

## New Beyond Blue data reveals significant mental health concerns for educators, children and young people

### IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Educators in Australia believe that only 38 percent of their colleagues are mentally healthy, a Beyond Blue survey has found.

The *National Mental Health in Education Survey* has been conducted annually since 2018 as part of Beyond Blue's mental health in education initiative, Be You. This year the survey gathered insights from 2630 educators working in early learning services and schools, including those studying to become educators. It captures the perceptions and observations of their own mental health in addition to their colleagues, and children and young people in their care.

Clear barriers to educator wellbeing were identified from the survey responses. These include high levels of staff turnover, workforce shortages, a lack of resources to enable leadership support, time constraints, and the impact of increased critical incidents within the education sector.

Half of the educators surveyed reported unusually high staff turnover in 2024. Of those educators, 93 percent said it negatively affected educator wellbeing, and 79 percent believed it negatively impacts the wellbeing of children and young people.

Educators cited mental health issues, such as depression and anxiety, as the leading health issue impacting children and young people, with 77 percent of educators identifying it as their top concern.

While the majority of respondents (95 percent) agree that good mental health is a precondition for effective learning, only one third of educators (33 percent) believe the children and young people in their care are mentally healthy.

"This year's findings reinforce the significant mental health challenges facing educators within schools and early learning services, across the country. The results reveal that while educators are confident in their ability to identify mental health concerns, there is a strong need for more support to address the increasing scale of these issues," Head of Be You, Beyond Blue Geri Sumpter said.

"The ever-growing expectations put on educators, along with stress and burnout are concerning. We need to address the barriers to wellbeing to ensure our educators can continue happily in their roles, in mentally healthy workplaces. When educators feel supported, they are better able to foster environments where children and young people can also thrive" Ms. Sumpter said.

The *National Mental Health in Education Report* translates the findings of the survey and offers a series of recommendations to implement at a system level to combat the key barriers identified.

### System-level recommendations:

- **Strengthen leadership support available to educators** by first uplifting support for leaders. This will empower leaders to effectively nurture the wellbeing of their staff. Educators require leaders who can implement sustainable wellbeing strategies.
- **Embed mental health training in pre-service education** to better prepare all future educators with the mental health literacy required to thrive in their career.

- **Provide paid time for educators to engage with wellbeing initiatives** such as Be You. Adequate funding is needed to ensure all educators have access to paid time for planning and professional development focused on mental health.
- **Invest in dedicated wellbeing support roles** in all learning communities. Funding for such roles across Australia will help ensure positive outcomes into the future.

- ENDS

**About Be You:** Be You is Australia's national mental health and wellbeing initiative designed to support educators in early learning services, school and in pre-service education. It is delivered by Beyond Blue in collaboration with Early Childhood Australia and headspace. Funded by the Commonwealth Department of Health and Aged Care, Be You is freely available to all educators and learning communities. It includes professional learning, support from consultants, and practical tools and resources to establish positive, inclusive and responsive learning environments.

The full National Mental Health in Education Report can be found at: <https://beyou.edu.au/-/media/about/evaluations-and-research/be-you-mental-health-in-education-report-2024.pdf>

Educators can access Be You at: <https://beyou.edu.au/>

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