



kidshelpline
@HighSchool
North QLD

Kids Helpline @ High School North QLD

Impact Evaluation Report

2019- 2020

Supported by



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Executive Summary

Kids Helpline @ High School (North Queensland) (KAS@HS NQ) has been in operation since July 2018. Through delivery of both digital and face to face counsellor facilitated education sessions, the program aims to positively affect the following seven domains of a student's life:

1. Awareness of issues relating to mental health and well-being
2. Confidence to deal with life challenges impacting on mental health and well-being
3. Knowledge of strategies to cope with mental health and well-being issues
4. Understanding of resilience
5. Understanding and awareness of help-seeking behaviours
6. Knowledge of available helping resources, including Kids Helpline
7. Attitudes towards help-seeking as an appropriate behaviour

In addition, the program aims to equip teachers and other educators with the necessary knowledge to support their students with mental health and well-being issues, and to support students to seek additional help when needed.

The proposed target reach for the KAS@HS NQ 2019-2020 program was 4,000 participating students. During the year, the role of participants was expanded to also include group sessions with teachers, parents and education/ mental health workers.

The program was heavily impacted by COVID-19, and the period through which students were home schooled. Despite this, the program received bookings for a total of 4,583 people for 99 sessions (95% high school students), with only a 17% cancellation rate (n=17 sessions). The program achieved 96% of the proposed target of 4,000 participants and reached 3,839 people (96% high school students) during 82 sessions.

The KAS@HS NQ Program Evaluation Framework articulated a methodology of collecting post session feedback throughout each year from participating teachers/educators and students. This was with the aim of measuring achievement of the program objectives outlined above.

yourtown has now concluded its second evaluation of the KAS@HS NQ program. This second evaluative study found all impact indicators continued to perform well when compared with last year's results. Qualitative feedback from both teachers/educators and students was predominantly positive, with a small number of suggested improvements. As the program has devised a method for continuous improvement, teacher suggestions were reviewed by the Project Officer in real time and changes incorporated where relevant and appropriate. Student suggestions are reviewed for implementation post annual report.

The 2019-2020 quantitative study results show all student mean score changes for retrospective pre and post metrics demonstrated statistically significant positive increases.

The domains where the largest increase in student mean scores were:

1. Increased knowledge of mental health and well-being issues (2.299 mean score increase)
2. Increased knowledge of coping strategies (2.142 mean score increase)
3. Increased likelihood of talking to Kids Helpline if they had a problem or concern (2.114 mean increase)

The following pages outline the key outputs and outcomes achieved during the 2019-2020 KAS@HS NQ program. The report layout is designed to enable results to be quickly identified for each indicator of achievement against the Evaluation Framework and include comparisons to the previous year's results.

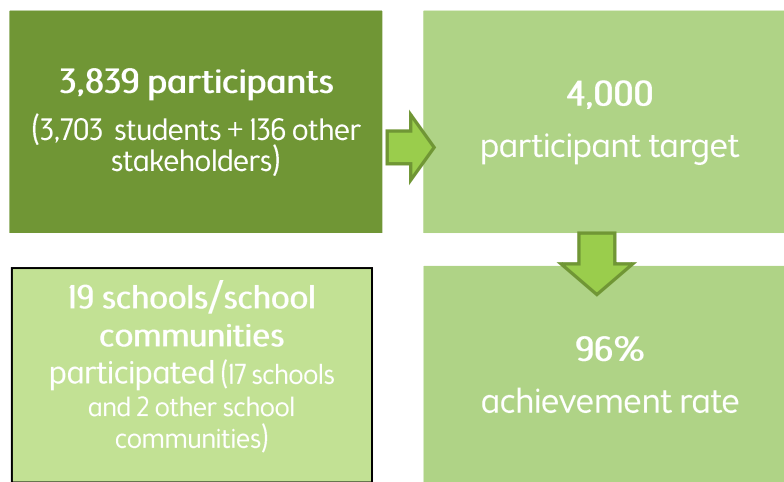
A brief description of the methodology used to conduct the evaluation is included as an appendix to this report.

Kids Helpline @ High School

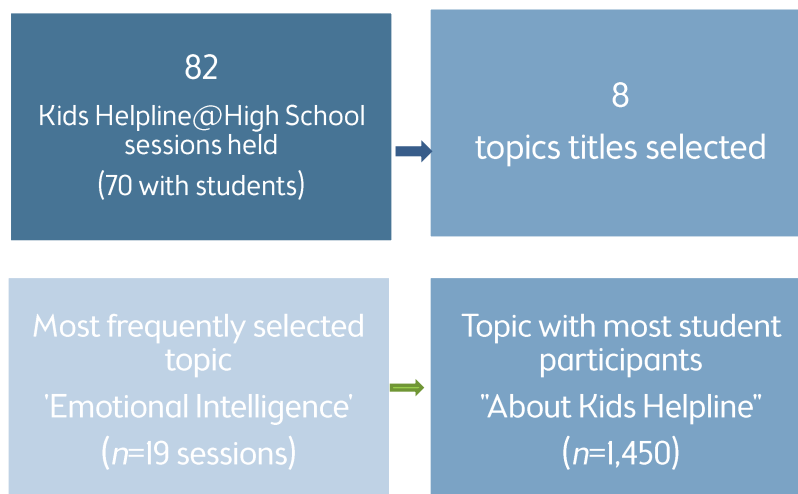
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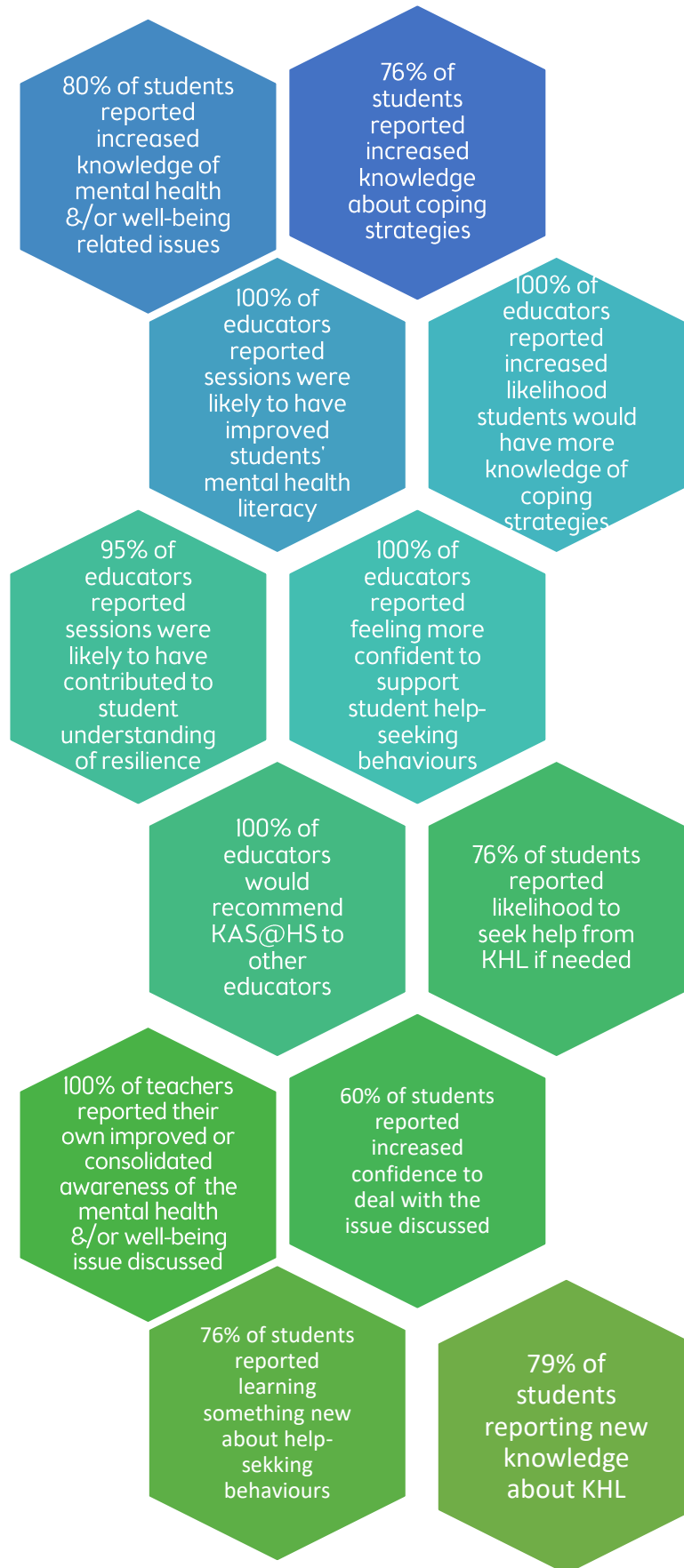
July 2019-June 2020

Who was helped?



What was delivered?





Meeting the mental health and well-being information needs of North Queensland high school students

Background to program

The North Queensland Primary Health Network (NQPHN) funded KAS@HS NQ program commenced virtual classroom sessions in July 2018. Evaluations of the national **primary school focused Kids Helpline @ School (KAS) program** had previously demonstrated that using online platforms to place Kids Helpline counsellors inside classrooms could address a scarcity of face to face mental health and well-being support resources in regional and remote Australia.

The KAS@HS program is designed to impact high school students and teacher/educators' awareness, knowledge and attitudes towards mental health/ well-being and help-seeking behaviours. Prior to the KAS@HS launch in October 2018, a co-design strategy was undertaken with North Queensland high school students and teachers to ensure content and delivery processes would match the needs of high school students and teachers. This strategy led to the development of a suite of six topics, including information about Kids Helpline, developing resilience and respectful relationships.

A program evaluation framework was developed in consultation with the NQPHN prior to service commencement, with significant evidence of the program's positive impact collected over the first year of service delivery.

Description of program's second year of delivery

Several adjustments and expansions to the program were made in the program's second year as a result of student and teacher/educator feedback, and COVID-19 driven home schooling.

These included:

- Holding a significant proportion of sessions face to face following feedback from students requesting the Kids Helpline @ High School counsellor attend the school in person. Students stated this would increase engagement and interactivity, and clarify information for them in real time.
- Using face to face visits to the North Queensland area to facilitate engagements with new schools and education related agencies.
- Expanding session audiences to include parents and local Inter-agency stakeholder groups, and trialling teacher/educator (including Guidance Officers and Heads of Well-being) only groups in four schools. It is anticipated these schools will book student classroom sessions in the 2020-2021 year.
- Developing new topics through teacher/educator online consultations.

It should be noted that during school closures in Northern Queensland from Term 1 to Term 2 of 2020, video conferencing was largely unavailable due to lack of home access to technology. Paper based learning was primarily used in the region during school closures, and Kids Helpline @ High School adapted the program delivery methods to ensure continuity of service by providing recorded sessions and downloadable resources from the program website.

A strong focus continued to be given to 'culturally appropriate' content and delivery methods. A tailored approach was created for specific cultural groups including:

- Inviting **yourtown's** Indigenous Advisors and local indigenous stakeholders into digital planning sessions, and
- Delivering content through visual communication methods more frequently, rather than through verbal or written words.

It is worth noting that 100% of respondent teachers/ educators reported Strongly Agreeing the program was culturally appropriate during the 2019-2020 evaluation.

Program Student Session Outputs

Three thousand seven hundred and three student from 13 schools in North Queensland locations participated in 70 KAS@HS program sessions during the 2019-2020 financial year.

Figure 1: Location of participating schools

School Location	Number of sessions	% of sessions
Outer Regional	57	81%
Very Remote	7	10%
Remote	4	6%
Inner Regional	2	3%
Total	70	100%

% are rounded to the nearest number

Ninety one percent of participating schools were Government, with the remaining 9% Catholic. "About Kids Helpline" had the highest number of students participating (1,450) and was the second most frequently selected topic by teachers/educators (16% of all sessions held). 'Emotional Intelligence' was the most popular topic selected by teachers/educators (27% of all sessions), and had the second largest number of student participants (612).

Figure 2 outlines the full topic breakdown for the 2019-2020 financial year.

Figure 2: Number and % of Sessions Held and Students Participating x Topic

Topic	Students no's	*% of all students	Sessions held	% of all sessions
About Kids Helpline	1,450	39%	11	16%
Emotional Intelligence	612	17%	19	27%
Cyberbullying & Mental Health	474	13%	4	6%
Developing Resilience	393	11%	12	17%

Topic	Students no's	*% of all students	Sessions held	% of all sessions
Your Online Well-Being	342	9%	9	13%
School Transitions	229	6%	5	7%
Respectful Relationships	173	5%	9	13%
COVID-19 Coping Strategies	30	1%	1	1%
Total	3,703	100%	70	100%

% are rounded to the nearest number

Reasons for booking

In addition to KAS@HS topic content fulfilling school curriculum needs, teacher/ educators also reported the content suited a range of other student needs.

"Cyber safety issues occurring at the school"

"I knew my cohort were struggling with respectful friendships and developing resilience so I asked (the counsellor) to deliver a session based on that"

"Our students require social/emotional developmental activities for their wellbeing"

"Real need for extra support systems for the issues my students are facing everyday"

"Year 12's transitioning"

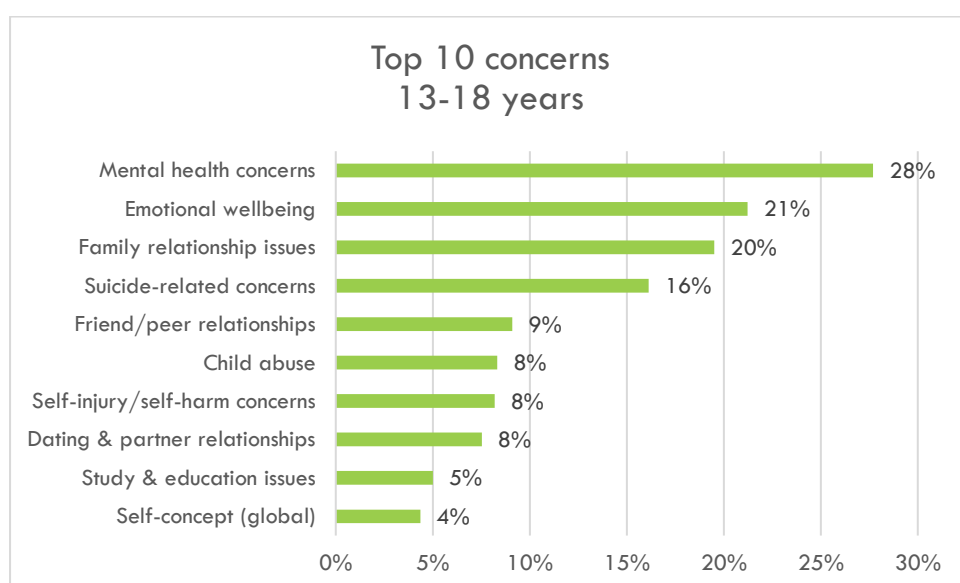
As part of the program's continual dialogue with educators, an additional short survey was conducted in May 2020 to clarify shared meaning of topic names and request input into future topics. Detailed content ideas and suggestions were collected and will be integrated into topic development in 2020-2021.

Program Impact

The program's second evaluation continued to demonstrate the effectiveness of this digital strategy for introducing high school students to concepts of caring for their own and other's mental health and well-being, and encouraging help-seeking when needed.

Nationally, the top 10 counselling concerns recorded for 13-18 year olds contacting the Kids Helpline counselling service during the 2019-2020 financial year showed high rates of help-seeking for mental health, emotional well-being, family relationships and suicide related concerns.

Figure 3: Top 10 counselling type concerns nationally for 13-18 year olds (N= 40,959)



Although data from the North Queensland PHN area are too small for statistical comparison, concern rankings for this age group in North Queensland were similar to national data.

A substantial proportion of young people contacting the counselling service from the North Queensland PHN region provided information of having heard about the service from their school.

Specifically, referral data to Kids Helpline during the 2019-2020 financial year showed the following:

- 1,553 contacts to Kids Helpline gave a postcode from the North Queensland PHN region*.
- Of these 1,553, 58% (906) were from young people aged between 13 and 18 years.
- Of these 906 contacts, 572 had information recorded relating to where the contact had heard about Kids Helpline.
- Of these 572 contacts, 31% (178) told their counsellors they had heard about the counselling service through their school.

**Postcode missing in 55% of contacts, so this would be an undercount*

Study Results

Qualitative and quantitative data were collected from both students and educators.

Qualitative feedback

Both stakeholder groups were asked to provide comments on the areas that provided most value to them, as well as suggestions for improvements.

Students

The majority of feedback noted high levels of satisfaction with the program's current activities and processes. Useful feedback was provided in relation to future content and delivery methods, including requests for deeper dives into specific mental health issues, more interactive work, more group challenges and more videos.

"This was very interesting and helpful and gave me the confidence to talk to someone about my problems"

Student Grade 9

"(I learnt) call, not text friends if fighting"

Student Grade 7

"It was a really good experience for me and it will help with my family issues in life"

Student Grade 7

"Talk more about strategies to improve our confidence in talking to our peers about problems"

Student Grade 9

"Talk about anxiety and depression and how to deal with it"

Student Grades 7-12

"Learnt so much! I enjoyed hearing the stories & calls that have come through, just knowing other people are in the same boat, so maybe some more stories"

Student Grade 12

"This was perfect. I want all of Australia to have this"

Student Grade 12

"Thank you for showing us that it's okay to worry"

Student Grade 12

Teachers/ Other Educators

Teachers and other educators also provided consistently positive feedback in relation to session content and delivery.

"Very informative session with good statistics for students to put into perspective. Key messages with nice activities to break up the hour session"

Teacher Year 8

"Student's loved the session (asking when they could do another session). The students found the content engaging and the strategies provided useful"

Teacher composite class

"(Counsellor's name), who ran our student workshops, conducted herself in an engaging and appropriate manner. Students were engaged with the questions and games throughout. Although the nature of the content was serious at times, the students were provided a warm and welcoming environment which allowed them to tell stories and provide information safely. Teacher "Well-being" class

"(After the session) students talked about why we have emotions. They also talked about being stuck in an emotion like anxiety or sadness"

Teacher Year 9

"(Counsellor's name) was extremely patient and caring towards some students who were quiet to start with. Her positive bubbly nature made the students feel very comfortable and safe enough to open up"

Teacher composite class

"(Counsellor's name) was a great presenter. We were very privileged to have her in our school. Other sessions were also reported to me to be excellent"

Teacher Years 7-12

"We had (counsellor's name) come to our school. She was brilliant!!"

Teacher Year 8

Process Effectiveness and Impact Indicator Results

Evidence of consistency of program process effectiveness and outcome achievements over the past two years is provided in this year's results tables. Some small percentage changes within small teacher samples can be seen but have no statistical significance.

Increased Mental Health Literacy	Indicator 1	Indicator 2	Indicator 3*
	Teachers reporting likelihood of students improved knowledge of mental health &/or well-being related topic	Teachers reporting their own improved or consolidated awareness of the mental health related topic discussed	Students reporting increased knowledge of mental health &/or well-being related topics
Number responding positively	21	21	597
Number answering question	21	21	748
% of positive responses	100%	100%	80%
Change from Previous Year	No change	↑ 5%	↓ 4%
Improved student confidence to tackle challenges impacting their mental health and well-being	Indicator 4*		
	Students reporting increased confidence to deal with the issues discussed		
Number responding positively	477		
Number answering question	745		
% of positive responses	60%		
Change from Previous Year	↓ 6%		
Improved student understanding of coping strategies	Indicator 5*	Indicator 6	
	Students reporting increased knowledge about strategies to deal with the topic discussed	Teachers reporting increased likelihood students will have more knowledge of coping strategies when mental health &/or well-being problems arise	
Number responding positively	574	21	
Number answering question	754	21	
% of positive responses	76%	100%	
Change from Previous Year	↓ 5%	No change	
	Indicator 7		

Improved student understanding of resilience	Teachers reporting likelihood of session contributing to student understanding of key factors promoting resilience
Number responding positively	20
Number answering question	21
% of positive responses	95%
Change from Previous Year	↓ 5%

Improved awareness of help-seeking behaviours	Indicator 8	Indicator 9
	Teachers reporting sessions were likely to have improved student understanding of importance of help-seeking when needed	Students reporting learning something new about help-seeking behaviours
Number responding positively	22	591
Number answering question	22	779
% of positive responses	100%	76%
Change from Previous Year	No change	↑ 9%

Knowledge of Kids Helpline	Indicator 10	Indicator 11
	Students reporting new knowledge of KHL **	Teachers reporting their own increased knowledge of KHL as an appropriate referral agency
Number responding positively	611	2
Number answering question	776	23
% of positive responses	79%	100%
Change from Previous Year	↓ 8%	No change

** Students experiencing multiple sessions will affect this indicator

Improved attitudes towards help-seeking behaviours	Indicator 12	Indicator 13*	Indicator 14*
	Teachers reporting feeling more confident post session to support student help-seeking behaviours	Students reporting increased level of likelihood to seek help from a trusted source if needed	Students reporting increased level of likelihood to seek help from KHL if needed
Number responding positively	22	428	583
Number answering question	22	771	770
% of positive responses	100%	56%	76%
Change from Previous Year	↑ 5%	↑ 1%	↑ 10%

Satisfaction	Indicator 15	Indicator 16	
	Teachers who intended to book another session	Teachers who would recommend KAS@HS to other teachers	
Number responding positively	23	23	
Number answering question	23	23	
% of positive responses	100%	100%	
Change from Previous Year	No change	No change	
Program Process Measures	Indicator 17	Indicator 18	Indicator 19
	Teachers believing the content and resources were appropriate and relevant to their students' needs	Teachers who reported the session met their expectations	Teachers who found the technology platform worked well
Number responding positively	23	23	23
Number answering question	23	23	23
% of positive responses	100%	100%	100%
Change from Previous Year	No change	No change	↑ 9%
Program Process Measures	Indicator 20	Indicator 21	
	Teachers who found contact prior to the session helpful	Teachers who believed the content and delivery methods were culturally appropriate for their student demographics	
Number responding positively	21	23	
Number answering question	21	23	
% of positive responses	100%	100%	
Change from Previous Year	No change	No change	

Appendix

Evaluation methodology

Participants and Procedures

A total of 816 stakeholders from two groups:- teachers/other educators and students, contributed to program process effectiveness and impact measurement.

Teachers/ Other Educators

Respondents to the teacher survey were from a range of roles, including Pastoral Leaders, School Counsellors, Guidance Officers, Heads of Student Welfare, School Principals and a School-based Health Youth Nurse. Following their session, all participating teacher/ educators were emailed a link to an online survey which was open for the full financial year 2019-2020. Survey questions were designed to elicit a mix of process effectiveness, satisfaction and session outcome data, as per the Kids Helpline@High School North Queensland Evaluation Framework. Teacher responses were received from 17 teacher/ educators in 9 schools holding 21 sessions. Eight topics were represented.

Students

Feedback was gathered from students using scaled pre and post session survey questions designed to retrospectively measure perceptions of change over the course of a session in their awareness, knowledge, understanding, attitudes and intended behaviours. Digital data collection methods were not used following consultation with teachers. Instead, paper copies of surveys were mailed out to schools between July 2019 and June 2020 and teacher/ educators requested to mail completed paper surveys back in prepaid return envelopes.

Two thousand, four hundred and thirty nine surveys (2,439) were sent out to classes who booked sessions during the sampling period, based on the number of students booked in by teacher/ educators.

Responses were subsequently received from 793 students (33% response rate) in 9 schools holding 21 sessions. Eight topics were represented.

The table below outlines the numbers of responses from each stakeholder group:

Total number of teacher survey responses	Number of student survey responses	Total number of sessions represented in student survey results
23	793	21

Study Design

Students

Student surveys were designed to collect evidence of changes in the following indicators of program success:

1. Increased knowledge about mental health and well-being issues
2. Increased knowledge about strategies to deal with the topic discussed
3. Increased confidence to deal with the kinds of issues discussed
4. New knowledge about how to get help if student has a worry or concern
5. New knowledge about Kids Helpline
6. Increased intention to talk to a trusted person if student was feeling sad, worried or had a problem
7. Increased intention to talk to a Kids Helpline counsellor

In addition, students were asked to record any ideas they had about how the program could be improved.

Teacher/ Educators

Online teacher surveys were predominantly designed to measure the effectiveness of program processes, including technological and professional support prior to and during the KAS@HS NQ program session. The surveys also collected information from teacher/ educators relating to their perceptions of both their own and student increased awareness and knowledge about mental health related issues, resilience and coping strategies, and of Kids Helpline as a help-seeking resource. The survey also asked teacher/educators to rate their own increased confidence to support student help-seeking behaviours post session.

Ideas for program improvement were also requested from teacher/educators.

Analysis and Reporting

Students were asked to retrospectively score their pre and post session perceptions of five impact indicators (marked with an asterisk in the Impact Indicator Results Tables above) on a scale of 0 to 10. Paired Samples T-Tests were used to compare mean scores for conditions before and after classroom sessions.

All five student measurements demonstrated statistically significant results:

- Indicator 3: Increased Mental Health Literacy
 - There was a significant difference between the scores for post-session knowledge about mental health literacy ($M=7.45$, $SD=2.285$) and pre-session knowledge about mental health literacy ($M=5.15$, $SD=2.551$) conditions; $t(747)=26.993$, $p=0.000$
- Indicator 4: Increased Confidence
 - There was a significant difference in the scores for post-session confidence in tackling challenges impacting on student mental health and well-being ($M=7.22$, $SD=2.706$) and pre-session confidence ($M=5.39$, $SD=3.028$) conditions; $t(744)=19.881$, $p=0.000$
- Indicator 5: Increased Knowledge of Coping Strategies

- There was a significant difference in the scores for post-session knowledge about coping strategies ($M=7.50$, $SD=2.289$) and pre-session knowledge about coping strategies ($M=5.36$, $SD=2.618$) conditions; $t(753)=24.940$, $p=0.000$
- Indicator 13: Increased Likelihood of Seeking Help from Someone Trusted
 - There was a significant difference in the scores for post-session intentions to seek-help from trusted sources if needed ($M=6.39$, $SD=3.028$) and pre-session intentions ($M=5.02$, $SD=3.155$) conditions; $t(770)=16.086$, $p=0.000$
- Indicator 14: Increased Likelihood of Seeking Help from Kids Helpline
 - There was a significant difference in the scores for post-session intentions to seek help from KHL if needed ($M=5.40$, $SD=3.219$) and pre-session intentions ($M=3.29$, $SD=2.926$) conditions; $t(769)=22.523$, $p=0.000$

Qualitative and quantitative feedback from teacher/educators was extracted on a weekly basis by the Kids Helpline @ High School Project Officer and routinely incorporated into program delivery for quality improvement purposes.

Further qualitative information arising from stakeholder comments collected during this study is available from the **yourtown** Advocacy and Research team if required.