

During the four-day BSEM training, educators are taken through the research underpinning the program design and tools for implementing the activities in each of the domains. Details of the training are provided in the following section.

The BSEM Training Program

The Berry Street training team provides teachers with (a) intensive and on-going professional development, and (b) detailed advice on structuring the teaching day in the form of a suite of printed curriculum guides (Brunzell, et al., 2015).

The professional development program aims to:

- (a) educate participants in re-engaging young people in learning, and progressing them, through sustained cognitive and behavioural change;
- (b) develop the capacity of each participant to take strategies back to their schools/classes and lead changes to school culture and teacher practice; and
- (c) assist teachers in achieving a range of short and long-term educational outcomes that include improved connection to school, social and emotional well-being, attendance, academic achievement and a decrease in anti-social or challenging behaviours.

The training typically runs for four days over a two-year period. During the training, participants learn about trauma and its effects and classroom and whole school strategies to promote an understanding of the five domains of the Model.

Utilising a 'blended learning' methodology, based on instructor expertise, peer-collaboration, and opportunities for participants to pilot learned strategies, the professional development program has aimed to achieve increased teacher capacity to work with challenging students. Each session focused on a different component of the Model, as shown below.

Day 1 BODY

Building school-wide rhythms and body-regulation through a focus on physical and emotional regulation of the stress response and de-escalation in school and classroom contexts.

Day 2 RELATIONSHIP

Increasing relational capacities in staff and students through attachment and attunement principles with specific relationship strategies for difficult-to-engage young people.

Dy 3 (Part 1) STAMINA

Creating a strong culture of independence for academic tasks by nurturing resilience and emotional intelligence.

Day 3 (Part 2) ENGAGEMENT

Employing engagement strategies that build willingness in struggling students.

Day 4 CHARACTER

Harnessing a values and a character strengths approach to enable successful student self-knowledge which leads to empowered future pathways.

The BSEM was presented to all staff at the two schools (within a group of four schools) through a sequence of professional development workshops, seminars and training sessions, specifically geared to the needs of each setting. These sessions were led by the Berry Street training team both offsite and within the schools.

Reflecting on training the four schools together, the trainers from Berry Street noted that the grouping of a number of schools together for training was not ideal as the *“messaging can be diluted”* (Berry Street trainer, 2019). The trainers explained that schools have different cultures, so it is optimal to train one school at a time. They also noted that having large numbers within the space was challenging and that the space where the training is held needs to be carefully considered and planned.

The Berry Street trainers did recognise, however, that cost factors can impact making grouped training the only viable way for some schools to take it on board. This costing arrangement, while providing for the four training days, did not include follow-up consultation visits from Berry Street trainers. Seeing this follow-up as crucial in supporting and sustaining implementation, the Darebin CRO approached the Darebin School Focus Youth Service (DSYFS), explaining that all the schools were working with the Model and it was important to support teachers’ practice through discussion and reflection with the trainers. As a result of the approach, the DSYFS agreed to fund the consultations.

All staff, both teaching and non-teaching, across the two evaluation schools have been included in the training. At the time of the interviews, Kimbla had completed the course (2017-2018) and had one consultation. They were yet to engage in any Masterclasses. Rutland was less progressed in their BSEM journey, having completed 3 of the 4 training days. The school plans to complete the training in 2019.

In the following section the report details each of the schools’ motivation for choosing to implement the BSEM.

The BSEM at Rutland and Kimbla Primary Schools

Why the BSEM?

The schools shared a range of reasons for choosing to embrace the BSEM.

At Kimbla, the first school to engage with the Darebin BSEM project, the staff interviewed talked about the impact of attending a presentation at Darebin Council in which Tom Brunzell from Berry Street provided an overview of the Model. The BSEM Leader from the school shared that: