

Conference Schedule



TIME	EVENT
8:45am	Registration and Coffee
9:30 - 9:50am	Official Conference Opening
9:50 - 10:50am	Keynote: Dr Tom Brunzell Advancing positive education together: Meeting the diverse strengths & wellbeing needs of all students
10:50am	Morning tea
11:25 - 12:25pm	Aunty Trish Hill Wall Flourishing Aboriginal Australians in the West
12:25pm	Lunch
1:25 - 2:25pm	Masterclasses: Choose one of three masterclasses. Masterclasses will run concurrently. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Professor Narelle Lemon, Self-care as a strength: Changing how we position "self" Dr Laura Allison, Flourishing Classrooms David Bott, Strategic Design for Wellbeing
2:30 - 3:15pm	Workshops (Round 1) Choose from 6 workshops.
3:25 - 4:10pm	Workshops (Round 2) Choose from 6 workshops.
4:15 - 4:30pm	Reflections and close
4:30 - 5:30pm	Optional networking



Keynote Speakers

Dr **Tom Brunzell**, PhD

Director of Education,
Berry Street Education Model



Advancing positive education together: Meeting the diverse strengths & wellbeing needs of all students

For almost two decades, positive education and wellbeing sciences have increased helpful evidence and practices for schools. For example, we now know that positive education helps us envision our campuses and classrooms as dynamic systems for learning and wellbeing (Allison, Waters, & Kern, 2021), and student wellbeing and staff wellbeing are best enacted as an integrated pursuit (Brunzell, Waters, & Stokes, 2021). However, as our field continues to evolve, we need to ensure that positive education strategies also evolve towards helping students meet their own needs for school engagement in healthy ways. In this keynote, Dr Tom Brunzell will explore findings of new research (Norrish & Brunzell, 2024) which sought to understand next-step vistas to ensure sustainable student engagement with learning. Particularly in proactive response to students' diversity of learning needs, empowerment needs, community needs and Cultural needs—while also acknowledging rich diversity within remote, rural and metro locations—positive education certainly offers viable pathways for educators to differentiate and contextualise within their local school communities.

Dr Tom Brunzell (MST, EdM, PhD) has experience as a teacher, school leader, researcher and education advisor. Currently he is the Director of Education at Berry Street and Honorary Fellow at the University of Melbourne Faculty of Education. Tom presents internationally on topics of transforming school culture, student engagement, trauma-informed practice, wellbeing and positive psychology, and effective school leadership. His book: *Creating Trauma-informed Strengths Based Classrooms*, co-authored with Dr Jacolyn Norrish, is available through Hachette/Jessica Kingsley Publishers, UK, and booksellers world-wide.

Keynote Speakers

Aunty **Trish Hill Wall**

Academic, Coordinator Moorditj Yorga,
Moorditj Mamaan Scholarship,
Curtin University

Flourishing Aboriginal Australians in the West



Addressing the persistent challenges faced by Aboriginal students, this keynote explores the impact of ongoing trauma, particularly evident in the alarming rates of school absenteeism within this community.

Educators face a curriculum that often falls short in adequately addressing the specific needs of Aboriginal people, neglecting Aboriginal heritage and belief systems, necessitating constant adjustments to teaching styles. This presentation delves into the critical issue of the curriculum's failure to meet the specific needs of Aboriginal learners, leading to a perpetual cycle of justifying perceived shortcomings and overcoming predetermined disadvantages.

In this presentation, Trish emphasises the palpable sense of disconnection from mainstream educational approaches, where the "white ways" of thinking dominate, limiting the space for Aboriginal students to assert ownership of their learning experiences. This keynote will explore the research findings on flourishing among Aboriginal people, asserting their fundamental human right to opportunities that foster healthy and flourishing lives, even in the face of adversity. Join us in this keynote as we navigate the path toward a more culturally sensitive, empowering, and inclusive education for Aboriginal students.

Trish Hill-Wall is a Wadandi Bibbulmun woman from the Southwest of Western Australia, and belongs to the to the Wilmen, Ballardong, Koreang, Minang and Wadandi language groups of the Nyungar Nation, and has ties to Wongi (Kalgoorlie) country, Yamatji (Geraldton) and Broome. She is a senior Elder in her community and has been taken through Womans Business. The Whadjuk Elders have authorised Trish to speak about her country and culture on behalf of her people. She belongs to the 'Stolen Generation' that was taken away under the 1905 Act when she was just two years old and was raised in Sister Kate's Orphanage until she turned nine. Trish has four children and ten grandchildren, and she firmly believes that the unfortunate experiences she endured during her childhood will not dictate her life or her children's future. Trish coordinates 31 Aboriginal women pursuing their first degree, and she wrote the first Clinical Aboriginal Mental Health Practitioner degree for Curtin. She lectures across disciplines, including the medical school, and is involved in many Category 1 research projects. Trish has diverse and vast experience working within the Aboriginal community. She has recently completed her first book, which will be utilised as part of her exegesis toward completing her PhD.

Masterclasses



Professor **Narelle Lemon**

Vice-Chancellor Professoriate Research Fellow & Professor in Education, Edith Cowan University

Self-care as a strength: Changing how we position “self”

Self-care is the proactive actions you take to develop, maintain, and protect your wellbeing, wellness and health underpinned by diverse wellbeing science, but so many of us don't know this or what it can look like as teachers. This presentation talks through self-care as a strength and brings together 5 dimensions for agency of I- we and us. We will explore wellbeing science in action through mindful awareness, self-compassion, habits, time, and empowerment as the how of self-care that allows you to be curious with what can be possible while empowering you as a teacher inside and outside of the educational context.

Professor Narelle Lemon is a VC Professoriate Research Fellow Edith Cowan University, Perth, Australia. Previous to moving to Perth, Narelle was Associate Dean Education in the School of Social Sciences, Media, Film and Education at Swinburne University of Technology, Melbourne, and is best known for her work in Pedagogy of Belonging across. Narelle is an interdisciplinary scholar across the fields of arts, education, and positive psychology. Her research expertise is in fostering wellbeing literacy in the contexts of K-12 schools, initial teacher education, higher education, and community education. Narelle focuses on capacity building in wellbeing and self-care of proactive action across diverse areas of evidence-based wellbeing science in order to flourish. Narelle blogs, posts, grams and podcasts as a part of her networked scholar practices.

Masterclasses



Dr Laura Allison

Chief Psychologist
Catholic Education Western
Australia

Flourishing Classrooms

To progress wellbeing improvement in schools, many are contemplating how they can be more effective and intentional with the resources they have. A positive systems approach with multiple action pathways is one high impact approach that can maximise the efforts of schools and effect sustained wellbeing change for both students and staff. In this masterclass, Laura will offer how targeting the individual and the collective through systems informed positive psychology can be approached in a school context. With real world examples and resources to take with you, school leaders, mental health practitioners and educators will be empowered to put academia into action and strategically influence their classrooms and schools to become flourishing systems.

Dr Laura Allison is the Chief Psychologist for Catholic Education in Western Australia and a Sessional Lecturer for Notre Dame University delivering the Leading Wellbeing in Education Professional Certificate. Laura has worked in education across the Government, Catholic and Independent sectors and has been the Director of Wellbeing in two schools. Laura sits on numerous State and National steering and advisory committees for mental health, wellbeing, and suicide prevention. She has expertise relating to school psychology, mental illness prevention and wellbeing promotion and was the recipient of the 2015 WA School Psychologist of the Year Award. Laura completed her PhD with the University of Melbourne, researching a system informed positive psychology, context-focused approach to develop the Flourishing Classroom System Observation Framework. Laura's research on positive systems has been published in scientific journals and academic books.

Masterclasses



David Bott

Director,
The Wellbeing Distillery

Strategic Design for Wellbeing

Over the past decade, the team from The Wellbeing Distillery have been supporting schools and governments around the world to design and implement high-impact wellbeing strategy.

Drawing on his experience in working with educators from over 1,000 schools, David Bott, will outline and share TWD's Strategic Design for Wellbeing Process. Refined over many years, this process allows a school leadership team to leverage core values, cultural perspectives, and current realities to craft a unique wellbeing vision for their school. This vision is then brought to life by designing and executing annual and always-on strategy elements for five key strategic partners within the school: leadership, operational staff, educators, students, and parents.

Participants will gain valuable experience in strategic wellbeing design, explore case-studies of schools that have successfully implemented this process and leave equipped to begin crafting their own wellbeing strategy.

David Bott is a sought-after speaker, author and education consultant who works with government organisations and some of the world's leading schools to help guide wellbeing vision and strategy. As an expert in applied wellbeing science, David has supported thousands of educators from hundreds of schools around the world in designing and implementing system-level approaches to wellbeing and cultural change.

David is the Co-Founder and Director of The Wellbeing Distillery, based in Melbourne, Australia. David was a founding member of the UAE Government's Dubai Future Council for Education, is a Director on the PESA (Positive Education Schools Association) board, and has published in academic journals and industry periodicals.

David's bestselling book, '10 Things Schools Get Wrong: And How We Can Get Them Right' was published in 2020. David has led significant projects, partnering with government and non-government organisations, to embed wellbeing science in school systems in the UAE and Hong Kong.

Workshops

Michelle Falzon

Masters of Applied Positive Psychology and Coaching Psychology.
Positive Wellbeing Education

Thriving Together: Enhancing Staff Wellbeing in Education through an Existential Wellbeing Framework.

This presentation introduces an innovative approach to enhancing staff wellbeing in education through an existential wellbeing framework. Grounded in positive psychology and existential philosophy, this framework offers a holistic perspective on wellbeing, emphasising the importance of meaning, purpose, and self-awareness. By integrating existential principles into staff support programs, schools can cultivate environments that foster resilience, self-compassion, and authentic engagement. This session will explore the theoretical underpinnings of the framework, practical strategies for implementation, and evidence of its effectiveness in improving staff wellbeing. Attendees will gain insights into how an existential wellbeing framework can transform educational settings, promoting flourishing and thriving for staff and students alike.

Dr Deb Perich, Ben Saulsman & Mia Bennison

Catholic Education Western Australia

Strategic Wellbeing Implementation – The formula for success!

Schools are increasingly concerned with how to respond to mental health concerns in their communities and promote wellbeing, yet many are unsure how to effectively achieve this. Catholic Education WA (CEWA) has developed a Strategic Wellbeing Framework to support CEWA schools in this pursuit, bringing together the science of wellbeing in education, with the science of implementation and the science of improvement. The CEWA Strategic Wellbeing Framework makes tangible for schools how they can make wellbeing visible, measurable, and improvable within their context, for all members of their school community. In order for successful outcomes, we need to address the why as school approaches to wellbeing are infinitely customisable, as there is no one-size-fits-all. Such approaches are built upon the needs and aspirations within the school context and rely on the effective fit, enabling the context and implementation fidelity of interventions. This presentation will explore the multiple pathways to wellbeing improvement and the wellbeing change cycle as outlined in the CEWA strategic wellbeing framework. Participants attending this session will leave feeling more equipped to implement sustainable, effective wellbeing change in their own school and classrooms. Starting you on the cyclical and ongoing journey through the change process which will become an integral part of how you work 'Think Big and Start Small'.

Workshops

Amanda Madden

BBus, GradDipEd, MEd, PhD candidate.
Edith Cowan University.

What does well-being mean to me? Adolescents Perspectives of well-being

This research explored adolescent perceptions of well-being and well-being programs in Western Australian Secondary schools. Using interviews and a survey, 37 adolescents were asked what they understood well-being to be and the effective components of school-based programs. Adolescents understood well-being involved connections, mental stability, capacity to cope and their own uniqueness; however, they also thought well-being programs were not effective and identified that classroom teachers should not teach well-being. This research highlights that we need effective well-being programs that students want to engage with. Implications for policy are evident especially in terms of student voice and future longitudinal studies.

Brad Gardner & Chris Miles

Director of the Wynne Centre for Health and Wellbeing, and Head of the On Queenslea Drive Program, Christ Church Grammar School

The Christ Church Journey

Explore Christ Church Grammar School's holistic approach to student wellbeing. This workshop will highlight the collaborative efforts across key areas within the school, emphasising the pivotal role that the Wynne Centre for Health and Wellbeing as well as the Year 9, On Queenslea Drive Program plays in the positive development of each student. Presenters Brad Gardner and Chris Miles will provide insights into the transformative experiences that shape our students' journey and the structured support provided throughout. Insights will be given into the Year 10 health and wellbeing program, designed to equip students with the adult skills required for the challenges of Years 11, 12 and beyond. Attendees of the workshop will gain valuable insights into the significance of a holistic wellbeing journey and the indispensable role of Rites of Passage in our community.

Workshops

Gillian Smith

Educator, Sessional University Academic, M.Ed Research Candidate.
Edith Cowan University.

How do Western Australian Teachers Hold Space for Hope?

How is hope maintained through the complex challenges and demands of teaching in 2024? What are teachers thinking and doing that enables them to hold space for hope? This session will unpack what Western Australian teachers say helps them to stay optimistic. Drawing on insights from a mixed-methods study, the hopeful constructs that bolster teacher well-being in the face of complex practice environments are explored. Stemming from an in-depth analysis of teachers' perceptions of young children's challenging behaviour, the findings from survey data of 130 Western Australian Kindergarten to Year 2 teachers sheds light on how some teachers can cultivate an optimistic and hopeful stance. Through an examination of collective teacher narratives and lived classroom experiences, the workshop offers unique and recent insights into Western Australian teacher's perspectives, aiming to connect participants with the local stories of resilience and flourishing.

Tasha Lawton

Director of Programs, Talk NOW!!

The secret to tacking sensitive topics in the classroom

Join us for a dynamic and immersive workshop tailored for primary and secondary school teachers and wellness educators. Dive into evidence-based activities aimed at engaging and empowering students in understanding respectful relationships. Topics covered include identity, gender, stereotypes, rejection, diversity, consent, inclusivity and vaping. Explore the use of peer-to-peer videos and learn strategies to facilitate discussions on these sensitive topics while maintaining a consistent whole-school message. Through hands-on activities and discussions, educators will gain practical tools to navigate these critical conversations, ensuring a safe and inclusive learning environment. Get ready to step outside your comfort zone and embark on a transformative journey towards building respectful relationships in your school community. Together, let's empower our students to create a culture of respect and understanding.