

Back to school and towards wellbeing



With students starting back at school for another year, mental health, resilience and wellbeing are key topics of discussion within the education sector. Indeed, Generation Y teachers and principals are seeing a rise in the number of mental health issues within their students.

To address this, questions to ask are, 'What part do schools play in the wellbeing journey?', 'What are parents looking for?' and 'What challenges is the education sector facing in the area of wellbeing?'

Wellbeing expectations growing

In the last 5 years, almost half of parents (48%) have increased their expectations of their child's school to support wellbeing.

Schools are responding well to this challenging issue with almost nine in ten parents (88%) satisfied with school support for their child's emotional wellbeing. There is still room for improvement, however, as 46% of parents are only somewhat satisfied.

Online bullying major challenge for today's students

Parents believe the top three challenges for today's students are:

1. Online bullying through social networks (60%)
2. High pressure to do well in exams and assessments (51%)
3. Life is more complicated, causing additional stress (49%)

Among principals and Gen Y teachers, online bullying and the rise of technology issues within the classroom are key concerns affecting student's wellbeing.

Teachers are finding it challenging to deal with the flow of online bullying issues that are happening external to the classroom and believe it may be affecting the resilience of today's students.

Resilience among students: increasing or decreasing?

Resilience is a growing concern among principals and teachers. It is a common concern that young people are less resilient than they use to be.

The research shows, however, that the discussion on resilience is not completely clear cut. Almost half of parents (46%) believe students today are less resilient than when they were growing up. One in five parents (21%) believe resilience has stayed the same while a third of parents (33%) believe students today are more resilient than when they were growing up.

Gen Y teachers are also divided in their perspectives, with many agreeing resilience has decreased.

On the other hand, some teachers have seen students in an increasingly challenging world overcome many hardships, suggesting that for students, resilience is increasing because of the greater challenges' they're facing.

The discussion on resilience provides an opportunity for the education sector to help build resilience in today's students. This is best done when it is embedded into learning, and through experience.

The future of education 2020
Exploring wellbeing, post-school pathways and the role of schools in building community

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