

JULY 2024

Tasmanian Government Submission

*House of Assembly Inquiry into Discrimination
and Bullying in Tasmanian Schools*

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1 Introduction

The Tasmanian Government welcomes the opportunity to make a submission to the Inquiry into Discrimination and Bullying in Tasmanian Schools as announced by the House of Assembly 12 June 2024.

The Department for Education, Children and Young People (DECYP) has a unique role providing universal access to education for all Tasmanian children and young people through our state schools. We represent the whole community and celebrate diversity, promoting inclusive schools. We recognise safe and inclusive learning environments are better for everyone, our staff, our students and our community.

The work our schools are doing is to be celebrated, supporting positive respectful behaviours in our children and young people, staff and the school community. Respect and inclusion in schools is more than just behaviour. As the students at Campbell Town District High School have found, “language matters”. Our language plays a large role in whether people feel included, safe and welcome. Some things are never ok.

This is a factual submission as it relates to the Inquiry Terms of Reference, it provides the opportunity to highlight the resources and supports provided by DECYP and our schools, what is working well and to recognise the important work of our school staff every day and our in-school partnerships and providers.

We recognise discrimination and bullying still occur in some instances and continue to work to improve prevention and responses to unacceptable behaviour. Respectful behaviour in our schools is everyone’s right and everyone’s responsibility. It is up to all of us to eliminate offensive behaviour and create safe, respectful and positive Tasmanian schools.

The Terms of Reference for the Inquiry into Discrimination and Bullying in Tasmanian Schools:

- (a) inquire into and report upon direct and indirect discrimination, prohibited conduct, unequal and disadvantageous treatment, bullying and harassment in Tasmanian schools in regard to students and staff;
- (b) inquire into and report upon the measures necessary to prevent and remedy discrimination and bullying in Tasmanian schools in regard to students and staff;
- (c) examine the obligations and duties of Tasmanian schools under the *Anti-Discrimination Act 1998* and other relevant statutes and policies in regard to students and staff;
- (d) examine and recommend what efforts are being made and should be made towards meeting those obligations by Tasmanian schools in regard to students and staff;
- (e) examine what other legislative or policy reforms may be required to address discrimination and bullying in regard to students and staff;
- (f) determine the impact of discrimination and bullying on student participation, retention and educational outcomes, and on staff recruitment, retention, workplace safety and career development.

2 What do we know about discrimination and bullying?

2.1 Definitions of discrimination and bullying

As per the *Anti-Discrimination Act 1998*, the **definition for discrimination** is where:

*A person treats another person less favourably based on an attribute or characteristic (direct) or imposes a condition, requirement or practice which is unreasonable in the circumstances and disadvantages a group of people (indirect)*¹

It is against the law if the conduct against a person is due to race, age, religious beliefs, sexual orientation or gender identity, family responsibilities, or disability.

Tasmania agreed to the national **definition of bullying** for Australian schools² as outlined in the Department for Education, Children and Young People *Student Behaviour Management Policy*:

Bullying is an ongoing and deliberate misuse of power in relationships through repeated verbal, physical and/or social behaviour that causes physical and/or psychological harm. It can involve an individual or a group misusing their power over one or more persons. Bullying can happen in person, or online, and it can be obvious (overt) or hidden (covert). Bullying behaviour is repeated, or has the potential to be repeated, over time.

Bullying of any form or for any reason can have immediate, medium and long-term effects on those involved, including bystanders.

*Single incidents and conflict or fights between equals, whether in person or online, are not defined as bullying. However, these conflicts still need to be addressed and resolved.*³⁴

Under Tasmanian law bullying can be illegal. It is a crime if someone is physically violent, threatens, stalks or damages or steals property⁵. It is important to note that not all challenging or anti-social behaviour is bullying, for example conflict between people or disliking someone is not bullying⁶. For some students with disability not all behaviours or language are intentional.

Harassment involves a repeated, unwanted pattern of behaviour or course of conduct with the intention of intimidating, humiliating or distressing another person, intruding into their privacy, causing anxiety, offence or other harm. Sexual harassment is against the law, is unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature and can be a one-off event⁷.

Confusion relating to what is bullying, discrimination and harassment can lead to under-reporting, or conversely demands for disciplinary action which may be better solved with alternative forms of behavioural intervention.

¹ *Anti-Discrimination Act 1998* (Tas)

² Australian Schools Anti-Bullying Collective, 2018, Australian Education Senior Officials Committee (AESOC)

³ Bullying. No Way! Australian Schools Anti-Bullying Collective

⁴ *Fair Work Amendment Act 2013* (Cth)

⁵ *Criminal Code Act 1924* (Tas)

⁶ Australian Human Rights Commission 'What is Bullying'

⁷ *Sex Discrimination Act 1984* (Cth)

2.2 Evidence relating to prevalence in schools

Data and information relating to discrimination and bullying from the perspective of both staff and students in Tasmanian Government schools is collected by a number of internal and external sources.

The Student Wellbeing and Engagement Survey is a comprehensive survey undertaken by DECYP each year of students from Years 4 to 12 in Tasmanian Government schools. DECYP also reports annual and quarterly data on attendance, suspensions and student retention in Tasmanian Government schools.

The Tasmanian State Service Employee Survey is an annual survey of all employees across government agencies.

The international Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) report is undertaken every three years and surveys a portion of 15 year olds across the world.

Students

Research from the Australian Schools Anti-Bullying Collective has established that bullying prevalence⁸:

- varies at different times of the year, with a difference between persistent bullying and bullying that is time-limited
- varies across student age ranges, with well-recognised peaks at various stages of certain ages (mid-primary school) and at times of transition (primary to high school)
- may be difficult to establish due to some students' unwillingness to report, or the reluctance to talk about bullying with adults.

Classroom culture and school climate are a key variable for schools to successfully reduce discrimination and bullying. Interventions are more successful when targeted at the peer group social level rather than only at an individual level, and include explicit teaching of school values, positive teacher-student relationships, teacher skills and principal support, and adult role modelling in the school setting⁹.

In 2003 Australia developed an integrated national policy to address violence, bullying and other aggressive behaviours in schools called the National Safe Schools Framework. In 2018 the Australian Student Wellbeing Framework was developed building on the previous safe schools initiatives, to promote positive relationships and support the wellbeing of students and educators within safe, inclusive and connected learning communities. The Student Wellbeing Hub provides schools with the information, resources and strategies they need to build safe, inclusive school cultures and foster positive respectful relationships¹⁰.

The OECD Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) is an international comparative study of student performance and measures the reading, mathematics and science abilities of 15-year-olds from across the world. In the 2022 PISA testing, 690 000 students from across 81 countries took part with 13 437 participating from Australia. The PISA 2022 report¹¹ found:

⁸ Australia's Safe and Supportive School Communities Working Group (now Australian Schools Anti-Bullying Collective)

⁹ Australian Schools Anti-Bullying Collective

¹⁰ The Australian Student Wellbeing Framework, Australian Government Department of Education

¹¹ PISA 2022 Reporting Australia's results – Volume II Student and School Characteristics

- A decrease in the percentage of Australian students by jurisdiction reporting exposure to each of six measured bullying behaviours between 2018 and 2022.
- Demographically bullying was reported
 - more in males than females
 - more from lower socioeconomic than advantaged backgrounds
 - more in regional schools than from remote or major cities
 - more in students born overseas than from those born in Australia
 - more in lower performing students than higher performing students
- The lowest perception of safety in places at school was outside the classroom (e.g. hallway, cafeteria, toilets).

We recognise that although there was a decrease in students reporting exposure to bullying between the 2018 and 2022 PISA reports, Tasmania was reported as having higher levels of bullying behaviours compared with other jurisdictions in Australia¹². As this is a snapshot of a sample of 15 year old students with wide error margins, DECYP examines more detailed sources of information across a wider range of year levels such as the Student Wellbeing and Engagement Survey.

DECYP undertakes an annual Student Wellbeing and Engagement Survey to understand and address issues impacting the wellbeing of our children and young people in the context of their learning. In 2023, the Student Wellbeing and Engagement Survey captured insights from 28 750 students in Years 4 to 12 (77.5 per cent of students enrolled in government schools). Of the four forms of bullying mentioned in the survey (physical, verbal, social and cyberbullying) the proportions of students who reported each form of bullying having a negative impact on their wellbeing has remained the same from 2019 to 2023.

Results from the 2023 DECYP Student Wellbeing and Engagement Survey¹³ showed that:

- Verbal (20 per cent) and social (15 per cent) bullying were more commonly identified as leading to low wellbeing compared with physical (9 per cent) and cyberbullying (8 per cent)
- 83 per cent of students feel safe at school most of the time
- 69 per cent of students felt that teachers and students care about each other and treat each other with respect.

The proportion of students in Tasmanian government schools suspended in 2023¹⁴ was 7.9%, with higher proportions in years 7 to 10. The proportion of students suspended for reasons that are unacceptable behaviours under the Education Act 2016 were:

- Behaviour that is detrimental to the health, safety or welfare of staff or other students (3.7 per cent of all students)
- Threatening behaviour (1.3 per cent)
- Bullying or cyberbullying (0.2 per cent)
- Discrimination (0.1 per cent).

Staff

The Tasmanian State Service undertakes an annual Employee Survey each April and includes questions on inclusion in the workplace and experiences of bullying or sexual harassment.

¹² PISA 2022 Reporting Australia's results – Volume II Student and School Characteristics

¹³ <https://www.decyp.tas.gov.au/wellbeing/student-wellbeing-and-engagement-survey/student-wellbeing-school-satisfaction-data/>

¹⁴ [Student engagement and participation data - Department for Education, Children and Young People \(decyp.tas.gov.au\)](#)

Results from the 2023 TSS report (whole of TSS)¹⁵ showed:

- 80 per cent of respondents agree employees from diverse cultural backgrounds are welcomed and supported
- 58 per cent agree employees with disability are welcomed and supported
- over 70 per cent agree gender or age is not a barrier to success at work
- 21 per cent experienced workplace bullying, predominantly intimidation, exclusion or isolation, psychological harassment or verbal abuse
- 60 per cent did not report the bullying.

2.3 Impacts of discrimination and bullying

We all have a right to feel safe and respected. The impacts of discrimination and bullying can be both short and long-term, influencing a person's self-esteem and confidence to participate in learning, their health and wellbeing, friendships, the community, and employment. Discrimination and bullying impacts not only on those who experience harmful behaviours, but those who undertake the negative behaviour against others and those who witness the negative behaviour.

Many of the negative impacts of bullying and discrimination are similar between those experienced by students and their families, and those experienced by school staff and their families¹⁶. These include^{17,18}:

- Mental health (shame, anxiety, depression, self-esteem, cognitive difficulties, panic attacks)
- Physical health (muscular tension, headaches, fatigue, digestive problems)
- Relationships and social disconnection
- Feel unsafe
- Sense of hopelessness or powerless
- Long term implications for health and achievement

Specific impacts on students and families

Negative impacts on students and their families have been observed relating to:

- School engagement and attendance (school refusal)
- Academic achievement
- Long-term impacts for physical and mental health
- Experiences of contempt and exclusion from peer relationships
- Stress arising through the reporting and disciplinary processes

Specific Impacts on school staff and leadership

Negative impacts have been observed relating to:

- Parental bullying of school staff (physical violence and online)
- Reputational damage (particularly in small communities)
- High staff turnover and low morale
- Leaving the education sector.

¹⁵ [Whole-of-TSS-Results-Report-PDF.pdf \(dpac.tas.gov.au\)](#)

¹⁶ Violence Harassment and Bullying. Australian Human Rights Commission

¹⁷ Bullying. No Way! Australian Schools Anti-Bullying Collective

¹⁸ Guide to Preventing and Responding to Workplace Bullying. Safe Work Australia

2.4 Evidence on how to prevent discrimination and bullying

DECYP supports schools to adopt a number of positive and proactive strategies for inclusive and safe learning and working environments, focusing on leadership, inclusion, student voice, partnerships and support¹⁹. Evidence of what works best in schools includes whole-school approaches, classroom rules and effective classroom management²⁰. Strategies to counter discrimination, harassment and bullying include²¹:

- Establish clear policy and guidelines outlining expectations for the school and workplace
- Set the standard for respectful relationships, behaviour and culture
- Peer mentoring
- Early identification
- Implement reporting and response measures.

3 Obligations of Tasmanian schools

3.1 Our legislative and regulatory obligations

The *Education Act 2016* outlines the right of every child to receive an education and the provision by the State of universal access to education through a government education system, with requirements including eliminating or ameliorating risks to health and safety of students and staff on school premises or attending school activities elsewhere. The Secretary's Instructions under the Act relating to unacceptable behaviours in Tasmanian government schools and discipline include:

- Secretary's Instruction No 3 for Unacceptable Behaviour of Students and Volunteers at, and visitors to, State schools or school activities
- Secretary's Instruction No 4 for Suspension, Exclusion, Expulsion or Prohibition of State school students

The Office of the Education Registrar was established in 2017 in response to the introduction of the *Education Act 2016* and is responsible for:

- registering and regulating non-government schools against the standards contained in *Education Regulations 2017*
- managing the compulsory conciliation conferencing process for non-attendance at government and non-government schools, removing barriers that prevent Tasmanian students from participating in learning and educational opportunities
- regulating home education, which is a legally recognised alternative to school-based education²².

Under the Anti-Discrimination Act 1998 Tasmanian schools are obliged to ensure students and staff are not directly or indirectly discriminated against based on their race, age, religious beliefs, sexual orientation or gender identity, family responsibilities, or disability. Equal Opportunity Tasmania assists the Commissioner fulfil the roles under the Act, including complaints under the Act.

¹⁹ Bullying. No Way! Australian Schools Anti-Bullying Collective

²⁰ Bullying. Telethon Kids Institute, Australia

²¹ Safe Work Australia

²² Office of the Education Registrar, Tasmanian Government

The *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* underpins DECYP's anti-discrimination approach for students with disability. This legislation prohibits discrimination on the grounds of disability across various areas of public life, including education.

The Australian Disability Standards for Education 2005 (the Standards) are legally binding guidelines designed to ensure equal access and participation in education for students with disabilities. They operate under the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* and apply to all education providers in Australia.

The *Work Health and Safety Act 2012* outlines obligations of employers to provide and maintain a safe and healthy working environment for all workers (staff), including managing psychosocial hazards and risks.

Under Standard 4 of the Child Youth Safe Standards (CYS Standards) all schools must ensure "Equity is upheld and diverse needs respected in policy and practice." This means the rights of every child and young person are met, with children and young people being treated with dignity, respect and fairness.

The department has a Duty of Care to manage student safety and safeguard students from harm, including minimising risks, reporting bullying and unacceptable behaviour, and providing support to students who experience harm (including bullying) as outlined in the Duty of Care for Students on Departmental Educational Sites Procedure.

3.2 Jurisdictional education commitments

DECYP is a member of the AESOC²³ Australian Schools Anti-Bullying Collective (ASAC), a key national student wellbeing initiative that supports Australian school communities to prevent and respond to student bullying, through the provision of evidence-informed resources. AESOC approves joint funding from the jurisdictions for the ASAC, and Tasmania's contribution annually is 1.09 per cent (\$22,247.00 for 2024-25).

The ASAC initiative is responsible for delivering the Bullying. No Way! website as well as the annual National Day of Action against Bullying and Violence (NDA). In 2023, 188 Tasmanian schools registered to take part in the initiative (including 146 Government schools).

In 2024, the NDA will evolve to be the Bullying No Way – National Week of Action, to be held from 12 – 16 August 2024.

DECYP's approach to combatting bullying in schools is consistent with the Australian Student Wellbeing Framework and is supported through School and Student Wellbeing Supports and the delivery of Respectful Relationships and Consent Education, which focuses on the prevention of gender based violence (outlined further below).

²³ AESOC stands for Australian Education Senior Officials Committee, which supports the Education Ministers

4 DECYP's approach to preventing and responding to discrimination and bullying in Tasmanian Government schools

In DECYP the rights of children and young people are upheld in all that we do, particularly the right to an education, to influence decisions that affect them, and to be safe from harm to ensure every child and young person is known, safe, well and learning. This is supported through our values of connection, courage, growth, respect and responsibility²⁴.

DECYP is committed to supporting our workforce in an inclusive and supportive environment challenging discrimination and bullying on any grounds.

DECYP has been implementing a wide range of initiatives to support respectful relationships and better behaviours in our schools. Research recognises both prevention and appropriate responses are necessary to counter bullying²⁵ and discrimination.

Clear expectations

DECYP has implemented a range of resources, policies, professional learning and behaviour change initiatives to help prevent and respond to discrimination and bullying in our schools.

The *Student Behaviour Management Policy and Procedure* ensures minimum standards in preventing, responding to and reporting negative behaviours such as bullying across all schools.

The Disability Standards for Education (DSE) play a key and prominent role in shaping our approach to inclusive education. These standards aim to promote equal opportunities for students with disability in educational settings, eliminate discrimination, ensure reasonable adjustments are made, and foster an inclusive educational environment.

The DSE applies to a wide range of educational settings - from preschools and kindergartens to public and private schools, vocational education providers, higher education institutions, and adult and community education providers. This comprehensive coverage ensures that students with disabilities are supported throughout their educational journey.

Our procedures and approach reflect and embed the DSE in five key areas - enrolment, participation, curriculum development, accreditation and delivery, student support services, and the elimination of harassment and victimisation.

The *Use of Mobile Phones by Students at School Policy* outlines restrictions for student use of mobile phones during school hours in Tasmanian Government Schools. Research on the use of mobile phones by students and the impact of cyber-bullying and student wellbeing was considered in the development of the policy. The Tasmanian policy aligns with the growing evidence that excessive use negatively impacts mental health and wellbeing.

The DECYP *Work Health and Safety Policy* outlines our obligations under the *Work Health and Safety Act 2012* to provide and maintain a safe and healthy working environment. This is supported by the Managing Psychosocial Hazards and Risks Procedure, which sets out

²⁴ DECYP Strategic Plan 2024-2030

²⁵ AESOC Australian Schools Anti-Bullying Collective

expectations for designing and managing working environments and behaviours to reduce psychological harm including from bullying, harassment, discrimination, aggression and violence.

All employees are expected to comply with the *State Service Act 2000* Code of Conduct which reinforces and upholds the principles by establishing standards of behaviour and conduct that apply to all employees, including everyone is to be treated with respect and without harassment, victimisation or discrimination. It also requires employees to establish procedures for investigating and determining breaches of the Code.

The DECYP Inclusive Language Guidelines outline how to communicate in Tasmanian government schools to promote respectful relationships to support inclusion and diversity, as required under the *Anti-Discrimination Act 1998*.

Behaviour Change through Curriculum Resources

By teaching our students the importance of respectful behaviours we are working towards breaking the cycle of disrespect and harmful relationships. Our staff and students continue to learn how to take action on bullying and discrimination and not be bystanders.

Across the Australian Curriculum, Respectful Relationships and Consent Education is helping children and young people to build the knowledge and skills to have healthy, respectful and equitable relationships and to actively challenge gender-stereotypes and discrimination.

Our teachers are supported through resource packages, expert-led professional learning opportunities, and a dedicated DECYP Respectful Relationships and Consent Education Project Officer.

Behaviour Change through Professional learning

Disability Standards for Education training emphasises the pivotal role of educators in fostering inclusive education settings. The training offers guidance on making reasonable adjustments and non-discriminatory practices. All new school leaders are made aware of their obligations under the DSE by completing national training modules.

In 2022 a comprehensive professional learning program in trauma-informed practices was developed and made available to all Tasmanian Government school-based staff. More than 3650 school staff have participated in the Trauma Informed Practice in Schools online training modules and approximately 2000 have participated in live training workshops.

The professional learning program to support our workforce includes delivering school-based and regional workshops and self-paced online professional learning programs for staff in schools.

In 2024 DECYP introduced an online organiser for existing and new professional learning and resources for schools that specifically support student wellbeing. Offerings include:

- Trauma Informed Practice
- Respectful Relationships and Consent Education
- Social and Emotional Learning
- Classroom Management and behaviour support
- Student Wellbeing and Engagement Survey: Belonging & School Climate
- Preventing and responding to bullying (including e-Safety Commissioner resources)
- Collaborative support
- Restorative practices.

Behaviour Change in the School Community

The DECYP Respectful Schools – The Line campaign was launched in 2021 and received media promotion via radio, television and online in 2021, 2022 and 2023. It aims to instigate changes in the behaviour of parents and carers towards school staff, including disrespectful online behaviour towards staff such as social media, direct messaging and email.

It is important to not be a bystander and to speak up when you see harmful behaviours.

This campaign is continuing in 2024 with a focus on respectful online behaviour from adults in the school community to school staff.

Reporting and Responding

The *Education Act 2016* and Secretary's Instructions No 3 and 4 outline disciplinary action for unacceptable behaviour at Tasmanian government schools, including for bullying and harassment.

Schools are to follow the DECYP *Student Behaviour Management Policy and Procedure* when responding to unacceptable behaviour, initially applying behavioural responses and restorative approaches. This includes:

- communicating with the family
- engaging the Student Support and Wellbeing Team and Professional Support Staff, to provide support for the student experiencing the unacceptable behaviour, as well as for students with risk-related behaviours
- broader communication including expectations for appropriate behaviour in the school with the school association and community.

If the *Student Behaviour Management Policy* is not effective in dealing with unacceptable behaviour, the principal may suspend the student for two weeks or less. A re-entry to school process follows a period of suspension or exclusion to support respectful behaviours and relationships and re-engage the student in learning.

Student Wellbeing Supports

Schools use their Student Wellbeing and Engagement Survey data to identify wellbeing strengths and challenges at a school level, including bullying, safety and school climate, and use a range of resources to target effort as needed which are fit-for-purpose for their context.

An example of how schools can use their data is from Campbell Town District High School. Secondary students noticed in their survey data there was very little physical violence however language was having an impact on student relationships. They initiated a successful 'Language Matters' campaign within the school, including how language can harm and supporting the use of inclusive language. Key messages include:

- Check in with the other person to make sure your language is landing right.
- Some things are never ok.

DECYP Student Support Services provide schools with supports including Inclusive Practice Teams (including disability supports), Professional Support Staff (including mental health supports), and School Health Nurses.

The Model for Supporting Students Impacted by Trauma is a multi-tiered approach, which supports DECYP's Child and Student Wellbeing Strategy. The Model provides universal, guided,

and intensive support funding for schools to put targeted interventions and supports in place for students impacted by trauma.

DECYP continues to form partnerships to provide a range of programs in schools to address discrimination, bullying and support positive relationships and inclusion including with Working It Out, A Fairer World, Speak Up Stay Chatty. Student wellbeing groups, such as Pride Groups, are supported in schools.

The National Student Wellbeing Program provides supports for our children and young people through the provision of funding for schools to recruit a Chaplain or Student Wellbeing Officer.

Funded Programs to Support Students Impacted by Trauma

It has been demonstrated there is a link between bullying and discriminatory behaviours and traumatic stress, particularly children and young people who have been exposed to trauma and violence may be more likely to bully others and be bullied.²⁶

Under the Model for Supporting Students Impacted by Trauma noted above, DECYP has provided targeted funding to 77 schools to build whole-school trauma informed practice, including access to a new interactive online hub with a range of resources and network opportunities. The Government's commitment and the increased investment (\$24 million in the 2023-24 Budget and the Forward Estimates) to support individual students impacted by trauma has enabled greater support over time, with 455 individual students now supported annually.

Schools who have received funding to support individual students have reported the beneficial impact upon their student's wellbeing and engagement in learning. The observed impacts of the additional funding (as reported by schools in 2023) include:

- increased positive relationships between students and staff
- increased positive peer relationships
- increased social and emotional literacy
- increase in student wellbeing
- increased access to collaborative support from community/external agencies or organisations
- increased access to flexible learning provisions.

Schools have also reported improved learning outcomes for students receiving individual funding support in 2023, including improvements in student attendance, suspension data, behavioural data, and curriculum attainment.

Staff Wellbeing Supports

The DECYP Staff Wellbeing Framework provides guidance and expectations for creating inclusive workplaces where diversity is supported and celebrated, and where staff feel safe, supported and able to flourish, implemented through the Staff Wellbeing and Inclusion Action Plan.

All DECYP staff are expected to comply with the DECYP *Work Health and Safety Policy* and the Managing Psychosocial Hazards and Risks Procedure, including eliminating risks from bullying, harassment, discrimination and violence.

²⁶ Bullying and Trauma. Stop Bullying

All Tasmanian government school Principals undergo mandatory induction training which includes legislative obligations, ethical conduct, and professional standards. These resources are available through the Principal Accountabilities Toolkit and an online hub which includes key resources such as the Respectful Communication Toolkit and obligations under the Disability Standards for Education.

The staff Psychosocial Hub includes policy and regulatory obligations, risk assessment and management resources, and the Safety Reporting System. The Legal Services Unit provides relevant legal and policy information to DECYP employees.

Resources

We continue to provide and update resources to set clear expectations of behaviour and make schools safer for staff, students and their families.

Tasmanian Government Schools continue to engage with resources available through the eSafety Commissioner's online portal including training, cyber safety resources and reporting mechanisms for educators, families and children and young people.

Resources are also available to schools through the School Principal Portal to address student violence (particularly the filming and sharing of fights). The theme of these resources is Break the Silence to End School Violence. See It – Report It – End It. This includes posters, stickers and templated letters that can be used as part of the Toolkit of resources.

To support a nationally consistent approach, many of our schools address bullying and violence by developing support strategies accessed through the Australian Government's Bullying. No Way! Website. Bullying. No Way! is the national anti-bullying website developed by the national Australian Schools Anti-Bullying Collective providing information and resources for young people, schools and families, including understanding, responding to and preventing bullying.

5 Conclusion

Disrespect in schools is crossing the line. In DECYP we want our students and staff safe and well in all our learning environments.

Our evidence indicates over 80 per cent of students feel safe at school most of the time and do not report negative wellbeing impacts from bullying behaviours.

To support our staff, students and families feeling safe at school DECYP has a range of best practice programs, initiatives and resources for staff, students and families and continue to improve our prevention and response practices.

We continue to build staff, student and families' understanding of what constitutes discrimination and bullying, the impacts, and how to prevent negative behaviours in our schools.

Social and cultural norms, modelling of behaviour, polarising and divisive public discourse, unmet needs and societal pressures all play a part in how children and young people see themselves and their place in the world.

Discrimination, harassment and bullying will be most effectively addressed through a 'multi-pronged' approach involving cooperation between students, staff and families, other agencies and support services and community organisations.

Help us to eliminate offensive behaviour towards school staff and students and create safe, respectful and positive environments in schools.