
*School Characteristics, Parenting and Student Mental Health:
Parent/caregivers reports from 100 Australian KidsMatter schools *
**Dr Helen Askill-Williams, Dr Katherine Dix, Professor Michael Lawson
& Professor Alan Russell, Centre for the Analysis of Educational
Futures, Flinders University (SA)**

This paper reports data from a questionnaire administered to the parents/caregivers of almost 5000 students in 100 KidsMatter Initiative (KMI) primary schools across Australia. KidsMatter is a mental health promotion, prevention and early intervention initiative based upon a model that supports early intervention to provide personal, social and economic benefits. Outcomes from the KMI will inform policies and practices concerning mental health promotion in schools. We asked parents/caregivers about four school-based characteristics, namely: 1) teaching social and emotional learning programs to enable students "to be" and "to become"; 2) parenting education and support; 3) building a positive school community, fostering "belonging"; and 4) early intervention for students experiencing mental health difficulties. Parents/caregivers were also asked about their own parenting competencies and their children's social, emotional and behavioural competencies. We report summary statistics of parent/caregiver responses and use structural equation modelling to demonstrate interrelationships among school-based characteristics, parenting, and students' social, emotional and behavioural competencies.