

IMPROVING WELLBEING THROUGH STUDENT PARTICIPATION AT SCHOOL

Australian Research Council Linkage Project (LP 140100540)

ABOUT THE PROJECT

Over recent years there has been significant interest in *wellbeing* in schools. At the same time, international evidence has pointed to the benefits of *participation* for children and young people, including in the context of education. Although there is now extensive scholarship around both children's wellbeing *and* participation, the links between these two fields have not been systematically investigated. Further, very little is currently known about how participation is perceived, practiced and evaluated in Australian schools, nor about how such participation potentially impacts on social and emotional wellbeing. A key finding of previous ARC Linkage research on *Wellbeing in Schools* conducted by the CCYP (LP 110200656) found that students highlighted the importance of having a say at school for fostering their wellbeing.

The aim of this research is to strengthen knowledge, policy and practice concerning student participation at school by identifying whether and how such participation improves students' social and emotional wellbeing. The project will investigate: (a) how student participation is currently articulated in education policy in Australia; (b) how students and teachers currently understand and experience participation; (c) which elements of participation at school are core predictors of student wellbeing; and (d) whether Honneth's modes of recognition (cared for, respected and valued) mediate the relationship between participation and wellbeing. The research will take place in government and non-government secondary schools in metropolitan and regional NSW and the ACT. A key output of the research will be a tool to measure participation in schools.

PROJECT TIMEFRAME

September 2014 – September 2017

PROJECT PARTNERS

[♦University of Central Lancashire \(UCLAN\)](#) ♦[NSW Advocate for Children & Young People](#) ♦ [NSW Department of Education and Communities \(DEC\)](#) ♦ [Catholic Schools Office, Lismore \(CSO\)](#)

RESEARCH TEAM

Professor Anne Graham – Chief Investigator (CCYP – SCU) ♦ Dr Sharon Bessell – Chief Investigator (ANU) ♦ Associate Professor Judy Cashmore – Chief Investigator (USYD) ♦ Professor Nigel Thomas - (UCLAN) ♦ Dr Ruth Habgood (NSW Commission for Children & Young People) ♦ Dr Lyn Gardon (NSW Department of Education and Communities) ♦ Dr Paul Thornton (Catholic Schools Office, Lismore) ♦ Dr Catharine Simmons – Research Associate (CCYP - SCU) ♦ Dr Donnah Anderson – Research Associate (CCYP - SCU) ♦ Alison Moss – Research Assistant (CCYP – SCU)

