

Chapter 5

School environments for student wellbeing and resilience

Next to families, schools are the most likely place where students can learn personal coping skills and experience the environmental conditions that foster wellbeing and resilience. For students who are alienated from their families, school takes on even greater importance as a place that offers the conditions and opportunities in which to develop resilience.

There are many strategies and approaches that schools and teachers can adopt to create positive schools and classrooms where students feel valued, are engaged, feel a sense of belonging and can learn personal and social-emotional skills.

1. Enhancing school, peer and class connectedness

Many factors in students' lives are beyond the school's control or influence and that puts some limits on what can be achieved by teachers. However, teachers still have a crucial role to play in fostering student wellbeing. Creating positive, safe and engaging classrooms is a complex and challenging task but the outcome in terms of student wellbeing and resilience is worth the time and energy. School matters a great deal to students, and the benefits from satisfying school experiences can be surprisingly long-lasting. One of the key writers on resilience, Michael Rutter¹ (p. 8), has explained it thus:

It is not high school achievement as such that seems to make a difference, rather, it is positive experiences of a kind that are pleasurable and rewarding and which help children develop a sense of their own worth together with the confidence that they can cope with life's challenges and can control what happens to them.

School, above all other social institutions, provides unique opportunities for students to connect on a daily basis with their peers and caring teachers. School connectedness is students' belief that adults in the school care about their learning as well as about them as individuals. A great number of studies over the past 20 years have confirmed that students' connectedness to school is the most significant factor in determining whether or not they complete school. For a high proportion of young people, being connected to their peers and having a sense of belonging to a friendship group is, at certain times, more relevant to their lives than feeling connected to their family². Adolescent girls, in particular, are often more likely to seek peer support than family support when they are experiencing difficulties³. For young people who don't feel connected to their family, their school can play a critical role in fostering their resilience.

2. Teacher optimism about student academic achievement

Teachers' optimism about their ability to make a difference in their students' lives in their own classrooms correlates with higher student performance and greater academic success⁴. Such optimism can be contagious. One study⁵ identified that teachers' shared or collective optimism in expecting their students to perform well academically was more important in influencing their academic achievement than the students' socio-economic status, other demographic data and previous achievement history. Another study found that when the teachers collectively raised their expectations of their students and made their students aware of this, and challenged them academically, they were consistently rewarded by improved student learning; students' confidence in their learning increased and their behaviour improved⁶.

Teachers may not feel empowered to make a difference at the system level of whole-school change, but working with their students in their own classrooms is working in their circle of influence. Reflecting on the kinds of teaching practices that foster student wellbeing and resilience in their classroom means not only reviewing 'what' is taught but also 'how' it is taught.

High academic expectations, a challenging curriculum with support for learning

The significant effect of teachers' expectations on student achievement and student wellbeing has been supported by research over many years. As noted above, students whose teachers have positive expectations for them not only demonstrate higher rates of academic success^{4,6,7}, but higher self-efficacy, more optimism⁸ and lower rates of problematic behaviours^{6,7}. Having high but achievable expectations for students also lowers their alcohol and drug abuse⁹. Many students who are 'at risk' and low on resilience do not perform well academically. Providing academic support and communicating an expectation that they can be successful is critical to helping these students succeed at school. John Hattie's book *Visible Learning* has highlighted the most effective strategies for increasing achievement and is a useful resource for teachers to reflect on their practice¹⁰.

Achievement motivation

Teachers can also help students develop a 'growth mindset', which involves:

- ⊙ believing that your intelligence/ability is not fixed, but can be developed by investing time and effort
- ⊙ seeing learning as a valuable goal to work towards, even though you initially make mistakes and the process requires hard work and an investment of time.

Having a growth mindset encourages students to view effort in a positive way and to feel they have the ability, through their own efforts, to learn and master new material. When they experience difficulties in a subject or task, they use more constructive, mastery-oriented explanations. Rather than saying 'I'm hopeless at reading' or 'I'm dumb, I can't do this', and then giving up, they explain their difficulty as due to lack of effort ('I need to work harder'), a lack of information or skill ('I need help with this') or not having the right strategies ('I need to learn my six times table first'). Students who have a growth mindset work harder, spend more time on learning and use more positive, effort-based strategies instead of giving up.

Dweck and Blackwell have investigated the impact of a growth mindset on student learning outcomes for more than 20 years^{11,12}. They have found that students with a growth mindset achieved increases in mathematics grades over seventh and eighth grade. In contrast, students with equal measured ability who had a fixed mindset (i.e. they viewed their intelligence/ability as fixed and unchangeable) did not achieve this level of improvement. The impact of a growth mindset was apparent for students at all levels of ability. Their research also demonstrated that students with a growth mindset used more complex thinking strategies and meta-cognitive strategies (i.e. self-monitoring of their learning), which led to deeper processing and understanding of the curriculum. Teacher and parent feedback on student performance influences the development of a growth or fixed

mindset. Telling students ‘You did well on that test, you must be really smart’ leads to a fixed mindset, whereas telling students ‘You did well on that test, you must have worked really hard’ focuses their attention on effort and builds a growth mindset. The idea that effort pays off in terms of learning, as well as the importance of having a growth mindset rather than a fixed mindset about their abilities, is taught in the ‘WINNERS’ unit and also links to helpful and optimistic thinking taught in the ‘People bouncing back’ and ‘Looking on the bright side’ units.

Research on learning and the brain

Research on neuroplasticity (the malleability of the brain) over recent years aligns with the notion of a growth mindset. It is now understood that learning causes substantial changes in the human brain¹³. Thinking occurs in the brain through the chemical communication of nerve cells connected in a complex network. Learning causes the cells of the brain to develop new connections, and existing connections become stronger. Studies in neurophysiology, neuroanatomy and brain imaging have all shown that when people practise and learn new skills, the areas of the brain responsible for those skills become larger and denser with neural tissue and that other areas of the brain are activated when the individual performs related tasks. Thus, our brains have the capacity to develop throughout life, but only in response to the stimulation of challenge and learning. Teaching students about the malleability of the brain, providing challenging material, and motivating them to apply effort and take an active role in their learning contributes to a growth mindset and higher achievement¹².

Not repeating students

Over the past 75 years, a pool of research-based knowledge about the effects on students of repeating a year level has been accumulating^{5, 14–16}. There are now strong indications that there are neither academic nor social advantages for the majority of students who repeat a year of their schooling. In fact, there is a high probability of harmful effects. Large-scale meta-analyses have provided the most important information about the effects of year level repetition¹⁰. The conclusions from these studies are clear-cut and almost unanimous: repeating a year does not improve academic performance, social competency or general behaviour of students at either the primary or secondary level. On the contrary, it creates a self-concept characterised by a sense of failure and a negative attitude to school, and places students at risk of further failure, increased anti-social behaviour and dropping out of school.

Differentiation

Classrooms that communicate high expectations are also characterised by a curriculum that is differentiated so that all students can be appropriately intellectually challenged and developed. The importance of a differentiated curriculum to cater for student diversity is highlighted in current curriculum documents¹⁷. A differentiated curriculum instead of ‘one size fits all’ means that students can access multiple entry points into the curriculum and produce different learning products to demonstrate what they know and understand. Curriculum differentiation is defined as consistently using a variety of teaching approaches to vary curriculum content, learning processes and products, assessment and the learning environment in response to the readiness and interests of academically diverse students¹⁸.

A relevant and differentiated curriculum can draw on:

- ⊙ real-life topics that reflect the interests and lives of students
- ⊙ a wide range of teaching strategies to actively engage different students in learning
- ⊙ the revised Bloom’s taxonomy to plan activities from simple to complex thinking¹⁹
- ⊙ Howard Gardner’s model of multiple intelligences (MI) to plan a greater range of teaching and learning strategies across different intellectual domains and more choice than a traditional curriculum^{20–22}. The MI model is the only theory of intelligence that includes intrapersonal (self) and interpersonal (people) intelligences, so provides a useful

framework for a focus on social-emotional skills as well as academic skills. MI theory also offers a strengths-based approach to curriculum planning and implementation. Strengths-based engagement is seen as critical for student wellbeing and is strongly advocated by the Positive Psychology/Positive Education movement²³.

The curriculum planning matrix that integrates Gardner's eight intelligences with the six levels of thinking in the revised Bloom's taxonomy^{21, 22} helps teachers to differentiate assessment and teaching by creating up to 48 ways to approach the same unit of work. Teachers' use of the matrix has been shown to increase their professional competency and confidence in effectively catering for students' diverse abilities and in helping their students to set goals and make meaningful choices about their learning tasks and products²⁴. It also gives students an opportunity to reflect on their relative intellectual strengths and limitations and to understand that, for them, some learning may require more effort and hard work than learning in other areas.

All students can benefit from a diversified curriculum but such a curriculum is particularly advantageous for students with learning difficulties and those students who are disengaged and more at risk of dropping out^{24, 25}. As Gardner²⁶ (p. 25) says:

When a student isn't learning something, you don't make the assumption that the student is stupid—you make the assumption that you haven't found the right key. The more resources you have for finding the right key, the more likely you are to succeed.

Recognising students' strengths is a starting point in adapting teaching strategies to develop those strengths. This can most readily be achieved by using the MI model as a curriculum planning tool. Research shows that teachers (and classmates) often develop more positive expectations of students' learning abilities once less-academic students are able to demonstrate their areas of intellectual strength(s), using an MI^{20, 24} model. Gardner²⁷ (p. 580) perceives that MI is:

... a hopeful and optimistic theory ... one that says one can build on strengths and there are many ways to achieve ... and to accomplish something meaningful in school and in the world beyond.

Student engagement

Students can be engaged, busy and having fun but not actually learning anything worthwhile. Students are more likely to be actively engaged in learning when working in their area of relative strength, and also when working at a task that is moderately challenging—not too hard and not too easy for them. Under these conditions they are more likely to experience 'psychological flow', which has been defined as a state of intense, focused concentration or absorption in an activity²⁸. When students experience 'flow' they feel more competent, in control and alert. Engaging in activities that trigger 'flow' can also help students when things are difficult and when adaptive 'distancing' is helpful.

Sometimes, giving students choice in what task they do or how they demonstrate what they know and understand encourages them to set their own challenges, and therefore be more likely to experience 'flow'. Observing student engagement in different learning activities helps a teacher understand the student's relative strengths and weaknesses across the different types of intelligences. Encouraging students to reflect on their own level of engagement in the different activities also helps them to gain a better sense of themselves as learners.

3. Provision of opportunities for meaningful participation and taking initiative

Our society promotes the idea of young people taking responsibility and ownership, but studies have shown that boredom, disillusionment and loss of motivation to achieve are more

characteristic of today's young people than in previous generations^{29, 30}. This was illustrated in an Australian study that ran focus groups with 1800 Year 9 and Year 11 boys³⁰. The study discovered a strong link between student disengagement in learning and curriculum and pedagogy that was perceived by these students as 'boring, repetitive and irrelevant'. The study showed that this disengagement can set up a spiral of disaffection that is probably more destructive for students who are identified as low achievers or non-achievers at school.

When students have opportunities for meaningful participation and encouragement to develop and show initiative, they are more likely to:

- ⊙ develop a strong sense of their own competence
- ⊙ take greater responsibility for their own actions
- ⊙ be more able to independently deal with boredom and hence engage in fewer self-harmful or anti-social activities.

There are three categories of initiative that students in schools can be encouraged to become involved in:

- ⊙ the pursuit of a personal or group goal
- ⊙ school or community service or volunteer work
- ⊙ a response to a problem that has some personal or community relevance.

For students to develop initiative, as many of the following features as possible need to be present. Students need to be:

- ⊙ intrinsically motivated to some extent in the project/plan
- ⊙ moderately challenged (not too hard or too easy)
- ⊙ given a relatively unstructured starting point that means they need to set goals, make plans and justify them to others
- ⊙ required to do a lot of decision making and problem solving
- ⊙ working within set guidelines
- ⊙ likely to encounter obstacles and setbacks and then have to work on solving these problems
- ⊙ working within their class, school or local community, not in isolation.

4. Positive teacher–student relationships

The quality of teaching, above all else, has been identified as the key factor in determining how well students learn^{10, 31, 32}. In these studies, the quality of the teacher–student relationship has also been identified as one of the most important factors, above content and pedagogy, in influencing students' learning.

Teachers can build positive relationships with their students in a range of ways, including:

- ⊙ using effective teaching strategies
- ⊙ establishing a collaborative classroom climate
- ⊙ being empathic, giving them a chance to be 'heard' and communicating warmth
- ⊙ communicating high expectations about what they can achieve
- ⊙ taking the time to get to know their students as people, not just students.

Many different research studies (e.g.^{32–34}) are remarkably consistent in the picture they present of the teachers that students respond to most positively. These teachers:

- ⊙ are relaxed, enjoy their day and are able to laugh, especially at their own mistakes
- ⊙ use fun and humour as part of their teaching
- ⊙ are fair and consistent in their discipline procedures
- ⊙ listen to what their students have to say
- ⊙ treat each student with respect and empathy and as an individual, greet them when they arrive and whenever the opportunity arises, using their name and making eye contact
- ⊙ show that they are pleased to see them rather than only making contact when there is a problem
- ⊙ remember students' details and preferences
- ⊙ use active listening and restorative conversations (see page 90) as part of behaviour management

- ⊙ develop many opportunities for student voice (e.g. they might negotiate some assignment details with students)
- ⊙ take an interest in what students do outside class and school
- ⊙ trust students with responsibilities
- ⊙ are authentic; listen to students' stories but also tell their own stories in an honest, realistic way
- ⊙ have high but realistic expectations of all students
- ⊙ don't shout/yell or 'go on about things'
- ⊙ don't give up on their students, or tell them they're no good and should leave school
- ⊙ explain the work, make the work interesting, find interesting things to do and don't make their students feel small when they don't understand
- ⊙ are enthusiastic about what they teach
- ⊙ make their curriculum relevant to their students' lives by firstly finding out what happens in the lives of their students
- ⊙ have an enthusiastic and experimental approach to trying out new teaching strategies while keeping learning outcomes in mind
- ⊙ are easy to talk to and students feel they can go to them when they are in trouble
- ⊙ encourage high levels of parental involvement with school but don't over-focus on family factors as explanations
- ⊙ have different learning pathways for different students.

All these characteristics reflect the value that students place on their teachers' support and interpersonal commitment to them. Yet research demonstrates that most students, especially boys, are reluctant to discuss their problems with their teachers. They are more likely to perceive their teachers as sources of discipline rather than sources of support, especially in secondary settings³.

Supporting less resilient students

There are three basic principles that teachers can follow in their work with young people who appear to be less resilient. These are:

- ⊙ Be persistent and communicate to the student that there is someone who is not going to give up on them or allow them to be distracted from the importance of school and their own wellbeing.
- ⊙ Provide continuity by making sure there is someone who knows the student's needs and is available across time.
- ⊙ Ensure that there is consistency in the most important messages from all concerned adults in the student's life—do the work, attend classes, be on time, express frustration in a constructive manner, stay in school, consider the rights of others, talk to someone if you're upset.

Other adults can also take on this role of 'going the extra mile', but teachers and schools are well placed to provide these three elements of persistence, continuity and consistency³⁵.

5. Establishing peer support structures

Peer support systems involve students participating in activities that befriend, help, mentor and/or tutor other students. They contribute to social and emotional learning and the development of pro-social values such as respect, cooperation and compassion. Many educational writers have suggested that there is a desire on the part of most young people to care for and support younger peers and/or peers in distress, despite not feeling confident that they have the skills to do so³⁶. Older students who act as peer supporters report improved confidence and social skills, a greater understanding of other people's feelings and behaviour, more open-mindedness and a stronger sense of responsibility. Younger students who receive peer support report that they had developed more skills in expressing their feelings, increased their sense of trust, felt safer and had a sense of being listened to.

Peer support structures also provide benefits to the school as a whole. A buddy system can strengthen school community and help to challenge stereotypes, misconceptions or fears that students hold about younger or older age groups. A buddy system can also help students to feel valued and supported, teach important social skills and create a caring ethos in the school³⁷. It can create feelings of connectedness that enable both older and younger ‘buddies’ to bond more closely with their school within a psychologically safe environment, thereby increasing the likelihood of more positive school behaviour³⁷.

Peer support systems can be collapsed into four broad categories: befriending systems, conflict resolution systems (peer mediation), counselling-based systems (peer counselling) and peer tutoring.

1. In **befriending peer support**, students are asked to act as a short-term friend towards another student and offer support and contact. This is the easiest approach to implement in a school because it is not as structured and complex as the other forms of peer support³⁸. Buddy systems are a form of befriending and, like most peer-led interventions, are very engaging³⁹, as students are involved in behaviours they would naturally enjoy with each other, such as spending time together, talking to one another, playing games, being recognised for their efforts and being actively involved⁴⁰.
2. In **conflict resolution peer support**, nominated or self-nominated students are trained to mediate disputes between peers. This is commonly called peer mediation.
3. In **peer-counselling support**, nominated or self-nominated students are trained to help students in distress (e.g. because they are being bullied) through the use of simple counselling skills such as listening, showing understanding and support, and helping with problem solving. Students receive some training in basic counselling skills and are available to talk through personal or school-related issues with other, often younger, students. The BOUNCE! and BOUNCE BACK! acronyms are a way of providing students with small ‘c’ counselling skills. They would also need:
 - good listening skills
 - an understanding and commitment to the principles of psychological safety.
4. In **peer tutoring support**, an older student both befriends a younger student and also works with them on a regular basis to learn and revise academic content. Hundreds of evaluations of cross-age tutoring studies indicate that it can contribute to positive academic gains and effective growth for both tutors and tutees^{41, 42}.

Effective practices in the implementation of peer support

The following guidelines outline effective practices in the implementation of peer support⁴³.

- ⊙ **Effective preparation:** A peer support program needs systematic planning. This includes making decisions about partnerships, designing activities, training the older students, informing the younger students about what is happening, and monitoring and evaluating the process. It also takes a lot of time in the initial stages to set up the program.
- ⊙ **Commitment:** Teacher commitment is an important feature of successful peer support programs. They also require the commitment of senior staff, especially the principal⁴⁴. Student commitment to being an older buddy is also crucial to a program’s overall effectiveness. When older buddies did not attend sessions or were inconsistent in their involvement, the impact on the younger buddies was negative rather than positive⁴⁵.
- ⊙ **The addition of peer tutoring:** Older buddies/mentors can be involved in teaching social skills, values or about bullying (as in a mentoring program) or academic content and thinking skills^{42, 46}.
- ⊙ **Effective pairing of younger and older students:** Younger students should be the same gender and similar in background to the older buddy or mentor⁴⁷.
- ⊙ **Optimal age difference between buddies:** The age difference should be about three years.
- ⊙ **Awareness within the school community:** Awareness of the school’s peer support program by all students and staff has also been identified as a significant factor in program success⁴⁸. Advance preparation of parents has also been shown as essential to a buddy program’s acceptance⁴⁹.

- ⊙ **Teacher buddying:** Teachers ‘buddying up’ with other colleagues to serve as role models for students can contribute to more effective peer support/buddy programs⁵⁰.

6. Positive behaviour management approaches

Student wellbeing is more likely to thrive in a school environment where there is a focus on positive behaviour management. Such an approach highlights prevention as well as intervention and aims to teach students appropriate skills.

School-wide Positive Behaviour Support

Many schools are implementing a whole-school approach to behaviour management called School-wide Positive Behaviour Support (SWPBS)⁵¹. This is an approach to behaviour management that aims to prevent and reduce anti-social and challenging behaviours by identifying what skills need to be taught and by using positive intervention strategies⁵². Positive behaviour support is consistent with *Bounce Back*’s multi-factored approach to wellbeing and resilience. The approach reviews the students’ learning environment to remove identified factors that maintain inappropriate or unacceptable behaviours. The focus is also on teaching students social-emotional skills such as negotiating, conflict resolution and empathy; and academic skills, such as numeracy and literacy skills, based on students’ needs. The aim is to engage them in more appropriate and pro-social behaviour. Positive consequences for pro-social behaviour are provided and negative consequences such as punishment are minimised, but not eliminated.

Restorative practices

Restorative practices have been implemented in many schools. These are consistent with the *Bounce Back!* program in that they focus on the importance of building positive relationships and teaching social-emotional learning skills, including empathy and conflict management. In this approach to behaviour management, ‘restorative’ means that when a student misbehaves, restoring relationships, repairing harm and learning perspective-taking and social responsibility are more important and effective than simply delivering punishment. Restorative practices include:

- ⊙ *conference circles*, where students sit in a circle, and use the structured format of restorative conferencing to discuss and problem-solve an issue that has affected the whole class or specific members of the class
- ⊙ *the restorative interview or conversation*, where the teacher uses the incident of misbehaviour as an educative opportunity for teaching empathy, consequential thinking and the importance of making amends in order to repair harm and relationships (see page 90)
- ⊙ *the restorative conference*, which is more formal and used with more serious and ongoing misbehaviour. It usually involves senior staff and parents, as well as the students involved and those who have been harmed by the students’ behaviour.

7. Developing safe and supportive school communities

Feeling safe at school is a basic human right and is essential for student wellbeing and resilience, as well as learning. One in six students reports being bullied⁵³ and one in ten reports being cyberbullied each term, mostly by nasty text messages and instant messaging⁵⁴. At this stage, secondary students are more likely to be cyberbullied than primary students, but it is expected that primary aged students will increasingly engage in cyberbullying as they become more adept at using technology. The effects of not feeling safe are well documented. A meta-analytic review of 20 years of research found that being bullied at school was associated with outcomes such as depression, loneliness, anxiety, negative self-concept and poor peer relationships⁵⁵. Students who bully others also don’t fare well. Many studies have emphasised the link between bullying at school and later violent, anti-social and/or criminal behaviour^{56, 57}.

The vision of the revised 2010 National Safe Schools Framework is that ‘all Australian school communities are safe and supportive learning environments that promote student wellbeing’. The revised NSSF (which was developed by the authors and Erebis International) provides clear guidelines, definitions of terms and resources to help schools develop a safe, supportive and inclusive school community. The ‘No bullying’ unit in **Classroom Resources** explicitly teaches students the skills and understandings to minimise school bullying.

8. Focusing on teacher wellbeing

Teacher wellbeing, or how satisfied and positive teachers feel about the quality of their work life, also affects student wellbeing. It also encompasses resilience, as teaching is a very complex occupation with many personal and professional demands. The complexity of teaching ensures there will be setbacks and difficulties, and for teachers to thrive in the face of setbacks is a key element of their wellbeing. An interesting study that compared teachers’ views of their work with other occupations was conducted in the United Kingdom⁵⁸. This was an in-depth study with teachers in eight high schools as well as an online survey with more than 1000 teachers. The online survey compared teachers’ responses to 300 other professional careers. The teachers reported that their daily work was:

- ⊙ fulfilling because it gave them a sense of meaning and purpose and a sense of accomplishment through developing young people and making a difference in their lives
- ⊙ exciting because it offered variety, enjoyment and interactions with many different people where every day was different
- ⊙ satisfying because it enabled their self-development, as well as the pleasure from helping young people to develop both intellectually and emotionally
- ⊙ enjoyable because of the varied positive interactions with and feedback from both young people and colleagues and the broader community.

This study clearly documents the positive emotions and sense of meaning and purpose many teachers experience in their work. It also indicates that focusing on the positives in the workplace, rather than dwelling on the negatives, is likely to enhance our sense of wellbeing and resilience.

Being positive and optimistic has been found to broaden one’s cognitive and social-emotional resources and build positive organisations⁵⁹. Experiencing positive emotions enhances our capacity for optimistic thinking, problem solving and decision making and leads to more flexible, innovative and creative solutions^{60, 61}. Positive emotions also have the ability to ‘undo’ the effects of stress and encourage both emotional and physical resilience⁶². The UK Foresight’s 2008 Mental Capital and Wellbeing Project drew on the latest research from across the world to consider how to improve everyone’s wellbeing throughout life⁶³. The project concluded that a small improvement in wellbeing can help to decrease mental health problems and help people to flourish. It distilled the wellbeing research down to five ways to enhance wellbeing; the acronym CLANG (Connect, Learn, Active, Notice, Give) helps in remembering these five ways.

1. **Connect** with people around you and with colleagues, family and friends. Building these connections will support and enrich you every day.
2. **Learn:** Keep learning. Take on a different responsibility at work; set a challenge you will enjoy achieving. Learning new things at work or in the community will make you more confident as well as being fun.
3. **Active:** Be active, go for a walk, run, swim, cycle, dance or garden. Exercising makes you feel good. Find a physical activity that you enjoy and that suits your level of mobility and fitness.
4. **Notice:** Take notice. Be curious, catch sight of the beautiful and savour the moment. Be aware of the world around you and what you are feeling. Reflecting on your experiences will help you appreciate what matters to you.

5. **Give:** Do something caring or generous for a student, a friend, a colleague or a stranger. Thank someone, smile, volunteer your time. Seeing yourself and your happiness linked to the wider community can be very rewarding and creates connections with the people around you.

Experiencing a sense of wellbeing and being resilient means that when faced with new initiatives, you are more able to:

- ⊙ maintain a high level of productivity and quality in your teaching as you manage change
- ⊙ remain emotionally and physically healthy during periods of uncertainty
- ⊙ rebound from any difficulties arising from change and challenge to be even stronger than before
- ⊙ be flexible about how to proceed when blocked
- ⊙ become more organised to avoid being overwhelmed with information
- ⊙ be proactive in engaging in any new initiatives rather than running away from them.

Our research has found that teachers who taught the 'People bouncing back' unit in **Classroom Resources** reported higher personal and professional resilience⁶⁴. This makes sense because in teaching skills and understandings, we develop a deep understanding of this content.

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Sample Pages