

# STEPS Decision-Making Framework *Useable Form*



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Name of program: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of staff completing form: \_\_\_\_\_

## Answers to STEPS key questions:

### Does it work? What is the evidence?

Yes

No

**Definition:** *Is the program based on a contemporary understanding of mental wellbeing that is consistent with the school's definition?*

**Theory:** *Is the program based on sound theory that draws on the existing knowledge from previous research in mental wellbeing?*

**Evidence:** *Does the program have evidence from well-designed research which shows measurable change in mental wellbeing?*

**Practice:** *Have other schools used this program and achieved positive outcomes?*

### Will it work to achieve our school's goals?

Yes

No

**Suitability:** *Does the program address the target students and needs that the school has identified?*

**Feasibility:** *Is the program feasible and practical in the school context?*

**Perspective:** *Is the philosophical perspective underpinning the program compatible with the school's approach to behaviour, learning and student wellbeing?*

### How will we know it has worked?

Yes

No

**Sustainability:** *Can the school implement and sustain the program as required for it to be effective?*

**Real results:** *Does the approach indicate how outcomes will be measured and timeframes within which to expect to see real results?*

Based on the information gathered, the school's decision is: \_\_\_\_\_

Finalised on date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Does it work? What is the evidence?

Key Question	To ask about the program	To ask about your school	
<b>Definition:</b>	<i>Is the program based on a contemporary understanding of mental wellbeing that is consistent with the school's definition?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How does the program define mental wellbeing?</li> <li>• How does the program identify the factor involved in mental wellbeing?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is the definition in the program consistent with the school's understanding of mental wellbeing?</li> <li>• Do all members of our school community share this definition of mental wellbeing? Is it included in our school policies?</li> </ul>
<b>Theory:</b>	<i>Is the program based on sound theory that draws on the existing knowledge from previous research in mental wellbeing?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What is the specific aim of the program, i.e. focus on skills, behaviours, knowledge etc?</li> <li>• What theory underpins the program and how has this been incorporated into the content, design and strategies of the program?</li> <li>• What previous research on mental health and wellbeing does the program draw on?</li> <li>• How does the program aim to improve mental health and wellbeing?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is the theoretical basis of this program consistent with our school's approach to behaviour, learning and student wellbeing?</li> <li>• Should we undertake some professional development to learn more about the existing knowledge on fostering mental wellbeing?</li> </ul>
<b>Evidence:</b>	<i>Does the program have evidence from well-designed research which shows measurable change in mental wellbeing?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What is the evidence for the program and how has it been gathered?</li> <li>• Does the evidence consist of real change involving measurement of specific behaviours and outcomes?</li> <li>• If the research evidence is limited, what plans exist for well-designed research into the program?</li> <li>• How did the researchers ensure confidence that the research supports valid claims of effectiveness?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Will the school be able to implement the program in a way similar to the way it was conducted in research studies?</li> <li>• Are we alert to the use of persuasion- or emotion-driven arguments rather than evidence to support this approach?</li> <li>• If there is limited research evidence for the program, have we carefully considered the questions under Definition and Theory?</li> </ul>
<b>Practice:</b>	<i>Have other schools used this program and achieved positive outcomes?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is the research evidence complemented by information from schools that have implemented the program in real-world situations?</li> <li>• If the research evidence is limited, what information (particularly student data) is available from other schools to suggest it is a 'promising practice'?</li> <li>• If there is no research evidence, are the definition and theory which underpin the program well explained and robust?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are the schools which have successfully implemented this program similar to our school?</li> <li>• Will the school be able to implement the program in a way similar to the way it was conducted in other schools that have achieved positive outcomes?</li> <li>• If there is limited research evidence for the program, have we carefully considered the question under Definition and Theory?</li> </ul>

## Will it work to achieve our service/school's goals?

Key Question	To ask about the program	To ask about your school
<b>Suitability:</b>	<i>Does the program address the target students and needs that the school has identified?</i>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What is the main purpose of the program: prevention or response?</li> <li>• Is the program whole-school, multifaceted or single issue focused?</li> <li>• What does the program focus on and who does it target?               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ participants</li> <li>○ student age (range)</li> <li>○ skill/knowledge areas addressed</li> <li>○ personal and social skills (if relevant)?</li> <li>○ social understandings/social diversity issues (if relevant)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do we need to further clarify our school's needs and aims so we can select a program to match?</li> <li>• Does the program target who we want to target and aim to achieve what we have identified as our goals?</li> <li>• Which of the school's identified goals and target areas does the program NOT address?</li> <li>• Can we integrate this program with existing programs in the school?</li> </ul>
<b>Feasibility:</b>	<i>Is the program feasible and practical in the school context?</i>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are all the requirements to implement the program detailed in the guidelines?</li> <li>• Is the program 'ready to go' or do schools have to do significant work to implement the program?</li> <li>• What are the initial and ongoing costs?</li> <li>• What training and support is provided?</li> <li>• What time and human resources are required from the school?</li> <li>• Does the program align with existing policies of the school?</li> <li>• Has this approach been successfully used in schools with similar resources and constraints as our school?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do we have the time, human resources and funding for initial and ongoing costs?</li> <li>• Can we provide staff with the skills, knowledge and support to implement the program?</li> <li>• Is the program compatible with other activities and requirements with which we need to comply?</li> <li>• If the program is delivered through extra classes (i.e. not embedded into curriculum) what impact will that have on the curriculum, and on people and other activities?</li> <li>• Is the program a good fit with our school resources and constraints?</li> <li>• Can the school's existing resources and activated be harnessed or redirected for the program?</li> </ul>
<b>Perspective:</b>	<i>Is the philosophical perspective underpinning the program compatible with the school's approach to behaviour, learning and student wellbeing?</i>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What philosophical perspective underpins the program?</li> <li>• What learning theory/pedagogical approach is the program based on?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What is our school's perspective on mental and student wellbeing (and where do we articulate this)?</li> <li>• Is the program's perspective compatible with our school's approach to promoting positive school climate and good mental wellbeing?</li> <li>• Is the pedagogical approach compatible with our school's approach to teaching and learning?</li> <li>• Before we implement a mental wellbeing program, do we need to invest in professional development on our philosophical perspective on mental wellbeing?</li> </ul>

## How will we know it has worked?

	Key Question	To ask about the program	To ask about your school
<b>Sustainability:</b>	<i>Can the school implement and sustain the program as required for it to be effective?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How long does the program take to fully implement and when should the school expect to see changes/outcomes?</li> <li>• Does the program provide specific guidelines on implementation (e.g. time frames, milestones, step-by-step procedures)?</li> <li>• Does the program provide information about possible adaptations that do not compromise fidelity (i.e. the way the program is intended to be used)?</li> <li>• Is staff training available initially and on an ongoing basis as needed, (e.g. for new staff) to ensure sustainable implementation?</li> <li>• What other support is available for implementation?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How will the school sustain energy and momentum throughout implementation given the anticipation time before outcomes will be observable?</li> <li>• Will the school be able to implement the approach as recommended in order to be effective (fidelity of implementation)?</li> <li>• Are adaptations needed to implement the program in our school context, and would these possibly compromise fidelity (and thus effectiveness)?</li> <li>• Have other schools made adaptations and has the Program been successful?</li> <li>• How might we support ongoing implementation with fidelity, reduce any gaps, and ensure sustainability for long-term change?</li> </ul>
<b>Real results:</b>	<i>Does the approach indicate how outcomes will be measured and timeframes within which to expect to see real results?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How are outcomes measured and how do they link to the stated aim of the program?</li> <li>• Are the resources or guidance provided for measuring progress and effectiveness of the program and informing a cycle of continuous change?</li> <li>• Does the program encourage student involvement in measuring outcomes?</li> <li>• What is the anticipated time frame before the school should be able to see measurable change?</li> <li>• How will the school be able to demonstrate to the wider community that the program has been successful?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What existing school measures and data can we use to monitor progress and measure outcomes?</li> <li>• If additional measurement tools and methods are required, what impact could they have?</li> <li>• Can our school commit to this program for the anticipated timeframes before we will see measurable and real results?</li> <li>• How and where will the school report and celebrate successful progress and outcomes?</li> </ul>