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WA Respectful Relationships Teaching Support Program. Evaluation Report Embedded Case Studies

COLLABORATION FOR EVIDENCE, RESEARCH & IMPACT IN PUBLIC HEALTH

WE ACKNOWLEDGE THE TRADITIONAL CUSTODIANS OF THE LAND ON WHICH WE COME TOGETHER TO CONDUCT OUR RESEARCH AND RECOGNIZE THAT THESE LANDS HAVE ALWAYS BEEN PLACES OF LEARNING FOR ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER PEOPLES. WE HONOUR AND PAY RESPECT TO ALL ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER ELDERS – PAST AND PRESENT – AND ACKNOWLEDGE THE IMPORTANT ROLE OF ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER VOICES, AND THEIR ONGOING LEADERSHIP IN RESPONDING TO DOMESTIC, FAMILY, AND SEXUAL VIOLENCE.

THIS EVALUATION REPORT WAS COMMISSIONED BY STARICK AS PART OF A BROADER CONTRACT TO CONDUCT VARIOUS EVALUATION ACTIVITIES RELATED TO THE WA RESPECTFUL RELATIONSHIPS TEACHING SUPPORT PROGRAM.

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4. Promotion and dissemination of evidence-based practice and building practice-based evidence.
5. Provision of research training and capacity-building techniques to undergraduate and postgraduate students, allied health promotion professionals and community workers.
6. Building sustained partnerships and collaborations with vulnerable and most at-risk communities and relevant community, government and private sector organisations.

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The project team wishes to acknowledge all the participants of our various education strategies who kindly provided feedback.

Acronyms

AIHW	Australian Institute of Health and Welfare
CERIPH	Collaboration for Evidence, Research and Impact in Public Health
DoE	Department of Education
FDV	Family & Domestic Violence
RRTSP	Respectful Relationships Teaching Support Program
RRE	Respectful Relationships Education
RSE	Relationships and Sexuality Education
RSE Project	Curtin University Relationships and Sexuality Education Project
SEIFA	Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas
WA	Western Australia



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1.0 Introduction

1.1 Background

The Western Australian (WA) Respectful Relationships Teaching Support Program (henceforth RRTSP or 'the program') is a professional learning program designed to train and support teachers in government schools to provide respectful relationships education (RRE). The program complements the WA curriculum, and the pilot was delivered state-wide over 4-years by the WA-based not-for-profit organisation Starick. Through the implementation of a whole-school approach, the program strives to embed RRE into the broader school community through strategies to enhance curriculum, teaching and learning; culture, ethos and environment; partnerships; and policy, plans and procedures. The RRTSP also assists schools beyond training; offering ongoing tailored support via email, school site visits, phone support and providing online tools such as a forum and library. In doing so, it aims to foster and enhance individual school cultures of respect and gender equality. The effectiveness of the RRTSP has been externally evaluated by the Collaboration for Evidence, Research and Impact in Public Health (CERIPH), Curtin University. This report describes findings from the holistic embedded case studies conducted with schools that participated in cohorts 2-4.

Violence is a significant public health issue in Australia. RRE is one primary prevention activity that seeks to prevent gender-based violence [1]. Gender-based violence includes any violence which includes a gender bias [1], the most common being violence against girls and women [2]. Although violence against girls and women is the most common, data from the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW), and La Trobe University suggest men, non-binary, and transgender people also experience of family and domestic violence (FDV) [2,3]. For instance, in 2018 men and women were equally likely to report they had experienced at least one instance of image-based abuse [2], and 41.9%, 45.9% and 52% of trans women, trans men, and non-binary people respectively had experienced verbal violence from an intimate partner [3].

In addition, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, people from cultural and linguistically diverse (CaLD) backgrounds, and people with a disability are also named as at-risk groups for FDV. Data from 2016 reported 1 in 5 Indigenous Australians had experienced physical or threatened violence, with 63% of women and 35% of men reporting the perpetrator of the most recent incident was a current or previous partner, or a family member [4]. Experiences of emotional abuse by a current or previous partner were more likely to be reported by women and men with disability than people without disability [5]. Although there is limited research on FDV within CaLD communities, the AIHW references the existence of forced marriage, visa abuse, and female genital mutilation [5].

Concerningly, data from the AIHW suggests up to one in 20 Australians believe violence against women may be justified in some situations with this belief more common among young people [2], highlighting the need for school-based programs. Research suggests that evidence-based school-based RRE when implemented appropriately, can reduce future rates of victimisation and perpetration [6].

1.2 RRTSP

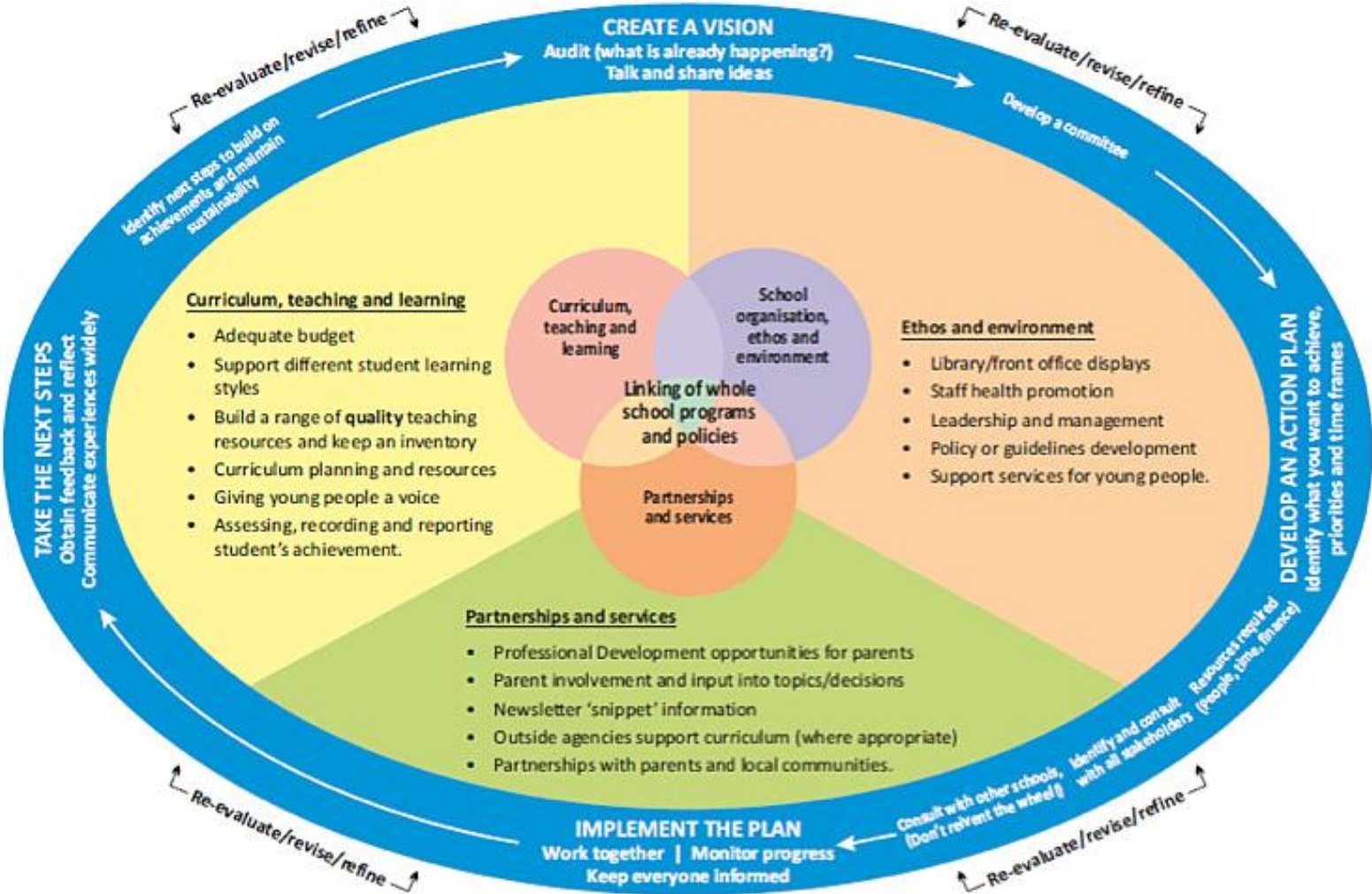
The program has been developed for Department of Education primary and secondary schools across Western Australia, including regional and remote schools. The purpose of the program is to support teachers and school staff to develop knowledge, skills, confidence, and community partnerships to achieve the following outcomes:

- A whole-school approach to respectful relationships education (RRE).
- Family, and domestic violence (FDV) and gender-based violence content is included in RRE.
- Gender equality and respect is taught across all areas of learning and curriculum.
- Responses to disclosures of experiences and/or perpetration of violence are safe.
- The whole school community and relevant community providers partner in, and champion intervention and prevention.
- Schools are safe spaces for students to learn, explore and disclose without fear of judgement or silencing.
- Norms, cultures and attitudes that support, condone and/or excuse FDV and gender-based violence are changed at the school community level.

Health promoting schools framework

The Health Promoting Schools (HPS) framework advocates and promotes a whole school approach to health issues, such as RRE [7], providing a structure to enable schools to plan, implement and evaluate programs focusing on key domains of: culture, learning and teaching; school organisation, ethos and environment; and partnerships and services [8, 9]. The HPS framework encourages health lessons to not be delivered in an ad hoc way [10] and to ensure lessons delivered in the classroom are reinforced by policies, procedures and practices which are embedded within the school's culture and strategic direction, and interactions with the stakeholders and wider school community [10]. While variations of the HPS have been implemented [11,12] the RRTSP focuses on the following domains: curriculum, teaching and learning, ethos and environment and partnerships and services (see Figure 1).

Figure 1. Examples of the components of a Health Promoting Schools Framework



Program structure

The program provides participating schools with ongoing support and engagement specific to their local context and needs. Professional development is provided for nominated staff from each school. Participants initially participate in an eLearning session, then attend two face-to-face workshops. This structure was slightly changed for cohort four, workshop two. Due to direction from the Department of Education, all school staff were required to participate in professional development online due to increasing numbers of COVID-19 in WA. Therefore, workshop two was conducted online via WebEx.

E-learning

The eLearning module (one to two hours) is completed prior to the face-to-face workshops. This module includes learnings around:

- The issue of family and domestic violence and violence prevention.
- Healthy and respectful relationships education in schools.

Following the eLearning module, participants attended two 4 to 5-hour, face-to-face workshops. These workshops are delivered approximately six-months apart. This gap enables schools to implement strategies in their school community. Workshop two of cohort four was facilitated online.

Workshop Structure

Workshop 1

- Revisit the eLearning material, reinforce knowledge and background of FDV, and emphasise the prevalence of FDV.
- Explore best practice principles and practical tools for addressing FDV in schools (including presentations from guest speakers).
- Planning time for schools to implement information received throughout the day.

Workshop 2 – Online for cohort 4

- Reflect on and share learnings from the implementation of RRTSP in school since workshop 1 (includes guest speakers, exemplar schools and external agencies).
- Explore future directions and supports (includes external agencies).
- Planning time to build on additional information and presentations from workshop 2.

1.3 Evaluation design

A mixed-methods approach to triangulate quantitative and qualitative data is employed to measure the implementation of the RRTSP from a whole of school perspective (see Figure 2). In addition,

short term impact on school staffs' knowledge and attitudes towards RRE and confidence in implementing RRE strategies and curricular was measured.

1.4 Evaluation methods

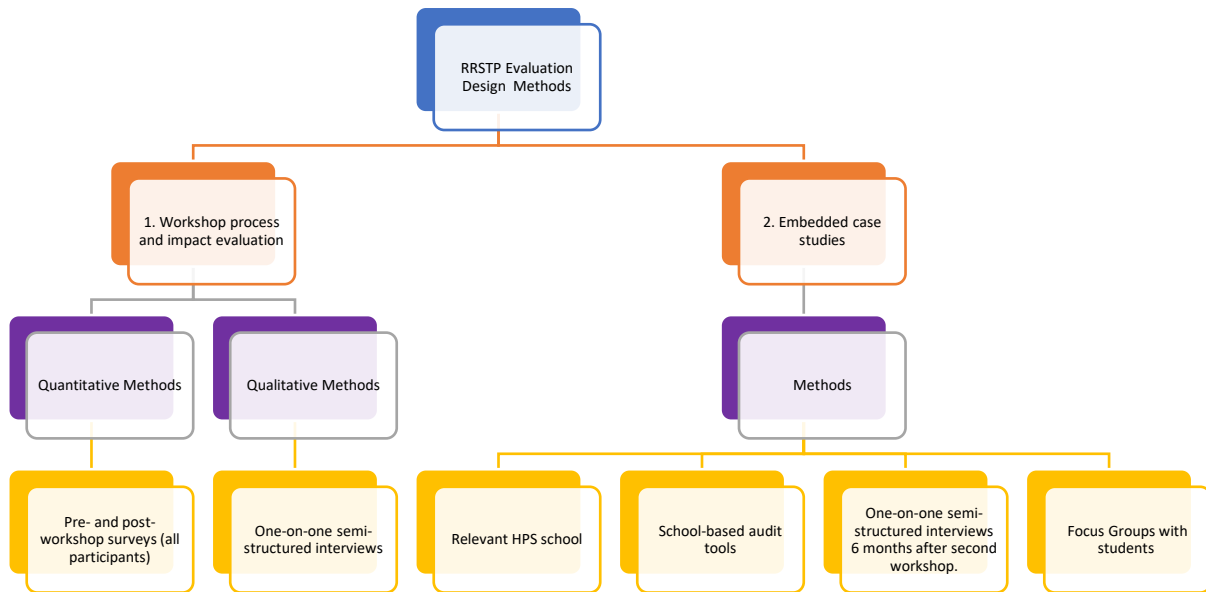
The external evaluation includes two components:

1. Process and impact evaluation for school staff participating in the training.
2. Embedded, holistic case studies of a purposive sample of schools.

This report describes the findings from the embedded, holistic case studies, which included a purposive sample of schools who participated in the program over cohorts two to four (including primary and secondary, metropolitan and rural). Data were collected using qualitative methods; with one-on-one interviews with school staff, parents, and stakeholders involved in the program, as well as focus groups discussions conducted with students attending the participating schools. Case study data was also be collected via desktop audits of documentation, school lesson plans and via a school climate audit. Findings from each school are presented separately, with common themes reported for all schools.

This phase of the evaluation measured the implementation of the RRTSP from a whole school perspective. The Health Promoting Schools framework was employed to guide the evaluation with a focus on the following domains: curriculum, teaching and learning, ethos and environment and partnerships and services. In addition, short term impact on school staff knowledge and attitudes towards RRE and confidence in implementing RRE strategies and curricular was measured.

Figure 2. Evaluation design and methods



1.5 Ethics

Ethics approval was received from Curtin University Human Research Ethics Committee (HRE2019-0470), and the Department of Education WA (D19/0504063) provided approval to conduct the study on Department sites.

1.6 Important considerations and limitations

The data presented in this report should be reviewed with an awareness of several key considerations and study limitations. The holistic, embedded case study evaluation was planned to occur over the four years of the pilot program, from 2019, to 2022. At the end of each cohort, it was intended that two to three schools would be recruited to participate as case study schools, with data collection to begin at least one term after they had completed the RRTSP workshops. Due to COVID-19 and the subsequent lockdowns and associated workload implications, changes in school structure, and staff turnover, data collection was unable to progress during 2020 and 2021. All schools who participated in the case studies were recruited in 2022. Therefore, schools differed in the stages of their implementation journey. Furthermore, schools had experienced significant staff turnover, which meant there was a limited number of staff who had attended the RRTSP program and were eligible to be interviewed.

A number of challenges were associated with recruiting schools into the case study evaluation. A total of 12 schools were purposively selected to represent different school types

(primary, district, secondary) and geographical location (metropolitan and regional/rural). These schools were invited to participate as a case study school, with additional recruitment for school participants conducted during the RRTSP End of Program Forum. Of the 12 schools initially invited, only three schools agreed to participate in the evaluation. An additional school agreed to participate after a phone call follow up. A fifth school was recruited to participate at the End of Project Forum.

Schools who elected not to participate provided a range of reasons including: (1) key contacts no longer being at the school (for example, principals or members of their implementation team); (2) not wanting to participate due to having not made progress with their implementation; (3) being involved in too many other projects; and (4) uncertainty related to COVID-19. In addition, five of the 12 schools who were contacted to participate did not reply to the invitation to participate via email and did not return phone calls to participate. Furthermore, as some schools suggested they were involved in too many projects, or had too much staff turnover to participate, open-ended questions based on the interview guide was administered via Qualtrics to school staff. Three schools were contacted to participate via survey. However, only one response from one school was collected.

Data were also collected via interviews from key stakeholders involved with the implementation of the RRTSP. These data triangulate case study data in addition to providing important insights into the implementation of the RRTSP.

Considering this background information, it is important to understand the holistic case studies presented in this report provide a snapshot of how *some* schools in the program responded to the RRTSP. It is important not to generalise these findings to all schools that participated in the pilot phase of the RRTSP.

2.0 Methods

2.1 Aim and Objectives

Aim

To conduct embedded case studies with purposively selected schools from cohort two to four from the Respectful Relationships Teaching Support Program Project (RRTSP) to explore the implementation and impact of the program.

Objectives

1. Measure the implementation of the RRTSP from a whole of school perspective.
2. Investigate the barriers and enablers to the implementation of a whole school approach to RRE.
3. Assess the short-term impact on school staff knowledge and attitudes towards respectful relationships education, and confidence in implementing RRE strategies and curricular.

2.2 Method

This phase of the evaluation involved the use of embedded, holistic case studies with a purposive sample of schools who participated in cohorts two to four of the RRTSP. The embedded cases studies will include interviews, focus group discussions, open-ended surveys and documentation. Different methods of data collection were employed based on the capacity of each school. The data will be used to measure the implementation and the perceived impact of RRTSP in each school. Barriers and enablers to implementation will also be explored.

Sample

Twelve schools were purposively selected to participate in the case study research. Of these five schools elected to participate. The literature indicates sample size for multiple case studies is dependent on time and resources, however as few as two sites can be used [13]. To capture diversity of schools those involved included four primary and one secondary schools. Four of the schools were metropolitan and one rural.

Within schools the principal and/or deputy principal, other key school staff, parents and students were invited to participate in interviews or focus group discussions. Participants in each case study varied due to school capacity.

Consent for the school to participate in the research was granted by each school principal. All individual participants provided informed consent. Students received parental consent and provided assent to participate. Data for documentation was collected with the support of a key school staff member.

Twelve stakeholders were purposively invited to participate in one-on-one semi-structured interviews. Of these ten agreed to participate in the research.

Data collection

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with school staff and parents. Interviews focused on barriers and enablers to implementing RRE in schools and included questions relating to the implementation of curriculum and other whole school strategies. One-on-one qualitative interviews were conducted by a researcher experienced in qualitative interview techniques and took between 35 and 60 minutes. Interviews with school staff and parents from each school were facilitated in person, on the phone, or through video conferencing software.

Students were invited to participate in focus group discussions (FGDs). Purposive samples of students were sought from each school who participated in the case studies (6-per FGD). One to two FGDs were conducted at each school, involving year six students if a primary school, and year 11 or 12 students if the school was a secondary school. These FGDs explored barriers and enablers to RRE, attitudes towards RRE in schools and RRE experienced at school. The FGDs were conducted in a quiet room at a convenient time for the school and took approximately 60 minutes.

Schools were invited to provide relevant documents that supported their implementation of RR at a whole school level. Documents could include relevant school policies and procedures; school reviews; curriculum examples and mapping documents, school newsletters, emails to staff, notices, staff support line resources; photographs and other documentation of events and classroom presentations, and information about workshops. Documents were used to support the interviews and FGD findings [13].

Stakeholders participated in semi structured one-one-one interviews by a researcher experienced in qualitative interview techniques. They were all facilitated on the phone, or through video conferencing software, and took between 35 and 60 minutes. Interviews focused on the professional role of the participant, the support they or their organisation provided to participants of the RRTSP, barriers and enablers to the schools implementing strategies, and improvements they recommended for the program going forward.

Data analysis

A grounded theory approach was employed to analyse the qualitative data (documentation, interviews, FGDs, open ended questions from the survey, qualitative data from the audit tools). Constant comparison analysis which requires the researcher to continually sort through the data collected, code information to identify key themes and reinforce theory generation was used [14]. Using this method allowed the research team to generate knowledge about common patterns and themes within the human experience [15]. Although the intent of this research was not to develop a grounded theory, the rigour associated with the technique enabled the researchers to present detailed and rich data [14].

To ensure credibility, the interview process employed in the FGDs and interviews was consistent with best practice for interviewing children, adolescents and adults [16,17]. To reduce bias and enhance conformability, the coding and themes were analysed by the research group. The case study method allows for comparison of data through interviews, FGDs, documentation, and open-ended questions. Qualitative data was managed and stored during the data management software NVivo, Version 20.

To ensure anonymity use of pseudonyms was employed when reporting qualitative data.

3.0 Results

3.1 Sample

Five schools participated in the embedded case studies. Schools included four metropolitan primary schools, and one rural secondary school. Interviews were conducted with 21 school staff and three

parents. Five FGDs were conducted with 25 participants, including 19 year six students, and six students in year 11 or 12. A further 10 interviews were conducted with stakeholders of the program.

3.2 Holistic embedded case studies

School one (metropolitan primary school)

School context

- Primary school in the Perth metropolitan area (cohort 3)
- SEIFA¹ Index 932
- Interviews completed: 6 school staff
- Unable to facilitate any interviews with parents or students due to school-based time constraints. This school was at the beginning of their RRTSP journey.

School summary

Strategies employed:

- Increasing staff awareness of RRE's place within the curriculum
- Promoting, facilitating and embedding social and emotional learning programs
- Role modelling respectful interactions amongst staff, and students
- Embedding RRE within school policies and plans
- The presence of an RRE champion to promote respectful relationships amongst the school, and be a resource for staff
- Began engagement with parents, and developing community partnerships

Barriers to implementing RRE experienced by the school:

- Cultural differences in what was appropriate to cover, along with pushback from parents on subject matter, and triggering content
- The curriculum is too overcrowded, with limited time to cover each area
- Resources which are available are outdated, and not relevant or inaccessible
- Program staff had significant turnover

Enablers to implementing RRE experienced by the school:

- Schools are ideal settings to teach and promote RRE
- Utilising a whole school approach to RRE facilitates teaching and promotion of key messages
- The RRE champion provided additional support and referral pathways for both teachers to access and families

¹ Socio-economic indexes for areas (SEIFA) ranks areas in Australia according to relative socio-economic advantage and disadvantage. The middle two-thirds of SEIFA scores fall between approximately 900-1100. The majority of the Perth metropolitan area falls within the higher SEIFA index (see <https://www.sbs.com.au/interactive/2017/struggle-street-embed/>). For this study the index is based on the SEIFA for the school area.

What further support does the RRTSP need to provide to this school?

- Curriculum support particularly updates to the curriculum
- Provision of more resources in the area of implementing RRE, including evidence-based strategies and illustrations of practice
- Additional staff training for all staff at the school
- Supporting the school to implement a whole-school approach to RRE
- Strategies schools can utilise to engage parents and community into their discussions of RRE
- Facilitate and formalise connection opportunities between other schools who participated in the RRTSP

What has the school already done?

The importance of a whole school approach to RRE is a message promoted within the RRTSP. This school implemented a variety of strategies in the domains of curriculum, ethos and environment and partnerships and community, to enhance the promotion of respectful relationships.

Curriculum, teaching and learning

Curriculum, teaching and learning is a key component of a whole school program. Three school staff spoke about the inclusion of RRE in the curriculum. There was an awareness that RRE exists in the curriculum, specifically in the Health and Physical Education curriculum *“it’s part of our curriculum in the health and phys-ed curriculum, it’s something that we’re doing to cover the curriculum areas”* (Mallory, Principal). One classroom teacher also spoke about the inclusion of respect within the national framework, referencing *“a value of Australian schooling...respect transcends everything...it has a flow on effect, it impacts your integrity...this is us, this is here, this is in our curriculum”* (Tracey, Classroom Teacher). With the support of the Curriculum Priorities group from the Department of Education, this school engaged in a scope and sequence of their health curriculum. During this, the teachers were given the current Health and Physical Education curriculum and were asked to highlight where RRE fits within each aspect of the curriculum across the year levels. The school staff reported not only did this bring attention to where RRE sits, but the process also enabled them to acknowledge what they may already be doing *“we gave them the current curriculum, and got them to highlight in what areas of the health curriculum...they think we already include respectful components of respectful relationships...Teachers like to know that they’re already doing something before they get asked to do more”*. In addition, one classroom teacher conducted her own research focusing on the Victorian curriculum, to gain a greater understanding of the language to use when teaching these curriculum areas *“I personally looked into the Victorian curriculum, just so I could kind of see what language and terminology they’re using for early childhood...I just kind of picked some things out of that to implement here”* (Cameron, Classroom Teacher).

Although creating a scope and sequence of the health curriculum seemed important, two school staff spoke about the importance of embedding RRE cross-curricular *“if it was...embedded into other aspects of the curriculum, that would be better”* (Sabena, Classroom teacher) *“as teachers we’re taught to integrate across all learning areas. So whilst it may fit in under health and wellbeing in our social and emotional learning, I would be encouraging that it’s something we’re on top of all the time”* (Wren, Classroom teacher).

School organisation, ethos and environment

Social and emotional programs

The inclusion of RRE within the school ethos and environment was highlighted by all participants. The most referenced strategy by all six staff was their social and emotional learning programs. School staff reflected on their whole school program, Promoting Alternative Thinking Strategies (PATHS), and how this intersects with (RRE). This program was said to have existed in the school prior to their participation in the RRTSP *“we’ve been a PATHS school for a long time, so that’s very embedded in all our plans, in all our policies, the way we do things”* (Mallory, Principal), however they recognised how many aspects of this program are similar to those promoted in a RRE program, *“the basis of that is all feelings are okay, but not all behaviours are okay. So you can see how that fits perfectly into respectful relationships because these kids are very comfortable with talking about their feelings”* (Mallory, Principal). This social and emotional learning program is embedded within the schools’ policies and planning, with messages within classrooms reminding the students about considering their behaviours, for example;

“We do the PATHS program at our school...we obviously focus on self-esteem and self-regulation and we look at a character Twiggle...he loses his load and he’s hit a friend, and we discuss why that’s wrong...how can we resolve that without physical violence” (Cameron, Classroom Teacher)

“If a child feels uncomfortable or unhappy, or if they feel excited, they will, you know, talk about it. And they can talk about it” (Corrine, Education Assistant)

“This goes on to every classroom. As I said, whether we know it or not, we are doing this all the time” (Tracey, Classroom Teacher)

In addition to PATHS, this school has employed several other emotional regulation strategies, such as mindfulness sessions, yoga, and zones of regulation, as well as being involved as a ‘Be You’ school looking at mental health *“the other resource actually that we’re doing at our school, it’s really good is Be You. We do a lot of discussions with Be You to see that we’re ticking their boxes”* (Wren, Classroom Teacher). Further, the school chaplain runs a program called Rainbows, which assists children who have suffered grief or loss in their family structure. Although not restricted to

these children, this program provides strategies, and someone to discuss any concerns or thoughts, for example;

“it is to help kids with issues at home...maybe their family, I mean a family member and so on, divorce, just to give them support” (Tracey, Classroom Teacher).

“they’re small groups where she takes them out of class for a short time once a term...that’s about, I guess, chatting about, you know, their concerns, if they want to open up on a small level basis” (Wren, Classroom Teacher)

Role modelling and promoting respectful interactions

All staff interviewed from this school spoke about how RRE is modelled through respectful interactions with members across the school community. Teachers reflected that positive behaviours were modelled and promoted within the school community, with reference to their zones of regulation and other whole school approaches. Three school staff mentioned this involved having conversations about undesirable behaviours such as hitting or swearing, and discussing how these behaviours can make others feel, for example:

“it’s about a conversation...talking to the kids about how what they do makes each other feel” (Mallory, Principal)

“I hammer that every day...we don’t touch anyone, we use our words, and I basically give the children a bit of a vocab wall and where we can kind of go from there...I think with our little ones, they don’t have the vocabulary to say, you did that, I’m angry at you...they just lash out physically” (Cameron, Classroom Teacher)

“I would try and calm the child down, sit with them, and try and make them understand that’s not the right way...see if they can understand what you’re saying...you have to sit down, you can’t just lash out yourself” (Corrine, Education Assistant).

One classroom teacher spoke about the effect this role modelling can have on the students:

“Just developing those respectful behaviours. So then they can, it then becomes automatic, try instil and engrain them. You know, everyone’s equal, everything thinks everything...so it’s not tokenistic...it’s got to be done and spoken enough in different ways to it becomes normal...so it becomes the way the person is, not something extra on top of their personality”. (Sabena, Classroom Teacher)

The idea of role modelling respectful relationships and interactions is consistent with the notion of using teachable moments to promote respectful relationships. Five school staff explicitly referenced how RRE is taught incidentally throughout their school daily. Using student actions during

class time, and opportunities at recess and lunch to engage in conversation about how you can show respect for others were reported, for example;

“when the girl slipped over like I probably would have just gone oh boys oh yeah, but I took it as an opportunity to talk about being respectful in a relationship with each other...we just have to take our opportunities because they’re there” (Mallory, Principal)

“teachable moments yeah. It’s got to be done incidentally throughout the whole day. Recess, breaks, every time before school, after school” (Sabena, Classroom Teacher).

The use of teachable moments to promote respectful relationships, made the participants believe many of the staff at their school would be comfortable teaching RRE, purely because they are already doing it without realising *“I think most teachers are practising role modelling and teaching RRE, whether they realise it or not”* (Tracey, Classroom Teacher).

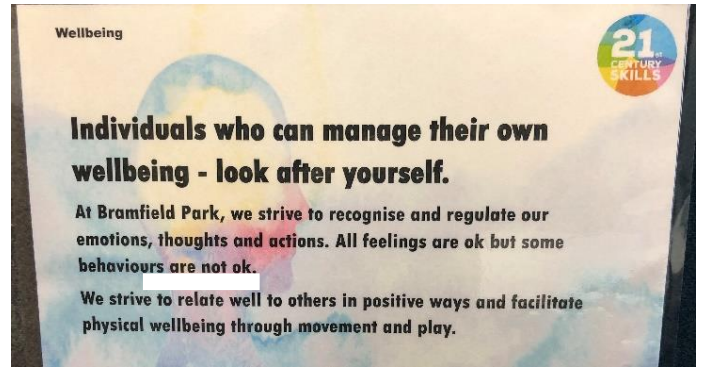
Embedding RRE in school policies

A whole school approach to RRE means the development of plans, policies and guidelines should be influenced by, and incorporate strategies to promote respectful relationships. Since their participation in the RRTSP, this school has included respectful relationships in their business plan, which means they are accountable to ensure RRE is promoted within the school. This schools’ business plan includes five pillars, one of which is Wellbeing, which focuses on mental health and physical health, under which RRE sits. The Principal said *“respectful relationships is in our business plan...so it’s part of our strategic direction”* (Mallory, Principal). Participants reflected on the benefits of including RRE within their business plan. By including RRE in their business plan, this would ensure that there was accountability in addressing this area, putting the responsibility on the teachers, and lessening any effect of key staff leaving *“because it’s in the business plan, it’s out accountability, it’s our responsibility as teachers, and so whilst I might lead it to date...we’d hope that was so embedded, that it’s part of our culture”* (Wren, Classroom Teacher).

In addition, this schools’ policies are guided by three core values: be respectful; be responsible; be safe. Corrine discussed that these three rules have been present within the school since they started over 20 years ago, which evidences the idea of an embedded approach to respect. Wren also stated *“respect is...part of our motto, so we have responsibility, respect, and safety as our three core values of our school, so it’s always been there”* (Wren, Classroom Teacher).



Signs used in classrooms



Regulating emotions

Staff culture

All six participants spoke about the positive culture between staff at the school. There seemed to be a very strong sense of community, support, and trust between the staff members of this school, which fostered a positive school environment *"we have a really strong sense of community and trust within each other at the school...the support that the staff give each other is above and beyond anything I've ever seen before at a school"* (Sabena, Classroom teacher). Three participants spoke explicitly about the strategies employed to support teachers who perhaps were not comfortable with a particular subject or topic. Cameron mentioned the school had previously implemented class sharing, where teachers would essentially switch classes for a certain period of time, and teach different content descriptors depending on what they were comfortable with *"if there has been a curriculum area that a staff member might not be comfortable with, we've actually shared it in the sense that...I had all the year ones and that teacher had all the year twos, and we taught separate content descriptors for that week or whatnot"* (Cameron, Classroom teacher).

Presence of an RRE champion

The presence of an RRE champion was referenced by all participants, which highlights the importance of having someone with a passion for RRE within the school community. This RRE champion is one of the staff members who attended the RRTSP training. Staff who participated in the case study interviews were very aware of the knowledge this champion has on the topic of RRE, and their comfort and confidence in broaching this topic with the community. Further, all six participants spoke about how the RRE champion had returned from the RRTSP training, and ran professional development sessions with the other school staff, exploring some of the key topics and messages from the training, for example:

"she did present to the staff, as a whole group on respectful relationships and what that encompasses" (Cameron, Classroom teacher)

“we’ve got a teacher...who’s been...going to classes and doing it and she’s represented us and taught it” (Corrine, Education assistant)

“(RRE champion) has been able to come back and taken the lead to actually share some of the eLearning modules with staff, so we’re working our way through those, and she’s created our three year plan” (Mallory, Principal).

These benefits were reinforced by the RRE champion, who suggested: *“since we’ve joined the program, since I’ve done the PDs with them, it’s equipped them already I think...I feel like I’m really starting to build their skill capacity...I do feel like that has been a very important part of the program” (Wren, Classroom teacher).*

Four participants (including the RRE champion) spoke about their roles being to support the teaching staff and be someone they could approach with questions. Three participants voiced their RRE champion assists with disclosures, by supporting the families, but also the teaching staff, for example;

“as soon as I had come up here and we discussed it...I had [RRE champion] who was part of respectful relationships...there was huge support behind us that it was, not only just me being supported, but especially the family” (Cameron, Classroom teacher)

“it’s good to know that we have the avenue through (RRE champion)...that if we need help as teachers or we get something disclosed, we have someone to go to and talk to and we can send the parents to someone if they feel comfortable” (Sabena, Classroom teacher).

Although participants spoke about how the RRE champion assists them with disclosures, it is important to note that three participants (including the RRE champion) felt it was important to have more training about responding to disclosures, to ensure they feel ready if this was to happen. This will be discussed in more detail in a later section.

Partnerships and community

Engaging parents

This school has started the process of engaging their parents in RRE and with the school in general using a number of strategies. One participant spoke about their open door policy, which gives permission for parents to approach the classroom teacher with a problem, and feel comfortable doing this *“I said, I’m always open door policy, you can come in and come chat to me about anything” (Cameron, Classroom teacher), “I build that relationship with parents and again, being early childhood, I’m at the door, I’m always talking to them...trying to keep it really comfortable...which is well how last year kind of came about, was that she felt comfortable to speak with me” (Cameron, Classroom teacher).* Other participants indicated they had a very supportive

relationship with their parent community, particularly through the Parents and Citizens Association (P&C) and school board. Discussions of RRE have been raised with the P&C and school board, with the RRE champion facilitating a presentation to the board, and the Principal introducing the topic to their P&C. The school board consists of a minimum of five parents, which was to be beneficial in getting the information out to the broader community *“just having those five parents be more aware of what we’re doing has already opened...the floodgates of getting messages out there, word of mouth is hugely contagious”* (Wren, Classroom teacher). After the End of Project Forum, the Principal shared information about RRE with their P&C, focusing on what the program is, why the school is involved, and who is the facilitator of the program. The principal reported the parents were very receptive and on board with this program, but also reflected that these are the parents who are already on board *“I just sort of talked a bit through that...the reason why we do it, why are we looking at this...to recognise that some relationships have violence, and we want to support those people...I sort of talked about that with the parents”* (Mallory, Principal).

This school is very multicultural, with many students not speaking English at home. To enhance parent communication the school has developed different booklets for other curriculum areas such as science and literacy, in a range of different languages spoken at the school *“we just made up booklets that are translated into different, like we have like 26 languages or something at our school, so made them up into all the languages that were available and sent them home”* (Sabena, Classroom Teacher). This is something the school is also planning to do for respectful relationships pamphlets, which they are aiming to use to engage parents with RRE. The school has also started including information in their newsletter about RRE *“just to get it out there...this is what we’re doing, your kids will be having these discussions, this is where respectful relationship fits into our school”* (Wren, Classroom Teacher). This was done for the first time following the research team completing the interviews at this school. Although the school staff identified ways they have engaged with parents previously, this was an area they felt they needed further support around.

Partnerships and services

Participating school staff provides a range of examples of community partnerships they have made which address RRE, and broader health issues. Three participants spoke about the connections which have been made with the local community health centre, which assists them to provide resources for students and families. In addition, two staff members have attended professional learning courses on domestic violence, which were held at the local community health centre *“I have gone to a couple of the domestic violence PDs that the local community centre have run”* (Sabena, Classroom teacher). This school has also engaged external presenters, such as constable care, and

the police, to come to the school and discuss certain issues, or just be present within the community. Mallory stated this was another way to give the students information as if they *“don’t listen to the teacher, [they] might listen to a show to relate a bit better”* (Mallory, Principal).

Creating partnerships with feeder and neighbouring schools, has also been a strategy employed by this school. This school has begun connecting with their local and neighbouring high schools (as a feeder primary school) and engaged in some sharing of resources given at the End of Project RRTSP Forum, specifically providing information about an external presenter which could be appropriate for these school settings i.e. ‘Youth Choices’.

The partnerships created with other schools involved in the RRTSP was noted by one participant. The RRTSP workshops, and End of Project Forum, gave participating schools an opportunity to network with each other, and develop those connections with schools who may be implementing things currently, or need some guidance and support. Wren said that she has *“swapped emails with a few schools from that forum...they’ve gained something from me, I’ve gained something from them. So we’re still in contact with that”* (Wren, Classroom teacher).

Finally, this school has created a relationship with Starick as part of their participation in the program. Through this relationship, the school has provided their pamphlets to families, and utilised them as a direct referral agency *“Starick has been a resource that we’ve used...their pamphlets and also as a direct referral agency so we’ve got some parents to contact them”* (Mallory, Principal). Since joining the RRTSP, this school has also participated in food drives for their local refuge, which has increased the communities’ awareness that this is a key focus for the school *“the only other thing we’ve probably done since joining has been doing a drive for our local refuge, so providing a food drive, making them aware that...this is really important to us as a school”* (Wren, Classroom teacher). The school also recently facilitated a Christmas food drive for Starick, collecting non-perishable items to be donated to families needing assistance in the community (Newsletter Nov/Dec).

Barriers and enablers to delivering whole school teaching RRE

Participants reported many barriers and enablers to their delivery of RRE. While a range of barriers were identified by teachers from this school, the principal suggested the school would have the capacity to overcome any barriers that arose.

Barriers: Broader school environment

Cultural differences

As this school is very multicultural, with an approximate 50% of students speaking another language other than English (2021 Annual Report), culture and the perceived differences in what is considered

appropriate between cultures was referenced by five participants. There was a notion that some parents would not be comfortable with the content delivered in some RRE classes, or they would feel a sense of shame. One participant said *“cultural differences...language...the understanding...like some topics may be just not okay for some cultures...sex education for instance...it’s shame, it’s embarrassing we don’t talk about that do we”* (Tracey, Classroom teacher). In addition, as the school does have a high population of Cultural and Linguistically Diverse students, this needs to be considered when considering what the school should be doing in this space *“diversity means we have to take consideration of other cultures, values, and expectations of what the school should or should not be doing”* (Corrine, Education assistant). Further, two participants spoke about how behaviours which may be classified as disrespectful in western society, are not classified as such in other cultures. Considering respectful relationships, there is the potential that some behaviours and ways of communicating may be labelled as negative, when they could potentially be a common behaviour or interaction within other cultures. The difficulty in exploring this, without dismissing the child’s or parent’s culture was highlighted as a barrier, and highlighted the need for more targeted training and education; for example:

“it’s culturally acceptable in some communities, some cultures, to be disrespectful...that would be another barrier is breaking down...you can’t really break down their culture” (Sabena, Classroom teacher)

“so one of the questions to me was in their discussion for year five sixes...about what do you...how do you approach the conversation that they may bring about...in my culture this is...the male is seen to be...the priority, we’re on a pedestal...how do we respect a culture” (Wren, Classroom teacher)

In addition to cultural considerations, language barriers needed to be considered for this school. Where some schools may be able to send notices home to parents, this school sometimes struggles as many of their families are non-English speakers or don not have English as their first language *“a lot of our families are non-English speakers...there’s definitely language barriers with a lot of our parents”* (Sabena, Classroom teacher). Wren highlighted it is difficult to send resources home to assist parents and children to have conversations about respectful relationships *“it’s really hard to get through, a lot of our students do not speak English at home at all so, getting those conversations happening in different languages, is really important...I don’t necessarily think that’s the school’s obligation to do that”* (Wren, Classroom teacher). Sabena mentioned resources for families relating to other curriculum aspects such as literacy have been translated into the many different languages at the school, however this has not been done for RRE yet.

Parents

The notion that parents were the most appropriate people to discuss RRE, and home is the best environment for this education was raised by three of the six participants *“as far as I’m concerned, respect comes from the home first, that’s where it should be taught”* (Corrine, Education assistant), with another two highlighting that families can play a role in RRE *“so parents definitely have a role, because hopefully, that’s their safe place where they’re not at school”* (Mallory, Principal). However, five participants referred to parents as barriers to teaching RRE, referencing aspects such as their role modelling, engagement with events held by the school, and education on the topic. Although there was an understanding amongst some of the participants that RRE should be taught at home, three participants acknowledged that not all children will be exposed to a family environment which models respectful interactions and behaviours. Wren said that *“children get messages through osmosis, you know they’re like little sponges. So whether it is taught or not, some of the behaviours with regards to respectful relationships is kind of embedded in them right from the start, if that’s what they’re seeing on a daily basis”* (Wren, Classroom teacher). Cameron referenced what can occur if these messages or actions are not respectful, reporting *“I’ve seen over my time, they’ve not been modelled to be communicators, they’ve only been modelled an initial reaction, which is lashing out, losing it and walking away and never resolving it”* (Cameron, Classroom teacher). Therefore, although the home environment can be suitable for RRE, the way behaviours and interactions are modelled to the children, can have a significant impact on their understanding of respectful relationships.

Engaging parents in the RRE taught at school was also listed as a barrier. Although one participant said the school had actively tried to promote seminars and workshops for parents, some not necessarily linked to RRE, Sabena spoke about the difficulty they face when trying to engage parents in communication regarding RRE. Sabena reflected *“I think we have a long way to go...we have a small core group of parents that go above and beyond and are involved...we also have a lot of parents who are (PAUSE) disconnected...they send their kids to school, and that’s job done”* (Sabena, Classroom teacher). Additionally, Sabena spoke about the difficulties they face when trying to engage with families who require this kind of help and assistance *“the biggest barrier is just the communication and the willingness of the community to accept, because the ones who would want it, are probably not the ones that are going to be able to come and access it”* (Sabena, Classroom teacher). To expand further, Sabena said *“the ones who need the help are the ones who can’t come and get it...it’s not easily available to them for whatever reason, whether they’re not allowed to go out...families that the parent or mum doesn’t work, doesn’t have a phone...she can’t drive, so she’s almost trapped”*. This discussion highlights the barrier to teaching RRE within the school can be

parent engagement, but there is also a barrier to embedding this across the school environment and having services available to the wider school community.

Topic can be triggering

Family and domestic violence can be a triggering topic for people who could have prior experiences. Hence, RRE potentially being a trigger for the school staff and the wider community was highlighted as a barrier to teaching RRE by four participants. Participants suggested prior experiences of family and domestic violence or abuse, may cause teachers to lack comfort and/or confidence delivering lessons with an RRE focus *"it probably all depends on the situation, and maybe if they've gone through a similar situation it might impact on them. So then...they probably wouldn't feel comfortable in doing it"* (Corrine, Education assistant). The knowledge or assumption of the effect teaching this topic could have on someone with personal experiences was applied to thinking about parents, with one participant reporting *"could be uncomfortable...for some parents or carers...especially if they've experienced something traumatic in their lives...domestic violence, gender bias...it might be hard, it might trigger...we've got to just be very careful for this"* (Tracey, Classroom teacher). Some participants suggested ways this barrier could be overcome, specifically referring to the support which is provided by the leadership team and RRE champion within the school. This will be addressed in a later section.

Barriers: Within the curriculum

Curriculum is overcrowded

The fact that the curriculum is already overcrowded with topics and information to cover across learning areas was raised as a barrier by three participants. There was a sense amongst the participants that RRE is a very important area, which requires a lot of information to be unpacked *"how do you unpack something like this which is so important?"* (Tracey, Classroom Teacher). Tracey was concerned that they would be unable to approach and teach RRE in the desired way, because the curriculum is already so overcrowded *"how do you do it properly if you are time poor, and if the curriculum is so overcrowded?"* (Tracey, Classroom teacher). Another participant reflected on their school's priorities, reporting that RRE is valued within this school so they will try to integrate this into the curriculum, however some schools do not have these same priorities *"I worry that teachers do get asked to integrate a lot into the curriculum...we value it so much, but other schools may not"* (Wren, Classroom teacher). Although the lack of perceived value to teach RRE doesn't seem to be present in this school, it is worthwhile noting this participant's reference to priorities, and how schools may address curriculum areas based on their values and school priorities.

Sabena also referenced the overcrowded curriculum when thinking about if RRE should be a standalone subject, or if it should be linked with someone else. Sabena's concern was it would be hard to find the time to have RRE being a standalone subject in the curriculum, due to there being so many existing curriculum areas to over *"I just think it'd be, you would struggle...any school would struggle to fit it into their curriculum...top of everything else"*. Sabena suggested a way to combat this barrier would be to link RRE with something already existing in the curriculum. However, it is important to note that aspects of RRE are included across a range of curriculum areas without RRE being an explicit area such as literacy or numeracy. Integrating RRE in a cross-curricular manner will be discussed in a later section.

Outdated resources

Two participants referenced the availability of resources as barriers within the curriculum. However, one participant described this issue in detail. This participant spoke explicitly about how many programs do not endorse the most up-to-date statistics, which makes it difficult for school staff to understand the emerging trends in different areas they will need to explore and target with their students *"that should be on the department to...update of statistics, update of whatever that is...emerging at that time that we need to know about for kids. I think that's really important"* (Wren, Classroom teacher). In addition, the idea that many resources available from the Department of Education have broken links, and books which are not available anymore *"SODERA...they kind of cover all the health aspects, but they got their resources from New South Wales...a lot of the links aren't there anymore, a lot of the books aren't available anymore. So it's quite frustrating to teach if you don't have the investment in updating"* (Wren, Classroom teacher). Although this idea was not referencing RRE resources, it is important to consider that schools do often source resources which are not evidence-based. In addition, out-dated resources are also being recommended. Wren reflected *"we're always told as teachers to have the most latest information, which we try...but some of that knowledge and content needs to be updated...I would expect every three to five years"* (Wren, Classroom teacher). This highlights the difficulty implementing RRE in the curriculum, when the current and evidence-based resources are not available.

Program staff turnover

The principal felt they require too much more support, referencing they have had conversations with different stakeholders in the program, and would feel *"as long as they're in their roles, that'll be what we need to support us"* (Mallory, Principal). Throughout the pilot of the RRTSP, there has been

considerable staff turnover amongst the key stakeholders however as this is a new school these staff will have not experienced this turnover.

Enablers

Schools are perfect settings for RRE

The most commonly referred to enabling factor in teaching RRE was that schools are appropriate settings for this type of education. Two participants referenced that children are attending school for most of their formative and developing years, highlighting the importance of the school community in fostering positive experiences and growth *“if a child starts going to school at three and finishes at 18, that will be 15 years of his/her life in a school setting...we are talking about his formative and developing years, his growing years, his early years, mostly spent in schools. Very important”* (Tracey, Classroom teacher), and *“I think the school setting is a perfect setting really, it’s an ideal unique setting, kids are here at school six hours a day. We have them for a long time, we can make change over time with them”* (Wren, Classroom teacher). Some other participants, including Wren, reflected that schools are able to provide a breadth of support for families and students, including access to resources which are age-appropriate, and school psychologists or counsellors who can assist in these situations *“I feel as though maybe some families might dismiss it...we [sic] going to the why is that not right...providing all those resources and support that are age-appropriate and relevant for our children and demographic”* (Cameron, Classroom teacher).

Participants also spoke about how schools provide a safe place for conversations to start, and for parents and families to know they can come and speak to school staff to ask for help if it is needed; for example:

“we create a space where the families...can come in and talk, and that does happen here, then they can get some support” (Mallory, Principal)

“I think first and foremost, the connections we make with our students, providing that safe place for them is good to open up and facilitate discussions in respectful relationships” (Wren, Classroom Teacher)

“those conversations are going to happen and have to happen, and I think if they can’t happen at school, I don’t know where they’re going to happen” (Wren. Classroom teacher)

The role of schools to be an educational institution which covers a variety of topics was mentioned by one participant. Mallory stated that due to the context of schools, they provide the perfect opportunity to educate not only their students, but their wider school community as well *“we are an educational institution so it’s a perfect place...to educate, not only the students, but also the families”*. Mallory also mentioned a lot of societal issues are addressed and educated about

within school settings as they occur, which related to her idea of schools being appropriate settings, and links with enablers to teach RRE. Finally, one participant spoke about how schools offer the opportunity to formalise RRE. Sabena suggested discussing RRE within schools helps students to gain different perspectives, and consider things in a cross-cultural way. Sabena also stated the school setting acts as an enabler for RRE, as students may not listen their parents regarding certain topics, but they could listen to their classroom teacher *“it gives another way of looking at things...it makes it almost formalised...I know being a parent myself, my children don’t listen to me, but they may listen to a teacher”* (Sabena, Classroom teacher).

There was also a sense that within a school, there are often a number of staff members who are available for students and families to speak to if they have a problem. Some participants suggested students will often develop trusting relationships with their teachers, and see them as safe people, which therefore facilitates and opens conversation opportunities between student and staff member; for example

“I think we build it as teachers... [our] first and foremost quality is to make connections with every student” (Wren, Classroom teacher)

“it’s something you can’t discuss if you don’t have a really good connection with the kids” (Sabena, Classroom teacher)

“students tend to feel closest to their teacher, or the education assistant that’s working in their classrooms” (Mallory, Principal)

Utilising a whole school approach

The use of a whole school approach to RRE was highlighted as something which would enable the school to address this issue more broadly. Respect seems to be embedded within this school’s culture, with three participants referring to three core values which have always been included in their business plans, and promoted at the school: be respectful; be responsible; be safe. Linking in with respectful relationships and how to treat others, participants reported the school is a PATHS school, which was explained by Mallory *“we’ve been a PATHS school for a long time, so that’s very embedded in all our plans...the basis of that is all feelings are okay, but not all behaviours are okay”* (Mallory, Principal), which ties into RRE. The notion that RRE could be incorporated into their PATHS curriculum, along with other curriculum areas was raised, suggesting looking at RRE from a whole-school and cross-curricular approach would be beneficial, potentially eliminating the barrier of not having time to include it as a standalone curriculum area, and enabling the school to address RRE *“as teachers we’re taught to integrate across all learning areas. So whilst it may fit in under...health and wellbeing in our social and emotional learning, I would be encouraging that it’s something we’re on*

top of all the time” (Wren, Classroom teacher). This sentiment was repeated by Sabena, who also spoke about how RRE cannot just be taught within curriculum areas, and should be something that is modelled and taught all throughout school “you incorporate it into your health curriculum and incorporate it into your protective behaviours curriculum and incorporate it into your PATHS curriculum, but it’s got to be all the time, it can’t just be isolated” (Sabena, Classroom teacher).

As previously mentioned, embedding RRE within their strategic plans was mentioned by two participants to be an enabler for discussing RRE within their school context. This school has a wellbeing pillar included in their business plan, which respectful relationships comes under. As this is included in the plan, Mallory mentioned there is a wellbeing team who meets once a term to discuss different aspects of wellbeing, including respectful relationships. Further, the inclusion of respectful relationships in strategic plans assists in ensuring RRE is covered within the school environment, as it places the onus on the school and school staff, and means there is accountability in meeting the aims for respectful relationships embedded in strategic plans *“it’s starting in our business plan...there’s accountability for that and I think at any approach or model you have, there’s got to be some sense of accountability...for it to progress...I think that’s been well received at our school” (Wren, Classroom teacher).*

RRE champion provides support and referrals

The presence of an RRE champion was highlighted by participants who consistently referenced this person’s contributions to RRE throughout most of the interviews. Having an RRE champion at the school with detailed knowledge and awareness of how to respond appropriately to disclosures was raised by three people. The RRE champion was said to provide support and referrals to other school staff who had been approached with disclosures of violence. This instilled a sense of support amongst other staff members, knowing there was someone there to support; for example:

“as soon as I had come up here...I had [RRE CHAMPION] who was part of respectful relationships...there was huge support behind us...not only just me being supported, but especially the family” (Cameron, Classroom teacher)

“we have had a couple of parents that we found them in domestic violence situations that sometimes the kids make a disclosure or sometimes the parents... so then we go straight to [RRE CHAMPION], our champion, and she provides the support and the guidance and the referral direction” (Mallory, Principal)

“it’s good to know that we have the avenue through [RRE CHAMPION]...that if we need help as teachers or we get something disclosed, we have someone to go to and talk to and we can send the parents to someone if they feel comfortable” (Sabena, Classroom teacher)

Further, the RRE champion held a breadth of knowledge in the area and was instrumental in supporting the school in delivering RRE. The 'champion' was one of two staff members who had attended both RRTSP workshops, staff reflected that the 'RRE champion' has *"got the knowledge, she's very confident, she's very comfortable working in this space. So I think having her there is a strong advocate"* (Mallory, Principal).

Further support necessary

Curriculum, teaching and learning

Curriculum support

Two participants referenced additional support they would need in the field of curriculum. There were references from one participant pertaining to the recent update of the curriculum from the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA) to include, and strengthen the inclusion of consent nationally. They stated when this curriculum begins, there will need to be a phase of familiarisation, and support in understanding this new curriculum will be needed *"...consent has been strengthened...next year will be familiarisation phase with that, so I think that...will be interesting to see and that will be a good support"* (Wren, Classroom teacher). In addition, one participant wanted more support in how they can teach RRE and aspects which fit within curriculum competencies, to gain a greater understanding and confidence in how they teach RRE. This participant wanted to attend a *"professional development day or a seminar...just being shown how to implement the curriculum or...being modelled what it looks like in a classroom or what they're expecting us to kind of...educate our students on"* (Cameron, Classroom teacher).

More resources about including RRE

As previously mentioned, outdated resources, and a lack of available current and evidence-based resources has been a reported barrier for this school in teaching RRE. Therefore, further support is needed in either sourcing, or accessing appropriate resources to use within this school's context. One participant highlighted that teachers like having resources and lesson plans ideas for each year group, while another said *"if you want to do something properly...you need the resources"* (Tracey, Classroom teacher). Wren mentioned that having resources which focused on how things can be taught and broached with specific year groups would be useful to target the explicit side of teaching, whilst also making reference to resources from Tasmania, Victoria, Queensland, and the Australian Capital Territory (ACT) which include *"teacher based handbooks or resource books"*, which are being utilised by early childhood teachers in their school already, as *"they seem to like those, those like things that are well set out for them to grab and go"*. Wren mentioned the need for a similar

resource using the WA context *“sooner rather than later”* or direction on *“where they want us to be with that”*. Wren suggested perhaps school staff who were involved in the RRTSP should be offered the opportunity to help create these resources in collaboration with Starick or other community health people, which could also encourage them to take more ownership of RRE within their school.

Ethos and environment

Staff training

The need for further support and training for all staff was raised by five participants. There was a sense amongst all participants that one staff member knows all the information, and the others perhaps aren't *“fully equipped”* (Cameron, Classroom teacher). These participants wanted there to be an opportunity to be upskilled, and gain the knowledge, understanding, and vocabulary needed to ask questions and respond to different situations *“it would be great to...upskill all of the teachers on respectful relationships...so they're aware of the vocabulary...so you know what questions to use and things like that”* (Sabena, Classroom teacher). The importance of the language used, and information presented to the students was highlighted by another participant, reporting *“if you want to do something properly...you need the training, you need the expertise. Because to me, young minds are very impressionable, you don't want to send the wrong message...it sticks there and it's really hard to unpack that”* (Tracey, Classroom teacher). Having the opportunity for other staff to attend professional development days or seminars was raised by one participant *“I would like a professional development day or seminar that I could attend”* (Cameron, Classroom teacher), and another reported they wanted there to be more professional development from the staff who attended the RRTSP *“we've got a teacher...who's been...going to classes and doing it and she's represented us and taught it...spoke to us about it. I would probably like to have more of that”* (Corrine, Education assistant).

Sabena spoke about the importance of having staff upskilled in RRE because of the socioeconomic area, and context of the school. Sabena mentioned there is family and domestic violence occurring in the school community, so the teaching and school staff need to be aware of the avenues of support, and responding to these disclosures *“I just think within our socioeconomic area and the amount of family violence we have within this school, we need to upskill as much as we can and know what's out there, know where we can send them for help...if they come to us, what do we do, what do I tell them? I don't know, I can't make it up, I have to give them proper advice”* (Sabena, Classroom teacher).

Support for a whole school approach

The RRTSP is marketed as a program which promotes a whole school approach to respectful relationships. However, some participants still felt they needed more support to implement a whole school approach to RRE after they participated in the program. One participant suggested they wanted more support around vocabulary and language to use when approaching this issue within their school *“suggested terminology and vocab that is appropriate...just so we’re all on the same...it’d be good to have like a targeted set of, I suppose vocab issues”* (Sabena, Classroom teacher) suggesting this may assist in creating a whole school language approach to RRE.

Findings from this school suggest that RRE needs to be something which is integrated, and not just taught on an ad hoc basis in one class, which is consistent with the whole-school approach. One participant stated they wanted to see further support for staff to build their capacity to implement RRE cross-curricular. The notion that this was another curriculum area which needed to be covered, linked with the barrier of the curriculum being overcrowded. Therefore, support in *“how to integrate [RRE] so that it’s not an extra thing for them”* (Wren, Classroom teacher), would be extremely beneficial.

Partnerships and community

Engaging parents and the community

This school had many plans to engage parents in RRE, however had not acted on many of these at the time of interview. One participant mentioned they had not engaged with their parents about respectful relationships yet but that it was *“somewhere we could look towards going next”* (Sabena, Classroom teacher). Four participants spoke about their desire to hold family nights or invitational workshops for parents which would have an RRE focus, where they would need further support from Starick as to how they can engage the community to attend these sessions. Recognising the need to engage parents and the community, whilst also acknowledging the multi-cultural context of this school, three participants suggested that with support, they could implement men’s s and women’s groups within their school community, and engage some cultural leaders to facilitate these sessions. Sabena suggested *“maybe that might be a way for some cultures...might be easier to address”*. Four participants also spoke about including RRE in pamphlets and newsletters for parents, *“maybe putting blurbs in the newsletter to explain to parents what it is and why we’re doing it and the importance of what it entails”* (Sabena, Classroom teacher). Three participants stated they wanted further support to engage parents and let them know what is being addressed from a whole-school approach, for example: *“my principal and I did recognise that we probably need to start...getting the*

message out there with our parents, to let them know... respectful relationships is happening in our school. We are taking a whole school approach” (Wren, Classroom teacher).

Make schools participating in the RRTSP more of a community

Although only one participant focused on the sense of community, it is important to note. Wren suggested there should be more of a facilitation of partnerships and relationships between different schools involved in the program. Although there is a page on Connect, which is a webpage for WA government schools, Wren suggested there should be another to create a network of schools and school staff who want to have discussions about what they are currently implementing, and access a range of different information sources *“it’d be really good to, I guess, make that more about...maybe having one just for a network, having it used specific that we can just ask each other questions or discussions” (Wren, Classroom teacher).* In addition, Wren also suggested to have a network of leaders within the cohort schools, whether that be leaders in the sense of school administrators, or passionate RRE champions within the schools, to be able to work in collaboration with each other to brainstorm ideas for their school *“I think a network would be really good of leaders in schools...I really think that helps us as leaders, or key people in schools to get together and thrash out ideas” (Wren, Classroom teacher).* This would also help connect schools which are outside the metropolitan area, but could contribute a different perspective to the issue which may be useful for other schools *“a leader for the networks across WA because...I’m sure there’s lots of schools that are outside the metro that have done some really good work as well” (Wren, Classroom teacher).*

School two (metropolitan primary school)

School context

- Primary school in the Perth metropolitan area (cohort 1)
- SEIFA Index 988
- Interviews completed: 5 school staff, one parent, 1 FGD with six year 6 students.

School summary

Strategies employed:

- Promoted explicit social and emotional learning, and focused on the delivery of these sessions, referring them back to respectful relationships
- Conducted a scope and sequence of the curriculum and RRE, looking at different areas in which RRE fits
- Taking a whole school approach to RRE and embedding this across different aspects of the school
- Forming a leadership group who promoted and advocated for the inclusion of RRE, and modelled desired behaviours daily
- Created a comprehensive behaviour management policy, which was clear for teachers, students and parents
- Provided support and additional training for teachers
- Maintained strong communication and relationships with their parent body
- Enabled the opportunity for parents and students to be involved in decision making, policies and change
- Creating partnerships with community and engaging in community consultations

Barriers experienced by this school in implementing RRE

- Parent pushback with the subject matter of RRE, and low engagement with workshops and events
- Staff awareness, attitudes, understanding and confidence with teaching RRE
- Many competing priorities within schools, with schools given many different responsibilities, hence time for implementation is an issue
- Overloaded curriculum

Enablers experienced by this school in implementing RRE

- Schools are appropriate settings for RRE to be taught, and promoted
- Using a whole-school approach to RRE implementation

What further support could the RRTSP provide this school?

- Additional information, support and reflection opportunities to help teachers feel comfortable discussing domestic violence
- Provide support for addressing the updates to the national curriculum, especially considering consent
- A wider variety of topics need to be included, especially a focus on violence for other genders
- Provide training for all staff employed at the school, rather than a select few
- Support and strategies for engaging parents into events held by the school, and activities with related to RRE

What has the school already done?

This school had engaged in a significant cultural change since participating in the RRTSP, and discussed a range of ways in which RRE was embedded across their curriculum, ethos and environment, and partnerships and community.

Curriculum, teaching and learning

Explicit social and emotional learning focus

Throughout all interviews, the links the school social and emotional learning curriculum were highlighted frequently. The most significant action this school had taken was to start specific assemblies occurring weekly, which focused on different aspects of respectful relationships, and social and emotional learning. These assemblies were called Social and Emotional Learning and Leadership (SELL) assemblies, which was language used with the staff, student, and parent participants. Due to separating year groups, with one assembly for pre-primary to year two students on one day, and another for year three to year six students on another day, the assemblies address topics in an age-appropriate way. Within the SELL assemblies, specific topics related to respectful relationships and social and emotional learning are explicitly taught, *“we’re definitely trying to make it so it’s explicitly taught, and people know what it...means and can understand it”* (Margaret, Education Support Program Deputy). In order to make the assemblies enjoyable for the students, the staff members who organise SELL used a range of strategies and interactive activities to teach the content, to make sure the students were being involved, *“you’re trying to make it interesting, but you’re trying to make it fun so that they can...take on board what you’re trying to teach them”* (Martina, Deputy Principal), *“a lot of the skills that I teach, we do the following week, we do a game show...they’re in their factions, and they get points...I’ll give them a scenario and act it how they would resolve it, or how they would demonstrate being trustworthy”* (Margaret, Education Support Program Deputy). As Margaret was the staff member who predominantly organises these assemblies, they provided a comprehensive list of some of the topics they have covered; personal

capabilities; values and STARR values; what it means to be trustworthy; trusted and safe adults; patience; responsibility; emotions and how to understand and deal with powerful emotions; kind and unkind words; bullying; the difference between tattling and telling, mindfulness; and conflict resolution. Two participants highlighted the need to make RRE and SELL explicitly taught, which is done during the weekly SELL assemblies. Margaret reflected, *“I think sometimes when it comes to social and emotional learning, people are like oh they should know that...we don’t say, oh you should know your spellings, we explicitly teach it...I think there’s sort of been a history in schools of not explicitly teaching those skills and assuming that people have it”* (Margaret, Education Support Deputy). In addition, the SELL assemblies were suggested to facilitate whole school language around RRE and social and emotional learning, as although RRE and social and emotional learning is still taught within the classrooms, the fact there is a separate assembly occurring every week to focus on these issues, means all the students are receiving the same messages, which helps with understanding, *“that’s had a massive impact on kids and their understanding... ..SELL assemblies are a great way of yeah everyone gets sort of the same message and teaching in that session”* (Max, Behaviour). This was an innovative way the school had embedded RRE within their academic calendar, which meant these lessons were not delivered in an ad hoc manner, and messages were consistent throughout the school.

Unpacking curriculum and RRE

With support from the Department of Education, this school has completed a scope and sequence of the current curriculum, including respectful relationships. This scope and sequence has been provided to the staff, so they are aware of where RRE can be facilitated within curriculum areas, and what aspects they should be focusing on, *“that has really helped staff, whether they use it in the way that we will want them to...I know exactly what I’m teaching and what I’m focusing on because it’s colour coded...If I really want to focus on gender, I know that those are the things”* (Martina, Deputy Principal). In addition, Margaret also mentioned this would assist staff with aspects of the curriculum they were unsure about, *“if they’ve got some aspects of the curriculum they weren’t sure about, she could sort of help them unpack that”* (Margaret, Education Support Program Deputy). The way the curriculum has been mapped has also allowed for teaching staff to deliver RRE in a cross-curricular manner, specifically for pre-primary to year two, where respectful relationships hadn’t been explicitly included, *“so technically speaking it doesn’t come in til year two, but it does...there’s a lot of things around protective behaviours...protective refusal skills, informed choices...these are the things that...saying no, safety...it’s heavily based on a whole range of different things that we would include...as part of our respectful, respect for yourself”* (Martina, Deputy Principal). Margaret

mentioned the ability to map the health and wider curriculums to identify areas RRE could be included, was something which perhaps the deputy would not have been able to do, had they not participated in the RRTSP, “*help with developing the scope and sequence of the curriculums...I’m sure she wouldn’t have been able to do that if it hadn’t of been participation in that*” (Margaret, Education Support Program Deputy).

WA Health and Physical Education Curriculum – Links with respectful relationships

Pre-Primary to Year 6 scope and sequence

Pre-primary	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6
Attitudes and values						
Students identify attitudes and values for a healthy, active lifestyle and demonstrate values consistent with the prevention of ill-health; the acceptance of personal responsibility for their health and physical activity levels; respect for social justice principles; and a commitment to personal achievement. The Health and Physical Education curriculum provides opportunities for students to develop, enhance and exhibit attitudes and values that promote a healthy lifestyle.						
Personal, social and community health						
Being healthy, safe and active						
<p>Personal strengths of individuals</p> <p>The different parts of the body and where they are located</p> <p>Protective behaviours to keep safe and healthy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> saying 'no' moving away telling an adult asking for help <p>Trusted people in the community who can help individuals feel safe</p>	<p>Personal strengths and how these change over time</p> <p>The strengths of others and how they contribute to positive outcomes, such as games and physical activities</p> <p>Ways in which the body changes as individuals grow older</p> <p>Strategies to use when help is needed, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> dialling 000 in an emergency reading basic safety signs accessing a safety house or a trusted network asking a trusted adult <p>The benefits of healthy eating and regular physical activity on health and wellbeing</p>	<p>Personal strengths and achievements and how they contribute to personal identities</p> <p>Changes in relationships and responsibilities as individuals grow older</p> <p>Strategies to use when help is needed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> procedure and practice for dialling 000 in an emergency locating safety houses and trusted networks in the local community <p>Strategies and behaviours that promote health and wellbeing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> personal hygiene practices healthy eating sufficient sleep staying hydrated regular physical activity 	<p>Factors that strengthen personal identities, such as the influence of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> family friends school <p>Physical, social and emotional changes that occur as individuals grow older, such as changes to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the body friendships feelings <p>Assertive behaviours and communication skills to respond to unsafe situations, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> keeping calm using appropriate non-verbal communication skills seeking help <p>Actions in daily routines that promote health, safety and wellbeing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> healthy eating appropriate levels of physical activity 	<p>Use of persistence and resilience as tools to respond positively to challenges and failure, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> using self-talk seeking help thinking optimistically <p>Strategies that help individuals to manage the impact of physical, social and emotional changes, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> positive self-talk assertiveness seeking help sharing responsibilities <p>Personal behaviours and strategies to remain safe in uncomfortable or unsafe situations, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> being alert and aware of unsafe situations using assertive behaviour and language knowing who or where to go for help in the community <p>Strategies to ensure safety and wellbeing at home and at school, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> following school rules identifying and choosing healthier foods for themselves 	<p>Ways that individuals and groups adapt to different contexts and situations</p> <p>Changes associated with puberty which vary with individuals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> physical mental emotional <p>Reliable sources of information that inform health, safety and wellbeing, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> internet-based information community health organisations publications and other media <p>Strategies that promote a safe, healthy lifestyle, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> comparing food labels on products increased physical activity practising sun safety 	<p>Ways that personal identities change over time</p> <p>Strategies and resources to understand and manage the changes and transitions associated with puberty, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> minimising and managing conflict recognising and building self-esteem selecting and managing relationships <p>Criteria that can be applied to sources of information to assess their credibility</p> <p>Strategies that promote a healthy lifestyle, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> refusing medicines, tobacco, alcohol or other drugs improving the nutritional value in meals increasing physical activity being safe in an online environment

Scope and sequence of the curriculum

Pre-primary	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6
Communicating and interacting for health and wellbeing						
<p>Personal and social skills to interact with others:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> expressing needs, wants and feelings active listening self-discipline <p>Emotional responses individuals may experience in different situations, such as feeling:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> happy sad excited tired angry scared confused <p>Appropriate language and actions to communicate feelings in different situations</p>	<p>Appreciation and encouragement of the behaviour of others through the use of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> manners positive language praise <p>Positive ways to react to their own emotions in different situations, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> walking away seeking help remaining calm <p>Ways health messages are communicated on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> television posters radio 	<p>Strategies to include others in activities and games</p> <p>Ways to interpret the feelings of others in different situations, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> words other people use facial expressions body language <p>Ways health messages are communicated in the media and how they can influence personal health choices, such as 'slip, slop, slap'</p>	<p>Behaviours that show empathy and respect for others</p> <p>Circumstances that can influence the level of emotional response to situations</p> <p>Choices and behaviours conveyed in health information and messages</p>	<p>The positive influence of respect, empathy and the valuing of differences in relationships</p> <p>Strategies to identify and manage emotions before reacting</p> <p>Strategies to cope with adverse situations and the demands of others</p> <p>Ways in which health information and messages can influence health decisions and behaviours</p>	<p>Skills and strategies to establish and manage relationships over time, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> exploring why relationships change assessing the impact of changing relationships on health and wellbeing building new friendships dealing with bullying and harassment <p>Ways in which inappropriate emotional responses impact on relationships, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> loss of trust fear loss of respect 	<p>Skills to establish and manage positive relationships, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> showing respect and empathy being cooperative actively listening being trustworthy accepting differences <p>Situations in which emotions can influence decision-making:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> in peer group with friends with family during sporting or physical activities
Contributing to healthy and active communities						
<p>Actions that promote health, safety and wellbeing, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> eating healthy food practising appropriate personal hygiene routines identifying household substances that can be dangerous following safety symbols and procedures <p>Safe active play in outdoor settings and the natural environment</p>	<p>Actions that support a safe classroom, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> moving around safely sharing appropriately following class rules <p>Physical activities that can take place in natural and built settings in the local community</p>	<p>Actions that keep people safe and healthy in and outside the classroom, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> staying hydrated being sun smart following school rules 	<p>Ways to be active in natural environments</p>	<p>Ways in which regular physical activity in natural and built environments promotes health</p>	<p>Preventive health measures that promote and maintain an individual's health, safety and wellbeing, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> bicycle safety sun safety 	<p>Preventive health measures that can promote and maintain community health, safety and wellbeing, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> creating social connections for better mental health meeting physical activity recommendations

Ethos and environment

Whole school approach to RRE

Much like other schools included in this report, this school had taken a whole school approach to RRE, embedding it across many aspects of their school such as their language used, policies and plans, role modelling, school values, and curriculum areas. Martina spoke about how RRE is embedded within their school pillars, business and operation plans. They mentioned instead of having a separate respectful relationships plan, they now have respectful relationships linked into every appropriate aspect of their operation plan, and their business plan, *“even in our business plan, everything’s interwoven into our business plan...it’s just our culture”* (Martina, Deputy Principal). The idea that RRE was embedded within every aspect of the school, and was essentially what their school culture was based on was referenced by six participants (five school staff and one parent), for example;

“it’s a real ethos here...it’s embedded in a lot of aspects of what we do” (Margaret, Education Support Program Deputy)

“in terms of respectful relationships, it’s sort of bled throughout the whole school in terms of everything we do” (Max, Behaviour)

“I think the fact that it’s hard to define...this is what we do...the fact that it’s so embedded that you have to kind of think...rather than oh year I taught protective behaviours last week, so that’s respectful relationships...the fact that it’s so throughout the whole school in every, every way you turn, you’ll be able to pick up something that’s respectful relationships” (Megan, Behaviour Specialist).

“it’s not just another subject to teach...it’s about weaving...embedding it within what you’re already talking about” (Roxy, Family Liaison Officer, Admin)

Health & Wellbeing Plan 2019 Respectful Relationships Review					
Aboriginal Cultural Standards Framework		Domestic & Family Abuse		Behaviour/Respect	
Support for Staff & Students	Professional Learning	Leadership & Commitment	Culture & Environment	Teaching & Learning	Families & Communities
<p>Changes in access to school – security & OSH concerns</p> <p>Connect notice re Staff Meeting on Respectful Relationships – providing outline, preparing staff for difficult topic</p> <p>Creation of information pamphlet & support contact details</p> <p>Copies of Duluth wheels – Power & Control, Equality provided to all staff</p> <p>Creation of a school 'White Ribbon' displayed permanently in our front office</p> <p>Staff - 'Wear White' for White Ribbon Day – awareness raising</p> <p>Acknowledging White Ribbon Day & 16 Days in WA</p>	<p>Child Protection & Abuse Prevention PD (3.5 hours)</p> <p>Raising staff awareness of a range of issues affecting our students & action to be taken. Revisited Protective Behaviours curriculum</p> <p>Staff Meeting – Respectful Relationships: An Introduction (1 hour)</p> <p>Staff Meeting – Aboriginal Cultural Standards Framework (1 hour) – importance of shared responsibility</p> <p>Staff Meeting – Gender Equality (1 hour) presented by Dale Palmer (White Ribbon)</p> <p>Staff Meeting – Identifying areas within the Health curriculum (1 hour) – cancelled</p>	<p>Principal, Deputy Principal, School Psychologist and office staff (front of office) attend Respectful Relationships program</p> <p>Deputy Principal & office staff attend Family Domestic Violence Forum Day in Gingin</p>	<p>Discussions re Improving level of respect & behaviour during assemblies – small staff group</p> <p>Deputies met with Aboriginal Elder to discuss how school could address some of the Aboriginal perspectives in Science using grounds & local area</p>	<p>Ongoing use of Calmer Classrooms & Making Space for Learning documents over last 5 years</p> <p>Identification of the need to teach students prerequisite skills before more in depth work on respect can be undertaken – wider issues with self-regulation and executive functioning</p> <p>Introduction of Zones of Regulation across whole school for all students</p> <p>Trialling of Mind Up across selected year groups Y6, Y4, Y1</p> <p>Presentation of work undertaken by the students in the Hub (ESC) classes for NAIDOC in Parent assembly – highlighting what is possible with careful & respectful planning (the majority of our students who identify as ATSI are in our ESC)</p>	<p>Protective Behaviours Parent Information booklet provided to parents as required</p> <p>Ongoing communication with wider Aboriginal community re Smoking Ceremony 1 - Dec 2019 (closed off the year)</p> <p>Raising community awareness of meaning & importance of Reconciliation – newsletter, connect & assembly – minimal impact</p> <p>Connect notice informing community of school's involvement in Respectful Relationships program</p> <p>Expressions of interest for Respectful Relationships Working Party</p> <p>Connect notice providing further clarification around the program following complaints</p> <p>Meeting of Respectful Relationships Working Party attended by Dale Palmer (White Ribbon) – very positive meeting, all wished to raise levels of respect across the school & community & provide ongoing support to affected families and staff</p> <p>Presentation of work undertaken by the students in the Hub (ESC) classes for NAIDOC in Parent assembly</p> <p>Community collection for Patricia Giles Centres supporting families affected by domestic violence</p>

Every participant at this school made reference to the school’s STARR values (safety, tolerance, achievement, respect, and resilience). The STARR values were said to be a whole school language, run through all years from kindergarten to year six, present in their education support centre, included as flashcards on teachers’ lanyards, and spoken about during their Social and Emotional Learning and Leadership (SELL) assemblies, *“it can be brought into every subject that is taught, it’s how we speak, it’s our SELL assemblies”* (Roxy, Family Liaison Officer, Admin), *“we’ve done our STARR values...run through the whole school...we’ve got...from the kindys...our special education program, they all have the star values”* (Megan, Behaviour Specialist). The Deputy Principal reported *“it’s made quite explicit that we have our STARR values and that respect...is key, it’s fundamental, it’s like the top drawer”* (Martina, Deputy Principal).

Our Values

In collaboration with our school community, we have identified five core STARR values to guide our behaviour and maximise learning and wellbeing. demonstrate:

S T A R R	Safety	Everyone has the right to feel safe at school.	
	Tolerance	Everyone is unique and everyone belongs.	
	Achievement	Everyone strives to achieve their personal best.	
	Respect	Everyone has the right to feel respected at school.	
	Resilience	We persevere in the face of challenges and bounce back after set-backs.	

Our golden rule is:

Treat others as you would like to be treated.

STARR Values

Another way this school had embedded RRE was by role modelling respectful interactions. The importance of role modelling what respectful relationships looked like, and sounded like, was discussed. Five participants stated the school, from their first point of contact with the parents, modelled respectful interactions. Max referenced their experience within the education support, specifically using role modelling and roleplay to teach the students about certain situations and respect, *“you could be doing role modelling, so watch me and I’ll role model maybe with another adult or another student”, “if there’s a situation that perhaps we’re sort of working on...maybe they’re inappropriately talking to a student out in the playground...we might roleplay it...we might create a social script...when this happens, I can do this...really explicit”* (Max, Behaviour). Respect was mentioned to be embedded in the interactions with the students, families, and other staff

members in the school, *“it’s embedded in the modelling of the relationships between the adults, and how we interact with the students and the families”* (Margaret, Education Support Program Deputy). Further, Martina referenced the importance of role modelling respectful relationships with the students, and building that connection with them *“you’ve got to have positive relationships with the kids and build the relationships...we keep saying to staff, you need to build relationships with your kids”* (Martina, Deputy Principal).

Leadership has promoted RRE

Across the interviews and FGDs, participants suggested there was a strong culture of respect which was promoted and modelled by leadership within the school. Five participants across the student, parent and staff interviews referenced the impact and involvement the leadership group has in the teaching and promoting of respectful relationships. One parent, one school staff member, and one student from the FGD reported the Principal had started at the school, and drove their cultural change, for example;

“the new principal and staff who come up with the ideas on how to teach us kids to...cope with everything” (Roxy, Student)

“she is positive, she shows that she’s great at...showing the kids how to have these respectful relationships...she does it around the school, she does it at assembly, she does it at the sports carnival...you see how the people react to it and those kids want to do the right thing by her” (Maddie, Parent)

“pretty much she is a person that who she is reflects about what the school is. So she’s the star values, she is respectful relationships, she’s the leader, she treats everyone exactly behind doors the way that she would want to be treated...to have a principal that’s so active within the school certainly helps” (Roxy, Family liaison officer)

In addition, the deputy principal was noted as a strong lead for respectful relationships within the school, who possessed a deep knowledge and passion for promoting this within the wider community. This individual was mentioned by three participants, who also suggested this staff member provides further support to other key staff within the school, for example

“[DEPUTY] has been like a leading light in that...she feels so passionate about it and her passion is...cascaded down to other people, and we’ve taken things on board” (Margaret, Education Support Program Deputy)

“she gets the top knowledge...I want to do this kind of thing...I’ll narrow it down...then I implement it...it goes down the ladder” (Megan, Behaviour specialist)

“[DEPUTY] I think was the main driver behind it all” (Max, Behaviour specialist)




Comprehensive behaviour management

All participants mentioned behaviour management as something the school has facilitated well. Three participants spoke about the positive approach to behaviour management the school now has, focusing on promoting and recognising positive behaviours, and taking more of a *“restorative approach rather than a punitive approach”* (Martina, Deputy Principal). This positive approach to behaviour was not something which existed in the school prior to their new Principal arriving and was something which developed during their cultural change. Participants said they focus a lot more on the positive behaviours students are exhibiting, and reinforcing these respectful behaviours, *“positive was a huge one, that you’re focusing on the positives, and you’re constantly...reinforcing positive behaviours that you want to see”* (Max, Behaviour). Margaret provided a good explanation of their movement to a reinforcing positive behaviour model:

“We really tried to focus on sort of the positive aspects of it, and lots of work on reinforcement, prior to [principal] being here, we were, believe it or not a non-positive reinforcement school. So we, the theory was that kids are intrinsically motivated to do things, well, it's not always the case. So it was really difficult to reinforce positive attitudes and behaviours because they couldn't get anything tangible for it...we didn't have stickers...as tokens and all that sort of stuff, where now we really sort of have very highly...scaffolded...it's very much sequenced, reinforcement systems for kids that need it in terms of behaviour” (Margaret, Education Support Program Deputy)

Adding to the positive reinforcements provided for good behaviours, there was a sense that whole school language was used when giving these tokens to the students. Megan spoke about how reinforcements can be helpful, but they should be accompanied by an explanation of why their behaviour was positive, which would link to their whole school language around respect, and their STARR values, for example;

“we made the individual tokens...we found that just reinforcing the child going oh good job, is a bit pointless, because they don't know what they've done...if you're like I love how you're smart ignoring or...you use your kind and calm words...they can see...I followed the instruction, I used my kind and calm...they know what they've done so they know what to do next time...otherwise the kids are like oh okay like I did something good, but I don't know what I did good and then they can't repeat it” (Megan, Behaviour Specialist).

	<p>KIND & CALM WORDS Give out when student uses kind words with others.</p>
	<p>SMART IGNORE Give out when student 'smart ignores' other students' inappropriate or silly behaviour.</p>
	<p>SAFE BODY Give out if student is showing a safe body. <i>This is usually a targeted token for students that struggle to have a 'safe body'.</i></p>

Examples of token behaviour

In addition, participants suggested there was a clear and comprehensive behaviour plan, which focuses more on what behaviours are occurring, rather than the student who is exhibiting those behaviours, *“we developed a pretty comprehensive behaviour plan...key parts of it were that we focus heavily on the behaviour, not the student”* (Max, Behaviour). Both the parent participant, and a school staff member discussed that this plan makes it very clear to the students what is expected of them when it comes to behaviour *“everything’s clear for the kids, they know what they’re doing”* (Maddie, Parent), *“we’ve got a massive behaviour policy with really clear guidelines of what’s expected and what’s not appropriate...everything’s really specific and I think that’s really helped the kids...it’s clear, you’ve just done X, that’s tier one, or you’ve just done Y, you’re moving into tier two mate”* (Martina, Deputy Principal). Roxy also suggested this behaviour plan incorporates emotions, and the impact emotions can have on behaviours, with consistent language around orange and red behaviours, which are present in classrooms, and on slips which are given to the students exhibiting these behaviours, *“our behaviour plan...also incorporates their emotional side of things...there’s no black, there’s no grey area...when a student does something that is...our orange card, or if it’s the red card, the students are aware of exactly what they’ve done...there’s no hidden messages”*. (Roxy, Family Liaison Officer, Admin).

Relationships have a significant impact on behaviour and learning. We build effective, respectful relationships and we know our students.

Behaviour is learned. We teach behaviour much like academic skills and we teach new behaviours to replace behaviours that challenge.

All behaviour serves a purpose for an individual. We seek to understand the reasons for behaviour so that unmet needs can be met.

Behaviour is influenced by the circumstances in which it occurs. We make environmental, curriculum and instructional adjustments to create inclusive learning environments that support the positive behaviour of all.

We emphasize proactive, preventative learning opportunities focused on teaching and rewarding positive, productive behaviours. A focus on punitive strategies is ineffective.

All community members are responsible for their own behaviour choices. We teach and model accountability for our behaviour through restorative practices and provide opportunities for students to make positive choices about their behaviour.

Consistency is a key factor in effective positive behaviour support. We reinforce and respond consistently to behaviours using our *Levels of Behaviour System*.

Some students with disability and/or additional needs may require individualised strategies and support. We provide a tiered system of support, including the development of Individual Behaviour Support Plans, for students who require tailored teaching and support.

Behaviour is the shared responsibility of the whole college community. We work collaboratively across the college and with students and families to facilitate a supportive, positive, safe and respectful learning culture.

Every day is a new day. We start each day anew.

Page included in the behaviour policy

Students in the FGD reflected on how student behaviours were in the school prior. They mentioned the school had changed a lot recently, mentioning violence used to be common, *“there was like much more kids and there was more violence and stuff”* (Roxy, Student), and there was issues with kid’s managing their emotions and bullying, *“I remember a few years ago, our school wasn’t really like that good with social stuff, so like there used to be a lot of like, kids getting angry and like a lot of bullies”* (Paladin, Student). In comparison, students recognised the school had *“gotten...much better”* (Roxy, Student), listing the fact that *“there’s...no more fights anymore”* (John, Student), and the lack of bullies present within the school community, *“there used to be so many bullies and now there’s like zero in the whole school”* (Paladin, Student) as reasons.

Support and training for teachers

Support and training opportunities for school staff was highlighted by six participants as something which the school facilitated. Four of these participants spoke about the how the school is very collaborative, and allows opportunities for the staff to discuss issues, or gain further support for teaching particular curriculum areas, for example;

“if teachers weren’t sure...how to sort of deliver the curriculum around it, we’ve got teams that can support around that” (Margaret, Education Support Deputy).

“teachers working with one another, they’re much more collaborative, they’re on the same page” (Max, Behaviour)

“even though we’re all one school, we all have little...teams within it...we’ve got your admin team...we’ve got our leadership team...then we’ve obviously got our teachers and our EAs...we’ve got constant learning” (Roxy, Family Liaison Officer, Admin)

“the staff are cohesive, they know what they’re doing” (Maddie, Parent)

This support was also mentioned in the context of the support provided by the teaching staff when responding to incidents within the school. There seemed to be a common notion that if something was to occur within the school, they would know who within their school would be the most appropriate person to respond, how to investigate this, and follow up with the relevant stakeholders, *“all the things that happen and people who come...is our point of call...she knows everything that’s going on type of thing...it...would be her referring to whoever else is in student services”* (Martina, Deputy Principal), *“I’m kind of the on the ground person...I’m the one that’s out and about, whenever there’s an issue at recess or lunch...I’m the one that gets called...I do all the investigating”* (Megan, Behaviour Specialist). The parent participant mentioned this was something the school did very well, having the support for the students to work through incidents, as well as supporting the parent to know the issue has been dealt with, *“I’ll say...did they pull you out of class today? How did you go? She’ll say either I spoke to the school psychologist, or I spoke to [teacher]...she’ll say we decide this, all good moved on thank you...she knows it’s been dealt with, I know it’s been dealt with, I’d go to work the next day not having to worry about it”* (Maddie, Parent).

Three participants spoke about the additional training opportunities they are offered in a range of areas. There were references to gatekeeper suicide assessment, and *“team teach”* training (Megan, Behaviour Specialist). In addition, the Deputy Principal noted they had facilitated a training session with their teachers post-participation in the RRTSP workshops, which focused on what the program was aiming to do, and also provided some additional guidance and information on domestic violence, *“we did a presentation I think it was...either 19 or 20...to staff around the whole...program, and domestic violence to raise staff awareness”* (Martina, Deputy Principal). One of the Education Support Program staff also spoke about the additional training opportunities staff working in this area receive, such as peg feeding, *“we have students with significant disabilities...we’ve done lots of staff training around sort of epilepsy, peg feeding...suctioning and things like that a lot of schools wouldn’t have”* (Margaret, Education Support Program Deputy). Therefore, it is clear this school has a range of supports available in the area of RRE, and also offers training opportunities for staff to increase their knowledge and awareness.

Partnerships and community

Strong communication and relationship with parents

The relationships the school has built with the parent and family community at the school was highlighted as a positive by five participants, including the parent. Prior to beginning with the RRTSP, the Deputy mentioned *“our reputation was really bad”*, and the school was not seen as a positive choice of school by parents, *“we’re actually seen as a positive choice of a school now, whereas we weren’t”* (Martina, Deputy Principal). However, there have been many changes in the communication with parents, as well as their promptness in intervening and responding to issues, which has created a strong relationship with their parent community. Two staff members spoke about the presence of parents on the school board, which allowed them to contribute their personal perspectives to issues which could potentially be occurring in the school, *“we’ve also got different members of our community...on our board...they’ve got different perspectives...we’ve got a parent...whose child is in our ed support, he’s got a disability so just...raising awareness”* (Martina, Deputy Principal), and also gave the school staff an opportunity to educate the parents on issues which would be focused on within the school, *“I know that [deputy] has been doing some work on it with the school board, she’s been educating them about it...they go out into the community and represent the parents and come with a voice”* (Margaret, Education Support Program Deputy). Roxy also recognised the roll they played in developing the relationship with the parents, referring to their process of enrolments and getting to know parent’s backgrounds, as well as creating an *“open door policy”* so parents feel comfortable approaching them with issues they may be facing at home, *“we’ve got an open-door policy...sometimes they don’t even have to say anything, and it’s like, are you okay?...it’s really getting to know everyone...we are here to help and support”* (Roxy, Family Liaison Officer, Admin).

The use of ‘connect’ as a communication platform was noted by two participants. Megan suggested information about their SELL assemblies is included in their newsletters, which also includes the type of content they were addressing, for example *“conflict resolution...inner critic...inner coach”* (Megan, Behaviour Specialist). Megan also suggested that including this information in newsletters opens conversation opportunities with the students and parents, and allows for consistent language and messaging within the school, *“one of the parents has sent a lovely email...about the growth mindset and about how their child has always been someone that’s never done anything, but then has said no...my inner critic is talking, but I need to use my inner coach...so then the parents have gone thank you so much and now the parents are using them”*. (Megan, Behaviour Specialist). Responses from the parent participant, highlighted the most positive thing the school does, is their communication with parents. This participant mentioned prior to the RRTSP,

“I wasn’t happy with the communication, I didn’t feel like I knew what was happening at the school” (Maddie, Parent). However, they reported now school staff are very responsive to concerns and emails, and are proactive in letting parents know if there has been an issue, *“if something’s happened, I always get an answer, always get an email, always...if I’m concerned about my daughter, which I was after a critical incident, they just email ‘just letting you know [child] has had a great morning...it’s as simple as that sometimes, a parent just wants to know their kid’s okay”* (Maddie, Parent).



Superfriends at an assembly

This school has also developed a relationship with their parent community, by inviting them to school events. Three participants spoke about learning journeys their school implemented, which involved the teachers setting up their classroom, and showing parents what their children had been working on in their classrooms. This was seen as a way to engage parents in what their children were doing at the school, and also opened up opportunities for the parents to communicate with their child’s classroom teacher, *“kids have their work displayed...parents sort of come through with their kids...that was like a massive success, parents loved it...it was very sort of informal, sort of setting where a parent would walk in and just sort of chat to a teacher and build that relationship”* (Max, Behaviour). It was also reported the parents would be able to see the school’s embedded messages on respect within these classroom, specifically referring to the STARR values, and good behaviour

tokens which were present in the classrooms, *“within the class...they can also see our STARR values, and they can see the token things, they can see the words that we use, they can see all the Aboriginal things that we’ve been doing”* (Roxy, Family Liaison Officer, Admin). Max suggested these learning journeys were the *“turning point as well where parents sort of got on board...that relationship started to build”* (Max, Behaviour). Further, the school actively invites parents to their school assemblies, where students can be recognised with awards for displaying the STARR values, and also could be nominated by their fellow peers to be a “Superfriend”, *“we do our Superfriends...at the assembly we announce it, their parents are invited to watch their child get it”* (Megan, Behaviour Specialist).

Opportunity for parent and student involvement in policies and changes

Relating to the school’s strong communication and relationship with their parents, this school engaged in consultation with their parent community when looking at changes which needed to be made to their policies, and school environment. All participants had reported there were many issues present in the school prior to their participation in the RRTSP. The parent participant spoke about their experience being able to provide feedback on what was needed within the school environment, which arose from a whole-school meeting set up by the Principal, *“the first thing she said is we’re having a meeting, you’re all welcome...she put up these big bits of paper and said, we’re going to write all the problems down...tell me what’s wrong...we’ll work through them one at a time and as soon as she said that I thought oh here’s someone listening to what we’ve got to say”* (Maddie, Parent). Compounding this, the parent reported participating in the school review was a positive experience and made them feel that they were involved in the school decisions, *“after doing the school review, I was part of that...really proud to be part of that as a parent...it was just a positive and it was like the school review...just to be a part of something that I knew was going to be positive”* (Maddie, Parent). In addition, one participant suggested their school’s values, which were heavily referenced throughout all interviews, were created with input from the full school community, *“we’ve got the STARR values...that’s something that we’ve sort of come up collaboratively with staff, parents, students, so all that work we did sort of...under that umbrella of either safety, tolerance, achievement, respect or resilience”* (Max, Behaviour).

In addition to the involvement from parents, student voice is now more present within the school community. Prior to starting with the RRTSP, this school did not have a student council, *“I’m in charge of the school council, so I actually started it...we’ve not always had a student council...that’s something that now we’re...building leadership capacity in the kids”* (Megan, Behaviour specialist). One school staff participant spoke about the involvement students have in deciding the playground equipment the school should purchase, and involvement in leadership roles for their faction

carnivals, *“kids are being involved in what playground equipment we’re going to have. They’ve got student voice through the student council, and they’ve got some leadership roles with faction carnivals”* (Margaret, Education Support Program Deputy). Recognising the presence of student voice within the school community, the parent participant reported, *“[child’s] mental health is really valued, and she has a say”* (Maddie, Parent). Further, students involved in the FGD recognised these changes, and how their voice is present within the school, *“everybody gets to talk now because like, people from the hub get to talk because they have badges”* (Omi, Student), *“we have like the leadership group, the sport captains, student councillors every Tuesday afternoon...we talk about...some games people can be unsafe, like in footy...you tackle the, to the ground and they get really hurt...we come up with like strategies on how to play more safe...then we put the posters up around the school”* (Roxy, Student). It seems something this school has done quite well, is ensure the voice of students, and others within their wider school community, is heard, and impacts the policies and procedures present at the school.

Community partnerships and consultations

The school had reported they have engaged with external organisations for a variety of reasons. Two participants reported on the engagement and relationships which had been built with their Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community, particularly by engaging in consultation with their Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community group regarding their factions, named after Indigenous seasons, *“we knew we wanted to do something Aboriginal to bring that culture through...we decided on the seasons”* (Megan, Behaviour Specialist), and holding smoking ceremonies in 2019 and 2020, *“we had a smoking ceremony...we closed it in 2019, and opened it in 2020. What a difference”* (Martina, Deputy Principal). The school also engaged with their community health clinic, due to their close proximity. Although the participant who mentioned this partnership did not say they were directly involved in RRE, they did report if the community health clinic had any concerns about FDV, they would approach the school, and if the school required further support, they would approach to health centre, *“if they had concerns around a family around...domestic violence and stuff, they would probably give us the nod...if we need support from them, we will go and ask them for support”* (Martina, Deputy Principal).

The school has also engaged in other community partnerships which were not directly related to RRE. Megan spoke about the school’s partnership and relationship with their grocery store and bakery, where bread, fruit, and non-perishable spreads and breakfast foods are donated to the school to ensure the students have access to food, *“we have a connection with [store]...we get free fruit...every single block is staked with fruit so then if you have a child that doesn’t have fruit in their*

lunch box, they're not going to miss out on crunch 'n sip" (Megan, Behaviour Specialist). It is important to note this school had engaged other agencies for support for physical and mental health, as can be seen by the above quote, and their reported partnership as a 'Be You' school, *"we're a Be You school...we do a lot of work around sort of mental health"* (Martina, Deputy Principal). Despite this engagement it is anticipated the school may need more support in engaging with other agencies with an RRE focus, such as their local women's refuge, women's health centres, and organisations who promote respectful relationships.

Barriers and enablers to teaching RRE

Barriers: Broader school environment

Parent pushback and engagement

Parental engagement and concern around the content of RRE was discussed as a barrier. Five participants, including a parent, spoke about how many parents may lack understanding and awareness of the topics which would be discussed during RRE. It was suggested by one participant that perhaps they had been negative towards addressing aspects of RRE, because they did not have a significant understanding of what topics would be addressed and how, and additionally, being *"biased about their own perceptions"* (Margaret, Education Support Program Deputy). As family and domestic violence was noted as a sensitive topic, two participants spoke about the challenges they would face introducing this topic to their parent and family community, *"possibly...they don't actually know what we're actually talking about...it's like...this is supposed to be a safe place for my child and you're talking about domestic violence"* (Roxy, Family Liaison Officer, Admin), *"there a whole group of information...that's over here somewhere that's actually not related to anything that we're talking about. But that's what the community take on and breaking down that barrier...and trying to explain to them...they've already got it in their head that's what we're teaching them...they're instantly offside, I don't want my child doing that"* (Martina, Principal). In addition to parental concerns about the content of RRE, and their reported lack of awareness and understanding approaching RRE in an age-appropriate way, Max also discussed role modelling. Max recognised the potential that parents may not role model respectful behaviours, *"you could have parents that...don't always model appropriate behaviours, some of the times they do, but sometimes they don't"* (Max, Behaviour). This may cause a further barrier for engaging students in RRE if they are receiving different messages from home, or are exposed to opposite behaviours in the home environment.

Parent engagement with activities and RRE was also noted by three staff members as something which needed improvement. These participants spoke about holding events and

workshops for parents at the school, including workshops on internet safety, bullying and cyberbullying, along with general information nights. All three participants suggested parent engagement in these events may not be sufficient. One participant reflected on their own experience as a parent when considering their response, *“I’m a parent...so finding time...I’ll be honest, I don’t read the newsletter...as a part, it’s hard to find the time to sit and do things like that”* (Megan, Behaviour Specialist). However, one participant suggested although some parents are engaged with workshops and actively seek out information, it is often those who do not require the support, *“the parent who would most benefit from respectful relationships...are the parents that are least likely to engage with it”* (Max, Behaviour), which results in a barrier for engaging that hard to reach parent population who could benefit from some explicit education and information around respectful relationships.

However, during the interview with the parent participant, there was a discussion about what they thought would be barriers to their school addressing RRE. This participant explicitly stated they did not think parents would be a barrier for teaching RRE, *“at this point, I don’t think parents would be much of a barrier at all...because I think parents really are feeling the same thing about schools...I don’t think parents would be a barrier”* (Maddie, Parent). This is important to consider as all school staff listed parents as barriers to teaching or promoting RRE within their school.

Staff awareness, attitudes, understanding, and confidence

Consistent with other schools included in this case study report, staff awareness, attitudes, understanding, and confidence in the content of RRE was mentioned as a barrier. Four staff members spoke about how the topic can be triggering for those with experiences of domestic violence, they may be unsure about how to approach this topic with their students, or they are uncomfortable with some of the subject matter they would need to address. The idea that staff may be lacking awareness, understanding and knowledge regarding RRE was suggested by Margaret, who stated *“I just think staff awareness and their understanding and knowledge about it, building up their capacity, there will probably be barriers to it”* (Margaret, Education Support Program Deputy). Margaret also added *“when you’re handling a tricky subject like this, you’re not...sure if you’re going to handle it in the right way”* (Margaret, Education Support Program Deputy). Confidence approaching the subject area was noted by two staff members, specifically with reference to their values, *“being comfortable, I guess is hard...that’s going to depend on the person’s values”* (Megan, Behaviour Specialist), and how they would feel about teaching student about domestic violence, *“when we were doing the introduce to the program, I was thinking oh my god, I’ve got to teach about domestic violence, I don’t want to teach about domestic violence”* (Martina, Deputy Principal),

which were perceived as barriers to teaching RRE. Finally, references to the content being triggering were mentioned by one participant, who stated *“I think there would definitely be staff members out there that it could trigger because obviously they may have gone through something...themselves”* (Roxy, Family Liaison Officer, Admin). These were all listed as barriers to teaching RRE which were present in the school. Martina also made reference to a lack of understanding about the content which could inhibit teachers feeling comfortable and confident delivering these sessions, *“I know there’s a lot of people who, and it’s nice in one way, they have no concept and no understanding of what abusive relationships are like...not one clue...they’re never going to be able to understand how to break that down into kind of what...skills you need to have enabled to avoid that”* (Martina, Deputy Principal).

Schools already have a lot of responsibilities

Three participants suggested schools are already given many responsibilities and priorities to address, which present barriers to delivering a comprehensive RRE program. One participant suggested schools are given many responsibilities which are traditionally outside of the educator role, *“we get responsibility for so many things that are actually not necessarily...it’s not English and maths...there’s a lot of stuff that we do that’s got no relation to what people think we do in a school”*, which could place a burden on their time allocation to address certain issues. This was reiterated by Roxy, who suggested *“schools can’t do everything...it feels like sometimes...when you hear about it in the media, that it’s another thing that schools have to take on”* (Roxy, Family Liaison Officer, Admin).

Barriers: Within the curriculum

Overloaded curriculum

Participants highlighted the curriculum is already overcrowded, and finding time to fit in discussions of RRE, to be barriers. Martina suggested that even with curriculums that are mandated, teachers were still finding it difficult to find the time to fit all the relevant and necessary content into lessons, *“protective behaviours is mandated, but staff find it difficult to fit in...when am I going to teach SELL, when am I going to do, because...SELL and protective behaviours and the kind of general health, are all under that health umbrella, not necessarily explicitly, but they’re all there”* (Martina, Deputy Principal). Max also recognised the increasing curriculum load, suggesting it effects the time teachers can dedicate to certain areas, *“teachers time, I suppose that’s very valuable...it feels like there’s an increasing curriculum load, and there’s just constantly being stuff sort of added on top”* (Max, Behaviour).

Enablers

Schools are appropriate settings for RRE

Schools were considered appropriate settings for RRE. Six participants suggested schools provided an appropriate setting to teach and discuss respectful relationships, for example;

“schools’ definitely a great place for some of that learning to happen, so that every, all the kids...are on the same page as to what a respectful relationship looks like” (Max, Behaviour)

“the kids with trauma...even if their children through CPFS, they’re not getting that help quick enough, so it needs to be done in schools” (Maddie, Parent)

“it definitely needs to be in schools, and it definitely needs to start early on” (Margaret, Education Support Program Deputy)

Schools were noted as appropriate settings for RRE for a range of reasons; they provide a positive environment which the students may not have at home; students engage in a range of different relationships whilst at school; there are a range of appropriate people available at the school to discuss RRE; and it allows RRE lessons to be broached early on in a child’s development. These factors were discussed by most staff interviewed, as well as the parent, for example:

“I think we can't assume that students and families have got the capacity to do that or deal with that...they need...to be taught, like I was saying earlier about the spelling's, we can't assume that they know about it” (Margaret, Education Support Program Deputy)

“If that's what they, that's just normal, that's the home, so if you then empower them to, to be able to stick up for themselves, be able to have the right words, be able to know that I don't like that, what can I do about it?” (Martina, Deputy Principal)

“Schools, I suppose are a great place to sort of start exposing kids, I suppose to what respectful relationships might be because outside of school, they might not have an opportunity to have parents or, you know, adults that do have respectful relationships” (Max, Behaviour)

“I think in a school you are all day surrounded by all sorts of different people, and if, and all sorts of different people, all sorts of different values, different homelives, and different backgrounds, situations, and it's the best time to kind of have those conversations” (Megan, Behaviour Specialist)

Using a whole-school approach

Adopting a whole school approach to RRE was suggested to be an enabling factor to addressing this issue. Beginning to address the barrier of an overcrowded curriculum, including RRE as a whole school approach enabled RRE to be taught and promoted in a range of different ways outside the traditional classroom, teaching what is in the curriculum setting. The idea of using teachable moments to discuss RRE was mentioned by three participants, where school staff could use

opportunities where they needed to address certain behaviours, as a way to model, teach, and promote respectful relationships, for example;

“it’s all the incidental staff that’s done constantly...we are a school that needs it” (Megan, Behaviour Specialist)

“I suppose the respectful relationships sort of works in a way through...you’re sort of doing it anyway...you’re sort of talking about expectations, you sort of have to address those anyway when you get behaviours...when issues arise...you’re sort of forced to teach it and deal with it” (Max, Behaviour)

“I think that’s where everybody’s involvement is...you can do it in two ways, you can do it the formal...which as educators we would do...then if you think about...our cleaners and our...office staff, they’re doing that all the time...but...not in a formal sense” (Martina, Principal).

Further, Martina spoke about teaching RRE in a cross-curricular manner, integrating aspects of respectful relationships across a range of curriculum areas, to lessen the load of teaching a whole separate program or curriculum. Martina suggested, *“I’ve tried to look at how we...can incorporate the themes that we’re supposed to be teaching, unpick them, but also kind of how we might, it’s like trying to unpick everything that we’ve got to teach but kind of slanted so that it meets the other things that we need”* (Martina, Deputy Principal). Martina suggested this was something the school was looking at more for next year, which may indicate they will need some support in addressing this.

Further support necessary

Curriculum, teaching and learning

There was only one participant from this school who raised that they needed further support in the areas of curriculum. Therefore, their responses are presented below.

The program was not enough to make teachers comfortable discussing domestic violence

This participant noted the program was not enough to make them feel comfortable discussing domestic violence with their student group or their wider school community. They suggested the topic needs to be *“teased out”* with the community, and although they felt *“the children need to know about things”*, they were also unsure about *“how to address”* the issue (Martina, Deputy Principal). This participant spoke to the fact not all students will be aware of the issue of domestic violence, and *“why would we want to bring that to them”* (Martina, Deputy Principal). In this participant’s opinion, the program had not given enough detail and provided enough for them to be comfortable teaching students about domestic violence, *“I really feel that is the one part of the*

program that kind of, that you will teach about this, that's the bit I find really sticky...I don't think this has been enough" (Martina, Deputy Principal).

Support for the new curriculum

There was an awareness that there will be a new curriculum released soon, which will address some areas of RRE, specifically consent, more explicitly. Therefore, one participant suggested they wanted to be supported in implementing this curriculum. Further, they wanted support in how to address this new curriculum in an age-appropriate way, whilst also ensuring the parents are aware of how this curriculum will be taught in age-appropriate ways, *"if somebody said to me I'm going to teach your five year old or six year old about consent, I would be thinking exactly what the parents are thinking...I wouldn't be thinking it's around...giving permission...so I get where parents are coming from"* (Martina, Deputy Principal).

Should promote violence against men and women

This participant also raised the need for the program to speak about violence experienced by other genders. Although they acknowledged domestic violence is a gendered issue, they have been faced with instances where the father has been the victim of domestic violence within their school, *"I know it's a gendered issue, but we've had from the outset, we've had dads, who've been victims"* (Martina, Deputy Principal). A focus on violence amongst all genders, would acknowledge the breadth of experiences, for example;

"the fact that women are being seen as you know, manipulative, dangerous, and abusive, is actually really positive, because it's a positive thing for men as well" (Martina, Deputy Principal)

"we do need to make sure we're not avoiding that, but at the same time we don't want to make sure that all men are shits and all women are perfect, because that's not real either" (Martina, Deputy Principal)

Ethos and environment

This school reported many ways in which RRE is embedded across their ethos and environment, and therefore did not mention many areas where they would need further support in this regard. One area was mentioned by one staff member, referring to their operational plans. Although Martina made references to RRE included in their plans, *"even in our business plan, everything's interwoven into our business plan...it's just our culture"* (Martina, Deputy Principal), Margaret suggested they would still need support in ensuring the plans they have in place remained relevant and correct. Margaret wanted continued support from Starick in addressing their goals, and also confirmation

they were focusing on the right areas, *“I think sometimes you can get complacent and think, oh we’ve got that, just making sure you’re constantly reviewing it...are we heading in the right direction? Are the goals...we think are relevant, but are they relevant in terms of what the experts think?”* (Margaret, Education Support Program Deputy).

Partnerships and community

Further training for all staff from Starick

The idea that all teachers needed to be aware and educated on RRE was raised by three participants. There was a sense that some school staff missed out on increasing their understanding and awareness of RRE and the intricacies of this education as they did not attend the workshop, *“I think workshops shouldn’t just be for leadership and just for teachers, I think it needs to go hand in hand with everybody...as in the front area, we sort of miss out on a lot, but a lot of the time we’re the forefront”* (Roxy, Family Liaison Office, Admin). Another staff member wanted to be more involved with the professional development from Starick, proposing *“it would have been nice to have a session or something”* delivered on this content, as *“they would have their sort of approach to delivering their content and ideas...an outside voice is always nice”* (Max, Behaviour). Further, Max suggested there should be a course, or unit for pre-service teachers to increase their knowledge on respectful relationships, *“looking at their academic transcripts, you’re not seeing like units on respectful relationships...so whether that becomes...educating...teachers in uni, making that a unit...cover it somewhere”* (Max, Behaviour). If this was not possible, Max also suggested the need for a *“dummies guide”*, so teachers have something they can refer to if they need examples of how to implement lessons within the classroom. One other participant spoke about additional training which would be necessary, referring to the need for more detailed guides on how to respond to disclosures. This participant suggested they were comfortable and confident responding to disclosures, and they would not be worried, but were concerned about other schools and other staff members. They suggested there should be a written guide, coming from the Department of Education, which would address the key processes which should be taken when responding to a disclosure, and how you can respond to a disclosure of family and domestic violence in a safe way, for example;

“I think that would be really useful to have a process around, even if the department were to do that...if you're confronted with a situation...because there would be schools that a deputy or a principal, if somebody rocks up in that situation, would absolutely be flawed, would have no idea what to do and would possibly handle it quite badly...either not supporting the victim or just stuffing it up completely. But we've also got people who think that, and this is really interesting, that

perpetrators because they present in such a great way, that the other person's making it up, there's still a lot of lack of understanding" (Martina, Deputy Principal).

Support for engaging parents

There was a need for support to engage parents. Six participants, including the parent participant, noted their desire for more parental sessions about RRE. Four of these participants made reference to the school facilitating "Triple P" workshops (Positive Parenting Program), which could help parents address difficult conversations, and support behaviours, for example;

"we're going to do some workshops...want to do some workshops around a whole bunch of things...I'm trained in Triple P ...so to try and do the Triple P around...how we support families around behaviour" (Martina, Deputy Principal)

"maybe like you do a Triple P, the positive parenting program...maybe we need the same thing...they could be held at the school, and maybe you could involve...local nurse...Ngala, places like that" (Maddie, Parent)

"I think Triple P...I know that's something I think next year she wants to bring in for parents to do workshops here that she can run...it's definitely probably needed for probably like the lower years to engage if we could...as we know the earlier we start, the more tools I suppose we've got" (Roxy, Family Liaison Officer, Admin)

Further, one participant suggested Starick could facilitate workshops with the parents, or attend their open days and learning journeys so they would have visibility among the wider school community, *"I don't know if it's a pie in the sky but when we have...open days and parental meetings, maybe coming in and sort of talking to families...maybe having a stall or something...they can give them...from the horses mouth sort of thing"* (Margaret, Education Support Program Deputy). The desire to facilitate these workshops and parent nights is important, however parent engagement with prior workshops was said to be low, particularly among the parents who potentially needed that education and support. Therefore, this school could benefit from additional support and instruction on engaging hard to reach, and priority parent populations, to attend these sessions.

Four participants, including the parent, suggested more information should be sent to their parent community about what they are currently focusing on in the area of respectful relationships. Participants mentioned sending home this information has the potential to make parent communities more aware of what their students will *"get out of it"* (Maddie, Parent), and open lines of communication, *"I suppose communicated with parents and engaged parents in recent years, has gone a long way, in terms of being very, I suppose, open and transparent with them, trying to maintain open lines of communication, which I think parents responded to"* (Max, Behaviour). In

addition, during a survey of their parents, they found that “[parents] wanted more of an idea of what was going on within the classroom” (Roxy, Family Liaison Officer, Admin). Participants from this school suggested they were still “building our parent relationships, we’ve come a long, long, long, long way...we are in a very good position...but you still have those parents...I think we could be...better” (Megan, Behaviour Specialist). Therefore, further support to help the school engage their parent and carer community, and provide them with information on what will be addressed in the classroom is required by this school.

School three (rural secondary school)

School context

- Secondary school in rural Western Australia (cohort 4)
- SEIFA Index 1006
- 4 school staff interviews, 1 parent interview, 1 FGD with year 11 and 12 students (6 students)

School summary

Strategies employed:

- The school had begun to take a whole school approach to their implementation of RRE
- Developed community partnerships with external agencies for further support and referral opportunities
- The school has a supportive staff group, who role model respectful behaviours with each other and with their students
- Some positive parent connections, engagement, and education has already taken place

Barriers to implementing RRE:

- There was pushback from parents for delivering RRE, with suggested barriers in parents knowledge and comfort with RRE topics
- A lack of staff training, knowledge, comfort, and confidence with the subject area of RRE was also a barrier to this school in teaching and promoting RRE
- Challenges with the curriculum were suggested, which included time to fit this in amongst other areas, high schools having specialised curriculums, and having the time and knowledge of how to apply RRE in a cross-curricular manner

Enablers to implementing RRE:

- Utilising a whole school approach to RRE facilitates teaching and learning
- Schools provide appropriate settings for the delivery and promotion of RRE

What further support does the RRTSP need to provide to this school?

- Additional staff training for all staff at the school
- Support for ensuring the program is sustainable if key staff members leave
- Strategies schools can utilise to engage parents and their community into discussions of RRE
- Providing illustrations of practice for including elements of RRE within their academic calendar, such as days of observance
- Restructuring the program to have separate primary and secondary school programs

- Further support for engaging with external agencies for support and professional development

What has the school already done?

Ethos and environment

Beginning a whole school approach to RRE

Participants from this school reported they had started to take a whole school approach to RRE, and were embedding a range of strategies. One strategy this school had employed, referenced by three school staff and the FGD, was to have dedicated wellbeing days in each school term. This school's context made it difficult to implement RRE within curriculum for older year groups, and they also found the content of RRE sessions was too heavy to fit in within their day program *"recognising that our students were finding that pretty heavy, and we were trying to squash them back into a normal day program, either side of those sessions...what we've done now is built those into almost whole days that are wellbeing days"* (Aaron, Program coordinator), so including the dedicated wellbeing day once per term for all students was a way to overcome this barrier. During these wellbeing days, a variety of topics areas are covered, and there is a big focus on social and emotional learning. In addition, this school had engaged an external provider to deliver sessions during wellbeing days, which include sessions relating to a variety of RRE concepts, for example: *"relationships in terms of supportive peer relationships...breaking down those traditional beliefs of...society's expectations on how we should look, think, and behaviour...how does that then potentially put us in situation where we're under pressure to give consent or do things we don't actually want to do...how do we get to the point of having the strength to say no"* (Sally, Head of Class). The students reflected that having days dedicated to wellbeing meant they spoke to each other more, and also interacted with people they usually wouldn't speak to; for example:

"I reckon it kind of pulls us all closer too" (Maverick, Student)

"you have to interact with people like you don't normally interact with as well" (Campbell, Student)

"you hear stories from other people you don't talk to" (Maverick, Student)

In addition, one student mentioned wellbeing and RRE would *"be forgotten otherwise"* (Ronald, Student).

also be taught through modelling, and the interactions staff have with each other and their students. Lucy mentioned within the school *“respectful relationship...a bit of a circle, it has to come from us as well...we sort of have to show what we teach and what we expect around”* (Lucy, Head of residence). In addition, the importance of teachers and school staff role modelling respectful behaviours was explained by Aaron, who mentioned *“schools basically offer kids opportunities to have role models...outside the nuclear family”*. Further, at this school, Aaron mentioned they really look at the programs they are running, and role model the desired behaviours and interactions promoted within the program *“we’ve also looked at...our social emotional learning...running a program about resilience, it’s actually about role modelling these things every day, and how we approach things, how we approach respect and how we approach...modelling respect, the language we use”* (Aaron, Program coordinator). This aspect of role modelling behaviours was an important way this school had embedded RRE across their school environment.

Supportive staff group

Throughout most of the interviews conducted at the school, they referenced the supportive nature of the school staff. Three staff members and one parent discussed how staff work well together across the whole school, and how there is further support and education offered to those who need it. All four of the school staff spoke about the level of collaboration between the student services team, and the input the school nurse has in investigating and providing resources to deliver RRE *“she’s often involved in sort of investigating and providing us with resources to deliver it...she’s definitely involved”* (Aaron, Program coordinator). The student services team was said to work together to find the most suitable person to discuss issues with, whilst also being a trusted adult for the student *“we have our student services...we all work together very well...we’re really coherent...if there’s any issues with any students...we go from there...who is the best person to help that student and who may have already built a really good relationship with a student and can help them...through that”* (Lucy, Head of residence).

In addition, one participant spoke about the support which is offered to school staff who perhaps were not comfortable or confident delivering sessions related to RRE, or needed more information. Robin mentioned they have been very clear to school staff that they will be supported to deliver any sessions, whilst also giving them the opportunity to *“hand ball”* the lesson or topic to another teacher if they don’t feel confident or comfortable *“I think I might even have said to some staff...I’m more than happy for you to hand ball if you’re not comfortable with it, rather than undo what somebody else is trying to do”* (Robin, Principal). In addition, the levels of support which are offered a was noted by another participant. The existence of initial, and then follow up support for

issues faced within the school community facilitates a comprehensive approach to responding to situations, and supporting staff and students *“the students will have someone where they go can to that they’re feeling they’re supported mental health wise, physical health wise, or relationship wise, we’ve got layers of support with our resi staff, and then our manager, with our chaplain, with our psych, with our nurse, with our student services team, with our student services officer”* (Sally, Head of class).

STAFF SUPPORT HELP LINES	
Mental Health Emergency Response Line	1300 555 788
Djookanka House Women's Refuge Narrogin	9881 6810
DVassist	1800 080 083
Share and Care – Welfare, Family Services and Financial Counselling	9622 2828
Lifeline.org.au	13 11 14
Eheadspace.org.au	1800 650 890
1800respect.org.au – Domestic Violence Support	1800 737 732
Suicidecallbackservice.org.au	1300 659 467
Employee Assistance Program	9882 2688
Rural Link	1800 552 002
Qlife.org.au	1800 184 527
Beyondblue.org.au	1300 224 636
Holyoake – Wheatbelt Alcohol & Drug Service	9621 1055
Police	13 14 44
ReachOut Australia	au.reachout.com
WellMob	wellmob.org.au

Female staff support lines which are around the school

STAFF SUPPORT HELP LINES	
Mental Health Emergency Response Line	1300 555 788
Men's Help Line	1300 78 99 78
regionalmenshealth.com.au	9690 2277
Share and Care – Welfare, Family Services and Financial Counselling	9622 2828
DVassist	1800 080 083
Lifeline.org.au	13 11 14
Eheadspace.org.au	1800 650 890
1800respect.org.au – Domestic Violence Support	1800 737 732
Suicidecallbackservice.org.au	1300 659 467
Employee Assistance Program	9882 2688
Rural Link	1800 552 002
Qlife.org.au	1800 184 527
Beyondblue.org.au	1300 224 636
Holyoake – Wheatbelt Alcohol & Drug Service	9621 1055
Police	13 14 44
ReachOut Australia	au.reachout.com
WellMob	wellmob.org.au

Male staff support lines which are around the school

Compounding the school’s supportive staff body, additional education opportunities are offered to staff to maximise their knowledge in the area of RRE. This school engaged an external provider after participating in the RRTSP to facilitate whole-school training on domestic violence and complex trauma to both the teaching and school staff, and separately to the students *“domestic violence is one for us, we’re looking at our school development day...next term... we are actually running PD for the staff first...then we’ve got a group coming to run some modules with the students after that”* (Robin, Principal). Robin highlighted this was an opportunity to upskill the staff to respond in these situations, and have consistent messaging across all staff in regards to respectful relationships *“we feel that it’s really important that we upskill the staff and have the staff all on the same page before we do anything with the kids...because it can be completely undone...if you get a staff member that comes out with a different message to a child that’s been through something...we do a lot of upskilling of our staff first”* (Robin, Principal).

Partnerships and community

Community partnerships for support and referrals

The school staff and students spoke about several community partnerships which have been made with external agencies around their area and beyond. Participants from this school discussed the connections they had made with their local women's health centre and refuges, child and adolescent mental health services, or other local mental health organisations. Robin mentioned the school's respectful relationships policy also outlines the local organisations which have been contacted for support, or those who could provide support *"in our respectful relationships policy, we actually document the local organisations that we have contact with...if they had a disclosure...the policy will actually list the different services that can be accessed"* (Robin, Principal), making it clear for the school staff where they could potentially provide their students with resources to.

One participant reported Starick had provided them with the contact details for their local women's refuge, which they subsequently contacted. This agency then provided the school with a range of resources, and facilitated a further connection with another agency, Building Safer Communities. From these connections, the school has been able to organise an additional professional development day for their school staff and students, which will focus on domestic violence and complex trauma.

The school engaged an external facilitator group to present a number of modules to the students across their wellbeing days. During the FGDs conducted with students attending this school, these sessions were very commonly referenced in their question responses. It seemed having an external facilitator was preferred, as a participant reported *"Tomorrow Man thing's probably the only one where everyone took it like pretty seriously, got something out of it"* (Ronald, Student), with another student continuing *"I think that is because they do go into so much more depth about it"* (Campbell, Student). In addition, it was suggested these external agencies do not present the information with any judgement, which allows the students to absorb more of the information and *"take it more on a deeper meaning...not just surface value"* (Douglass, Student).

One school staff member also discussed the connections being made with other schools with similar contexts, as well as the other local high school in the area. This participant mentioned this would allow for there to be more of a consistent approach to RRE across the sector *"we're working with a high school around some of that physical stuff...we're trying to build relationships and partnerships with the other...colleges in this space so we can get more of a consistent approach"* (Sally, Head of Class). In addition, three participants spoke about the relationship which has been delivered with Starick. Participants spoke about how staff members from Starick had made face to face visits, which was appreciated given this school is in a regional area of Western Australia.

Further, they have been *“good in terms of providing frameworks, and providing numbers and things like that”* (Aaron, Program Coordinator).

Parent connections, engagement, and education

Although engaging parents was mentioned as a significant barrier for this school, the school had already engaged in some communication with their parents on the topic of RRE. Two school staff members, and one parent spoke about how notices and newsletters had been sent out to parents, which included information on respectful relationships and health, *“we did some stuff around men’s health week and put some stuff through around men and help seeking behaviours in men”* (Aaron, Program coordinator), *“we get a chronicle...every, I reckon nearly every fortnight or every month...I’ve probably seen them in there”* (Sam, Parent). However, this was an area the school wanted to make greater progress in. One member of the school staff, and one parent acknowledged how important it was to build relationships with parents and families. The parent participant reflected on a personal experience where the principal had reached out to their family to offer support after a critical incident *“I did get a phone call from our principal, we are quite good friends with them”* (Sam, Parent).

The inclusion of parents on the school’s board was raised by the parent participant in their interview. Although they did not reference that RRE had been a topic of discussion in these meetings, this participant noted being on the school board gives them access and insight into how the school is operating, and what may be happening within the school *“being on the school council is actually really good because you just kind of...you have a bit more of an inside information of what’s going on and the behind the scenes, I guess”* (Sam, parent). The challenges this school faces in engaging parents in RRE is explored below.

Barriers and enablers to teaching RRE

Barriers: Broader school environment

Parent pushback, knowledge, comfort with RRE topics

Parents as barriers to teaching RRE was noted by four of the school staff, and one parent, for a variety of reasons. Parents’ beliefs about RRE and the associated topics such as domestic violence, gender stereotypes and norms, as well as gender diversity were noted as challenging, which would therefore make sending information to parents regarding these topics difficult *“gender diversity...that’s going to be a real biggie for us. We’re going to have to be very, very mindful of how we approach that, because it won’t sit well with the staff, the majority of staff, and it won’t sit well with the majority of our community”* (Robin, Principal), *“in LGBTIQ+ space, we have conservative*

parents...when can cause...educating the parents around these sorts of things would be complex...not impossible, but just complex" (Aaron, Program coordinator). Further, there was a sense that many of the parents within the school community may not have been exposed to respectful relationships during their developing years, or did not receive this kind of education throughout their schooling, which could mean they would not want their child involved in any RRE sessions, they needed to be educated first, or the inclusion of this information may be triggering for them; for example;

"I think from a community perspective, potentially, because this hasn't been done before there might be...we're a very traditional...potentially a little bit old fashioned...I'm not exactly sure how our parent body will take the fact that we want to have these conversations with the students" (Sally, Head of class)

"Unfortunately, I think most of the parents of kids we have no probably didn't have any support in knowing those things or learning about those things" (Aaron, Program coordinator)

"For some parents, they probably need that education as well to understand that, because if they haven't been taught it growing up, then they wouldn't have a great understanding" (Lucy, Head of residence)

"Some parents probably who are in that situation, learning about respectful relationships might be something that actually goes "oh okay so this, this isn't meant to happen to me"" (Lucy, head of residence)

In addition to some of the beliefs and attitudes noted by participants regarding their parent community, there were logistical barriers in involving the parent community in RRE reported by the participants. Two school staff and one parent discussed the difficulty distance has on parents' engagement. Sam mentioned that parents are *"from all over the place, we kind of don't really see each other very often"* (Sam, Parent). In addition, the distance was noted by one of the school staff, in the context of this causing difficulty getting the parent community together, or to have a scheduled phone call between all parents *"for us, it's probably distance...bringing our community...we have a wider school community. Our students travel from so far away...we couldn't just say, okay on Wednesday night, we're gonna have a night and call parents and we're gonna talk about respectful relationships...for some of our parents, that means getting on a plane and flying here...so it's a bit harder"* (Lucy, Head of residence). Further, internet connectivity was noted as a contributing factor to this barrier, as internet access, and ability to access programs which would enable video conferencing was not something available to all of the parent community *"I think a lot of them don't have access to technology...it would be difficult to get them all on a WebEx or something like that, so any sort of mass communication with them is a little bit difficult"* (Aaron, Program coordinator).

The value system of the wider community, and what is modelled at home were factors which contributed to this barrier. Three school staff referenced the impact external messages, particularly from other role models, can have on their attitudes and beliefs. There was a sense that there needed to be consistent messaging between the home and school, with role models who would promote the same messages as the school *“as long as their role models...echoing the same messages that we’re echoing...this stuff needs to be with...greater systemic change”* (Aaron, Program coordinator). In addition, Lucy spoke about the effect family environments can have on students’ beliefs about what behaviours are appropriate in relationships. For example, *“I guess for lots of kids, there’s things that go on at home, that probably aren’t okay, or aren’t okay in an ideal world...some of them will just go “well, this is the norm”, and until they’re taught that that’s not what’s normal, then they’ll just carry on...that will just become a generational kind of thing”* (Lucy, Head of residence). These wider community values were said to be a significant barrier, as referenced by Robin, *“I don’t know whether it’s our responsibility to try and change the value system of the wider community, I think that’s bigger than us...I think...that’s going to be a huge challenge for us”* (Robin, Principal).

Lack of staff training, knowledge, comfort, and confidence

A lack of staff training, knowledge, comfort and/or confidence to deliver sessions on RRE was raised by five participants (four school staff and one parent). Staffs’ personal beliefs and attitudes towards respectful relationships were indicated to be a barrier, influenced by how they had been brought up *“there’s going to be staff here that...we’re not going to be able to change their personal view...because of the nature of how they’ve been brought up”* (Robin, Principal). Robin further reinforced this, noting *“it is hard because we do have staff who are not on board and are not quite at the point where they can keep their own opinions to themselves”* (Robin, Principal). This idea of ingrained attitudes and beliefs from their own education and development was further referenced by Sally, *“I can understand potentially, some of your younger staff might find that an easier topic to brood, some of your older staff who have been raised in a different generation, that was taboo, you don’t talk about that”* (Sally, Head of Class).

The idea of being confident with the content was explicitly referenced by two school staff, with one participant speaking about teaching RRE in a cross-curricular way. There was reference to the notion that school staff have different skills, particularly in a secondary school setting where teachers are specialised in different subjects, *“I think different people have different skill bases...the English side of my degree is in cultural studies around gender, sexuality and stuff, so I’m comfortable talking about that in an English class and feel like I can have a discussion...I might not be good in a*

discussion about...STIs" (Aaron, Program coordinator), *"I think too it's the content of the subject, and also then the qualifications of the teachers as well. I could have a conversation about alcohol, but am I going to know, accurately all the statistics with evidence...like my PE teacher will? Probably not"* (Sally, Head of class). In addition, Lucy just spoke about teachers' confidence in general, referencing *"I don't know that all the staff would be capable of teaching it perhaps...because of a confidence thing...they might not feel confident enough"* (Lucy, Head of residence). In addition, being comfortable with the content was raised by three participants, and spoken about in the context of teaching content which may be uncomfortable just for the subject matter, for example *"there's a level of comfort required in your teaching...if you've got an uncomfortable person who's not in that space, it's hard for them to...I've seen teachers struggle to do just basic sort of sex ed"* (Aaron, Program, coordinator), or the content is uncomfortable because it can be triggering due to personal experiences *"I think sometimes it can be a trigger too...if you're a teacher in that situation, that can be...quite confronting"* (Sam, Parent), *"you've got to be mindful, I guess, of past experiences of the adults...we are meant to set that aside, but some people are not mentally, in a place where they can do that, they should, because they're teachers and they should be objective, but they're also human and fallible"* (Sally, Head of class).

Barriers: Within the curriculum

Time to deliver, and apply cross-curricular links

Not only were there reservations in teacher comfort and confidence to apply RRE across different curriculum areas, but time for implementation was also an issue. In particular, one participant drew the link between their comfort and confidence in the area and applying this cross-curricular, and spoke about the time it would take a school staff member to apply RRE to different subject areas without the knowledge as to how to do this, *"if I said to someone, "can you work respectful relationships into your science curriculum", they might be like "I don't know how to do that", which causes time for them"* (Aaron, Program coordinator). Time to deliver within the curriculum was also cited, with one participant referring to the many interruptions this school faces, for example: *"we see our students within SCASA requirements, but we have a lot of disruptions like our kids go out for field trips, we have open day...there [are] already, in a 10 week term, five disrupted weeks"* (Sally, Head of Class).

Secondary schools have specialised curriculum areas

Relating to the above theme, three participants discussed that secondary schools have a very specialised curriculum, which may not have any explicit areas addressing RRE, making it difficult to

find the time to discuss this topic area. Two of the three participants reflected that after year 10, there is no health curriculum which must be delivered to all students, *“the problem with health and PE is it ends...they all end in year 10”* (Aaron, Program Coordinator), *“when you look at the curriculum, the kids basically do math, English...they don’t do health and phys ed past year 10”* (Robin, Principal). However, there was a clear need for this content to be addressed across year levels, as noted in this comment from Aaron, *“one of my big concerns is the 11s, and 12s, so our year 12s now, some of them will turn 18 this year, and there’s no actual curriculum time to talk to them about protective behaviours...in all facets of that, and respectful relationships. That’s really concerning to me, because...I have year 10 boys now that can’t understand...that they will need to understand by the time they’re 18”* (Aaron, Program coordinator). Further, the context of this school also acts as a barrier in this sense, due to the lack of scope and time they have for an RRE curriculum amongst their other areas they need to address, *“probably the main blocker is that it physically cannot be fitted into the timetable with the need for what we have to cover”* (Robin, Principal).

Enablers

Taking a whole-school approach to RRE

Adopting a whole-school approach to RRE was a factor which would enable RRE to be taught and promoted within their school. This school referenced they were already in the process of creating a cultural change within their school before participating in the program. The school staff had already begun writing their respectful relationships framework prior to participating in the program, which then meant they were able to use the workshops as validation they were creating the right frameworks, and had relevant information presented, *“I think...for us...it was helpful...we kind of felt that we already had, like when I went to the first day and they were going though okay this is what you should have, it was more yep we’ve got that, yep we’ve got that”* (Robin, Principal), *“the best thing about it was...we hit it at a time we were already in a process of change...so we would take everything they gave us and run with it, so when they gave us their framework around different areas of respectful relationships, we were able to go, well we’ve got a program for that, we’ve got a program for that”* (Aaron, Program coordinator). In addition, they had already begun to shift their culture within the schools, specifically regarding including women and girls in different areas, and working on the relationships between members of the school community, *“we are working on the respectful relationships within the community, less so with curriculum, but more with that culture ethos approach...building that sort of positive culture without being a formal PBS [Positive Behaviour Support] school”* (Sally, Head of class).

Strategy	Program description	Who	Resources Required	Timeline
Tomorrow Man	Facilitates discussion around building more positive versions of masculinity. Students <u>are able to</u> build resilience, self-confidence and a sense of connectedness to their peers.	Yr 10/11/12 Boys	External Providers Staff to attend	6 sessions each year
Tomorrow Woman	Program aims to enable women to express their authentic selves and live their own version of a woman of tomorrow. Students <u>are able to</u> build resilience, self-confidence and a sense of connectedness to their peers	Yr 10/11/12 Girls	External Providers Staff to attend	6 Sessions each year
SENSEability	A Social-Emotional Learning program that is a <u>strength based</u> resilience program. This program has a strong evidence base for <u>12-18 year olds</u> and is available through <u>BeyondBlue</u> .	Yr 10/11/12	Student Services Program Coordinator and HOD.	Modules delivered in response to SEW survey data each year
Teen Mental Health First Aid	Students learn the Teen MHFA Action Plan, information about different types of mental health problems and mental health crisis situations in young people and how to give mental health first aid to peers	Yr 11 Yr 12	External Providers Trained College Staff	Each year 2022 only due to lack of access in 2021
Peer Skills	Program aims to enrich their social and interpersonal skills, develop listening <u>skills</u> and promote resilience	Yr Dorm Captains	Chaplain (trained)	6 x 2hr weekly sessions delivered consecutively
Challenges and Choices	Focuses on resilience, relationship skills, road safety and drug education programs.	Yr 10	PE staff	Integrated into Yr 10 PE lessons
Protective Behaviours	This is a personal safety program designed to equip children with the knowledge and skills to act in ways that reduce the likelihood of abuse occurring and help them to report abuse and to seek help if abuse occurs	Yr 11/12	Department of Education programs and resources	TBC
Respectful Relationships	This aims to support students to build relationships characterised by non-violence, equality, mutual respect, and trust.	Yr 10		Integrated into Yr 10 Health Lessons
Wellbeing Days	Provide opportunities for positive interactions between students and staff and within the student body while raising awareness of the importance of wellbeing.	All Students	College Staff	3 per year determined by Senior Staff
Health and Physical Education Curriculum	The Health and Physical Education curriculum contains opportunities for building the skills students need to form long lasting, respectful relationships. Topics covered include stereotypes, media messages, protective behaviours, respectful <u>relationships</u> and risky situations.	Yr 10 Yr 11/12 who elect General Physical education	HPE Staff	Integrated into the curriculum throughout the year
English Curriculum	The English curriculum contains opportunities to explore concepts such as gender, <u>sex</u> and sexuality. For example, in the ATAR course gender is explored through culture and cultural change over time. In the Foundation course, students look at diversity in the <u>work place</u> and the need to support equality and equity.	All Students	English Staff	Integrated into the curriculum throughout the year
DV and Trauma PD	This PD will run for staff, year 12s and year 11s in 2022. Moving forward, the College aims to deliver this information to all year 11 students.	Staff, Year 11s, Year 12s	External Provider – coordinated by Program Coordinator	Staff – 2022 11 Students - Annually

Inclusions of activities

The use of teachable moments and role modelling was referenced by this school. As mentioned in a previous section, there were instances reported by three participants (two school staff and one parent), where incidental promotion of RRE was needed, which facilitated their teaching in that area. Role modelling appropriate behaviours was also noted as an enabler when teaching and promoting RRE.

Schools are appropriate settings for RRE delivery

Schools were noted as appropriate settings for RRE. One school staff member and one parent referenced that due to the time students spend at school, they are the most appropriate settings, “*I think because we do have the students here all the time*” (Robin, Principal), “*well and truly, I mean that’s where kids spend 90% of their time*” (Sam, Parent), because they have a “*captive audience*”

(Robin, Principal). In addition, due to the context of schools in general, they were mentioned to be appropriate settings because they can offer *“the most reliable and sustainable place”* (Aaron, Program coordinator), to discuss issues which may arise. Reinforcing this, schools were also referenced as the *“safest place”* (Lucy, Head of residence), and somewhere students can be confident there is available support if they were to need it, *“we’ve got such a good student services team to offer support following those kind of information sessions, so if that pushes any buttons for any of the students, or it brings up something that maybe we’re not aware of is going on in their life, we have a really good support team here that can pick those kids up and help look after them...elsewhere in the community, potentially it would be a drop the message and leave and there would be no follow up and there’d be no support”* (Sally, Head of class). Reinforcing this, Sally also stated *“the last thing you want to do to a...already potentially emotionally fragile child, is throw them something that’s going to shatter them and then go “okay see you later”, they don’t know where to get help, we offer that”* (Sally, Head of class). There was also a sense that within the school, there are a range of different supports which can be accessed, including their classroom teacher, admin staff, or school psychologist or counsellor. Two participants also mentioned that it is everyone’s responsibility within a school to have discussions on RR, *“I kind of feel that anyone in a position who has a child around them should be allowed to”* (Sam, Parent), *“there’s your big picture, your whole school education around it, and that’s everyone’s responsibility”* (Robin, Principal).



Student support help lines included around the school

Further support necessary

Ethos and environment

More staff training

As staff beliefs, knowledge, comfort and confidence was noted as a barrier to teaching and promoting RRE, more staff training is something which needs to be supported by the RRTSP. Three staff members referenced the need for more training with their staff, to be able to adequately respond to issues which may occur within the school, and address curriculum areas appropriately, *“the knowledge of who is here and who they should be referring them to...we do have a support network, so they need to be familiar with school processes, to know who to actually refer those students to and how to handle it”* (Sally, Head of Class), *“broader education around...respectful relationships for staff...instead of it being an extra thing that we have to bring in, which puts a drain on teaching staff...making it apart of bringing it in so it is a part of the curriculum”* (Lucy, Head of residence). Recognising the need for more broader education across the group of teachers within a school community, Aaron suggested a way they could be further supported would be for Starick to attend schools to present to the wider school staff, rather than taking only a few staff members, *“I think if they could do something to present to a school, rather than just take a little focus group”* (Aaron, Program coordinator). Aaron suggested perhaps a smaller group of people could be taken after the whole-school presentation, to follow up on certain topics and issues.

Models for including RRE in academic calendar

Observance of key days within the academic calendar such as White Ribbon Day and Wear it Purple Day was something this school wanted guidance around. One school staff participant mentioned they had reviewed other school models of days of observance, specifically Wear it Purple Day, and did not like the way this day was planned, *“I’m trying to figure out what’s the best way to approach some things...like, a Wear it Purple kind of day, I don’t know what that will look like. I’ve looked at some other school models, and I don’t like how they do certain things”* (Aaron, Program coordinator). In addition, students in the FGD recognised observing these days would be a positive and suggested the school had discussed participating in these days recently, Cameron: *“no we haven’t had anything”*, Maverick *“the other day they brought up in the meeting about White Ribbon Day”*, Chook *“yeah that we should do it”*. However, one student recognised the challenge this may have due to the school’s context and strict uniforms. They suggested perhaps linking their wellbeing days in with the observance days would be a way they could overcome this barrier, *“it would work if we lined it up with the wellbeing days I feel like it’d work, but if we didn’t, I don’t think it’d get much traction”* (Ronald, Student). This may be an area the school needs more support in, either mapping their

school's calendar against these observance days, or support and advice on how they can acknowledge these days, without there being too many disruptions to their daily activities, and necessary uniform.

Program needs sustainability

The sustainability of the program was highlighted by two participants, who suggested perhaps the program structure does not lend itself to be sustainable within schools. Within this school, one participant mentioned that some of the staff who had attended the workshop had left the school making it difficult for the remaining teachers to implement strategies *"the information that we were being given through the professional development for the team that went, which unfortunately kind of dropped off to just me in the end cos [sic] the others had left"* (Robin, Principal), which would have affected the messages which were able to be brought to the wider school. In addition, the format of needing to take information back from the workshop to your wider school community was raised as a challenge, *"because what they do is they take some of your staff that are interested, but then your staff kind of have to go back to the school and give a spiel"* (Aaron, Program coordinator). Potentially training all staff or providing all staff with a training package for this may be more sustainable, to ensure all staff have access to the training, and aren't just receiving the relayed messages delivered by those staff who attended the workshops. Further, Aaron spoke about the real need for schools to want to engage in a cultural shift. Aaron mentioned *"I actually think...you could go through the program and get nothing out of it if you weren't interested in changing your school"* (Aaron, Program coordinator). This means that there is potentially more room in the workshops, and prior, for the RRTSP to support and facilitate some reflective activities regarding why schools were participating in the program, which may assist them in not treating this program as a *"tick a box"* (Aaron, Program coordinator).

Partnerships and community

Engaging parents

Participants from this school noted they faced many challenges when engaging their parent community in RRE. Three school staff indicated the school had engaged in some information sharing with the parents, with one participant recalling the need to *"prep the parents"* on certain topics, such as pornography, *"the last module that we had to do a bit of prep around was with the year 12 boys, they were going into...the pornography and how that can affect your thinking and your view of women and things like that...we had to do quite a bit of prep around that"* (Robin, Principal). Other school staff referred to the need to send information home to parents about what they were

currently focusing on as a school, to gain their support for addressing those areas, *“it’s making them a part of anything that we...keeping in contact with them with any concerns...sort of keeping them involved so they support us and what we’re doing”* (Lucy, Head of residence). In addition, one participant was concerned about how information could be sent home about family and domestic violence. *“if we’re talking DV...I am a little concerned as to how that’s gonna go...I’m not aware of any domestic violence that is occurring in families within our school community...I’m not sure...what’s going to be the reaction when that information does go home...I don’t know what to expect”* (Sally, Head of Class). However, three participants, including Sally mentioned the need for more resources to be available to parents. Two participants spoke about the need for resources to be available to parents, so they understand the content that is being delivered, and where they could go to access support. In addition, one participant highlighted the potential to engage external agencies to facilitate a parent education session, *“what is there scope to do? Well there is the possibility...of an external provider coming in to give a parent education session”* (Sally, Head of class). There is a need for this school to be supported in their efforts to engage their parent community.

RRTSP sectioning age groups

Although only mentioned by one participant from this school, the suggestion for the RRTSP to be delivered as two separate programs, one for primary, and one for secondary was raised. This participant suggested that throughout the workshops, some of the presentation materials were not at a level which would be appropriate for high school and did not focus and target specific issues which are present within a high school context, *“some of the presentation materials weren’t at our level...weren’t age appropriate”* (Aaron, Program coordinator). This participant suggested when the primary and upper schools are combined, it would not be possible to present information in an appropriate way for all workshop attendees, *“it would have to go back to year levels...I think that’s the issue when you have primary schools and upper schools, and our schools there, that wouldn’t be possible...not in a meaningful way, it would be a bit of a throwaway”* (Aaron, Program coordinator). This participant suggested to would be the most appropriate to have respectful relationships for K-3, years 4-9, and 10-12. It seems based on this, that this school may need more support on how topics can be broached in age-appropriate ways across year levels.

Engaging with external agencies

Further support for engaging with external agencies was highlighted by one participant. Although participants from this school mentioned engaging with external agencies such as their local women’s’ refuge and women’s health centre, there was a sense that local support groups are

understaffed, and don't have the capacity to provide further support and training to their school staff, *"trying to tap into some of the local...support groups, they're very much underfunded as well...they're not able to...give us a lot of time that they don't have the bodies on the ground"* (Robin, Principal). This participant wanted Starick to be able to support them in sourcing appropriate agencies.

School four (metropolitan primary school)

School context

- Primary school in the Perth metropolitan area (cohort 1)
- SEIFA Index 1028
- 1 open-ended survey completed by school staff
- Due to a range of factors, this school participated in the case studies via survey. Only one staff member was able to complete the survey.

School summary

Strategies employed:

- Engaging in a whole school approach to RRE, and embedding aspects of this across their school environment
- Acknowledging days of observance within their academic calendar
- Engaging their parent community in discussions of RRE
- Created and developed partnerships with external agencies

Barriers to implementing RRE:

- Teachers do not receive enough RRE training throughout their role or in pre-service teaching
- Sourcing the funding and time to implement new initiatives can be challenging
- Staff turnover and new staff coming to the school can be difficult as whole school training may need to be repeated
- Engaging time poor parents in the content of RRE can be difficult

Enablers to implementing RRE:

- Schools are ideal settings to teach and promote RRE
- Utilising a whole school approach to RRE facilitates teaching and promotion of key messages

What further support does the RRTSP need to provide to this school?

- Support to continue discussions of RRE within the school community, to ensure RRE remains a key priority
- Further exposure, support and training for the staff involved in the program

What has the school already done?

Ethos and environment

Engaging in a whole school approach

Based on the survey response, this school was taking a whole school approach to RRE. There was an awareness that RRE is not a standalone curriculum, and should be taught cross-curricular within different aspects of schooling *“it should be taught across the curriculum especially as it is linked to*

several of the general capabilities (personal and social, ethical understanding, intercultural understanding)” (Sean, Administrator, Program coordinator). This participant mentioned RRE is enshrined within their school policies, and is supported by a range of stakeholders within their school community “to really embed it in our school, it has been endorsed by our school board, back by our P&C and enshrined in school policy” Sean, Administrator, Program coordinator).

Acknowledgment of days of observance

This school has engaged in specific days of observance relating to respectful relationships such as White Ribbon Day, Wear it Purple Day, and 16 days in WA. Engagement with these days in the school calendar was said to have *“given a voice to marginalised members of [the] school community”* (Sean, Administrator, Program coordinator).

Partnerships and community

The participant was able to name a range of partnerships which have been formed with members of their community, whether that be parents or families, or external agencies.

Engaging parents

This school had implemented a range of strategies to engage with parents including: a workshop for the parents of year six students, focusing on relationships and sexuality education; inviting parents to participate in their days of observance *“parents are invited to participate in some of our RR-themed acknowledgement days such as White Ribbon Day and Wear it Purple Day”* (Sean, Administrator, Program Coordinator); and sharing information on respectful relationships with a note home each term. Further, it was reported that this school engages in a discussion with parents about the benefits of modelling RR, prior to the child attending the school *“educating parents, prior to their child attending school, on the benefits of modelling RR”* (Sean, Administrator, Program Coordinator).

External partnerships

This school has sourced external agencies for support when delivering and implementing both RRE and RSE within the school. This school referenced their relationship with Starick which happened due to their involvement with the RRTSP *“we have received incredible support, particularly from [project officers] at Starick Services. Their frequent offers of communication has been vital to ensure we stayed the course and delivered the initiatives we set out to”* (Sean, Administrator, Program coordinator).

Barriers and enablers to teaching RRE

Barriers: Broader school environment

Teachers do not receive RRE training

When referencing if teachers should be comfortable teaching RRE, this participant said, *“despite the positive impact that all teaching staff knowledge [respectful relationships] has on academic performance, it is interesting that some staff choose not to (or aren’t competent) in displaying [respectful relationships] practices in their professional lives”* (Sean, Administrator, Program Coordinator). Potential reasons for this suggested by this participant included that teachers do not receive adequate RRE training throughout their pre-service degrees, and potentially were not modelled and taught RRE through their developmental years. Therefore this was perceived as a barrier to teaching RRE.

Funding and time to implement initiatives

This participant was aware that to implement initiatives within a school, there needs to be funding and time available to school staff. Sean mentioned that they were given a 0.2FTE allocation within their school to focus on RR, however it is more likely this time is spent dealing with the behaviour of students *“our school recognises the importance of this key area and I have been given a 0.2 FTE allocation to work in this space...I find the majority of this time is spent dealing with student behaviour”*. Sean reflected that there needs to be adequate resourcing for teachers to broach this topic within their school, and enough funding available to allow teaching staff and other school staff to drive and implement initiatives *“providing funding/resourcing to enable staff to drive key initiatives is imperative. The goodwill of teachers and administrators only stretches so far, with time the biggest barrier”* (Sean, Administrator, Program coordinator).

Sean reflected on previous years when considering barriers, mentioning that *“[respectful relationships] was well delivered across the school in 2019/2020 as there was an impetus behind it which came of our small time”* (Sean, Administrator, Program coordinator). The inclusion of dedicated non-teaching time put aside for the team to plan a range of initiatives, and time dedicated to implement and deliver these. However, there have been a range of barriers reported over the last two years which has meant the team did not have the same amount of dedicated time to explore these initiatives *“I would say over the last 2 years it has been more difficult as we have not been given the same time for a range of reasons (competing school priorities, lack of relief staff due to COVID)”*, which has resulted in a barrier for delivering and promoting RRE (Sean, Administrator, Program coordinator).

New staff and staff turnover

The turnover of key staff within the school driving the initiatives, along with changes within the school administration were highlighted as barriers for this school. Although this school was engaging in good practice of educating new staff who came to the school about their focuses and RRE, the participant reflected this can be challenging when done in a whole of school way. Sean reported this training is done as a “*whole-staff professional learning session*”, which means both new and old staff would attend this training together. Sean mention this “*is problematic...as our existing staff have heard it all before*”. In addition, Sean reported that a number of their staff have moved to other schools, and they have had a complete overhaul of their school administration, which can impact how programs are implemented within a school.

Engaging time poor parents

Engaging parents in RRE was seen as a barrier present within the broader school environment. Although this school reported many ways in which they engage parents with RRE, they still found there could be barriers in this domain, particularly in reference to parents who are time poor “*it can be challenge to engage time poor parents*” (Sean, Administrator, Program coordinator).

Enablers

Taking a whole-school approach to RRE

This school adopted a whole-school approach to RRE. Ensuring RRE is included across the curriculum, and speaking about and promoting RRE outside of the traditional classroom setting, including it in school events such as assemblies, and referring to days of observance were highlighted. Further, this participant spoke about the importance of using teachable moments to discuss RRE. They made reference to the fact RRE is not an isolated lesson and should be something which is embedded throughout the school days and weeks “*as teachable moments in the classroom occur throughout a school day/week...cannot simply be shoehorned into a 45-60min health lesson each week*” (Sean, Administrator, Program coordinator). This will allow the school to address RRE from a broader perspective than a scheduled lesson.

Schools are appropriate settings for RRE

The notion that schools are appropriate settings for RRE was explored in this participant’s response. The importance of a child’s first classroom teacher in kindergarten or pre-primary was highlighted, similarly to the first school reported in this embedded case study, as they are able to mould the student in their earliest developmental years to learn a range of acceptable behaviours and

attitudes, *“a child’s early years at daycare/school are vital in conditioning a range of social acceptable behaviours and attitudes”* (Sean, Administrator, Program Coordinator). Something this school also engaged with was speaking to the parents about RRE during their *“K/PP orientation day each year”* (Sean, Administrator, Program coordinator), promoting the idea of starting RRE early. Further, this participant spoke about how schools can introduce RRE topics incrementally, in an age-appropriate manner throughout schooling. The participant spoke about a *“3-prong”* approach to teaching RRE, looking at *“1. Topics related to self (K-PP) 2. Topics related to others eg: communication (Yr 1-3) 3. Topics related to community (Y4-6)”* (Sean, Administrator, Program coordinator). The school environment allows this flow of topics to occur, and also content to be revisited and refreshed throughout schooling *“there is some natural crossover in the teaching of these key areas from year to year...year 6’s still need reminding of RRE topics that relate to others”* (Sean, Administrator, Program coordinator).

Further support necessary

Ethos and environment

Regular discussions to ensure RRE remains a priority

Competing priorities within the school and time dedications can impact the way programs are delivered. This participant wanted there to be regular check ins, or opportunities to discuss RRE, to ensure they maintain their progress with RRE. The participant said *“regular touchpoints/opportunities to discuss RRE are vital to ensure we ‘maintain the rage’ and the RRE doesn’t drop off our list of priorities, which is a proven reality of what happens in schools”* (Sean, Administrator, Program Coordinator).

Partnerships and community

More exposure, support, and training

The need for more exposure to RRE topics and information, and further professional learning for teachers and broader school staff was highlighted. It was suggested that having mentors, and supportive school leadership can help teachers to become more confident and comfortable teaching the key concepts included in RRE, and promoting this across the school, *“further professional learning and assistance via mentors/support school leadership, a teacher’s confidence in teaching key concepts should increase over time”* (Sean, Administrator, Program coordinator).

School five (metropolitan primary school)

School context

- Primary school in the metropolitan area (cohort 3)
- SEIFA Index 977
- 5 interviews conducted with school staff, 1 parent interview, and 3 FGDs with year 6 students (1 group of 5 and 2 groups of 4)

School summary

Strategies employed:

- Started to take a whole-school approach to RRE, incorporating RRE across their curriculum areas, which involved the scope and sequence of curriculum areas, and social and emotional programs
- This school had begun a daily check in strategy, which was started in response to inappropriate behaviour. This allows students to check in daily on how they felt at school that day, and if anything had impacted their day
- The school staff at this school were suggested to be supportive, collaborative, and responsive to situations
- Positive relationships were facilitated with parents
- Partnerships with external organisations were created and developed within the school

Barriers to implementing RRE:

- Staff training, engagement and comfort with the topic area was noted as a barrier
- Having parents who pushed back against RRE, and had limited engagement with events and information which was sent out was reported
- Students' preconceived beliefs and attitudes relating to RRE were noted to be challenging in this space
- The overcrowding of the curriculum makes it difficult to address all the areas in the time allocated, and fit RRE within this

Enablers to implementing RRE:

- Schools are ideal settings to teach and promote RRE
- The school views RRE as a vital topic, which needs to be taught and addressed

What further support does the RRTSP need to provide to this school?

- Support in the area of curriculum, particularly for incorporating RRE in a cross-curricular manner

- Provide more resources in the area of implementing RRE, including evidence-based strategies and illustrations of practice of how to deliver a range of topics in an age appropriate way
- Additional staff training for all staff at the school
- Further support and guidance on how to prioritise school spending and funding, to include areas of RRE
- Strategies schools can utilise to engage parents and community into their discussions of RRE
- Facilitate and formalise connection opportunities between other schools who participated in the RRTSP

What has the school already done?

Curriculum, teaching and learning

Incorporating RRE across curriculum areas

There was an awareness that RRE would be included in Health and Physical Education curriculum, however four participants suggested RRE would be better suited across a range of curriculum areas. Therefore, consistent with this school's whole-school approach to RRE, they had begun to incorporate elements of respectful relationships in a cross-curricular manner, as they had reflected it was previously *"a little bit isolated"* (Emily, Principal). Two participants suggested a range of activities and strategies have been employed for use at the beginning of each day to refresh the students understanding and knowledge of respectful relationships. These participants referenced their use of *"warm ups"* to introduce RRE within each class lesson, for example;

"every single warm up is about respectful relationships, no matter what we're teaching...if we're doing healthy eating, we incorporate then like everyone's body is different, how are we respectful of everyone's body" (Samantha, Classroom Teacher)

"incorporating it as much as you can within different subjects...just little warm ups in the morning...we sometimes refresh like who are you five safe people...that takes 10 seconds, and you tell the person next to you who your five safe people are" (Lani, Classroom Teacher)

Recognising the importance of incorporating RRE in a cross-curricular form, one participant spoke about strategies and activities they use within different lessons in areas such as maths and English, to reiterate RRE messages and re-educate on aspects of respectful relationships. Lani suggested, *"having mini role plays within that...kids doing little short burst writing about two characters, who may be having issues, how are they going to solve it...just...incorporating respectful relationships without the kids realising, which is really exciting"* (Lani, Classroom Teacher). The Principal suggested working RRE into the curriculum this way is *"really about working smarter"*

(Emily, Principal) to ensure the content can be covered in a way which would bypass some of the barriers outlined in a later section.

Conducting a scope and sequence of curriculum areas

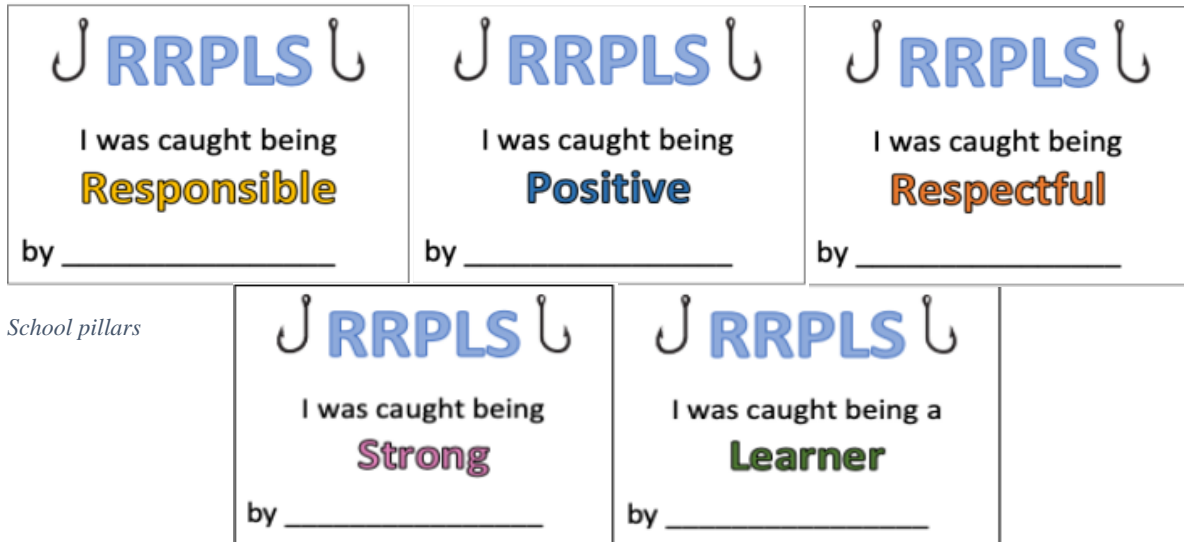
Recognising the need to incorporate RRE across different curriculum areas, this school has begun to conduct a two-year scope and sequence of their health curriculum, respectful relationships, zones of regulation, and protective behaviours. Further, they had begun to develop a bullying intervention program, which would support staff in addressing these situations. Tom suggested this scope and sequence would be *“mapping that out for staff over two years, term by term...over that two-year period, they should cover all the modules and topics for respectful relationships, protective behaviours, and the health curriculum”* (Tom, Classroom Teacher, PBS Leader). It was predicted that this guide would support the teachers to know what content should be delivered within these areas, when this information should be covered, and when they need to update strategies which already exist within the classroom, *“it's really supporting staff in when to deliver this...making sure that...helping hand is updated every term, your zones of regulation toolkit is updated every term, and then what modules you're covering in respectful relationships...to make sure you tick off all of them over a two year period”* (Tom, Classroom Teacher, PBS Leader). Further, conducting the scope and sequence and including different areas which should be addressed was included as a way the school could ensure they have a consistent approach to these topics included in RRE across the whole school, *“it's a consistent school wide approach, rather than one year group doing this, one year group doing that, and then there's gaps in learning and gaps in understanding”* (Tom, Classroom Teacher, PBS Leader).

Ethos and environment

Whole school approach to RRE

It was clear this school had taken a whole school approach to RRE, and embedded it across numerous aspects of their school, considering their values, curriculum, informal teaching, and whole school language. It was suggested that all school staff were on board with delivering RRE, and there was a universal understanding of what content should be delivered, and when this should start. Tom reported *“I think we've got a really fantastic whole school approach to respectful relationships...all the staff are on board with the program...we've got a pretty ingrained approach to all of that...when it should be taught, what we're teaching first, the context in each year group”* (Tom, Classroom Teacher, PBS Leader). As this school is a PBS school, respect was reported to be embedded within their school values. Four participants mentioned the school's five pillars: respectful, responsible,

positive, learners, strong, and which were said to be constantly revisited throughout the school so students were aware of their behaviours and actions within the school, “one of our core values is respect, so constantly revisiting...what it...looks like, sounds like, feels like to be respectful” (Lani, Classroom Teacher).



Further, Tom mentioned how RRE has influenced and is embedded within school plans and whole school language, suggesting “all our work with respectful relationships, developing our school behaviour management policy, mental health and wellbeing policy, it’s very engrained in the school that every student has a zones of regulation tool kit and a helping hand, just so teachers are aware of...trusted adults and strategies” (Tom, Classroom Teacher, PBS Leader).

The use of a whole-school language around respectful relationships was mentioned by five participants, as something the school has done well. Four school staff members suggested this whole school language helps to ensure consistency in messages across all year levels within the school, and increases the students’ capacity to understand certain topics and concepts, for example;

“quite often we’ll walk into a class...you can hear them going back to that...whole school language around relationships and making sure that...they address it” (Emily Principal)

“every day essentially we revisit...you’ve been respectful because you followed the teachers’ instruction, we’re constantly using the vocabulary of respect within the classroom and the whole community...K to six know exactly what respect is, but then how they can show respect...that vocabulary is just brought up every day of the school week” (Lani, Classroom Teacher)

“very consistent language and approach...the language at our school is very consistent...if a kid’s escalating, it’s like alright what’s your strategies? What’s the situation...what zone are you in?...it’s very consistent language” (Tom, Classroom Teacher, PBS Leader)

“now I’ll go in and I’ll speak to a child and I’ll say, okay well what are you upset about? Well, so and so took my pencil and I didn’t give them consent...they’re using that kind of language now”
(Wilda, Associate Principal)

This linked to their use of teachable moments for incidental education, and their role modelling of respectful behaviours. Six participants explicitly spoke about the importance of revisiting RRE, whether that be within classroom time or in an informal way and using teachable moments to promote respectful behaviours and interactions. Revisiting RRE was suggested to assist in embedding the messages for the students, and getting constant reinforcement about what respect looks like, and appropriate behaviours, for example;

“to me, that’s probably like, the least important...it’s more about everyday teaching, and everyday concepts that are coming through the kids and the language that’s coming from the...teachers” (Wilda, Associate Principal)

“I think also with respectful relationships, it’s important to not just have...we’re learning about respectful relationships today and do that for eight weeks, and then never revisit it, it needs to be something that is constantly spoke about...it doesn’t have to necessarily be a whole lesson on it every week, just even having refreshers...that’s why we have respect as one of our things, okay I can see some disrespectful behaviour, what does it mean to be respectful?” (Lani, Classroom Teacher)

“our teachers are really good role models for the kids...the way that we interact with them, everyone tries their best to demonstrate the correct language and how we speak to each other and stuff like that...that’s also...really important” (Samantha, Classroom Teacher)

“we use respectful language, and then we explicitly teach what that respectful language is”
(Tom, Classroom Teacher, PBS Leader)

Further to this, the importance of embedding RRE both outside traditional classroom lessons, and across curriculum areas was mentioned, as this enabled them to relate the students’ learning back to real life situations, and ensured consistency of messaging, for example;

“you’re stopping them and talking to them about it, instead of sitting on the mat and being like, this is what we’re learning today, using more of like a teaching tool...where...it’s real life situations, and this is how we stop, give them that teaching moment, then see if they can...apply that to what they’re doing” (Samantha, Classroom Teacher).

“it is that next step beyond just a classroom program...I suppose it’s a philosophy, and it’s a change of mindset...it’s not a standalone curriculum, it’s woven through everything we do all day every day, and it isn’t just about what’s happening in a classroom” (Emily, Principal)

“sometimes when things happen, like you get really angry or something...the teacher would ask...why are you angry? And try to help you like figure out...what’s wrong, how to stop it, and if you need help from someone else” (Billy Bob, Student)


“even if they're not the teacher in charge of teaching health, or however they would categorise that particular lesson, it has application wherever they are, whether they're in music, or science or LOTE or whatever. They're always interacting with people so that...constant reinforcement of respectful relationships across the board, I think is important” (Jane, Parent)

In addition, the linking of RRE across different subject areas was also something the school had begun, which would enable teaching staff to teach and promote RRE within their classrooms, without the concern of time to include a separate subject lesson, for example;

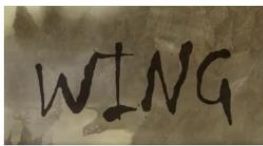
“linking that to our respectful relationships lessons and anything else in the health curriculum we need to address so that we’re not having to teach two separate areas” (Emily, Principal)

“it’s been good having like a small team of us that have been able to kind of interlink protective behaviours and respectful relationships together so it’s not like an extra thing that has to be added into your week...our timetable is so jam packed already” (Samantha, Classroom Teacher)

White Ribbon Day 2021
Early Childhood Lesson Plan (Kindy to Year 2/3)

HOOK
 <p>Can be accessed at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nYTrIcn4rjg https://www.literacyshed.com/for-the-birds.html</p> <p>Watch the whole video "For The Birds"</p> <p>Ask students what message they think they got from the video? This sparks the debate: Who are the mean ones? Why are they mean? Are any of the small birds worse than others?</p>
MAIN DISCUSSION
<p>Watch a second time, this time pausing and discussing the themes explored in the video.</p> <p>Themes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Getting aggressive with other people / Shouting and yelling at others to solve problems - The power of facial expressions, how it makes others feel - Making fun of someone's appearance - Importance of standing up to people, laughing and joining in is just as bad - Violence and hurting others is never okay
ACTIVITY
<p>Watch the video "One Kind Word" https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oJQg2JyQ3mM</p> <p>Ask students to think of one kind thing they could say to someone to make their day. Think pair share ideas on the mat as a class. Make an anchor chart about "One Kind Word"</p> <p>Make a white paper flower and write 'One kind Word' on the flower that they can use to combat bullying and violence. Children need to cut out all the flowers and glue them on top of each other (largest to smallest). Depending on your student's fine motor abilities, you can get them to make a flower each or work together to make one flower per 3 students.</p>
PLENER Y
<p>Share one take away from the lesson with a partner / class</p>

White Ribbon Day 2021
Upper Primary Lesson Plan (Years 3 to 6)

HOOK
 <p>Can be accessed at: https://www.literacyshed.com/wing.html https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GlyN606PF3U</p> <p>Watch the whole video "Wing"</p> <p>Ask students what message they think they got from the video?</p>
MAIN DISCUSSION
<p>Watch a second time, this time pausing and discussing the themes explored in the video.</p> <p>Themes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hurting other people - Taking other peoples belongings - Treating others differently based off their appearance - Intimidating others by out numbering people - You shouldn't have to hide away, there is always someone to help - Importance of standing up for people when we see they are being hurt emotionally /physically - We need to stand together to combat violence / bullying
ACTIVITY
<p>Watch the video "One Kind Word" https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oJQg2JyQ3mM</p> <p>Ask students to think of one kind thing they could say to someone to make their day. Think pair share ideas on the mat as a class. Make an anchor chart about "One Kind Word"</p> <p>Make a white paper flower and write 'One kind Word' on the flower that they can use to combat bullying and violence. Children need to cut out all the flowers and glue them on top of each other (largest to smallest). Depending on your student's fine motor abilities, you can get them to make a flower each or work together to make one flower per 3 students.</p>
PLENER Y
<p>Share one take away from the lesson with a partner / class</p>

Example of lessons used for White Ribbon Day

Daily check ins

One strategy this school has employed recently was the use of a “*daily check in*”. The parent participant suggested this was started due to inappropriate behaviour happening within the classroom between students, “*my daughter was one of the kids who was having an issue with some boys...the school have been great, very responsive and they’ve set up a system like a daily check in where the kids can anonymously say...I’m having these issues*” (Jane, Parent). For the daily check in, students can scan a QR code whenever they like during the week, and are taken to a survey. This survey asks them questions such as “*did you feel happy at school today?*” (Billy Bob, Student), and if they “*click no, you’ve got to write why and stuff underneath...then did you feel safe at school*” (Billy Bob, Student). Another student mentioned this check in allows them to “*write how you feel, what day it is, and what made you feel that way, and if it was a student or a teacher*” (Tilly, Student). In these check ins, there is a space for the student to write their name if they would like extra support from teaching staff, or they can remain anonymous. The daily check ins were mentioned frequently throughout the interviews, with all three student FGDs, and four other participants (school staff and a parent) reporting on this strategy. Not only did the check ins allow “*the teachers...to see within the classroom who felt safe, or who was happy*” (Lani, Classroom Teacher), they also “*[give] kids a voice*” (Emily, Principal), and involve the students in resolutions to problems occurring in the school “*use the kids themselves...we’ve got this issue, how can we make it better?*” (Jane, Parent). The parent participant suggested this was “*a really good use of the respectful relationship sort of philosophy, that we’re all responsible...no one exists in a vacuum, like our actions affect each other, and we can encourage each other to be better*” (Jane, Parent). Another classroom teacher also suggested they do an informal check in with students who come late to their class reporting, “*those kids that come in late, I’ll always get them up and be like...was everything okay this morning...some of them will tell me that something’s happened in the morning...just checking in with them and making sure they’re okay*” (Samantha, Classroom Teacher).

Social and emotional programs

Along with their whole-school approach to RRE, there were a range of social and emotional programs which were embedded within the school. Two strategies or programs were mentioned the most frequently by school staff, parents, and students: the Rainbows program, and their zones of regulation. The use of the Zones of Regulation was reported to assist the students in recognising their emotions, and also provide them with the vocabulary they need to “*articulate how they’re feeling*” (Tom, Classroom Teacher, PBS Leader). Recognising this, Wilda also mentioned “*it gives them that...what is acceptable in each of those zones of feelings? So when you’re angry, what’s*

acceptable and what's okay, what's not okay" (Wilda, Associate Principal). Using the Zones of Regulation within the classroom was also mentioned as a helpful tool for the classroom teachers, and they could be given an indication of how their students had arrived at school, and how they are feeling at the beginning of the day, *"we do zones of regulation...it just gives me a gauge on how their mornings been and if some of them say like, I'm in the blue zone, sad, I'd be like okay...then we can have a chat about it"* (Lani, Classroom Teacher). The Zones of Regulation were frequently referred to during the FGDs, where students had been provided with, or come up with their own strategies for when they need to work through their emotions to get back to the 'green zone', for example;

"we have like toolboxes, around year three and you started making them...you put like three things that...if you didn't have like the best lunch or recess break, or you didn't have a good time...at home, you just ask your teacher and you'll go and do what you need to help you feel better" (John, Student)

"there used to be that little quiet corner for like a couch or a beanbag or something, that you would just chill in there for a little bit until you're back in the zone" (Pat, Student)

"they have these toolkits, and you wrote strategies, you could do like breathing, or just draw...they told us that you should use them whenever you're stressed or not in the green zone" (Tilly, Student)

Rainbows was another frequently referenced program within the school. This program was reported to be for students who may be experiencing grief or loss within the family or have experienced traumatic events, but also could be related to *"divorce within their family, or disrespectful relationships within school, at home"* (Lani, Classroom Teacher). Five participants suggested the Rainbows program provides counselling sessions for these students, where they explore a range of issues and provide strategies. These programs were said to be run by their school psychologist, but includes a *"few other staff"* (Wilda, Associate Principal) who are *"trained in the program within the school"* (Lani, Classroom Teacher). Lani suggested the programs were beneficial for the kids, as often *"it's so hard to...sit down and purely focus on one student, and what's been going on because it's just so much chaos around the class"*, and Rainbows gives these students *"the time to speak to someone about what's going on without it actually being like a formal psychologist appointment"* (Lani, Classroom Teacher). One of the students who participated in a FGD had been involved in Rainbows, and provided this story of their experience:

"In Rainbows, personally what I've experienced is, you go there, and you talk about like, what you can do, what's happened to you...to try and feel like you're not the only one going through this and if anyone feels like that, and then there's like, a little book that you read through and go through

the pages and like an empty page where you can just like scribble on it and like, take your mind away” (James, Student)

This book was referred to by staff as a ‘big life journal’ where the students attending Rainbows could write down their thoughts and feelings about the situation they were going through. Tom provided this explanation on the use of these journals within the program:

“big life journal is just kids that usually go to Rainbows that kind of just chat to an adult, and then record and try to understand the situation that they might be in like, if their parent is taken away, or goes to jail due to things that were happening at home, it’s just helping them to understand in kids terms what the situation is...answering those sort of pointy end questions that might not be appropriate in a class setting or one on one setting” (Tom, Classroom Teacher, PBS Leader).

Supportive, collaborative, responsive school staff

The notion that the staff team at the school were collaborative, supportive of one another, responsive to situations occurring within the school, and open to additional training opportunities. Although many of the staff reported that all staff at the school were on board with teaching and promoting RRE as part of their whole-school approach, some participants suggested there may still be teachers who do not feel comfortable with the content. However, three participants suggested if there were issues with teaching the content, based on factors such as their comfort or confidence, and potential experiences of trauma within their background, there would be support provided to ensure the students still received the information they needed, for example;

“if I did have a teacher that was struggling, I would come up with a solution in terms of why don’t you team teach? Let’s open up the doors to next door and let’s do it together” (Emily, Principal)

“I feel quite comfortable that if there was a staff member that felt uncomfortable about anything that they were delivering that they’d come and talk to us...then we put in a plan to support that teacher” (Wilda, Associate Principal)

In addition to providing the support to teachers who may find the content challenging, there was a sense that the teachers at this school have been *“historically...very collaborative”* (Emily, Principal). Content, and what is happening within the classrooms were often spoken about during staff meetings, and included in their staff newsletters. This keeps the school staff up to date on things their students may be speaking about, and ensures communication is provided across the school, so the issue can be broached with the different year levels, *“it was just a conversation that needed to be had...for those kids to understand that it wasn’t an okay thing to talk about, and then I...put in our staff newsletter, a little thing about him, and if they hear anyone, because obviously, some of my kids have younger siblings in class, or they have older siblings in high school who might*

have been talking about it so really just communicating with the whole school about little social media trends to do with respectful relationships that are coming across as well which is so scary” (Lani, Classroom Teacher).

Good Afternoon,

I have attached the video link on consent and the google drive link for the Respectful Relationships Lesson plans.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AArly-tvxWE>



Email sent to all staff about consent

This sharing of information between staff members was also mentioned after participants who attended the RRTSP returned to the school. Samantha reported, *“when we came back from the first respectful relationships seminar we went to, we did a whole school [professional learning] PL, so we talked to other teachers about it...it was pretty powerful...I had probably five or six teachers come up to me and say, like that’s the best, like PL that we’ve done as a staff...it really put into perspective why...respectful relationships is so important”* (Samantha, Classroom Teacher). In addition, Tom reported there is a section in the staff newsletter for them to offer feedback on what is happening with the school, or if they would want more information on certain topics, *“we also get really constructive feedback from staff as well if something’s not working, or they’re not liking something. Each week in our staff newsletter, we have like an open text feedback survey, which is anonymous, so that gives everyone the opportunity to feedback on things that might not be working...if we want specific, respectful relationship advice, it’s just the matter of asking staff in a staff meeting to provide feedback in a survey, and then that gives us the ability to plan and adjust appropriately”* (Tom, Classroom Teacher, PBS Leader).

Partnerships and community

School facilitates positive relationships with the parents

The school and school staff positive relationships with parents was highlighted by many participants. Three school staff suggested they would inform the parents on topics which would be covered within class time, and additionally topics which would be a focus for the school, by sending

information home, *“being proactive in informing parents and keeping parents up to date with what we’re teaching”* (Tom, Classroom Teacher, PBS Leader). Another participant mentioned informing the parents on content discussed at school may assist in opening conversation opportunities between students and their parents, and ensure parents are aware of the kinds of questions which may be asked, *“informing the parents about what’s been spoken about in class...some students might not fully...comprehend the conversation and have gone home and said one thing and parents are just like why are you talking about that in class...having...open communication with the parents, so they’re aware of the conversations that are being had”* (Lani, Classroom Teacher). The parent participant also suggested this was a good idea, as it would allow them to *“support it at home...a lot of the stuff they do at school, the kids will tell me about anyway, but if the parents are aware, then we can say, how did it go...what did you learn...then we can reinforce those lessons”* (Jane, Parent).

Six participants spoke about the inclusion of messages around the school, on their social media pages, and in their newsletters to parents which promote RRE. Three of these participants spoke about how their Facebook page is used to connect with the parents, where information about their wellbeing weeks, and any days of observance they are participating in, will be promoted on this page. This was mentioned to assist in *“raising awareness around that, and then what’s being taught at school, which keeps parents in the loop”* (Tom, Classroom Teacher, PBS Leader).

Two participants spoke about workshops which had been facilitated with parents. Tom mentioned the existence of a workshop addressing online behaviours and cyber safety, which was facilitated with parents, and provided to students. Jane, the parent participant from this school, referenced their inclusion of a Triple P workshop, which *“gives parents tools...to parent in more positive ways”* (Jane, Parent). Although the school had engaged in holding these workshops and had listed a range of other strategies they use for involving parents, similarly to other schools included in this report, this school also faced challenges with engaging their parent community, which are discussed in a later section.

MATRIX 2022 – Parent/Guardian/Community Communication

	Parent/Guardian/Community Communication
We are RESPECTFUL	We communicate respectfully online.
	We speak respectfully to all school community members both online and face to face.
	Parent/Guardian/Community Communication
We are RESPONSIBLE	We communicate any major concerns directly to administration.
	We keep up to date with school events/notices via Compass/school apps, social media pages and the newsletter.
	Parent/Guardian/Community Communication
We are POSITIVE	We involve ourselves in community events.
	We encourage our kids to come to school.
	Parent/Guardian/Community Communication
We are LEARNERS	We access workshops or any available parent information sessions when available.
	Parent/Guardian/Community Communication
We are STRONG	We work with the school in supporting the decisions made throughout the school community.

Parent/Guardian/Community Communication Matrix

Links with external organisations

Five participants spoke about the connections the school had made to external organisations, and other schools, such as their local high school. Four participants explicitly spoke about developing partnerships and relationships with external agencies, who they could contact to facilitate incursions for the students, provide support for the parents, and reiterate messages which were present within the classroom. Two participants mentioned engaging external facilitators during incursions may help the students to remember the information as *“kids always remember incursions and excursions because they’re big exciting things”* (Lani, Classroom Teacher), but it can also be a way to reiterate and solidify the messages which the classroom teachers, and broader school staff deliver every day, for example;

“the teacher can teach but it’s always good to have someone else to come in to sort of back up and solidify...repeat the messages” (Tom, Classroom Teacher, PBS Leader)

“to have something to refer back to...to think oh it’s not just my teacher...saying that, there is other people out there who agree with her” (Lani, Classroom Teacher)

Other external partnerships this school has engaged with were reported by the parent participant. They suggested the school had involved their local men’s shed, to create that *“community...where the kids feel connected with the wider community and they can see those*

positive interactions happening” (Jane, Parent). In addition, Jane also reported the school had a relationship with the ‘fathering project’, which Jane suggested was an “organisation that encourages dads and other father figures to be involved and gives them support and tells them how to do that”. This relationship came about through their P&C, who organised an evening for the fathering project to speak with the parents. Jane suggested “the dads and other father figures were invited to come with their kids and just spend time together and hear about it, and so my husband went with some of our kids and he loved it, he thought it was really good, and since then, he’s been receiving emails from the Fathering project...they send out...advice and inspirational things and little dad jokes and stuff...it’s an ongoing thing that they can sort of be attached to if they want to” (Jane, Parent).

In addition to the connections with external agencies, this school has engaged with several other schools around their area for support, and discussions regarding implementing this content. They have made connections with their local high school, where they engage in discussions about “*what’s working and what’s not*” (Emily, Principal), and also bring them in to present to the students about what their expectations would be for those attending their school, “*the people at the high school...they came down a couple of months ago and they were talking about stuff...they had a couple of expectations...they gave us this little laminated piece of paper, and it had like all these strategies to use*” (Trevor, Student). Two participants also spoke about connections they had made with other schools participating in the RRTSP, to brainstorm and collaborate on ideas, and also gain some examples of practice which have worked within their schools, for example:

“we worked with [school]...just to look at their kind of scope and sequence of how they incorporate it into their, and even our main events” (Samantha, Classroom Teacher)

“we’re waiting to build a bit of a connection with [school]...I’m really excited about that because I just think...we can do everything we think is right here, but if other schools have got an idea, or they’re doing something really well, let’s listen to them and see if that’ll work for us” (Emily, Principal)

Barriers and enablers to teaching RRE

Barriers: Broader school environment

Staff training, engagement and comfort with topic area

Although participants suggested the school staff were on board with teaching RRE as an area, six participants had concerns about staff training, engagement with the content, and comfort with the topic area. Three school staff participants spoke about the effect staff’s preconceived attitudes and beliefs could have on their ability to teach and promote RRE, specifically in some of the “*pointy end subjects*” (Tom, Classroom Teacher, PBS Leader). Lani suggested “*there are a few topics within*

respectful relationships that some teachers aren't fully comfortable teaching, just because they're not really sure of why it's necessary to teach the students because...they don't really understand it themselves" (Lani, Classroom Teacher). Tom repeated this sentiment, suggesting *"I think it just comes down to those, for lack of a better word, like pointy end subjects like gender identity, [transgender], all that kind of stuff and what is the appropriate age to start those conversations...people have their own personal beliefs and understandings of those topics, so I would say a very small minority of staff might not be confident in teaching that"* (Tom, Classroom Teacher, PBS Leader). Compounding this, one school staff member highlighted the content may be difficult for some teachers to address, if they have prior experiences of violent or abusive relationships, *"there is one teacher off the top of my head that I feel might struggle with it personally, from some of the things that she's experienced in her own life, where she hasn't experienced very respectful relationships"* (Wilda, Associate Principal). The participants raised some concerns here relating to staff's confidence, knowledge, and comfort in RRE.

Parent pushback and engagement

Much like other schools included in this report, parent pushback and their engagement within the school were mentioned as barriers to implementing, promoting, and teaching RRE. Although the school had run workshops, four participants reported they struggled to get the parent engagement and buy in to attend these workshops and seminars. It was also noted that the parents who would attend these workshops, are potentially not the parents who are in need of help and support to promote these behaviours within their home, for example;

"we have lots and lots of issues getting out parents on site to workshops...as much as we want to have parents on site...it's quite often something out of our control" (Emily, Principal)

"unfortunately, when it comes to...our positive parenting workshops that we do, it's the parents that are striving to constantly do the right thing that get involved in those workshops, it's not always the parents that we would want to get involved" (Lani, Classroom Teacher)

"I would love to hold proper seminars for parents...sometimes it's really hard because our school community, no one comes, so we've tried and it's just not been successful" (Samantha, Classroom Teacher)

"barriers for parents...if it's on school sit, it'll be the same families that come and get all the messages and get all the information...those ones that are not coming and then not engaging, they're the ones that probably need it the most" (Wilda, Associate Principal).

In addition, two participants reflected that some parents may not agree with the information their child would be taught within a class, or would not be aware of how topics can be

tailored to be age appropriate, for example *“negative thoughts towards aspects of the respectful relationship, so like some...parents don’t believe in, still don’t agree with like gender...like girls transitioning to boys, boys transitioning to girls, girls liking girls...I think that’s...still gonna take a long time to try...I think some parents don’t like that we maybe teach that in class that it’s okay to feel that way”* (Samantha, Classroom Teacher), *“another barrier would be if that kid goes home and their parent disagrees, then you could have parents emailing the school”* (Tom, Classroom Teacher, PBS Leader). Further, some parents who may have experience of domestic violence in their history, potentially do not want their children to be learning about this, *“I think parents can get very defensive when it comes to talking about respectful relationships if there is something going on at home...if they have...been in a domestic violent relationship, they almost either like really shelter their kids to not have to experience that to the point where the student is not aware of what is out there”* (Lani, Classroom Teacher). One teacher recalled a student being denied attending classes where consent was being discussed *“because of some things that were going on at home...I think they were worried about what was going to be brought up”* (Lani, Classroom Teacher). This last quote is concerning as educative is preventative and provides students with the knowledge they need to make decisions in the future. Therefore, this school needs further support in engaging their parent community and obtaining their support for addressing this area. Their need for further support in this area is discussed in a later section.

Student’s preconceived beliefs and attitudes

Related to parent engagement and pushback, as well as teacher’s attitudes and values, student’s preconceived beliefs and attitudes were mentioned as a barrier to teaching and promoting RRE. Four participants suggested some of the messages students receive from the home environment, along with areas such as social media, can affect how they view situations in relation to RRE. There was a sense that these preconceived attitudes and beliefs can be challenging, as often they have been repeated and reiterated throughout the students’ life and are now embedded in their values and behaviours, *“in terms of the older ones, it can be tricky...by that stage, a lot of the concepts...they’ve been drilled into them in lots of different ways”* (Wilda, Principal), and are in direct comparison with the messages they are trying to promote within the school, *“all those kinds of issues from their home context, I think that can be a barrier as well...you can have quite graphic language...using those homophobic, racial, ableist slurs, which is something that we’re really on to as this school”* (Tom, Classroom Teacher, PBS Leader). Four participants acknowledged that often these messages become so embedded and engrained in the students due to the environment they grow up in, *“some kids who are coming from horrific environments who are in desperate need of support and just someone*

to care about them, because they're not getting it elsewhere" (Jane, Parent). These participants recognised there may be an absence of a positive role model within the home environment, *"what kind of role model...if it's an abusive relationship, that child is going to think...that's a role model, that's how you treat males and females...that's how we react to someone who might be gay or [transgender]"* (Tom, Classroom Teacher, PBS Leader), or the parents may not be equipped with the skills they need to address issues of respectful relationships and domestic violence with their children, *"you can't ever assume that a parent is equipped to do that...there's going to be bias with a parent"* (Emily, Principal). Therefore, it appears the school needs additional support in addressing preconceived values, attitudes, and beliefs, and what factors have influenced them in these areas.

Barriers: Within the curriculum

Curriculum is overcrowded and outdated

The crowded curriculum made finding the time to incorporate RR as a challenge *"with every subject area, and especially your health curriculum, I mean, you realistically could teach it all day every day couldn't you"* (Emily, Principal), *"with all the stresses of getting all the content done, packing in all the other...days, things like that, it can get a little bit crowded"* (Tom, Classroom Teacher, PBS Leader). In addition, the overcrowding of the curriculum was suggested to impact the way teachers can approach these topics with students, and the potential teaching tools they are able to use, *"I think that it's crowding out and not giving them space and time to do what the teachers would like to do with the kids"* (Jane, Parent). Four participants reported the significant amount of content which needs to be addressed, combined with assessments for students, and communication with stakeholders and other members of the school community, means teachers are often *"already overworked"* (Wilda, Associate Principal), *"the constant assessments and the admin load on teachers means that they are racing to get through this content"* (Jane, Parent). In addition, as topics such as maths and English remain top priorities to cover, subjects and content relating to health can be pushed down in priority, *"health, [humanities and social sciences] HAS, like all those sort of subjects can be pushed down, just because...at schools, it's all data drive, so literacy and numeracy, NAPLAN, and all those things unfortunately, take priority sometimes"* (Tom, Classroom Teacher, PBS Leader).

Further, there was a suggestion from two participants that the curriculum is lacking in many areas and is not up to date with the content most students will have access to. These participants suggested students are being exposed to more every day, reflecting that *"respectful relationships is the same as what I was taught in school, but 11 year old's know way more now than what an 11 year old did 10 years ago...they have that opportunity to be exposed to so much more, which is really scary"* (Lani, Classroom Teacher). Jane repeated this idea, stating *"it's a tough one because these*

days, with the stuff kids are exposed to, like you're having to deal with quite mature content with a really young age...there's a very fine line that the teachers are having to walk" (Jane, Parent). This fine line was in reference to ensuring the students who have been exposed to things which are potentially inappropriate, are educated on these areas, but not exposing students to content they had not seen or heard about yet, *"it's hard at the same time because there are kids out there who have not been exposed to this stuff, so finding the silver lining of teaching the kids who do know a lot about a lot of things, and then not oversharing too much to the point of accidentally exposing the other kids"* (Lani, Classroom Teacher). Although this was an interesting point, two participants suggested their teaching is constrained by what is in the curriculum as appropriate for the age group, which could effect the content they were allowed to speak about, for example;

"I think with teaching...you can only really teach...age group...what's in the curriculum. So at the moment, with my year sixes for example, we're doing puberty, and there's a lot of questions that have been coming around...that we legally cannot answer...as a year six teacher" (Lani, Classroom Teacher)

"yeah teaching consent, and all those things in year six being in a primary school setting, you know, there's certain things you can and can't say in terms of relationships and...situations that happen inside and outside of school, especially if students have older siblings. So I guess, in terms of what we can give the kids skills in...we are constricted by the curriculum and what we can teach and say to kids" (Tom, Classroom Teacher, PBS Leader)

More support is needed with delivering content in an age-appropriate way, and ensuring enough time is allocated to explore these lessons.

Enablers

Schools are appropriate settings to teach and promote RRE

A key enabling factors was that schools were seen as appropriate settings for RRE. This school's inclusion of using teachable moments to promote RRE was reflected *"it's like a living laboratory...they can apply the things they're learning as they're learning it"* (Jane, Parent). Further, it was suggested that students spent most of their time at school, with their classroom teacher, which allows them to develop a relationship with that teacher, and see them as a safe and trusted adult, *"we are with these students five days a week, six hours a day, we spend majority of their awake time with them essentially...I see these kids more than their own parents, like some of their own parents might...it's important for me to be that safe person that they can come to if something has happened"* (Lani, Classroom Teacher). The impact classroom teachers can have on their students learning was reiterated by the principal, who suggested *"the classroom teacher, I believe should be a*

child's lighthouse, should be that person that they feel safe, because that's the person they're having most of their time with" (Emily, Principal).

Six participants also suggested most of the teachers at the school would be comfortable including RRE within their lessons. There was an understanding that the school has clear expectations from staff on how they should act, and what they should be teaching, which included respectful relationships, *"I think staff are pretty well aware of the school's expectations, and majority would be comfortable...including protective behaviours, respectful relationships...al that kind of stuff in their lessons"* (Tom, Classroom Teacher, PBS Leader). Samantha suggested respectful relationships is *"a huge part of [their] society"*, which meant there was the support available for teachers in the form of their mental health and wellbeing committee, who had *"[interlinked] protective behaviours and respectful relationships together so it's not like an extra thing that has to be added into your week"* (Samantha Classroom Teacher). In addition, the Principal suggested when implementing new things, they work in phases, with leaders or experts involved in each phase, which helps to increase the capacity of all staff, and supports them when implementing new initiatives, *"we work in phases...so...for everything we roll out, we always have an expert in each phase, so while all the staff haven't done the professional learning, there's always at least one person in that phase that's done it"* (Emily, Principal).

The school environment was enhanced by providing positive role models to the students as well as education they may not receive from their home environment. It was suggested that for some students, they do not have a home environment where respectful relationships were modelled, and they receive messages to challenge verbal and physical abuse. Schools were said to provide this supportive environment and is reliable to provide those lessons needed to impact students' future relationships, *"unfortunately, a lot of our kids don't get those messages, or they get mixed messages at home...we can't be guaranteed that they're going to get that message. So if we can teach that, you know, through our...school years, from kindy, all the way through to year six, I think it would be you know, most definitely appropriate. But also, I think in a lot of circumstances, lifesaving"* (Wilda, Associate Principal). Furthermore, school environments were said to enable relationships to be formed between children and adults, where behaviours can be challenged, and continuous positive role modelling can occur, *"I always look at the little kids when they're really struggling...because...some of them haven't had any role modelling. But...within months...they are learning that...at school, we have these expectations"* (Emily, Principal).

RRE is seen as a vital topic

The fact that school staff and parents involved in these case study interviews saw RRE as a vital topic, acts as an enabler for addressing this area. There was an idea that respectful relationships is applicable across all aspects of a students' life, and without addressing this area, students may not have the skills to treat people with respect, or be comfortable discussing any issues they may be facing, *"if you're not comfortable with listening to a child talk about things, or you're not comfortable teaching respectful relationships...how do you expect kids to...be able to be respectful?"* (Samantha, Classroom Teacher), *"without respectful relationships they're not going to have a very good life...it's something that impacts them across every facet of...their world, whether it's at school, at home, in loving relationships, in friendships, in workplaces...out in society, everything...you can't go anywhere without relating to someone in some way or another"* (Tom, Classroom Teacher, PBS Leader). Lani and Jane also recognised RRE's application across all aspects suggesting *"it's something that is relevant in any context"* (Jane, Parent), and *"it's such a vital topic...it's life skills for kids to take out through the rest of their lives, it's not just going to be oh this is what we're learning in year two, okay you're going into three now...you've learnt that you don't really need to know it, it's a continuum"* (Lani, Classroom Teacher). Therefore, the perceived importance of teaching and promoting RRE acts as an enabler to ensure this content is delivered across schooling.

Further support necessary

Curriculum, teaching and learning

Support for incorporating cross-curricular links

As this school had begun taking a whole school approach to RRE, and embedded it across many aspects of their school, participants wanted some more support with integrating curriculums, to ensure RRE content could be covered throughout a range of curriculum areas. Some participants suggested this was already being actioned, with the two-year scope and sequence of the health curriculum, RRE, and protective behaviours that Tom referred to. However, Samantha suggested additional support in incorporating these areas into one curriculum could be needed, *"I think trying to incorporate PBS, respectful relationships, protective behaviours into one health curriculum. We have started, which has been really good. But I think maybe just having a little bit more guidance on that"* (Samantha, Classroom Teacher). This could help to address their perceived barrier of the curriculum being overcrowded, with limited time to address certain areas.

Guidelines for making topics age appropriate

There was a reported need for there to be guidelines provided to schools on how they can make topics age-appropriate. Although this recommendation for further support was only noted by one participant, they discussed the challenges they face in delivering information in age-appropriate ways, due to the volume of content students are exposed to now. Wilda suggested, *“how I was talking about introducing concepts from a very early age...the consent stuff...having almost like an overview of those concepts that can be introduced at a very young age, and what that would look like throughout from kindy to year six”* (Wilda, Associate Principal). It was suggested providing this resource may make it easier for teachers to plan lessons relating to this content, and take into account their time pressures, which were reported in this schools’ barriers, *“just to take the thinking out for us, which may already exist, but I just haven't seen it. So even if there was like a small information pack that's not too long that people aren't going to look at and go, I'm not reading that because I don't have time. But like an overview, I guess, would be really helpful”* (Wilda, Associate Principal).

Ethos and environment

Upskilling all staff

The importance of upskilling all staff with respect to RRE was mentioned by six participants. There was a reported need for teachers to be upskilled and confident in addressing a range of areas which are covered within RRE, which was something that the RRTSP could provide them with, *“I think teachers need to be educated on the topics, you can't really just be like oh this is what you're going to be teaching because it's in the curriculum go nuts, especially when it comes to topics like family and domestic violence, it is really, really important that teachers have that sensitivity towards that subject”* (Lani, Classroom Teacher). Further, Jane reflected on the content students are being exposed to due to the internet, and suggested *“I think specifically with like, sexualized behaviour, pornography, those really confronting... things that are coming up with young children...I think the teachers need support...what should I do in this instance...that's probably something that they need, I don't know, professional development in or something”* (Jane, Parent). Additional professional development opportunities were also required to ensure teachers recognised and responded to disclosures appropriately, and felt confident in the approach they were taking, *“as a teacher...if a parent comes to you and says this is happening, teachers being confident enough then to be like, okay well this is what I can do to help you and not shutting the whole situation down. Or...kids talking about it...making sure that we're still supporting them and listening to them”* (Samantha, Classroom Teacher). Lani recognised the importance of ensuring all teaching staff are actively promoting and

teaching RRE, and being sensitive to the issue, which would occur from additional training opportunities *“statistically, there are going to be maybe one or two kids within our school setting in particular that you know of that have experienced or are experiencing family and domestic violence, but there could potentially be another three or four that have or are and no one knows about it because it's kept a secret. So I think sensitivity around those topics is really important. And that's why I think teachers really need to be upskilled in those areas as well”* (Lani, Classroom Teacher).

Importantly, there was a sense amongst the staff who did not attend the RRTSP, that they were not really aware of what the program was covering in the initial workshops, *“I can't really comment because I wasn't around when they went to the initial, like workshops and things like that”* (Tom, Classroom Teacher, PBS Leader), *“I've only just really come on board now so I'm not really sure about the whole project”* (Lani, Classroom Teacher). Although staff training was reported, and participants had reported bringing information back to the wider staff, it was clear that there is still some information sharing and education which needs to be facilitated within the wider community of school staff. Wilda suggested there should be *“an overview of what they did and some ideas that they want to implement within the school”* (Wilda, Associate Principal). Lani recognised the gap which exists in the current program, suggesting *“any additional training...because I think with...this whole project, it's normally the same teachers that are going, which is fantastic because they're constantly being upskilled and that can be brought back, but I think it would be good to have other trainings, I don't know if there could be like a whole staff day or something where we can just have like, even a block where [Starick] could come in and just talk about what respectful relationships education is and what you can do to support the teachers as well”* (Lani, Classroom Teacher). Even if this was not possible, Lani referred to the possibility of having learning modules available to the wider teaching staff, to ensure that they are all given the opportunity to be upskilled in the area of respectful relationships, *“I think providing...I don't know if [Starick] have like learning modules or things like that, just for other teachers to be...able to be upskilled within respectful relationships education”* (Lani, Classroom Teacher). Due to this, and the limited number of teachers who had attended the RRTSP remaining at the school after 2022, *“there are at least two of those people that went to the PL that are moving on to other schools at the end of the year”* (Wilda, Associate Principal), there was a reported need for more of their teaching and school staff to be trained in this content, *“if all of those people did leave, then we would just, it's a priority in the school, so we would have somebody else go and get trained up”* (Wilda, Associate Principal). This highlights the importance of ensuring the whole staff body is trained and ready to deliver this education and are passionate about including this area within their teaching, either in the curriculum or informally.

Funding and spending

Additional support for accessing funding opportunities or prioritising their spending to include RRE was mentioned by two participants. Emily suggested there seems to be more spending allocated to areas such as literacy and numeracy, when they believed *“we need to be dealing with their mental health...unless we get that right, unless they can get on with other people...they’re self regulated...if we don’t get that right...really we can’t go into the English and maths”* (Emily, Principal). These two participants suggested it was about finding the funding to dedicate time and money towards mental health and wellbeing, which may have flow on effects to other areas of schooling, *“funding...what schools can access in terms of like mental health and wellbeing surveys, you know all the tools and resources”* (Tom, Classroom Teacher, PBS Leader), *“we really need to work on that self-regulation...for us...it’s finding the funding for that...we’re looking at this tier three intervention, more for self-regulation and wellbeing over English and maths intervention. I still think we’ll get improvements in their English and maths because they will be regulated, and they’ll be...calm, they’ll be happier”* (Emily, Principal). Therefore, navigating their spending, and providing additional information on funding opportunities for schools to access to implement RRE programs is support which is necessary.

Partnerships and community

Support for engaging parents with workshops, training, and school events

Although this school had reported a range of ways they engaged their parents with RRE, and also reported a positive relationship between school staff and parents, there were still suggestions of where further support would be needed in engaging with their stakeholders. The participants wanted more connection and information sharing opportunities with the parents, where potentially information could be sent home regarding how to respond to certain situations, and what the content of respectful relationships would look like, *“I think one of our goals as a school could be to inform the parents a little bit more about what respectful relationship is”* (Lani, Classroom Teacher), *“I would like to see how that’s addressed. I know they are working on it...but I would like to know a bit more about how they’re approaching it”* (Jane, Parent). Furthermore, participants wanted support in engaging their parent community to attend information sessions, workshops, and school events, as this would assist in creating the consistent message between school and home, *“I think even if we were able to hold...workshops where they can come in, and we just talk about what respectful relationship means and how they can help promote that at home...I think that would be really, really important”* (Samantha, Classroom Teacher). It was clear from the barriers previously mentioned that there needs to be more support for engaging hard to reach parents who perhaps are

not interested in being involved in this way, *"I just find, usually, if we have like a school event, or even with...a lot of things like assemblies and things like that you will have the same families always coming, and the same family is always not coming"* (Wilda, Principal), which is something the RRTSP should facilitate.

Formalising connection opportunities between cohort schools

Three participants spoke about their desire for the connection opportunities between other schools involved in the program to be formalised. As previously mentioned, this school has engaged and created partnerships and relationships with their surrounding schools, and some other schools who were involved in the RRTSP. However, it was recognised these occurred because they had a proactive staff member who reached out to the other schools on their own accord, *"I think maybe respectful relationships need to formalise that a bit more, because I know because we have an [staff member], who is really proactive, he has reached out to the schools himself"* (Emily, Principal). These participants recognised the benefits of sharing what their school had done in terms of their strategies, policies, and plans. There were different ways in which participants thought these connection opportunities could be facilitated which included a page where participants of the RRTSP could go to discuss and brainstorm ideas with other RRTSP participants, *"sharing school resources...a page where we can all connect and talk and we can get resources and ideas...from each other"* (Samantha, Classroom Teacher), continued inclusion of presentations from other schools who participated in the program and what progress they had made with their RRE approach *"it'd be great to see a lot more of that sharing of documents...what's working well? What's not? How did you do this? And if that can be facilitated with Starick, I find that on the PD that we went to, it's really great hearing what other schools are doing, so making the effort for Starick to approach schools and ask them to present about what's happening at their school because it really contextualizes it for other schools attending those PDs"* (Tom, Classroom Teacher, PBS Leader), and giving school who had already participated in the program the chance to mentor a new school who is beginning with the RRTSP, to build that connection with others, and also facilitate information and knowledge sharing *"it's even as well like, maybe other schools mentoring schools who are just starting out in the program, or are having difficulties, and that can be facilitated by Starick, like obviously if a school's struggling, oh this school's doing great, can we get you guys to come to a meeting?...that would be really great"* (Tom, Classroom Teacher, PBS Leader). Emily suggested including formalised connection opportunities with other schools would be beneficial, as *"we can learn so much from other schools"* (Emily, Principal).

3.3 Stakeholders

Ten interviews were conducted with key stakeholders involved in the RRTSP representing various government departments, and non-government organisations with subject expertise in FDV. These interviews explored the professional role of each individual and the support they provided to the participants of the RRTSP. Various barriers and enablers to whole school implementation were also identified and discussed. Finally, participants provided their thoughts on how the program could be improved.

Beneficial aspects of the program

Presentations from other schools

As evident from the findings from the case study schools, there was opportunity provided for RRTSP participants to engage with other schools, particularly for the more engaged schools who were able to present to subsequent cohorts about their implementation progress. Seven stakeholders discussed the benefits of including this a core strategy for ongoing delivery of the program. The inclusion of the presentations from other schools allowed sharing of information *“I know that previous cohorts...have actually come and presented in...new cohorts so they can actually see what other schools have done”* (Renata, Stakeholder), which also provided some tangible examples of what other schools had done, *“I think that works really well in terms of schools that had done something that had worked really well within their school...using that...as an example to other schools, can help implement...exemplar projects”* (Beth, Stakeholder).

Michelle recognised the benefits of this program, stating *“the ability of the program to allow schools to network at a planning level, and then look at illustrations of practice across a range of schools and...see if there's strategies that they can adopt that would work in their contexts or setting, and I think...we know that works very well with our schools, so this is a way of perhaps just...the opportunity to see something, a strategy work, or perhaps a strategy they hadn't thought of”* (Michelle, Stakeholder). Furthermore, schools sharing what they had implemented within their environment was noted as a benefit so schools from similar settings could potentially hear about what *“didn't work well”* (Mandy, Stakeholder), and take this into consideration when developing their own strategies. The connections made as a result of these presentations were also referenced in stakeholder interviews, where it was suggested that *“schools who had done well with implementing in their school... present [to] the regional, rural, remotes about what they've done and how they've done it...that's another way of connecting up across metro and rural, building relationships there”* (Mandy, Stakeholder).

School site visits from Starick

The inclusion of school site visits from Starick were referenced by five stakeholders as a beneficial aspect of the program. School site visits involved the Starick staff, often the project officers of the RRTSP, to attend the schools in person and discuss the direction the school wanted to take in their implementation of their RRE. Further, these visits involved discussions of learnings the school staff had taken from their participation thus far, and what each school needed after their participation in workshop one so this could be taken into consideration for workshop two, *“we reviewed how things were going for them, what learnings there were, what we needed to ensure was in their next training when they were coming back for the second lot of training, and to ensure that they felt listened to”* (Mandy, Stakeholder). This participant also reported school site visits allowed for the stakeholders to identify who the champions and key people at the school who would be promoting and advocating for the inclusion of RRE *“we met...with the key people within their schools to sort of get an understanding of what does this need to look like in your school context and who are the key people that will be the, that will be the champions or holders of this work in your school environment”* (Mandy, Stakeholder). In addition, Beth suggested *“going out to the schools...doing the work, and being able to contextualise”* was *“really useful”* for the schools who were participating in the program. Finally, conducting the school visits also assisted the schools to *“discuss the implementation planning...resourcing that is needed...help guide their planning”* (Julie, Stakeholder). It seems these school visits allowed the participating schools to continue their RRE conversations, and gain support from the program provider between the workshop, and was *“a game changer”* (Mandy, Stakeholder), in the program.

The variety of stakeholders involved in the program

The inclusion of Starick as the program provider was noted as a benefit by four stakeholders from different organisations. The organisation provided their subject matter expertise in terms of *“how to broach the topic and the detail”* (Logan, Stakeholder). Further, they were able to provide detailed information on *“gendered violence and primary prevention”* (Beth, Stakeholder). The benefit of including a provider with subject matter expertise in FDV, was reported to be a *“really good...grounding in the issues and what people should be concerned about, and what they should be looking to do”* (Jenny, Stakeholder).

The Department of Education’s (DoE) role, although not formalised with funding in the program, was noted as a benefit to the program’s model. While Starick held subject matter expertise in FDV, the DoE could provide their subject matter expertise in how DoE schools run, and how programs may be implemented within a school context, *“the input from education...is fantastic...they know everything about schools...what is likely to work or not work...they provide an awful lot of*

really, really good information that facilitates the program" (Jenny, Stakeholder). The inclusion of the DoE addressed the need for a stakeholder with education expertise, to ensure the strategies provided by Starick were appropriate for school settings and linked back to the relevant curriculum. In addition, stakeholders also suggested the DoE provides curriculum oversight, and information about approaching RRE from a whole-school perspective, *"linking back to the curriculum...the desired implementation is that whole school approach, it is grounded in the health and physical education curriculum"* (Lola, Stakeholder). Furthermore, the recruitment of schools was organised through the DoE. They identified schools based upon recommendations from regional directors, through Ministerials, and via expressions of interest obtained through the Information and Knowledge Online platform (IKON).

Promotes a whole school approach

Five stakeholders spoke about how the program promotes a whole-school approach to RRE in multiple ways, and discussed how this benefits the schools. One participant explicitly mentioned the suggestion of moving away from just a curriculum focus, to looking at how RRE can be embedded across various domains within the school, and advocating for schools to take a whole-school approach to violence prevention and RRE, *"this is about moving from the content delivery within the classroom...to ways that those messages can be supported and embedded at a whole-school level"* (Michelle, Stakeholder). Michelle suggested this includes *"the whole school community, parents, careers, and the surrounding community"* and ensures messages *"around respectful behaviour"* are communicated (Michelle, Stakeholder). Further, four participants suggested the program assisted schools in prioritising RRE as an area they needed to address. The program was suggested to give the school staff *"space to actually put time into this"* and *"actually implement some of the stuff"* considering their *"massive workload"* (Logan, Stakeholder).

Furthermore, the RRTSP *"strongly encourage[s]... leadership representation"* (Lola, Stakeholder) throughout the school's participation in the workshops and broader program, *"the brief for this program is that a leader should attend with the team from the school"* (Michelle, Stakeholder). A senior administrator, such as the principal, deputy principal, or head of student services, or a learning area is required to participate in the program. One of the aims of the program identified by the stakeholders, was to *"develop leaders to better lead this in their schools"* (Lois, Stakeholder). Michelle suggested the involvement of a leader gives schools the *"time to plan [and] the license to go ahead and embed it across the school"* (Michelle, Stakeholder), which was seen as a way schools could prioritise the workload, which was significant when considering barriers reported by the case study schools. Input from the stakeholders suggested having a leadership group who

were engaged, and supportive of the content and embedding a whole-school approach to RRE enabled schools to implement a range of different strategies across their school environment. A strong leadership group with a passion for RRE and implementing strategies, along with their support for ensuring RRE was a priority was suggested to be an enabler by multiple stakeholders, for example;

“you really have to have that commitment from the principal, and at least...a couple of the teachers so that they can implement it and work across the rest of the teaching body...I think...that's the main ingredient, if you haven't got that, then it's not going to go anywhere” (Jenny, Stakeholder)

“leadership buy in...a dedicated, a passionate kind of leader and team willing...to actually make things happen, to make it a priority...is the main thing” (Logan, Stakeholder)

“you have to have the support of the principal, and the leaders have to have a good network of people to be able to lean on, and they've got a really strong purpose. So they have a really good understanding of why they are doing what they're doing” (Lois, Stakeholder)

“I think, if you've got principals and Deputy principals going to the workshop, then it's sort of that top-down approach, as well as the bottom-up approach, so it's sort of that leadership has got that buy in already” (Renata, Stakeholder)

The involvement of the leadership group was also suggested to assist as *“once they have that support, they're able to implement it because there isn't resistance from that point forth”* (Julie, Stakeholder). One participant also suggested this buy in from leadership needs to be present in high levels of the Department of Education more broadly, not just within schools, *“I think really strong buy in from their leadership...across their leadership...team...not just...one person”* (Beth, Stakeholder).

Barriers to program implementation

Program did not give skills, strategies, or confidence to teach RRE

Five stakeholder participants suggested they did not think the program developed or enhanced teachers' skills, knowledge, or confidence to teach RRE subject material. These participants suggested RRE was a difficult subject area to teach in, and may cause some discomfort for staff when approaching issues, for example;

“I think some teachers might...feel...not enough confidence to talk about family and domestic violence” (Renata, Stakeholder)

“it's less the skill to teach, but more the skill to teach that very nuanced piece of education” (Julie, Stakeholder)

“it's a difficult area to be teaching, and particularly when you sort of start...getting into gender inequality and gender full stop, and respectful relationships and family and domestic

violence...these are topics that not everyone's going to feel comfortable delivering" (Jenny, Stakeholder)

The structure of RRTSP model focuses on supporting schools plan for whole school approaches rather than providing specific skill development training meaning *"it's really left to the school to tackle [RRE]"* (Lois, Stakeholder). If school staff don't have knowledge and skills to facilitate the topic, implementing strategies can be very challenging. Therefore, five participants suggested school staff needed more professional learning, and further suggested this professional learning should be offered to the wider school staff community, not just a select few staff. This could be done through *"eLearning modules...webinars"* (Mandy, Stakeholder), *"the Department of Education...or some other contractor being engaged to provide it to them"* (Jenny, Stakeholder). However, it should also be a role of the program to support schools to facilitate whole school staff professional development opportunities. There is a need to ensure all staff have adequate training and that a core group of staff are committed to lead the program, particularly when considering staff turnover. There was a need for school staff to be equipped with the knowledge and skills they needed to support the program messages, and to engage the wider school community, *"how do we get this message across, because...what I hear constantly is that...if a teacher within the school tries to get this message across, tries to present this, it's very challenging for them to do that"* (Oli, Stakeholder).

Lack of buy in from key stakeholders and limited planning time

As discussed previously, involvement by school leadership in the program, and their commitment for engaging with and implementing the content was necessary for the program's success within a school. Seven stakeholders suggested a lack of planning time and limited support from school leadership were barriers to schools being able to implement the program. There was a sense that schools could have staff who were very dedicated to the program, however, if the leadership group were not committed, or did not see this as a priority within their school, it was easy for them to dismiss the program entirely. Some schools encountered low levels of support when the principal changed, or when the program was presented to the school board, highlighting the importance of key staff advocating to the broader leadership group and to new school leaders, for example;

"one of the schools...they were very committed to it, but they took the project to the school board, and the school board said no...they didn't want to be involved" (Jenny, Stakeholder)

"I know schools who didn't have the support of leadership, and so weren't able to implement once they went back to schools. There's...school...they were committed, we had a successful school visit, we had a plan in place, and then they changed principal, and because the principal changed,

they came in with different priorities and respectful relationships wasn't a priority for them...so the school had to drop off" (Julie, Stakeholder).

The lack of interest and engagement from the leadership team also meant school staff were not provided with the time they needed to implement the strategies they wanted to. There was a strong sense amongst three stakeholders that to implement strategies effectively, there needed to be a sufficient time allocation. Oli suggested *"the biggest thing that comes back time and time again, is this...time pressures, we want to implement stuff, but we haven't got the time"*. This also related to how individual schools planned to implement the program. The program advocates for a whole school approach, however, schools who had thought of the program as *"separate to their curriculum"* found it *"hard...to get the space"* (multiple stakeholders) to implement different strategies and plan. This was consistent with many of the barriers highlighted by the schools themselves in relation to overcrowded curriculums and time constraints.

COVID-19 and the effects on resourcing and teacher relief

The pilot of the RRTSP was delivered between 2019 and 2022, which aligned with the unfolding COVID-19 pandemic. This resulted in many aggravating factors that were beyond the control of the RRTSP and individual schools and impacted implementation. Six stakeholders referenced the effects COVID-19 had on schools, including issues with teacher shortages and relief, other resourcing issues, and the impact on professional learning opportunities, for example;

"I suppose during COVID, schools [modified] staff meetings...so some schools might not have had the opportunity as a whole staff to come together to discuss it. Or...the leaders to present what they might have needed to in a timely manner" (Lois, Stakeholder)

"obviously COVID has taken over a lot of things, but there was a lack of training as well for everybody because everyone was so short staffed" (Renata, Stakeholder)

"I think COVID was a big one as well, so schools who already were under resourced, for example, smaller schools who have fewer staff...there just was not capacity to implement anything for them, they had to kind of go about their core business of teaching before anything else" (Julie, Stakeholder)

The effects COVID-19 had on the ability to find teacher relief was mentioned by three stakeholders. In order for teachers and school staff to be pulled out of the school to attend the RRTSP training, there needed to be relief staff available to take classes, *"the other big factor that is a block is if they're not able to get relief for their role while they're...going to training or...having...someone to meet with them...being able to be relieved while...they did that work"* (Mandy, Stakeholder). Furthermore, although some schools may have been very passionate about

the program and wanted to brainstorm plans, come up with ideas for implementation, and dedicate a certain number of hours to this program, they could not find replacements to enable them to be taken out of the classroom, *“with the teacher relief...they might have said okay we've done this training, we're gonna spend...10 hours over the next three weeks working out what we're going to do, put a plan in place, but they couldn't even get the teacher relief in to do that...so they just didn't have that opportunity to even just take that time out to try and have some DOTT time and do it”* (Renata, Stakeholder).

Some schools need prescriptive ways of how to implement whole-school RRE

Multiple stakeholders noted a lack of evidence-based, tangible illustrations of practice provided to schools, to give them examples of how they could implement certain strategies, either in their whole-school approach, or in the classroom time. Although stakeholders suggested presentations from other schools were useful, there was a clear deficit in *“clear examples of what you can do...checklists”* (Beth, Stakeholder), which made it difficult to implement strategies. Furthermore, the program did not provide specific training as to *“how to”* (Lola, Stakeholder) implement specific teaching and learning strategies, or whole-school programs. This was highlighted by Beth who stating they perceived the program provided *“a whole load of information”* and wanted participants to *“go and try and do a project or do work in your school”* without giving them *“a clear way of how to do that”* (Beth, Stakeholder).

Suggestions for program improvement

Revisions to program content is required

Stakeholders reported gaps in the current content of the RRTSP. The most referenced suggestion, reported by eight stakeholders, was that the program needed to promote evidence-based strategies for implementation and embedding RRE via a whole school approach, supported with specific examples how this can be done.

“it's not...this is our program...here's a checklist, or here's some guidelines on how you could go back to your school with this information and implement” (Beth, Stakeholder)

“It's almost like...can you give us a manual, that a teacher can go in and open up and say...good morning everybody today...there...was a...real kind of magnetic pull to, that's great we get it, we get it, we need to make a difference, but what can we do?” (Oli, Stakeholder).

“What impeded them was the... 'how to' do that. So the depth of the 'how to' and the support...the way the strategies were explained...through the program” (Lola, Stakeholder)

“There's a lot of this is what you can do, there's no evidence-based strategies and mechanisms for implementation. So that that again, effects the sustainability of the program,

because unless you've got that right, we know everything loses momentum and is not sustainable into the long term” (Michelle, Stakeholder)

There was also a lot of commentary regarding the need to identify specific teaching and learning resources, and more explicit guidance about scope and sequence of RRE, for example;

“what they'd really like is a very clear...they quite often referred to sequencing.

So...sequencing of content and lesson plans... some of the teachers are quite frustrated because they're very committed to the idea of the program, but they don't necessarily know how to deliver respectful relationships education in the classroom” (Jenny, Stakeholder)

“When it comes to the crunch, and they're actually looking for support in the classroom to deliver lessons, they don't have that” (Jenny, Stakeholder)

“[could] produce that...support...some sort of a manual...that's actually provided that...support...teachers to deliver the program. That would be great...teachers would find that incredibly helpful” (Jenny, Stakeholder)

“I think something that could be extremely improved is those teaching and learning resources, I think teaching staff would benefit from a teaching and learning pack that has lessons ready to go for them, that has the language in the lessons as well, that would increase their confidence in teaching them because they could start reading off book if needed as it were, and go off book as they go along...just something to really get them started, that is not only just there, but it's also structured, so you know, from year one if you know, there's like an eight week course, and they follow that course accordingly” (Julie, Stakeholder)

“Having a...plethora of illustrations of practice of how to [implement], isn't really blue sky thinking but quite an...achievable activity” (Lola, stakeholder)

“[the program] could also provide a step-by-step resource for schools with teaching exemplars...to coach school leaders” (Lois, Stakeholder).

Further, another two participants referenced the need for all materials to be rooted in *“evidence based best practice”* (Lois, Stakeholder), for it to be transferable to the school context, particularly the Western Australian context. Michelle spoke in detail about the need for evidence-based strategies to be given to the schools. Stakeholders highlighted the global issue of FDV, and the range of interventions developed to respond to this issue. Michelle suggested there should be a *“global scan”* of available evidence and current programs which could be contextualised to the Western Australian context and could be of benefit to schools in implementing their program. Furthermore, it was suggested that conducting this global scan would determine if interventions were evidence-based, *“that's not evident at the moment...there's a lot of input...around...look*

evidence tells us this, evidence tells us that...I think there needs to be some work in that area to replicate...all of that". Michelle suggested "the program is a little bit superficial like that...we're expecting too much factfinding work from schools without some solid...key elements to work from" (Michelle, Stakeholder).

There was also a reported need for the content delivered during the workshops to promote more primary prevention messages, and aspects which contribute to respectful relationships. Two participants suggested the messages in the workshop should be promoting positive, respectful relationships, as opposed to being reactive in responding to problems present in the school regarding FDV, or intimate partner violence, *"I think content really needs to [actually] be about respectful relationships and what a positive, good relationship is"* (Beth, Stakeholder), *"what we're trying to do is focus on the building of respectful behaviours so we don't end up with violence down the track"* (Lola, Stakeholder). Furthermore, there was a reported need by one participant for the program to make the messages clearer about the gendered drivers of violence, and focusing on primary prevention messages *"the purpose of the program...that is the messages that we give to young people, so primary prevention...what is primary prevention, the messages that we give young people have an impact on family violence and that's why we're there, that's what the program is about"* (Oli, Stakeholder). One participant also reflected that the content delivered during the workshops was not sufficient to encompass the multitude of factors which influence respectful relationships, such as consent, porn, sex, and sexuality, *"we should be still including stuff when we're educating young people or educating teachers about...respectful relationships, how can you remove the sexual violence component and the sexuality component from it?"* (Beth, Stakeholder). This participant suggested this *"should be RSE [relationships and sexuality education] work, but...people don't like that language, they want to call it respectful relationships, they want to call it consent education"* (Beth, Stakeholder). Beth stated *"we're missing an important piece [in delivering] this program, around the [sexual violence] information and consent"* (Beth, Stakeholder), which should be considered for future iterations of the program, and suggestions for additional content to be included.

Program needs sustainability beyond a two-day training course

Several stakeholders note that the program model was not sustainable. Specifically, two stakeholders expressed concern that a two-day workshop was not going to be enough to embed a long-term program and cultural change. One stakeholder suggested *"even just trying to deliver what really needs to be like a long-term program over two days...I don't know how useful that is...there's only two days, so it's like, how much information? I just don't think...in that timeframe, it's not*

enough time to deliver the content that needs to be delivered over a two-day period” (Beth, Stakeholder). Another stakeholder suggested future programs may need to encompass three workshops, with further support provided across 12 months instead of the 6-month model currently in place, *“if you think of the workshop as a support, I think that we could have more workshops per cohort...supporting...cohorts for 12 months instead of six months, and having three workshops”* (Julie, Stakeholder). Additional workshops may be one possible strategy to provide all the additional content that had previously been suggested and provide schools with adequate planning time.

Across the three years of the pilot program, there was significant turnover of Starick program staff, which two stakeholders reported made it difficult for both the cohort schools, and for other stakeholders. In addition, staff turnover at schools participating in the program was noted by six stakeholders as something which effected the program’s sustainability. Participants suggested it was common amongst the cohort schools to have staff changes in their implementation team or leadership team, or to have key staff members who were passionate about the program to leave, for example;

“we know...there's such a massive turnover of staff...and we saw that even just trying to engage some of the schools in regional and remote areas, staff are leaving constantly. So...if you only have...two champions, a couple of people from the school that are attending, and one or two of them leaves, then program over for that school” (Beth, Stakeholder)

“Okay...for example, they had a big implementation team, and they were very committed to the work...they'd added more people onto the team. But...I believe...the principal left...there were now changes in staff roles, and also some staff left. So then the team was down to one person, and so the one person had to spearhead everything and unfortunately, they were unable to proceed with the program” (Julie, Stakeholder)

“I think...schools that are maybe going through staffing transitions or difficulties in regard to the sustainability of staff, so that continuity of staff I think that makes it very difficult” (Michelle, Stakeholder)

Whole school programs require commitment, long term focus, and a dedicated school community. Five stakeholders suggested this program required schools to prioritise RRE, and it is up to the schools how much they consider this information, which can affect the sustainability of the program beyond the two workshops, for example;

“I think on the training side...there was so much going on in schools to then find the time to go okay, let's look at respectful relationships, I just think they were doing the bare minimum, the bare minimum that they could do just to keep the schools going” (Renata, Stakeholder)

“it is a challenging space, because schools are presented with a range of opportunities on a regular basis and they really need to curate and ascertain whether a program is applicable to their context and their needs at that point in time, and their community perhaps” (Michelle, Stakeholder)

“potentially there's just competing priorities in the school, and...because it's...not scaffolded, not supported as much as they need, then...it doesn't have that priority...it will just slip back because it's a lot harder to implement than other things” (Lola, Stakeholder)

“schools are really busy places, [there is] a lot of programs that schools can choose to do in different areas, not just respectful relationships...so the schools have to choose to make it a priority for the year” (Lois, Stakeholder)

“how much it is utilised...what benefit schools get out of it really depends very much on the individual teachers in the schools...and...how good they are at looking at...what [is provided], and then running with it...making good use of it in their school, in their situation” (Jenny, Stakeholder)

As discussed previously, ensuring school staff have adequate time to plan and implement strategies, and commitment from school leadership is crucial to the successful implementation of whole-school programs. Therefore, additional work needs to be done to ensure the program is sustainable past the two workshops, and doesn't just focus on what is occurring in the short term, as Michelle mentioned, *“this is not a short term fix, this is a long term cultural change”* (Michelle, Stakeholder).

Stronger communication strategies are required

Six stakeholders reported that the program needed to communicate its overarching aim and objectives clearly and strongly, and the types of messages which would be included within the workshops. One stakeholder suggested it was possible that the way the program was communicated discouraged schools from participating, or reporting they had participated, due to fear that other schools would think they had an issue with FDV. Other stakeholders spoke about misconceptions regarding the project and what it was actually focusing on, *“they withdrew from the program completely...it was a male staff body, and they felt that the messaging of the program is targeting males...they thought that the way that the program was, I guess the messages were related to them, they felt like they were being attacked as men”* (Julie, Stakeholder). One other stakeholder reported participants' expectations of the program, did not match what the program was aiming to achieve and promote, for example: *“this is an example where...the principal did feel it was a great idea, yes his school needed it, but sent a group of teachers who we hadn't spoken to because we only speak to the principal...those teachers thought that they would be getting a 'how to' manual, and that's not the program”* (Lola, Stakeholder). Furthermore, this same stakeholder suggested the program is

reliant on schools who are on board with the messages and outcomes of the program and want to participate. However, it is schools who potentially are not aware of the outcomes, aims and purpose of the program, who need to attend the most, *“what it probably needs to develop into is being able to bring the schools that aren't quite in that space along. So if we equate it to a teacher...my A student [may] get an A...despite me, but the impact that I can have, is potentially getting my D student to a C, or C to a B...that's what the program has to do, somehow inspire...others into the journey”* (Lola, Stakeholder).

These findings highlight the need for the program to have very strong, consistent messages in what content would be explored, how this will happen, benefits to the school in participating, and what the schools could get out of their participation. Julie suggested there needed to be clear messages within the workshops to avoid the *“disconnect between the message that is sent out and how it's been understood”* (Julie, Stakeholder). There was the need to recognise and be *“completely clear with the message that it's not about attacking anybody, it's about recognising that...family and domestic violence is the end results of...disrespect of women...especially with violence against women being the focus of that”* (Julie, Stakeholder). In addition, the need to recognise that FDV is a gendered issue, and messages should be clear about the gendered drivers of violence, *“we need to continue to place more emphasis on...the gendered drivers of family violence”* (Oli, Stakeholder). It was also suggested the RRTSP's messaging, and promotion should focus on primary prevention, and highlight that the program is for all schools, regardless of issues within their school community. Beth suggested the program is *“supposed to be about primary prevention...addressing a problem before it occurs...I feel there needs to be work done around how we communicate the program to be positive...not your school has an issue”* (Beth, Stakeholder). Beth believed it should be very clear to the participants that *“this is the program, this is what you'll be doing”*, as *“there shouldn't be a problem with doing [the program]...this is an issue that is in every school...it might not be as visible sometimes...we know...one in six women experience violence, this is happening in every school...how do we build that knowledge and make it okay to be doing this program and not for it to be...this doesn't happen to us, because that's...been the issue in family violence...it's very counterintuitive in terms of addressing the issue”* (Beth, Stakeholder).

Additions and changes to program staff are needed

Various stakeholders identified a need for more staff to be added to the program, including some with experience and qualifications in teaching health and physical education, health promotion, and change management. It was clear throughout the stakeholder interviews that the DoE provided the education expertise in how schools ran, quality assurance of Starick's suggested resources to ensure

they would be appropriate for the school context, and the links back to the curriculum, but there was the notion that the role DoE plays in the program is not sustainable for the long term, considering the lack of funding they are provided to support the program's outcomes. Therefore if the current program's structure was to continue, five stakeholders reported the need for Starick to recruit additional employees with education expertise. It was suggested by Jenny that *"lesson plans"* were not something which Starick could support in as Starick employees were *"not teachers"* and did not *"have that background to be developing up...a whole manual that...supports respectful relationships teaching in schools"* (Jenny, Stakeholder). There was the sense amongst these five stakeholders that Starick needs to upskill, and capacity build their staff to be aware of how strategies can be implemented within the school environment, and how schools operate, for example;

"[Starick] don't have the curriculum background...[Starick are] trying to implement a program which impacts schools, but [Starick]...don't have any education experience" (Lois, Stakeholder)

"I think the program could, even with its current funding...source that education expertise outside of the Department of Education...build the capacity of...staff in delivering a program like this" (Lola, Stakeholder)

"I mean, if you had an educator who had an understanding of the educational setting, then the way that you develop your components of support are going to reflect the needs of schools and the way that they implement things and the way that they're supported to implement things...it gives a lens over the different contexts and communities and barriers to implementation" (Michelle, Stakeholder).

One participant discussed the need for another person to support cohort schools beyond the pilot program to ensure the program remains sustainable. Renata suggested the pilot program ended with *"40 [schools] from 2019"*. *Future iterations of the program, starting with cohort 5 are including 22 schools, "there's 22 schools that they can support for the next year"* (Renata, Stakeholder). This participant was concerned that the resources currently available were not sufficient to support all schools who participated in the first four cohorts of the RRTSP, and the additional schools who have been recruited, and will be recruited for future iterations, *"another 22 are going to come...who's going to support the previous 22...I don't think that's been built into the program very well"* (Renata, Stakeholder). Renata suggested this workload would be too much for current program staff to manage, reporting *"it's about 40 schools from 2019, [Starick] still support them, and then obviously now because it's got bigger and it's 22 schools, so by...the middle of next year, [Starick are] going to be starting another 22 schools and this 22 have only just finished, so potentially, [Starick are] gonna have 22 new schools and 22 schools that have only been*

implementing the program within the last 12 months” (Renata, Stakeholder). This participant suggested there potentially needs to be additional Starick program staff members to support previous schools in the program, *“I personally think there needs to be another resource for just probably one person...just supports previous schools...just ringing them...once every six months, can we help you?”* (Renata, Stakeholder). This may help to ensure the program is sustainable, that greater levels of connection and support can be offered going forward.

Link other schools together

Four stakeholders suggested that there should be a formalised way of linking cohort schools, so they are able to discuss strategies, and consider implementation in different contexts. It was noted by one stakeholder that there were schools who were proud of the progress they had made in the area of RRE, and had presented to the other schools in prospective cohorts. Two participants suggested there should be a forum or platform where schools can be linked, and strategies can be shared, *“if something could be held centrally, that had...those different projects for other schools to access, I think that would be really useful for them”* (Beth, Stakeholder), *“I think examples as well...different schools that have done different approaches and...sharing those, some kind of platform where all those things...could be shared...I think...the school [CONNECT] isn't just for respectful relationships, the school one is for everything, they can't flood it with respectful relationships for schools that aren't involved. So yeah, I'm not too sure how that that works, but maybe even some kind of platform where they could share all the respectful relationships. But an internal facing one rather than an external facing”* (Renata, Stakeholder). Including a platform schools could engage with each other on would give them *“the opportunity to work with each other about what they're planning to do, and what might or may not work for different contexts”* (Logan, Stakeholder). Further, Mandy suggested linking the cohort schools together in a formalised manner may assist creating the cultural change desired by the program, *“it is really critical to build relationships with people because you're trying to create...cultural change. Bringing people together as much as you can...if you can bring people together who are doing the same, then they feel valued”* (Mandy, Stakeholder). Renata suggested it may be appropriate to create *“maybe some kind of community of practice for previous schools that have done it...just to keep it going”* (Renata, Stakeholder), which also ties into the need to make this a sustainable program past the initial two workshops and six months of support.

4.0 Recommendations

- 1. Schools should be encouraged to form additional partnerships with organisations who have an RRE focus to allow for additional support opportunities.** Schools included in the case studies mentioned many partnerships they had made with external agencies, such as local grocery stores and bakeries, mental health organisations, physical health organisations, and specialists of school-based relationships and sexuality education. Some schools participating in the case studies also reported the partnerships and relationships they had formed with their local women's refuge and women's health centre and referenced their relationship to Starick. However, it appears schools need more support in developing relationships with external agencies that have a focus on RRE and delivering this content within a school environment. It is recommended Starick provide contact and service details for other organisations that can provide additional training and support to the schools if needed. Specific quality assurance indicators may need to be considered in the compilation of this list. This may assist in building the capacity of all staff to respond to issues within their school community and reduce the burden on the RRTSP team. Further, it is suggested Starick provide examples of how external organisations can be utilised within the school context. External groups can be engaged to support school staff, students and/or families in a variety of ways associated with RRE and FDV.
- 2. The RRTSP program should strongly advocate for parental involvement in RRE and provide evidence-based strategies schools can use to engage with their parents, families and carers.** Parents were listed by many case study schools as barriers to implementing RRE in terms of explicit pushback, their level of engagement, and/or their knowledge of the issue. However, two parents who were interviewed for this project did not mention parents as barriers to RRE. This suggests that there is potentially a disconnect between the needs of the parent community and what a school is facilitating. Further, it is possible that schools may be underestimating their parent body's support for addressing RRE within the curriculum, and embedding it in their ethos and environment. Whilst the opinions of the parents who were interviewed may not be generalisable to the wider community of parents, they do provide some into the need to improve communication and engagement with parents. It is recommended that the program dedicates time to providing evidence-based strategies schools can utilise to engage their parent community and solidify support for addressing this topic area. This may include providing exemplars of good communication strategies such as suggested content for newsletters, examples of social media posts, and examples of letters

or emails which can be sent to families. Furthermore, it is recommended that the program provides a message-framing communication guide, which will assist the school in understanding the language and phrasing that is the best to use when engaging with parents on this topic, and what language should be avoided. The involvement of parents, families, carers, and the wider school community is an important aspect of a whole school approach. It is therefore critical that all groups have easy and ongoing access to specific RRE teaching and learning materials and are genuinely consulted in the development of school policy and when routine audits of current practice are undertaken.

3. **The program should work to build the capacity of all school staff involved in each cohort school, by providing training packages and opportunities to staff who did not attend the RRTSP workshops.** Schools currently send a few staff members to the workshops, with the RRTSP encouraging the presence of school leaders, such as Principals, Deputies, and Head of Learning Areas. However, participants in the case study schools recognised there were other staff at their school who were very knowledgeable in this space area due to their training. Some also identified staff, who did not participate in the RRTSP workshops, who would benefit from receiving training from an external and authoritative body. It is therefore recommended that further training opportunities are afforded to all school staff. Ultimately some whole school training is preferable. This may be achieved during whole school professional development days. However where there is not the capacity to include all school staff in face to face workshops and forums, provision of appropriate and accessible eLearning modules and for a wide variety of evidence-based resources be provided to WA schools (see www.gdhr.wa.gov.au as an example) is recommended. It is important this program is sustainable even though there may be a high turnover of staff.
4. **Schools would benefit from the formalisation of connection opportunities between other schools participating in the program.** A key benefit of this program's structure was the inclusion of past cohort schools presenting to new schools about how they have implemented their RRE program and providing examples of strategies they have used. Further, dedicating time within the workshops for schools to plan and interact with each other allowed for further connection opportunities, and group strategising. However, after the workshops, it was left to individual schools to reach out to other cohort schools for support. Although the existence of the Connect page for RRE was mentioned by one participant, other school staff did not speak about this platform, and stakeholders suggested there needed to be another forum or platform which can link all the participating schools together. Therefore, we recommend the creation of a platform, or facilitation of a forum

including all participating schools in the RRTSP, and their respective staff members employed at the school. This should not just be a forum which includes resources and examples of implementation, this forum or platform should allow for discussions between schools and be structured to ensure ongoing engagement. It is recognised that an End of Program Forum was held with schools who participated in the pilot of the program. However, these opportunities should be promoted in workshop one, and also during the inter-workshop period. This may enable schools experiencing similar issues to discuss various options and to collectively brainstorm solutions or pool resources that could be contextualised to their own school environment and context. This may consequently facilitate greater connection opportunities between schools and may help to ensure ongoing sustainability of the program.

5. **The program should provide specific guidance and support for schools to implement a whole school approach to RRE.** There were many suggestions of how schools had taken a whole school approach to RRE, relating back to their social and emotional learning programs, information included in their policies and plans, school culture, and whole school language. However, three of the case study school sites reported the need for the program to provide more support with implementation of a whole school approach. The findings suggested while ideas were provided there was less support around implementation. One element of a whole school approach is to ensure cross-curricular links are made where appropriate. Schools should be supported by the RRTSP to conduct a scope and sequence of their curriculum, including curricular beyond health and physical education, to identify where RRE can be included across multiple Learning Areas (see www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/resources/curriculum-connections/portfolios/respect-matters as an example). Providing school with examples of current practice from similar school sites will help to reduce the barriers they may be experiencing in relation to limited planning time and curriculum overcrowding. Specific support around how to implement other key strategies such as policy, parents and community engagement and fostering a positive ethos and environment would also be beneficial.
6. **The program should provide specific guidance and support for schools to implement a variety of teaching and learning activities related to RRE.** School staff and stakeholders suggested schools needed further support with teaching and learning resources they can use within the classroom, and evidence-based guidelines on how to provide age-appropriate content across all years of schooling. Any adaptations for specific student cohorts should also be considered (e.g., students with diverse religious or cultural backgrounds, students

with a disability). Specific illustrations of practice and evidence-based examples of how RRE lessons could be implemented within a broader whole-school approach would also be useful. A wide variety of contemporary, Australian, and evidenced-based RRE teaching and learning materials are available for schools and the RRTSP should make more explicit connections to these.

- 7. The program’s content needs to be adjusted ensure primary prevention messages are being delivered as per best practice guidelines, and that the intersectionality between FDV and other issues is addressed.** The program currently focuses on gender-based violence, with a key focus on violence against women. As per internationally recognised best practice principles [18], primary prevention and education messages need to be strengths-based and framed positively. The program needs to carefully ensure all message framing is appropriate for the various audiences it targets (see www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/-/media/ResourceCentre/PublicationsandResources/Mental-health/Framing-gender-equality--Message-guide.pdf as an example). For the program to adequately address respectful relationships, the core messages should promote and give examples of what a respectful relationship looks like (as opposed to what an unhealthy one looks like), and the skills necessary to sustain healthy relationships. Relationships should be framed within a real-world context and so education about consent, sex, sexuality, and pornography (or other sexually explicit material) should be considered. This is also important in relation to the recent updates to the Australian national curriculum that includes these issues, and an understanding that pending WA curriculum changes will likely be similar. It is imperative that the program recognises and responds to the diversity of human relationships and experiences. This includes individuals with diverse religious and/or cultural backgrounds; those with diverse identities related to sex, gender or sexuality; and people with a disability.
- 8. Educational experts should be added to the program team, to ensure ongoing sustainability of the program.** It was suggested – mostly in stakeholder interviews - that Starick potentially do not have adequate knowledge of schools organisation, that is how schools are managed and function. In addition, it was perceived Starick also lacked awareness of a broad array of strategies and tools that are appropriate for use within a school context. This may make further scaling of the program and the creation of additional resources problematic. It is therefore recommended that additional staff with specific skills related to school health education and health promotion are recruited to support the current Starick team.

9. **Stronger communication strategies are required.** The program needs to be clear about the overarching aim and objectives, and to communicate these clearly to schools. Effective whole-school and classroom strategies should be easily accessible, realistic and staff implementation skills developed. As previously noted, all content should also align with evidence-based guidelines regarding message framing. Finally, all messaging should be able to be disseminated easily to other key stakeholders associated with the program: school staff; students; parents, families and carers; external agencies and community groups.

5.0 Conclusion

This report outlined the qualitative data collected from (a) the holistic embedded case studies that were conducted with a purposive sample of schools who participated in the RRTSP, and (b) interviews with stakeholders who were involved in various aspects of the RRTSP. Overall, it appears some schools were successful in embedding RRE via a whole school framework; focusing on school culture; including and embedding RRE within policies and plans; engaging external agencies and families; role modelling respectful interactions with staff and students; and providing a comprehensive RRE teaching and learning program. The schools involved in the case studies appeared motivated to continue their work in the space of RRE, and had plans for further engagement and inclusion they wanted to participate in. However, this experience was not universal and many barriers to implementation were identified.

There were many areas within a whole school approach where case study school required additional support in. Additional support to engage successfully with parent and carer groups was required. Most schools required specific tools and strategies to help guide whole-school implementation of RRE, as well as effective teaching and learning programs, and strong cross-curricular links. There was a clear need for the program to provide illustrations of practice, evidence-based strategies and clear communication guidance. Enhancing implementation skills of staff is essential. Further, the formalisation of stronger relationships between schools participating in the RRTSP would allow for greater discussion and collaboration.

This information provided in this report, combined other evaluation data on the RRTSP that has been published separately, provide insight into the experience of schools and key stakeholders who have been involved in the initial pilot phase of the RRTSP. It is hoped that the evidence presented is useful to the ongoing delivery of this program.

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