

Choosing external student wellbeing programs - a guide for schools

Confidently choose impactful wellbeing programs that support your School Excellence Plan (SEP) initiatives.



The importance of evidence-based student wellbeing external programs

The NSW Department of Education recognises the key role of schools in supporting children and young people's diverse wellbeing needs in their local context and acknowledges the potential value of partnerships with external providers.

Effective quality assured student wellbeing programs add value to the curriculum, support school improvement measures and contribute to improved student wellbeing, learning and life outcomes.

[The Student Wellbeing external programs catalogue](#) is a starting point when looking for evidence-based external student wellbeing programs for your school. Available for purchase through the department's intranet, these programs have been quality assured under the key themes.

Where the catalogue does not currently have a program that meets your school's context and need, school staff can use this checklist to guide decision-making.

Before purchasing a new external student wellbeing program, always recheck the catalogue for what programs are available as the department is continuing to build the catalogue.

What are external providers?

- For the purposes of this guide the term 'external provider' refers to any person, organisation or group offering their programs, presentations or resources to support students' wellbeing.
- This definition excludes externally funded health, disability and wellbeing service providers supporting individual students, including other government departments or volunteers approved by the school's principal.

Choosing external wellbeing programs – checklist

1. Program details

Program title

External provider organisation and contact

Student cohort/s

Student need identified in SEP

Brief outline how the program will support identified school improvement measures

2. Mandatory criteria

	Yes	No	Comment
1. The organisation has public liability insurance (level required \$20M)			
2. The organisation has workers compensation – if a sole trader, the alternative is personal accident and injury insurance			
3. The program is being delivered by staff who hold a current Working With Children Check (WWCC)*			
4. The program is being delivered by staff who hold qualifications relevant to the program			
5. If the program is online and collects or stores identifiable data (names, details, notes) of students and/or staff, Information Technology Directorate has been contacted by the school at cyber.security@det.nsw.edu.au to clarify any safety concerns.			

* remember to also check the department's Not to Be Employed list.

If the school is not provided with evidence of the above five (5) mandatory criteria, it is strongly recommended that the program is not implemented.

3. Evaluation criteria

Use this checklist to guide your judgement in selecting an appropriate external wellbeing program.

Criteria	Guiding information	Yes	No	Comment
Student need	The program meets an identified student wellbeing need.			
Alignment (& consultation)	The program supports the school's <u>School Excellence Plan</u> and aligns with or complements other wellbeing needs or priorities of the school.			
	The program adds value to the curriculum.			
	The program has been reviewed and considered in line with departmental policies and procedures (e.g. Controversial Issues in Schools policy).			
	The program is inclusive and safe for all students involved in the program.			
	The program caters for individual needs of all students.			
Evidence base	The program has clear outcomes.			
	There is evidence that the program has a positive impact on student wellbeing outcomes.			

Criteria	Guiding information	Yes	No	Comment
Functionality	Implementation of the program is feasible within the school organisation (e.g. timetabling, space, time out of class, supervision, staff required).			
	There is a logical and consistent sequence to activities.			
	There is an ability to modify the program to meet student needs in your school context while maintaining core activities.			
	External providers have mechanisms to ensure the program is delivered with quality every time (fidelity).			
Feedback and ongoing improvement	The program builds capacity in staff members' skills and knowledge.			
	There is a clear and rigorous process for evaluating the outcomes of this program in your school (including student, staff and parent feedback).			

4. Making a decision

- If all items of the checklist have been considered, the principal will have sound evidence to decide whether to go ahead with the delivery of the wellbeing program by the external provider in the context of their school.
- If the principal decides to engage the provider, this decision tool should be attached to the risk management proforma if required and stored as part of the school's documentation for implementing the program.
- The engagement of a provider must be done in accordance with the department's procurement policies and guidelines.

Support

Support for school staff is available at correspondence-wellbeingprojects@det.nsw.edu.au

Principal or delegate decision

Purchase approved	
Purchase declined	
More information required	
Signed:	
Position:	
Date:	