see a wide range of Apps that have been reviewed by users and professionals - (It has a little questionnaire to help narrow down Apps that are good for your situation)

# Short Video Presentations about Wellbeing

- The following slides have a selection of short video presentations that touch on topics and themes in this presentation
- They are good for your own personal use or could be used to raise a discussion in the workplace about staff wellbeing
- When you view these on YouTube or TEDTalks you will see other similar presentations will come up – you can spend hours being inspired by these visual presentations!



# Short Video - Staff Wellbeing in Education Settings

- Claire Ely from Anna Freud – National Centre for Children and Families (UK)
- What managers can do for staff
- What you can do for yourself
- Tips and tricks to assist wellbeing in education settings



# Video Analysis - One Small Step ...

Amy Morin - Therapist— On Mental Strength

15 Minutes

Bad mental habits

1. Self Pity
2. Envy or giving your power to others
3. Expect the world should be fair

You are in control of your thoughts and responses



# Learn to shine bright - Wellbeing for Teachers

- Kelly Hopkinson – Teacher
- Kelly's story of recognizing the need for self-care
- Practical strategies for self-care



# Video Analysis - The Missing Ingredient in Self Care

- Portia Jackson-Preston – Health Researcher
- Six elements of Self-Care
- Self Care is a daily practice that meets your preferences and needs
- Making Self-Care a community wide practice



# Video Analysis - Behaviour Change

## Three fundamentals of behaviour change

- Social Incentives (how others respond / approve)
- Immediate Rewards
- Focus on the positive



Tali Sharot – Professor of Cognitive Neuroscience



# Masterclass in Resilience - Post traumatic growth in action!

- Ted Talk – [“How do you define yourself?” Lizzy Velasquez - Ugliest Girl in the World](#)
- What are the risk factors for the development of some type of mental illness for Lizzie?
- What are the elements of Lizzie’s experience that have combined to create a resilient response to a complex and difficult life situation? (School, family, self, community)



# Video Analysis - The person you really need to marry

- A Ted Talk by Tracey McMillan – relationships expert
- 14 Minutes
- Commitment to loving oneself
- Empathy towards self can be the hardest to manage!
- More personal development than wellbeing at work – both are interlinked!



# Join Safer Communities Facebook Group!

## Mental Health Education for Teachers and Youth Workers

- Post questions about mental health in education settings
- Respond to others posts to offer support, information or advice!

# Resources Online - Mental Health and Wellbeing

- [Beyond Blue](#)
- [Head to Health](#)
- [Mental Health Access Line \(NSW\) – 1800 011 511](#)
- A good 10 minute mindfulness exercise – Julia Kristina  
<https://tt.juliakristina.com/ten-minute-mindfulness-audio/>

# More Resources

- Facebook Group for educators - <https://www.facebook.com/groups/519298848604415/>
- Gratitude Research and Training – Robert Emmons - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8964envYh58>
- Calm App – Free Use for educators (ON HOLD) - <https://www.calm.com/schools>
- Kelly McGonigal – Ted Talk “How to make stress your friend” - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RcGyVTAoXEU>
- Personal Planning from Mind Tools- <https://www.mindtools.com/courses/InV924x0/PersonalDevelopmentPlanning.pdf>
- Visualisation process - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2iPFtZENEq4>



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## Contact Us

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**Thank  
You**

