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— Mynette Fulmer  
Centre Manager

## Kids Capers North Lakes and Be You: turning wellbeing goals into tangible outcomes

In 2019, the leadership team at Kids Capers North Lakes identified improved educator wellbeing and stronger connection with families as priorities for the year. Learn how this early learning service, located 40 minutes from Brisbane’s CBD, used the Early Support and Family Partnerships domains on the Be You website to achieve these goals.

It’s 8am, and Kristy Newton is already two hours into her day.

As the Assistant Manager at Kids Capers North Lakes, she is awake bright and early to welcome families through the door.

By her side is Centre Manager Mynette Fulmer. Together, they share the responsibility of supporting the centre’s 30 educators and caring for more than 100 children between the ages of six weeks to five.

After breakfast, children spill out into the play area. Colour and noise builds up as they run, slide and paint their way into the day.

To an observer, the joyful atmosphere is swiftly apparent. As are some of the unique daily challenges that confront the service’s educators and leadership team.

Ever-mindful of these challenges, throughout 2019 Kristy and Mynette noticed that some educators, as well as families and children, were showing increasing signs of stress. In response, they set about researching how best to help support the mental health and wellbeing of those in their learning community.

Via the Australian Children’s Education & Care Quality Authority (ACECQA) website, they came across Be You. As Kristy explains, it didn’t take long for them to register.

“To make a big service feel small and communal can be difficult at times, so we wanted to find a framework that could make that happen. When we found Be You, everything just married together nicely.”



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## Creating stronger connections with families

As well as being Assistant Manager, Kristy is the centre's Educational Leader and was a natural candidate to become the Action Team Leader. In doing so, she has been able to successfully guide her colleagues through a selection of Be You modules.

Using the Partner module within the Family Partnerships domain, for instance, educators have learned how to foster and build relationships with the service's families, many of whom are from culturally diverse backgrounds.

This foundation work has equipped educators with the tools and resources they need to confidently approach difficult conversations and talk to parents and guardians about a child's wellbeing. As a result, the lines of communication between educators and families at Kids Capers North Lakes have never been more open.

"Be You has been able to complete that full circle of wellbeing for us," said Kristy.

"The wellbeing of our staff has improved because they now have the help and tools to cope in difficult management situations and conversations. If our families are better supported then the children's behaviour changes for the better."

*"We're a 170-place service which is huge, and we have over 300 families"*

— Kristy Newton  
Action Team Leader

*"Having concrete tools and steps through Be You has really helped the centre offer support to families if they need it."*

— Kristy Newton  
Action Team Leader







## The importance of educator wellbeing

The team at Kids Capers North Lakes have been delighted with how easily Be You has slotted into everyday life.

Mynette was quick to point out that the benefits extend beyond the stronger connection educators now have with families, citing what has been achieved using the Early Support domain as an example.

According to Mynette, the framework and guidance provided within the Notice, Inquire and Provide modules has enabled herself and Action Team members to better identify early signs of mental health issues. Not only in relation to children and their families but also their fellow educators.

“We have the most incredible job in the world to raise and be a part of these young children’s lives,” she said.

“Our educators spend five days a week here, this is their second home and it’s my job to look after their welfare. It’s so important to make them feel happy to come to work.



Kristy and the Kids Capers North Lakes team take a look at the Be You resources.

“To create that stable support network you need additional help and support. That’s where Be You and the modules within the Early Support domain have been so important to us. They provide the team with the tools and resources to fall back on when we need them.”

“And that’s why educator wellbeing is so important.”