

Impact Statement 2016

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 – this is crucial 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 match volunteers who want to foster a difference within school students who need assistance and guidance.



**Volunteers helping
students thrive**

MADE POSSIBLE THANKS TO THE SUPPORT OF THE KIMBERLEY FOUNDATION,
NEWMAN'S OWN FOUNDATION, WILLIAM BUCKLAND FOUNDATION
AND GANDEL PHILANTHROPY.

The Need



EdConnect brings together three groups – schools, students and volunteers – in a model that is mutually beneficial and addresses the unmet need of each group.

Schools

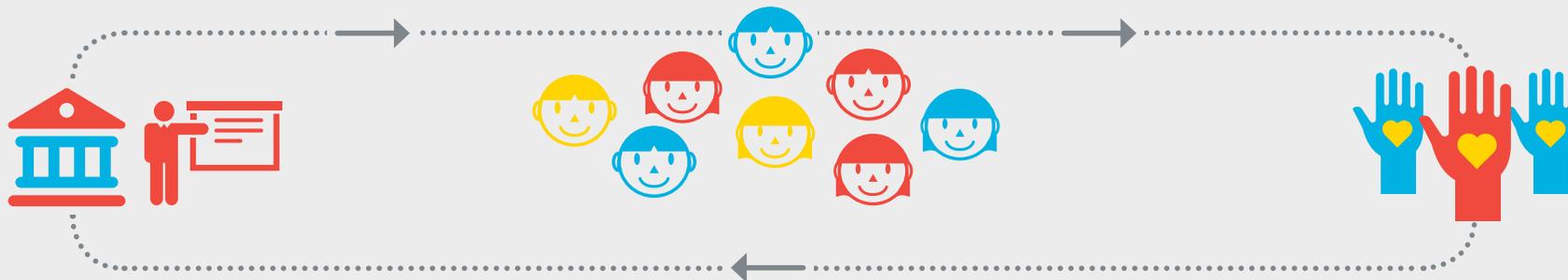
School life is complex and challenging, leaving schools with little opportunity and resources to recruit, screen, train and support volunteers. Australian teachers work longer hours, and have bigger classes, than the global average, and our school systems have some of the most inequitable funding levels in the OECD,¹ 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 the previous 12 months. This 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 unemployment⁴ and/or underemployment. 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 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.

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 mentoring programs make stronger matches and demonstrate the outcomes they produce.

Applied Research Consulting provides rigorous and comprehensive survey tools to analyse mentoring outcome evaluations and promote mentoring program development.

 **11,409**
supported students

 **946**
volunteers

 **1,866**
hours a week

Equating to a value of:
.....
\$3,247,586
.....
returned to the Australian community⁵
.....

For every
\$1.00
we invested
into EdConnect
Australia
we returned
\$3.88
in value back to
the Australian
Community.⁶



Student Impact



School Coordinators report annually on the impact of volunteers on school students.⁷

In 2016 the School Coordinators reported the following impacts:



89%

improved social skills



91%

improved literacy



87%

improved numeracy



93%

improved concentration



100%

improved self-esteem & confidence



93%

reduction in disruptive behaviour



91%

increased participation in school activities



97%

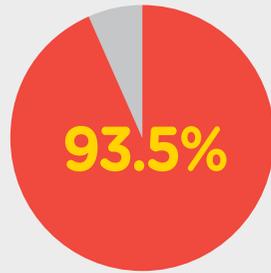
improved student/school relationships

“It’s the friendship – security, trust, guidance and mateship. My mentee wants to take me home to his place and live with him and his family.”

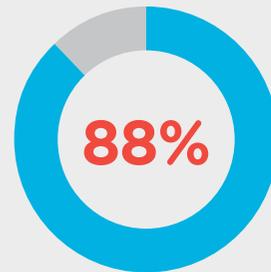
The Impact on Volunteers

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

Research conducted at the end of 2016 shows the following:



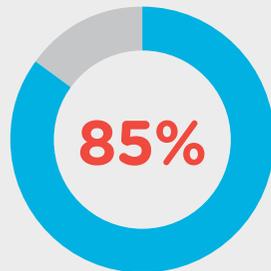
of volunteers rated their volunteer **experience** very positively



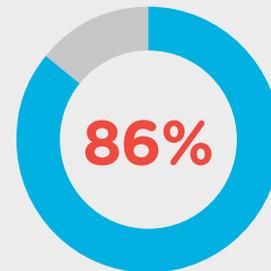
of volunteers value their **relationship with their EdConnect Liaison Officer**

96%

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



of volunteers will be **returning** to the same school in 2017



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% ↑

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



86% ↑

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



86.5% ↑

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



97% ↑

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 conducted at the end of 2016 shows the following:

99%

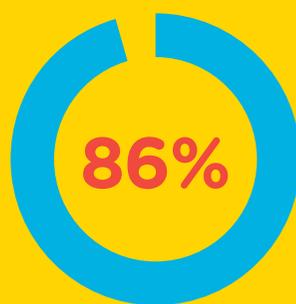
of teachers support our volunteering program

95%

percentage of schools reporting they are in need of our programs



of schools identified **one-to-one support** as a key benefit of our programs



agreed that a key benefit of our program was **providing a positive older role model**



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

“We love having EdConnect volunteers in the school. They are well-trained and ready to go with all relevant checks in place and they have a positive outlook and desire to make a difference.”

Endnotes

- 1 Australian Education Union 2016, Research snapshot 2016 : teachers and workloads. Briefing Paper [NP]
<http://www.aefederal.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 VolunteeringWA'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 1,866 volunteer hours' x 40 weeks (4 school terms minus school holidays) to give a total of 74,640 hours per year. The total hours per year (74,640) 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 (2015/16 and 2016/17) which totals \$835,430.
- 7 EdConnect Australia 2017, School Survey 2016: Summary Report on Findings, Perth.
- 8 EdConnect Australia 2017, Volunteer Survey 2016: Summary Report on Findings, Perth.



“Mentoring with EdConnect is one of the best decisions I’ve ever made for myself. Being able to connect with my mentee and making a positive impact on her life gave me a real sense of purpose and achievement. It was fantastic to know that my mentee looked forward to our weekly sessions and I realised how easy it is to make such a dramatic impact on another’s life. It’s a really rewarding experience to be able to give back to the community and I would gladly recommend it to anyone.”



Visit www.edconnectaustralia.org.au to register your interest.

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Or email us at
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