

Impact Statement 2017

At EdConnect, we continuously monitor our service delivery and performance to ensure that we are making a measurable difference to the communities we support.

We measure the quality of relationships between our volunteers and the students they mentor, volunteers and their interactions with schools, volunteers' relationship with EdConnect staff and schools' relationships with EdConnect and its staff. We also measure the match quality between students and mentors - a crucial factor in sustaining ongoing relationships.

Our Mission is to prepare and connect intergenerational volunteers with disadvantaged or at-risk young people for education success and wellbeing. We aspire to change lives and reconnect generations, making communities stronger and their people more resilient. Ultimately, we connect volunteers who want to make a difference within the school community with students who need assistance and guidance.



**Volunteers helping
students thrive**

Made possible with support from
The Kimberley Foundation.

The Need



EdConnect brings together three important groups in each local community – schools, students and volunteers – in a model that is mutually beneficial and positively impacts on the unmet need of each group.

Schools

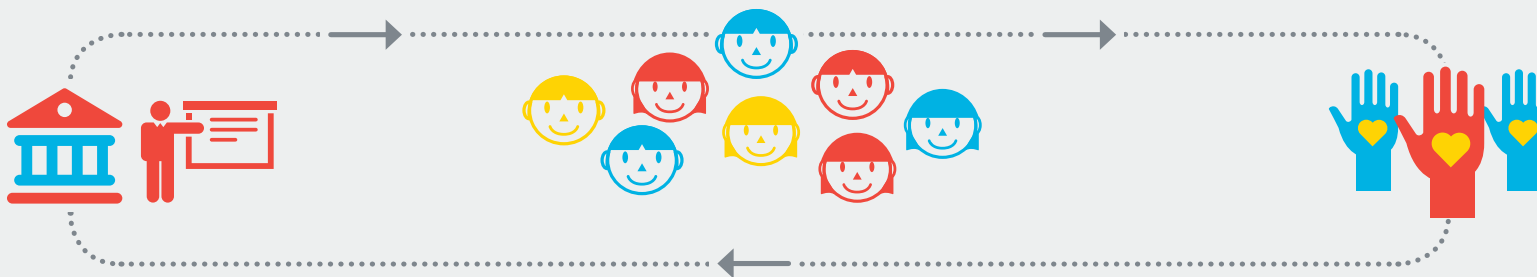
School life is complex and challenging, with limited additional resources to recruit, screen, train and support volunteers. Australian teachers work longer hours, and have bigger classes, than the global average, and our school systems have some of the most inequitable funding levels in the OECD¹, which increases the workload pressure in our most disadvantaged schools.

Students

Young people are increasingly struggling in school with changed family structures, increased reporting of learning and/or special needs, cultural differences and socio-economic disadvantages. Almost one in seven (13.9%) 4 to 17 year-olds were assessed as having mental disorders in 2015, which is equivalent to 560,000 Australian children and adolescents.²

Volunteers

Australia's fastest growing age group is 65 years and older³ and young people are facing high unemployment and/or underemployment.⁴ Volunteering provides countless benefits from fostering a sense of belonging and community connectedness to maintaining mental and physical health. For all generations volunteering offers new skills, interests, networks, a renewed sense of purpose and potential pathways for employment.



Our Impact

We use a range of tools to measure our impact including school and volunteer surveys, consultations and quarterly data collections by our Liaison Officers.

Since 2015 EdConnect has provided an annual Social Impact report informing our stakeholders and funders of the program outcomes.

As we offer a unique mentoring program, we also engage Applied Research Consulting, an independent research consultancy, to bridge the gap between research and practice and to help our mentoring programs make stronger matches and demonstrate the outcomes they produce. This approach provides rigorous and comprehensive survey tools to analyse mentoring outcome evaluations and inform program development.

 **12,980**
supported students

 **1,034**
volunteers

 **1,986**
hours a week

Equating to a value of:
.....
\$3,456,434
.....
returned to the Australian community⁵
.....

For every
\$1.00
we invested
into EdConnect
Australia
we returned
\$3.98
in value back to
the Australian
Community.⁶



Student Impact



Each school allocates a School Coordinator who reports annually on the impact of volunteers on their school students.⁷

In 2017 the School Coordinators reported the following impacts:



99%

improved social skills



96%

improved literacy



89%

improved numeracy



98%

improved concentration



99%

improved self-esteem & confidence



88%

reduction in disruptive behaviour



93%

increased participation in school activities



93%

improved student/school relationships

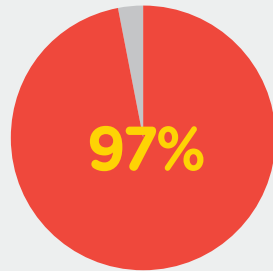
“It has given me the opportunity to connect with my local school which may not have happened without the program. The backing of EdConnect gives added security to me and the school.”

EdConnect Volunteer

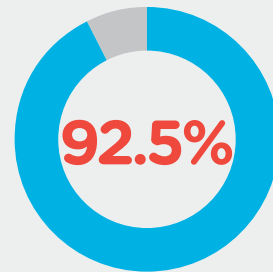
The Impact on Volunteers

Every year, EdConnect Australia conducts research with its volunteers to determine how they are faring.⁸

Research results for 2017:



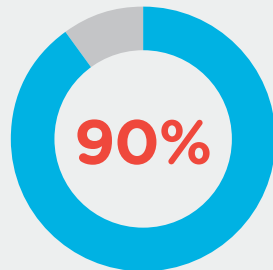
of volunteers rated their volunteer **experience** very positively



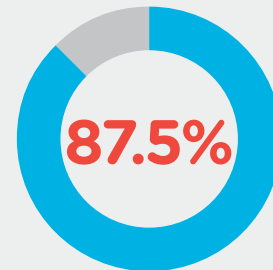
of volunteers value their **relationship with their EdConnect Liaison Officer**

96.5%

of volunteers reported that they **enjoy** working within their chosen school/s



of volunteers will be **returning** to the same school in 2018



of volunteers reported that **EdConnect's assistance was vital** in connecting them to the school/s

Our research also clearly shows there are direct benefits for volunteers:



96.5% ↑

of volunteers reported that volunteering with us **improves their mental health and wellbeing**



87.5% ↑

of volunteers reported that volunteering with us **improves their physical health and wellbeing**



85% ↑

of volunteers reported that volunteering with us has **helped them to develop new skills**



87% ↑

of volunteers **feel more connected to their communities** through volunteering with EdConnect

The Impact on Schools

EdConnect Australia also conducts annual research with its member schools to determine how they are faring.



Research results for 2017:

98%

of teachers **support** our volunteering program

98%



percentage of schools reporting they are **in need** of our programs

The Top 3 benefits as rated by schools were:

- 1.** Being able to offer one to one **assistance** to those who need it most
- 2.** Having a **positive older role model** for children to interact with
- 3.** Being able to **introduce a program/project** that would otherwise be difficult without the help from EdConnect Australia Volunteers



reported that we **provide useful guidance** and support

“A fantastic program and our school has been fortunate to secure amazing volunteers who have helped build confidence and resilience in our students”

Carnaby Rise Primary School

Endnotes

- 1 Australian Education Union 2016, Research snapshot 2016 : teachers and workloads. Briefing Paper [NP] <http://www.aeufederal.org.au/application/files/1414/7754/3543/AEU-BP-RS2016-Teachers.pdf>
- 2 Lawrence D, Johnson S, Hafekost J, Boterhoven De Haan K, Sawyer M, Ainley J, Zubrick SR (2015) The Mental Health of Children and Adolescents. Report on the second Australian Child and Adolescent Survey of Mental Health and Wellbeing. Department of Health, Canberra. [https://health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/9DA8CA21306FE6EDCA257E2700016945/\\$File/child2.pdf](https://health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/9DA8CA21306FE6EDCA257E2700016945/$File/child2.pdf)
- 3 Aged & Community Services Australia (ACSA) (2015): Social Isolation and Loneliness among older Australians, Issues Paper No. 1, October 2015, available at: <http://www.agedcare.org.au/publications/social-isolation-and-loneliness>.
- 4 Graduate Careers Australia (2014): Graduate Destinations 2014: A report on the work and study outcomes of recent higher education graduates: http://www.graduatecareers.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/Graduate_Destinations_Report_2014_FINAL.pdf.
- 5 Determining the value we returned to the Australian community was calculated using Volunteering WA's calculator - <https://volunteeringwa.org.au/resources/volunteer-benefits-calculator/>. The figure of \$43.51 is used as the replacement cost of volunteers' labour in WA and is averaged out across all given age groups. Calculated using a weekly volunteer figure of 1,986 volunteer hours' x 40 weeks (4 school terms minus school holidays) to give a total of 79,440 hours per year. The total hours per year (79,440) is then multiplied by the hourly rate of \$43.51
- 6 Return for every \$1 invested: Calculated by dividing the value returned to the community by the average expenditure of the last two financial years (2016/17 and 2017/18) which totals \$888,992.
- 7 EdConnect Australia 2018, School Survey 2017: Summary Report on Findings, Perth.
- 8 EdConnect Australia 2018, Volunteer Survey 2017: Summary Report on Findings, Perth.



“The volunteer program provides assistance to students that would not otherwise be possible. Senior students are provided with individual tutoring, individual classes and programs are also supported. The program is extremely beneficial.”

Glenroy College

“Being able to establish a rapport with a child and I can tell that they enjoy reading to me. Seeing the gradual improvement in their abilities and confidence. Knowing that I have made, even the tiniest difference to a child’s day is unbelievably rewarding.”

EdConnect Volunteer



**Want to find out more about us,
or thinking about volunteering?**

Visit www.edconnectaustralia.org.au

Call Western Australia – 08 9444 8646
Victoria/New South Wales – 1800 668 550

Email edconnect@edconnect.org.au

f **Connect** facebook.com/EdConnectAustralia