



Planning for Implementation



With delivery partners



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Be You offers a whole learning community approach to supporting mental health and wellbeing in your early learning service or school.

This workbook accompanies the [Planning for Implementation modules](#) on the Be You website. If you haven't started the modules, we recommend doing so before returning to this workbook.

The concepts in this workbook can be applied to early learning and school age care settings of any size, including medium and large providers, as well as standalone services. Throughout, we'll use the term 'learning community' to refer to these settings.



Remember

Your Be You Consultant is available to support you throughout your implementation process. You'll find contact information on the final page of this workbook.

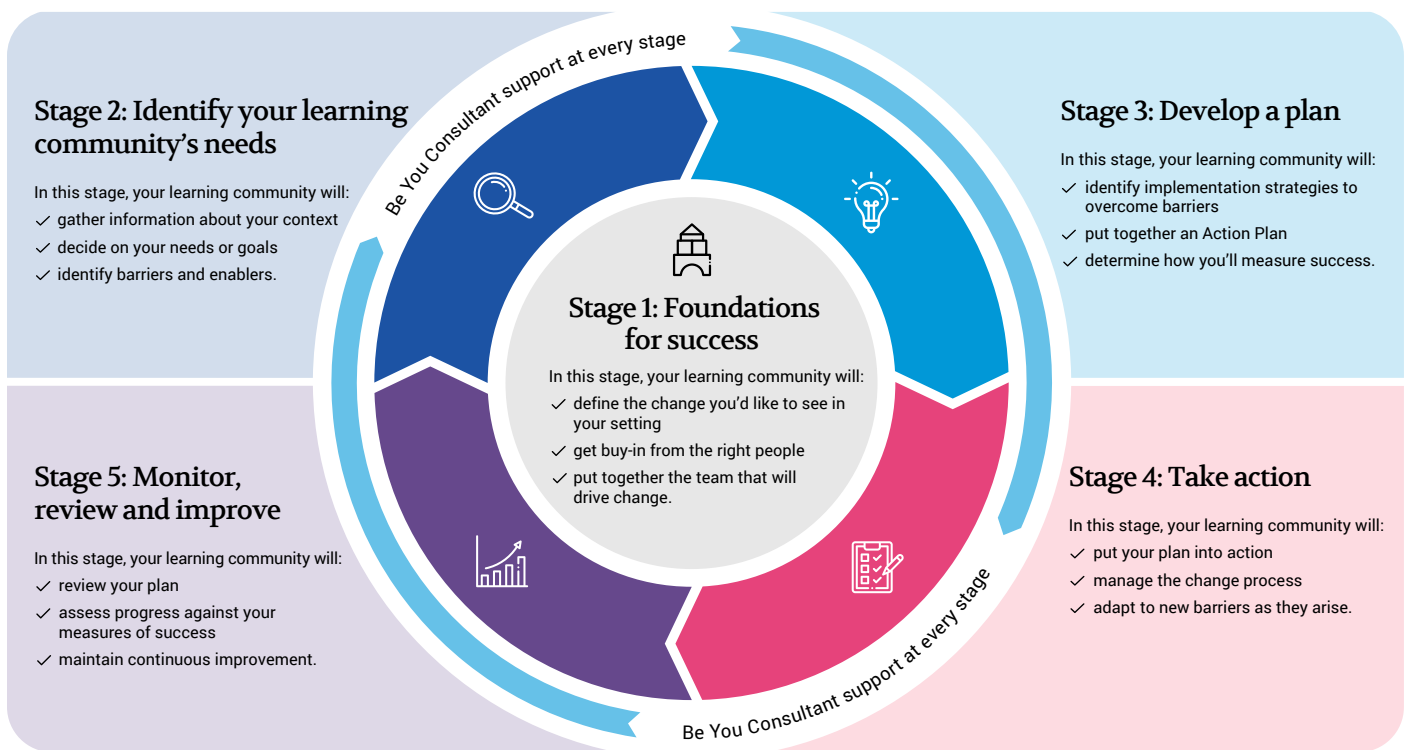
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Implementation matters

When we set out to improve mental health and wellbeing in our learning community, the 'how' is just as important as the 'what'. That's why it's essential to plan for implementation.

Implementation describes the activities and processes that learning communities undertake to make meaningful, sustainable and positive change around mental health and wellbeing. In Be You, the process of implementation is represented as a cycle, with various stages that you move through over time.



The Be You Implementation Cycle is designed to help you plan for effective implementation in your context. It complements the work you're already doing to support mental health and wellbeing. In fact, Be You will be more successful if it forms a key component of your service's existing strategic planning and Quality Improvement Plan.

This workbook will guide you through the five stages of the Be You Implementation Cycle. When you've finished, you'll have everything you need to create an Action Plan and make change.

Let's get started.

Stage 1: Foundations for success

Successful implementation starts with defining the change you'd like to see in your learning community.

Gather members of your learning community together to consider your current mental health practices, strategies and level of understanding. Think about your strengths, but also issues you'd like to address or areas you might improve in. Make notes in the boxes below.

Current state ...
Mental health and wellbeing:
Where are we now?

Future state ...
Mental health and wellbeing:
Where do we want to be?

The change you'd like to see is the gap between 'where you are now' and 'where you want to be'. You might think of it as your 'why'.

We'll add more detail to this change as we move through the Implementation Cycle. For now, see if you can capture your vision for change in simple language to share with others in your learning community.

Our vision for change ...

As Marg says, context is key. Every learning community is different. What will change look and feel like in your context? What strengths and resources will you draw on?

Having a clear and compelling vision or 'why' is a great way to rally your learning community around change. We'll revisit this throughout the implementation process.

The role of the Action Team

Planning for implementation is a team effort. In this first stage, it's important to identify the people who will drive the implementation process in your setting. In Be You, we call this your Action Team. The members of your Action Team don't need to be mental health experts. However, they will need to make a commitment to meeting as a group and leading change.



An Action Team must have at least one Action Team Leader, who receives access to a Be You Consultant as well as additional planning and implementation tools on their Be You dashboard. Your learning community can have as many Action Team Leaders as you like. Confirm your role as Action Team Leader on your dashboard by selecting My Learning Community.

Our Action Team members are ...



Reflection

- Does your Action Team reflect the diversity of your learning community?
- Are there opportunities to include the voices of children, families and other community members?
- If you're part of a larger provider, does it include representatives from different levels and roles across your organisation?
- Are you overlooking any strengths?



Remember

If you're not in a position of decision-making authority in your setting, it's important at this stage to gain the support of your leadership. Active and engaged leadership is a key enabler of successful implementation. Once your leadership is on board, encourage them to communicate their commitment to Be You with your learning community.

Stage 2: Identify your learning community's needs

This stage involves gathering information about your learning community. This will help you better understand your needs and goals, and identify potential barriers and enablers to making change. You'll want to consider your strengths and opportunities for growth, and try to get a picture of how members of your community currently think and feel about mental health.

You're probably collecting some of this information already, through surveys, educator observations, pedagogical documentation, and enrolment and attendance data. This is all valuable information. Now it's time to gather your Action Team and interpret your data together.



Our strengths



Reflection

Are you getting similar feedback from, for example, educators and families? Or do different groups in your service feel differently about some areas? This might help you understand which goals or needs to prioritise.



Our opportunities to improve



Reflection

Consider who has contributed to your data. For example, do survey results represent the views of most of your families or only a small number? Are there ways you could engage with more voices?

How does our learning community think and feel about mental health?





Identifying needs, barriers and enablers

As you interpret the information you've gathered, start to identify the needs or goals that you'd like to address through your change process. It might be helpful to revisit your vision of change from Stage 1 to help you put these needs and goals into words.

Document this below.

Our mental health needs/goals ...



Reflection

It's important to prioritise and focus on what you can achieve. If you've identified many needs or goals, which will you address first?

Try to use simple and active language that everyone in your learning community will understand. A good sentence starter is 'To achieve our [vision for change], we need to ...'

Once your needs and goals are clear, you should identify the barriers and enablers to making change in your context.

A **barrier** is anything that makes the process of change slower or more difficult. For example: a low level of knowledge among staff about the importance of children’s mental health, or a lack of time to engage in the implementation process.

An **enabler** is anything that helps facilitate the process of change or increases the chance of success. For example: strong support from your leadership team, or access to a Be You Consultant.



Remember

Barriers and enablers will evolve and change over time, so check back on this section as you proceed through the following stages.



Remember

Every learning community will experience different barriers and enablers. Watch the videos in Module 2, then document your barriers and enablers in the boxes below.

Our barriers ...

Our enablers ...

Stage 3: Develop a plan

Now it's time to make a plan. There isn't a single 'right' way to plan for implementation. You might like to download the **Be You Action Plan** template from your dashboard and tailor it to your needs. You could adapt your existing **Quality Improvement Plan**. Or you may prefer a more visual format which conveys important information through images.



Remember

Marg calls the early stages of the Implementation Cycle the 'pay now or pay later' stages. The work you've done so far will set you up well for successful implementation.

Whichever format you use, it's helpful to include the following information in your plan:

Your vision for change (your 'why')

Your learning community's needs/goals (your 'what')

Measures of success

Implementation barriers and enablers

Implementation strategies that directly address your barriers and enablers, and specific actions you'll take to make change (your 'how')

Roles and responsibilities (your 'who')

Timelines (your 'when')



Remember

Implementation strategies are the strategies you'll use to ensure that change is accepted, implemented and sustained in your learning community. These strategies should be aligned to the needs, barriers and enablers you've identified. This way, your plan will be tailor-made for you. Module 3 has some great examples and discussion of how to develop appropriate implementation strategies.




As an Action Team, use the table below to document implementation strategies that address the needs, barriers and enablers you recorded in the previous section. Try to select at least one strategy for each barrier or enabler you've identified. Then think of specific activities or actions you might implement to achieve your goals and nominate the people who'll make things happen.

Our vision for change

Needs or goals	Measures of success— how will we know we've been successful?	Barriers and enablers	Implementation strategies	Specific actions	Roles and responsibilities—who will be doing what?	Timelines—when will this happen?

At this stage, it's important to consider how you'll measure success against your objectives. Where possible, include at least some things that can be measured in numbers and compared over time, such as trends in survey results or changes in attendance numbers.



Reflection

- Are your actions realistic and practical?
- Can they be delivered within the timelines you've committed to?

Stage 4: Take action



You've identified your learning community's needs and made a plan. In this stage, you'll work together to start implementing the strategies and actions you've committed to.

As an Action Team, refer to your plan regularly to ensure you're staying on track. Be mindful that meaningful change in mental health and wellbeing doesn't happen overnight, and that it can sometimes take a while before tangible results are seen. It's normal to encounter some uncertainty and resistance as your learning community progresses. Sometimes, unexpected challenges or new barriers will arise. This is also completely normal.

Remember to revisit your plan over time and make updates as needed.

As we take action, I will care for my own wellbeing by ...



Remember

Now is a great time to think about your own wellbeing. Explore [Be You Educator wellbeing resources](#).

Stage 5: Monitor, review and improve

Reflective practice is at the heart of the early childhood profession. It's also an important part of good implementation. In this stage, you'll review your Action Plan, reflect on your progress so far, and consider if any updates are needed. This is continuous improvement in action.

This stage should include your whole Action Team, as well as any other key people in your learning community. As you conduct your review, consider:

- What's working well? How can we acknowledge and celebrate this success as a learning community?
- What contributed to this success? Is there learning we could apply to other areas of our plan?
- What could be improved or done differently?
- Have any new barriers emerged?
- Are the timelines, enablers and implementation strategies we selected still appropriate?
- Are there any new or emerging issues that should be included in our plan?
- Have our needs, goals or priorities changed?
- Is our vision for change still relevant?



Remember

As you review your progress, refer back to the measures of success you identified in Stage 3.



Reflection

Consider all the people in your learning community who have been affected by your implementation process. Are there opportunities for their voices to be included in the review stage? Could children be part of this process?

Document any changes you'd like to make to your Action Plan and think about how you'll share these with others in your learning community.

Embedding and sustaining change

If your implementation process is successful, then your vision for change will become 'business as usual' in your learning community.

You'll have developed a shared vocabulary and set of practices around mental health and wellbeing. You'll find that planning for mental health is embedded in your continuous improvement cycles. The change should feel sustainable—it will no longer require intensive action. As a result, you'll be able to identify new needs, priorities and action areas.

You've nearly reached the end of this workbook. However, the implementation process is cyclical and non-linear. You may find yourself moving backwards and forwards between stages or completing a cycle multiple times before change feels embedded. In large or complex settings, you may even have multiple implementation processes operating at the same time.



Remember

Your Be You Consultant is available to support you at every step of your implementation journey. You'll find contact details on the final page of this workbook.

Finally, don't keep your success to yourself! Sharing your experiences with others can be incredibly powerful and is a great way to acknowledge the hard work of your Action Team. Make sure that everyone in your learning community knows what you've achieved together. You might also consider submitting a news item to your Be You Consultant for sharing in a social media post, implementation story, or online event.

Additional notes ...

Helplines

Beyond Blue: 1300 22 4636

Lifeline: 13 11 14

headspace: 1800 650 890

MensLine Australia: 1300 78 99 78

Kids Helpline: 1800 55 1800

Our local supports and services

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Be You

Be You: beyou.edu.au

Professional Learning: beyou.edu.au/learn

Resources (tools and guides, Fact Sheets, events): beyou.edu.au/resources

Register with Be You: beyou.edu.au/register

For more information, contact us: beyou@earlychildhood.org.au



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