

MindMatters

A Programme for the Promotion of Mental Health in Primary and Secondary Schools: German-Language Adaptation and Pilot-Study Results¹

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MindMatters, a programme developed in the late 1990s by three Australian universities and supported by the Commonwealth Department of Health and Aged Care, follows the overall aims of mental health promotion and the prevention of mental illness. MindMatters hopes to encourage (1) respect and tolerance in the classroom, (2) schools to develop a supportive inner-school environment, as well as instigating or furthering networks/ partnerships between schools and their external environments, thereby (3) contributing to better learning and teaching, which in turn improves the educational quality of the school. The German adaptation (<http://www.mindmatters-schule.de>), addresses pupils and teachers, heads of schools, non-academic members of staff and all persons involved in the school environment alike. School development material covers issues such as mental health promotion management in schools, suicide prevention and the opening up or computer linking of schools. As a central theme, school books contain development and maintenance of friendships, dealing with stress, mobbing/bullying, experiencing grief and loss, as well as areas of mental problems. They can be used by pupils in ordinary classwork and are suitable for various subjects and school-years. The programme was successfully piloted and externally evaluated in 32 German and Swiss secondary schools

¹ MindMatters is a joint project between the BARMER Ersatzkasse (Alternative Medical-Insurance Company), Gemeindeunfallversicherungsverband (Community Accident-Insurance Group) from Westphalia – Lippe, Rhineland, and Hanover, in Germany, and the Swiss Federal Health Authority

