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Abstract

Author biographies for the volume 7, number 1 issue of the Journal of Student Engagement: Education Matters, 2017.



Author Biographies

Kerrie Delany

Kerrie is passionate about children learning to read and enjoying reading. Studying psychology has provided the means to specifically assess students, in order to guide parents and teachers toward gaining specialised assistance most suited to a child's individual needs. Participants in this research highlighted that it is critical to acknowledge the manifesting symptoms and pervasive impact of dyslexia on all aspects of a child's life. Therefore, as a school counsellor, Kerrie also aims to make a practical difference, one child at a time, one school at a time, by preventing negative psychological consequences of a child struggling to read. As neurological research becomes more sophisticated, Kerrie plans to continue to advocate for a strategic intervention regime at an educational and health systems level. Together, further research and practical everyday intervention can work toward improving outcomes for all struggling readers and their families.

Kym-Myree Earle

Kym-Myree Earle is a school counsellor for the NSW Department of Education working in rural schools. She has spent her working life working with traumatised children over a long period within child protection and school contexts. The Graduate Diploma in Psychology (School Counselling) from the University of Wollongong provided an opportunity to intensively study child and adolescent psychology, often from a trauma perspective. This course exposed the need for school counsellors and other helpers working with children who are traumatised, or have mental illnesses, to maintain good mental health to effectively assist these young people with their concerns. This research project provided the first snapshot into the level of stress and burnout being experienced by NSW school counsellors. It also provides both opportunity for further research and indicates mindfulness practices may lower the burnout experienced by school counsellors.

Leanne Foubister

Leanne is a primary school educator who has recently completed her Graduate Diploma in Psychology and Certificate in School Counselling at the University of Wollongong. She became a teaching professional with the specific goal of becoming a school counsellor to provide educational,



social and emotional support for all students regardless of their abilities or circumstances. Leanne believes that promoting mental wellbeing within the school community directly correlates with positive educational outcomes. In her role as a school counsellor she looks forward to helping to empower her young clients to discover their own potential through a range of evidence-based therapeutic interventions, which include solution-focused practices and cognitive-based therapies.

Amanda Rodd

Amanda is a school counsellor currently working in public schools in NSW, Australia. She decided to undertake a qualification in school counselling after teaching in high schools for about 12 years. Amanda has a passion for psychology and human behavior, but also education, and school counselling was the perfect way to combine both passions. Since being in the job, she has come to realise the potential for stress and burnout in the school counselling position. Her personal interest in health and wellbeing contributed to the decision to explore the area of school counsellor burnout and the association between burnout, mindfulness and career-sustaining behaviours, with consequent development of understanding in this area. It is hoped that this research will contribute to a deeper understanding about the potential of reducing burnout through mindfulness practices and career sustaining behaviours, and combined with future research, provide evidence based information for the development of professional learning plans and professional learning activities in the education system for school counsellors.

Suzanne Schwebel

Suzanne Schwebel is a second year Graduate Diploma in Psychology student at the University of Wollongong in the school counsellor in training scholarship program. Her original intentions always included a career in the field of psychology, but detoured into teaching when she became interested in the field of educational psychology. The scholarship enabled Suzanne the opportunity to continue her journey into the field of psychology, where she hopes to be in a better position to assist the wellbeing needs of students in a way she felt unable to in her capacity as a teacher. Her research has enlightened her to the increasing amount of research that is providing evidence of the significant connection between spirituality and overall wellbeing, particularly in the area of mental health, and she plans to be an advocate for promoting further education and training in this area in the fields of both education and psychology.