

Parent Information Evening – Pressures facing Stage 6 Students

21st August 2023

7pm

Presenters – CSO and SFX Wellbeing Team

Nurturing the Mental Health and Wellbeing of our Young People

- Understanding mental health and wellbeing
- Prevalence of mental health issues
- Factors influencing mental health
- What is stress and its role
- Promoting your own mental health and wellbeing
- Role of parents
- Barriers to seeking help
- Where to go for some information
- Where to for help



What do we mean by mental health and mental illness?



- Mental health is a state of mental well-being that enables people to cope with the stresses of life, realize their abilities, learn well and work well, and contribute to their community. (WHO)
- A mental illness is a health problem that significantly affects how a person feels, thinks, behaves, and interacts with other people. It is diagnosed according to standardised criteria.
- The term mental health disorder is also used to refer to these health problems. (www.health.gov.au)

What do we mean by mental health and mental illness?



Why wellbeing is important?

- In 2023, one in five of us will experience mental illness.
- One in two of us will experience mental illness in our lifetime
- 50% of all people who ever develop a mental illness will have their first episode prior to the age of 14 (WHO).



Why wellbeing is important

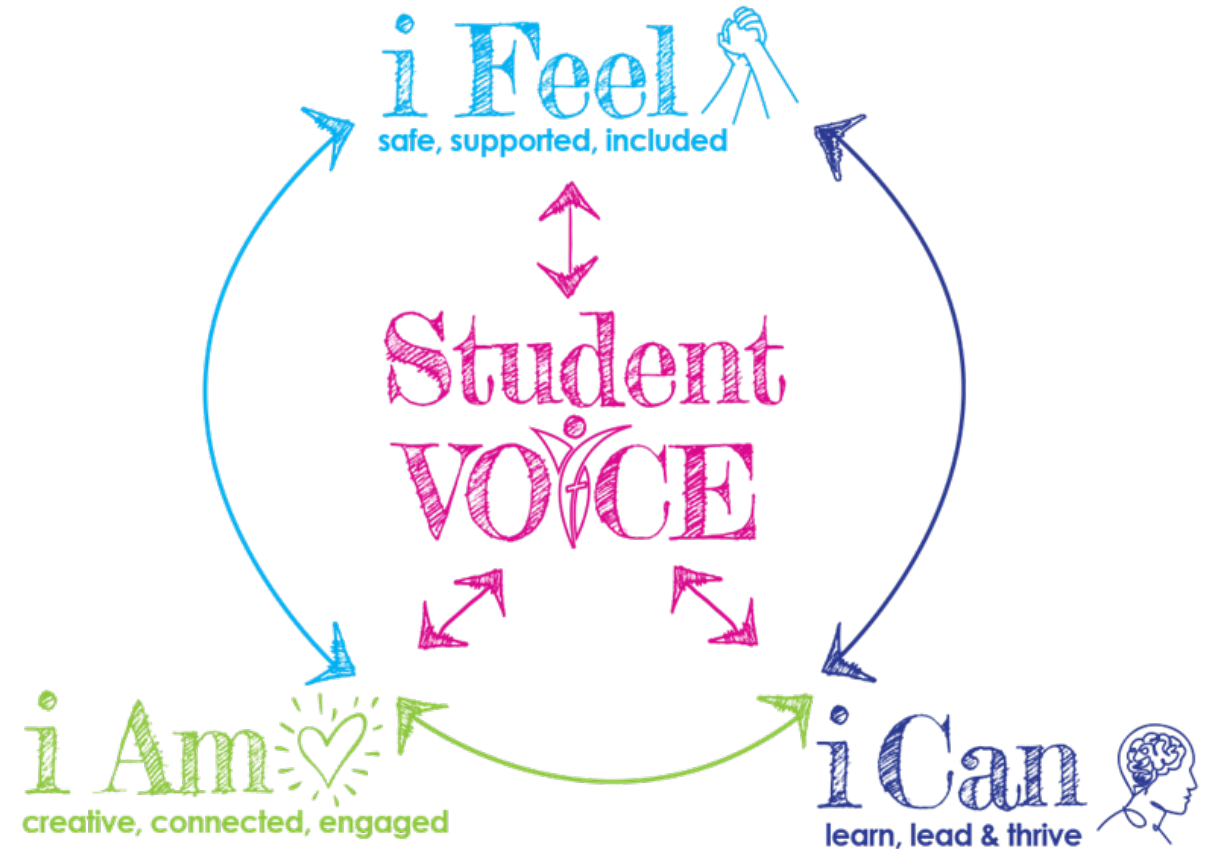
As complexity
in the world has evolved,
Wellbeing and Learning represent
an integrated concept.

**You cannot be
successful on one, without
the other.**
(Fullan, 2021)

- Wellbeing and learning are inextricably linked.
- Wellbeing is integral to school engagement and successful learning and successful learning is a key contributor to positive lifelong wellbeing outcomes.
- Support timely identification of issues and support for students.
- Lessen the stigma of accessing mental health supports
- Reduce the likelihood and severity of disruption to student learning.
- Lessen early school leaving, risky behaviour, and substance abuse.

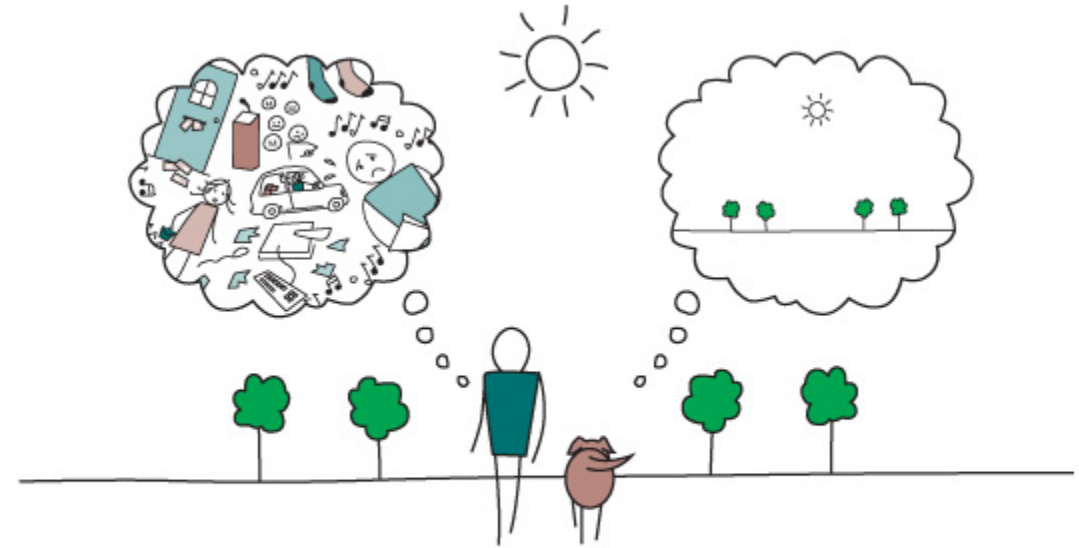
CSO - Student Wellbeing Framework

Student Wellbeing refers to a positive sense of self and belonging, and the skills to make positive and healthy choices to support learning and achievement, provided in a safe and accepting environment for all students. (Ottawa-Carleton District School Board, 2014).



Factors that can influence our mental health

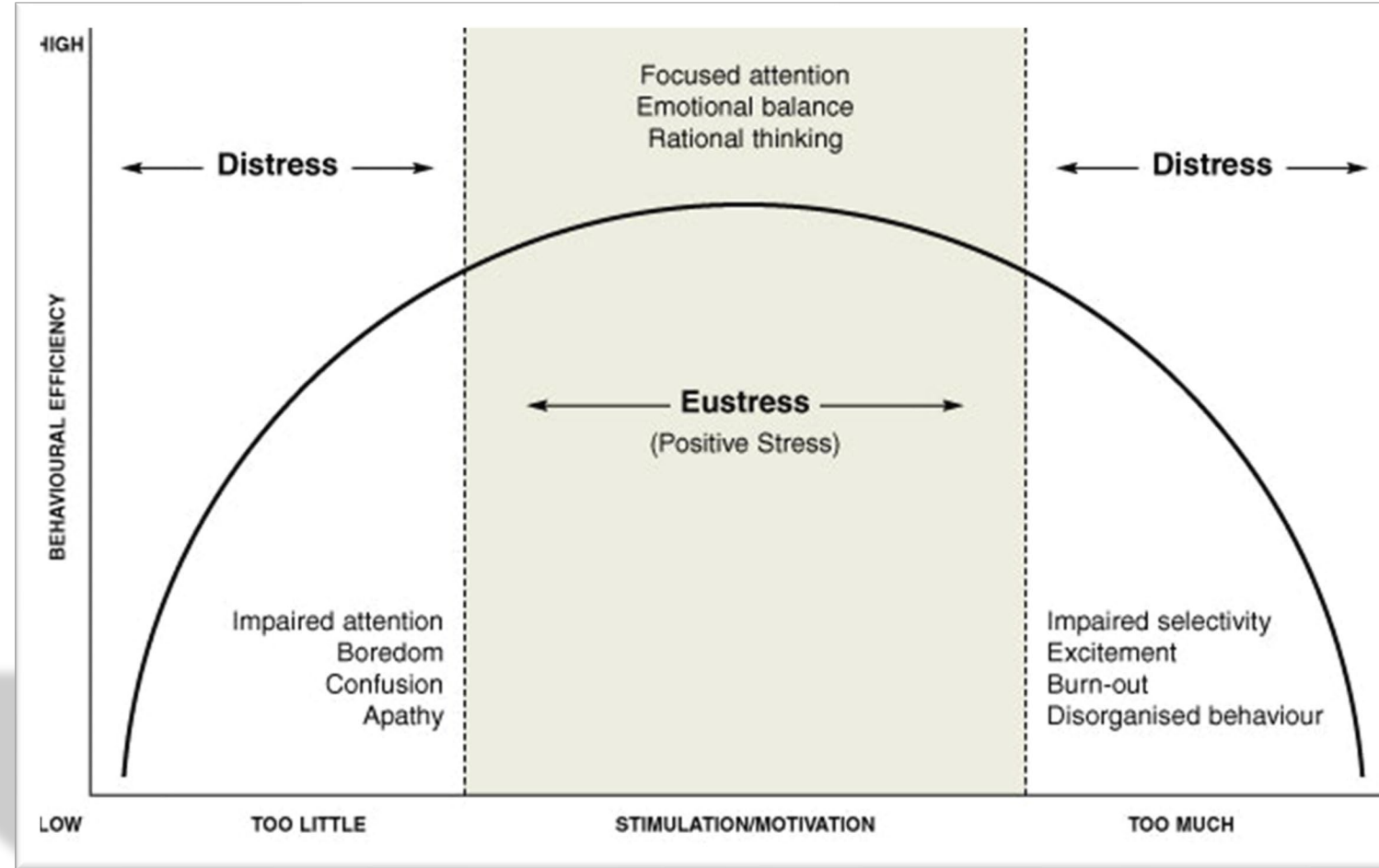
- Staying active
- Doing things you enjoy
- Maintaining connections with family and friends
- Eating well
- Enough sleep
- Learning ways to handle tough times- social and emotional skills
- Early identification



Mind Full, or Mindful?

The role of stress

- The term stress - used in a variety of contexts and with different meanings.
- Stress can be defined as both the perception of threat or pressure, and the body's response to that.
- **Eustress**
- Stress that becomes chronic, stress that is prolonged and repeated, can have a profoundly negative impact on our nervous system, on both our physical and our mental wellbeing.



Promoting wellbeing and coping strategies

- Talking it out
- Taking a break
- Get organised/create a routine
- Doing something you love
- Using relaxation techniques/move your body
- Being mindful/present
- Engaging in positive self-talk
- The role of self-compassion



The role of parents

Communication and being present

- Listen without judgement and to understand them
- Don't ask too many questions at first
- Being genuinely interested and curious about what your child is telling you.
- Giving them your undivided attention.
- Show empathy – put yourself in your child's shoes.
- Avoid jumping in with instructions or unsolicited advice.
- Choose a quiet space without distractions for important conversations.

The role of parents

- help build problem solving skills
- actively encouraging your child to do their best
- listen without judgment and seeking to understand their concerns and challenges
- acknowledge their achievements and supporting them through mistakes and challenges
- set consistent expectations
- Create a calm and predictable home environment
- Have an understanding about what they need from you when under stress

Barriers to seeking help

- “It’s not that bad, there are people feeling worse than me”
- “people will think I’m crazy”
- “I’ve tried counselling before, and it didn’t help”
- “I don’t know where to go”
- “I don’t think things can change”
- “there is nothing wrong”
- “it takes too long, there is a waitlist everywhere”

Sometimes the words we use to describe mental health difficulties and media portrayals contribute to stigma and discrimination.



Where to go for more information

Websites

- **Reachout** – Info for parents and young people
- **Youth Beyond Blue**
- **Beyond Blue** – also has specific information for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community.
- **Hearspace**
- **The Black Dog Institute**
- **Parent Line NSW** – 1300 1300 52 (Mon-Fri 9am-9pm; Sat/Sun 4pm-9pm)



Where to go for immediate mental health support?

- **Kids Helpline** – online counselling service for young people aged 5-25.
Ph:1800 551 800 (24/7) or Online Chat
- **Lifeline** - 131114
- **NSW Mental Health Line** – 1800 011 511
- **Safe Haven** - place you can go if you're feeling distressed or having suicidal thoughts at 22 Stewart Avenue, Hamilton East NSW 2303
Open: 4pm to 9pm Friday to Sunday
- **Emergency Dept** – John Hunter Hospital – CAMHS Consultation and Liaison team onsite

Where to go for mental health support?

- GP
- School counsellor
- Headspace Newcastle -49 294201
- Catholic Care: Rosewood Centre – 1800 613 155
- **Mental health professional** – e.g. Psychologist/social worker; psychiatrist (face to face or online such as The Brave program)
- **NSW Mental Health Line** – 1800 011 511

School Counselling Team





Who We Are



School counsellors are qualified social workers, psychologists, or counsellors



We are employed by the Catholic Schools Office



At SFX, we have at least one counsellor on site every day

What We Do

Psychoeducation

Short-term therapy

Trialling tools and strategies

Connecting with external services

Liaising with other school staff

Small group support

Whole school wellbeing support

Who We See



People often come to see us when they are experiencing:

Anxiety	Adjustment
Low mood	Substance use
Academic stress	Eating difficulties
Crisis and trauma	
Interpersonal stress	
Self-harm and thoughts of suicide	

We typically refer back to House Coordinators or Pastoral Care for:

- Friendship difficulties
- Grief and loss
- Self-esteem
- Family hardship

What We Use

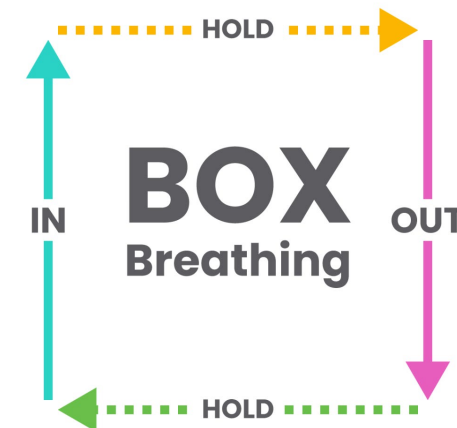
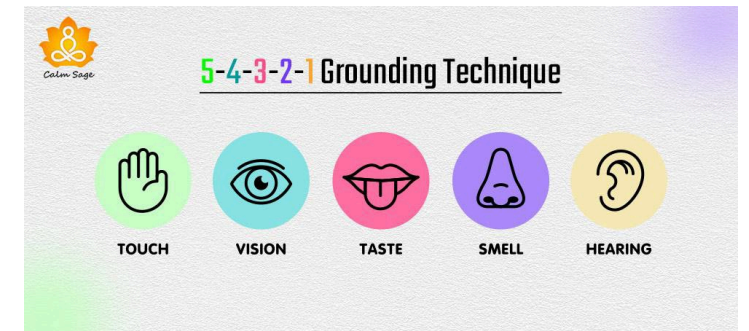
Apps



Websites



Tools



How To Connect

Students can self-refer using the confidential form at student services or talking with their House Coordinator

Parents are welcome to make contact with the House Coordinator who will arrange a time to talk with the young person

We meet with young people during class times, where they are invited to come to student services

Megan: Monday-Thursday

Tahlia: Thursday-Friday



5 Ways to Wellbeing

CONNECT

Connect with people
around you

BE ACTIVE

Keep your mind and
body active

**BE
AWARE**

Take notice of the
world around you

**KEEP
LEARNING**

Learn something
new or rediscover
an old interest

**HELP
OTHERS**

Do something kind
for a friend
or stranger