

*Student social and emotional skills and their general wellbeing are fundamental to learning and lifelong opportunities. Measuring student wellbeing helps build a picture of the whole student beyond academic results. Schools play a critical role in this space.*

South Australia's Department for Education has developed the Wellbeing and Engagement Census (WEC), a data collection system that measures the wellbeing and engagement of every student (age 9 to 18) across the education system.

The WEC provides you with evidence directly from students themselves to monitor, guide and build their wellbeing, acknowledging the growing recognition of how measuring student wellbeing helps in building the social-emotional and self-regulation skills they will need in adult life.

Our experience in working with governments, education systems and schools is that people need a complete solution; not only to have access to an instrument but to all of the other business processes that lead to successful collection (such as privacy protection, data collection and management, and customised reporting).

As well, quality, scientific rigour, and harm minimisation have all been factored into the product design.

The survey asks young people how they think and feel about their experiences both inside and outside of school. The census includes questions that focus on the areas of development listed below.

The survey focuses on young people's developmental health and wellbeing, school experiences and what young people do with their time after school.

The survey has been validated and tested extensively with Australian school students and their peers internationally.

## MEASURES OF DEVELOPMENT

Additional items can be included



**Social and emotional wellbeing**

Optimism, perseverance, happiness, life satisfaction, emotion regulation, sadness and worries



**Relationships, engagement and learning in school**

Availability of supportive adults in school, sense of belonging with peers, academic self-concept, school climate, victimisation at school (experiences with physical, verbal, social and cyber bullying), emotional engagement with teachers, cognitive engagement



**Physical health and lifestyle and after school activities**

General health, body image, nutrition and sleeping patterns, time spent after school (youth organisations, school/non-school sport, time spent watching TV and playing video games, participating in music lessons)

*“Participating in the Census makes you feel like you are part of the school and feel valued, it makes you feel important”*

Student, South Australian Primary School

## WHAT DOES THE DEPARTMENT FOR EDUCATION PROVIDE

As a government agency and provider of education, like you we are mindful of reputational risk and have designed business processes and protocols to manage that risk from a government perspective.

We do not sell an instrument as we are not commercial providers but rather we work in partnership with education systems to provide a service to measure wellbeing and engagement in a manner appropriate to the needs of each provider. Whilst our general approach focuses on using validated items, confidentialised reports, and privacy protection, we do not provide a “one size fits all” solution. Rather we try to tailor the product to the needs of our partners. In our approach, we aim to minimise teacher workload and ensure the administration of the census at school is as clear and simple as possible.

## OUR SERVICES INCLUDE

- The wellbeing collection instrument, and the opportunity for additional items to be included
- Stakeholder engagement focussed on wellbeing measurement
- Cultural adaptation and translation of the wellbeing items
- Building the survey platform
- Strategies to recruit schools
- Communication and census administration materials
- Privacy protocols that allow for identifiable URL data
- Opening the survey platform for students to complete the wellbeing instrument
- Technical support during the collection period
- Cleaning and processing of data
- Psychometric report reflecting how the items work
- Generating customised school reports
- Student data broken down by gender and/or year level and domain
- Whole of system report
- Project management and support
- All licencing and IP matters
- Additional information as requested

### HOW DOES IT WORK?

- The survey takes approximately one class lesson to complete. Young people taking the survey are supervised by a classroom teacher, principal, or other school adult.
- Completed surveys are held by a secure online data system in the Department for Education.
- Each participating school and school system receives a report that summarises what their students have said on the survey.
- To protect against the identification of students, schools that have less than five students will not receive school results.
- Young people’s participation in the survey is completely voluntary. Any parent can request that their child not take the survey by contacting their classroom teacher or school principal. Students are also told that they can withdraw from taking the survey at any point.

### HOW IS THE INFORMATION USED?

- Schools and communities can discuss the results contained in the reports with others to determine whether the general pattern is expected or not and what next steps might be taken.
- Further information on the use of the data can be found in the summary reports. We also draw your attention to the toolkits which summarise key evidence and information on the domains.

### THE SURVEY IS...

- The survey is a population-level survey.
- It is a measure of multiple aspects of development and supports available to young people.
- It gives governments, education systems, schools and communities important information about the views and needs of young people.
- It can be used to improve supports and services for young people in schools and communities.
- It gives young people the chance to have their voices heard.

### THE SURVEY IS NOT ...

- The survey does not diagnose young people with specific learning disabilities or developmental delays.
- It does not assess the “success” or “failure” of individual children.
- The results do not identify individual children or teachers.
- It is not conducted to compare the “performance” of classrooms or schools.

## FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

Visit [wellbeingcensus.sa.gov.au](https://wellbeingcensus.sa.gov.au) | Email: [education.wec@sa.gov.au](mailto:education.wec@sa.gov.au)