



# **Volume 1, Issue 2**

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## **List of Abstracts**

### **1) Tackling cyberbullying: A cross-cultural comparison**

*Helen Cowie*

This article examines cyberbullying in the UK and Japan and compares the steps that each country is taking to address the issue by exploring the general principles through which central government, parents, charities, teachers, students and ICT providers in each country are working together. It also suggests that peer support schemes have a unique contribution to make and that an emphasis on peer group relationships and processes of collaboration with young people offer useful ways forward. It is essential to acknowledge that the problem is multi-dimensional and without a full understanding of the complex ways in which young people relate to one another it is unlikely that cyberbullying will be reduced.

### **2) Venturing into schools: Locating mental health initiatives in complex environments**

*Helen Askill-Williams, Michael J. Lawson and Phillip T. Slee*

Schools provide viable settings for mental health promotion initiatives, such as programs to develop students' social and emotional capabilities (SEC). Complexity in the school environments into which initiatives are introduced, such as diverse student capabilities, school structures, and teachers' knowledge and confidence, will play an integral role in the success of those initiatives. This paper investigates the environments of schools about to receive the *KidsMatter* mental health promotion, prevention and early intervention initiative in Australia, using information sourced from questionnaires about 2598 students and their teachers in 50 Australian primary schools. The focus of the report is on the status of the schools' work in one of the key focus areas for the intervention, namely students' SEC. Analysis showed relatively high levels of students' SEC across the whole sample. Teachers' attitudes towards SEC learning were highly positive. Teachers' self-rated knowledge and approaches in dealing with SEC were moderate, and point to requirements for additional pre-service and professional development. The extent of regular and sustained delivery of SEC programs and mental health initiatives in general showed variability, suggesting the need to attend to school systems and structural supports. Implications of these areas of diversity in school environments on the selection and methods of delivery of mental health promotion programs in schools are discussed.

### **3) Primary social and emotional aspects of learning (SEAL) small group interventions: a qualitative study of factors affecting implementation and the role of Local Authority support**

*Neil Humphrey, Ann Lendrum, Michael Wigelsworth and Afroditi Kalambouka*

The aims of the current study were to examine the factors affecting implementation of social and emotional aspects of learning (SEAL) small group interventions in primary schools and to explore the role of support from Local Authorities (LAs) in the implementation process. Telephone interviews were conducted with lead SEAL staff in 12 LAs across England as part of a larger national evaluation of this educational initiative. Data were transcribed and subjected to qualitative content analysis. Subsequently, a tentative model was developed to document the relationship between the nature of support provided by LAs (e.g. training events, developing/providing additional materials), factors affecting implementation at school level (e.g. school readiness, the profile of SEAL) and perceived barriers to success (e.g. misconceptions about the purpose of small group interventions). These findings are discussed in relation to the existing literature on the implementation of social-emotional initiatives and interventions in education.

### **4) Schools as contexts for the development of social and emotional learning**

*Felicienne Mallia Borg*

This study describes the developmental process in a secondary school which had taken up the challenge of responding more effectively to an increasingly diverse community of learners. The study was aimed at understanding the challenges faced by the school in this area and the ways it sought to create a more inclusive community, with a particular focus on social and emotional learning. A qualitative case study design was used, with semi-structured interviews held with various stakeholders, namely the school administration, teachers, support staff, parents and the students. Findings indicated that to be able to respond to student diversity, a school needed to restructure its culture, policies and practices. Teachers needed continual preparation and a vast array of skills, knowledge and pedagogical approaches to help them reach out to all learners. Structural barriers needed to be removed and collaboration encouraged at class, school and community level. The importance of parental involvement was also emphasized as was also the Head's commitment to inclusive values and a distributed style of leadership.

### **5) Teaching assistants and pupils' academic and social engagement in mainstream schools: insights from systematic literature reviews**

*Wasył Cajkler and Geoff Tennant*

The last twenty years have seen a huge expansion in the additional adults working in classrooms in the UK, USA, and other countries. This paper presents the findings of a series of systematic literature reviews about teaching assistants (TAs). The first two reviews focused on stakeholder perceptions of TAs' contributions to academic and social engagement, namely the perceptions of pupils, teachers, TAs, headteachers and parents on four principal contributions that teaching assistants contribute to: pupils' academic and socio-academic engagement; inclusion; maintenance of stakeholder relations; and support for the teacher. The third review explored training of TAs. Against a background of patchy training provision both in the UK and the USA, strong claims are made for the benefits to TAs of training provided, particularly in building confidence and skills. The conclusions include implications for further training and the need for further research to gain an in-depth understanding of the way TAs engage with children.