



GOOD MENTAL HEALTH

....where happiness starts

At Leeming Primary...

we recognise that mental health is vitally important for all, both adults and children. We also recognise that we need to start early in developing an understanding of and strategies for good mental health.

We already have [Aussie Optimism](#) running in our senior grades and the Departmental Health programme plays a significant role throughout the years however, there needs to be a more explicit focus on this aspect of our development especially in the younger years.

Over late 2007, our Action Team will be engaged in training and then putting together a plan to implement a programme to achieve the aims of **KidsMatter**.

Our Action Team consists of :

Mrs Linda Thomas – School Co-ordinator and responsible for Aussie Optimism and Peer Mediation

Mrs Paula Braimbridge –P&C member, Parent and Health worker

Mr Graeme Sassella-Otley – Principal



What is KidsMatter?

KidsMatter is a primary school mental health promotion, prevention and early intervention initiative developed in collaboration with the Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing, *beyondblue: the national depression initiative*, the Australian Psychological Society, the Australian Principals Associations Professional Development Council (APAPDC) and supported by the Australian Rotary Health Research Fund.

The **KidsMatter** initiative aims to:

- **Improve the mental health and well-being of primary school students**
- **Reduce mental health problems among students (eg., anxiety, depression and behavioral problems)**
- **Achieve greater support and assistance for students at risk or experiencing mental health problems.**

Schools have a significant influence on students' emotional, social and behavioural development. There is a growing understanding that the primary school years represent a significant opportunity for mental health promotion, and the prevention and early intervention of mental health problems in children.

Students who are mentally healthy learn better, have better relationships with

teachers, family members and peers, and exhibit greater resiliency in meeting life's challenges. Ultimately these students are better placed to successfully negotiate the transition into adolescence and adulthood: they are less likely to exhibit serious mental health problems and health risk behaviours and have a greater capacity to achieve long-term education and career goals.

Conversely, mental health problems such as anxiety, depression and behavioural disorders significantly compromise the quality of life of young people, diminishing their capacity for schooling, relationships and community participation. Of concern is that mental health problems are appearing earlier, and are more persistent, complex and damaging.

To find out more, click on
http://www.beecoswebengine.org/cache13/KidsMatter_Main.html



OTHER LINKS

Beyondblue

<http://www.beyondblue.org.au/>

Aussie Optimism

<http://chpru.ecu.edu.au/research/completed/aussie-optimism.php>

Family Pathways - Princess Margaret Hospital

(Child and Family Mental Health Service)

http://www.pmh.health.wa.gov.au/services/family_pathways/index.htm