

# **Promoting Mental Health and Well-being in Schools**

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There has been a growth of interest in psychological health and well-being amongst educational professionals, who increasingly are seeking additional training to equip them to deliver interventions to support distressed young people and their families. Although mental health services are inaccessible for many, there are indications that the majority who receive help do so through the education system. This presentation will consider the growing international prevalence of child and adolescent mental health problems, with discussion of risk and protective factors and the interplay between the two. The role of schools in prevention and early intervention will be discussed, in the context of a critical review of research into the systemic factors linked to best practice. Key issues that will be explored relate to the complexity of presenting problems, the evidence-base for particular therapeutic approaches, the transportability of results derived from empirical research studies into real world settings, the need to build systemic capacity and the professionals best placed to provide help. It argued that school/educational psychologists can have an important role in helping to define the nature of professional support that is most effective at individual, systems and policy levels as well as contributing to research.