

# Beyond Blue and Be You response to the Be You Evaluation 2021-2023

The Australian Council for Education Research (ACER) conducted the third evaluation of Be You, assessing its implementation and outcomes from July 2021 to June 2023.

Beyond Blue recognises the importance of evaluation for accountability and transparency and fostering continuous learning and improvement.

You can read ACER's full and executive summary reports on the Be You website:

- [Be You research and evaluation - Be You](#)

The evaluation examined Be You as a whole initiative, including its operating and delivery model. The analysis drew on large national data sets, service delivery data and feedback from educators, consultants, and representatives from Beyond Blue, headspace, and Early Childhood Australia.

## Headline findings

The evaluation concluded that Be You is operating as expected at this stage of implementation. The primary recommendation was to maintain the framework, processes, and resources as a foundation for ongoing delivery.

- Be You is successfully building educators' capacity to promote children's mental health and wellbeing.
- Be You supports early learning and out of school hours care services in meeting and exceeding National Quality Standards.
- Attending a Be You school that is highly invested in student wellbeing is associated with improved social, emotional, and learning skills among both primary and secondary students and improved wellbeing outcomes among secondary students.
- Educators highly engaged with Be You report better wellbeing.
- Consultant support remains highly valued by Action Team Leaders and learning communities.
- Be You has responded to previous evaluation recommendations.

## Beyond Blue welcomes ACER's findings

ACER provided 12 recommendations, each outlining opportunities to enhance Be You's impact and to better meet the needs of key audiences. Beyond Blue is committed to addressing these areas for improvement, recognising that all recommendations are significant. It was acknowledged that meaningful improvements will take time to implement.

ACER also highlight that "many of the recommendations, while drawing attention to specific areas for improvement, share common interrelated issues".

Four focus areas have been identified in Be You's strategic plan 2023-2027. to support prioritising activities to progress addressing the evaluation recommendations.

## Focus Area 1: Understanding our context, and positioning Be You in a reform environment.

### Evaluation recommendations:

**Recommendation 1:** Clarify the purpose, scope and intended deliverables of Be You for all audiences.

**Recommendation 4:** Clarify the strengths of Be You and return on investment in a flooded market of Social and Emotional Learning programs and initiatives.

**Recommendation 8:** Identify points of difference and gaps in what is needed, to avoid duplicating effort.

### Context:

- The mental health and wellbeing landscape in the education sector is complex.
- Pathways between learning communities, mental health systems and broader social support systems are unclear.
- It has been difficult for educators and learning communities to identify which program, or initiative may be most appropriate to suit their needs.
- Be You aims to simplify a complex environment of initiatives and programs which can improve mental health outcomes for educators, children, and young people.
- Be You also shapes the mental health in education landscape through our advocacy work.

### We are:

- Developing a detailed map of Be You's eco-system, to communicate our role, contributions, and position in the mental health in education landscape.
- Partnering with key organisations that offer complementary initiatives to Be You, strengthening our offering, ensuring alignment, and avoiding duplication.
- Developing an Advocacy and Engagement strategy that leverages Be You's capabilities to support system and sector priorities, enabling schools and early learning services to meaningfully participate in creating mentally healthy learning communities.

## Focus Area 2: Demonstrating impact.

### Evaluation recommendations:

**Recommendation 7:** Reconsider the benefits of the Learning Communities Survey

**Recommendation 12:** Continue to develop and improve monitoring and evaluation measurements

### Context:

- The National Support for Child and Youth Mental Health Program consists of two initiatives – Be You and the National Workforce Centre for Child Mental Health delivered by Emerging Minds.
- The intentionally flexible ways in which learning communities can interact, engage with and implement Be You presents some challenges from a monitoring and evaluation perspective.
- We need to have relevant indicators throughout the user journey to understand learning community and individual educator engagement with Be You.

### We are:

- Reviewing and improving our measurement frameworks and tools to better demonstrate and communicate Be You's impact. This includes:
  - articulating the questions we want our data to answer.
  - identifying what data is needed to answer those questions.
  - confirming the best approach to ensure the routine collection of high-quality data.
  - determining how to best communicate the impact Be You is having in a way that is accessible and meaningful to stakeholders.
  - working with Emerging Minds to align outcome measurements and develop a shared narrative about impacts where appropriate.
- Refining the digital infrastructure needed to routinely capture and visualise high-quality and meaningful data.
- Continually reviewing and improving tools and resources available to learning communities, including our learning community surveys, supporting data collection in real-time and enabling tailored implementation support.
- Maintaining a commitment to regular independent evaluation with a strong focus on identifying and articulating Be You's impact for key audience and stakeholder groups.

### Focus Area 3: Workforce efficiency and freeing up Consultant time to support deeper engagement with Be You.

#### Evaluation recommendations:

- **Recommendation 2:** Clarify the role of Consultants, particularly in relation to scope and purpose
- **Recommendation 3:** Define the optimal reach of Be You with regards to breadth and depth
- **Recommendation 5:** Whole system redesign of digital infrastructure to improve user experience, free-up Consultant time, and centralise document sharing

#### Context:

- The evaluation demonstrated that the Be You Consultants are extremely valued by learning communities and action team leaders.
- As Consultant time is both a highly valued and finite resource, it is imperative that we ensure Consultants use their time in ways that has high impact for learning communities.

#### We are:

- Strengthening recruitment and induction processes to ensure Consultants are set up for success and provided with high role clarity.
- Using strategic communications to ensure that action teams, educators and learning communities have high clarity on the support they can expect from Be You consultants.
- Refining our systems, processes, ways of working and digital infrastructure to minimise Consultant administration tasks, allowing more time for engagement with learning communities.
- Improving the quality and availability of data that can be used by Consultants to inform how they work with learning communities.
- Conducting an independent Evaluation of Be You, focusing on the optimal reach within the current workforce capacity to inform key recommendations around scalability.

## Focus Area 4: User experience

### Evaluation recommendations:

- **Recommendation 6:** Continue evolving our offering to support Educator Wellbeing.
- **Recommendation 9:** Continue improving relevant and inclusivity of Be You for diverse communities.
- **Recommendation 11:** Better support the training of an Action Team Leader.

### Context:

- Be You is proud of the breadth of evidence based professional learning, tools, and resources available on the website to support educators and learning communities develop their knowledge, confidence, and competence with regards to implementing a whole learning community approach to wellbeing. These resources were developed in response to research that Beyond Blue commissioned Monash University to undertake in 2021.<sup>1</sup>
- It is acknowledged that it can be difficult for educators to navigate the website and to locate relevant resources.
- This can result in a negative user experience, increased reliance on Consultants to support educators to identify and access relevant resources or risk of disengagement with Be You.

### We are:

- Making navigation of the Be You website and access to relevant resources easier for educators.
- Strengthening Be You's strategic focus on educator wellbeing by continuing to contribute to the evidence base, evolving our offerings for educators, and increasing awareness of this key focus through marketing, communications, and engagement.
- Mapping and improving the user experience of individual educators and Action Teams, including identifying key moments that matter.
- Continually enhancing professional learning modules to improve accessibility and align with educators' preferences, providing actionable steps for implementation in their learning communities.
- Improving tools and resources available to support learning communities such as digitising the Implementation and Reflection Tool.
- Embed principles of equity and inclusion in our ways of working and ensure embedded throughout all educational content.

## Thank you.

Be You thanks ACER for its invaluable insights and clear recommendations, which will guide future work. Many individuals contributed to the evaluation; we would like to sincerely thank:

- The educators who completed surveys to support the evaluation.
- Key stakeholders across Be You who participated in consultations and interviews, and
- The Be You workforce who were involved across all aspects of the evaluation.

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<sup>1</sup> Reupert, A., Patrick, P., Berger, E., Morris, Z., Diamond, Z., Hammer, M., & Hine, R. (2021). Educator care: Moving beyond self-care. Report produced for BeyondBlue.