

*Every child deserves the chance  
to learn and flourish*



**Expressive Therapies School Program**



**PARTNER PROSPECTUS**

**f** **ig**  
**@healqld**

## 01 Why HEAL?

How we support students to be available for learning and build the capacity of schools to respond to trauma.

## 02 The Impact of Refugee Trauma on Young People

Understanding how the refugee experience affects children and young people, their learning and development.

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Why expressive therapies are effective interventions for young people with an experience of trauma.



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Get in touch with HEAL to chat more about how we can partner to ensure every child has the opportunity to learn and flourish.

# 01 WHY HEAL?

***HEAL believes every child deserves the chance to learn and flourish free from the impacts of trauma, including intergenerational trauma.***

HEAL gives young people from refugee backgrounds the skills to regulate their emotions, supporting them to heal from their trauma so they are able to better engage with learning in the classroom, develop a strong sense of identity and build positive relationships with their teachers and peers.

We place qualified expressive therapists in schools, providing individual therapy and group programs for students to strengthen their resilience and sense of belonging.

We build the capacity of school staff to identify and respond to trauma so that schools are equipped to offer a positive educational experience for students and their families.

## ABOUT HEAL



**Founded in 2004  
at Milpera State  
High School**



**3 school  
sites**



**Supporting 279+  
students annually  
from 31+ cultural  
backgrounds**



**Qualified  
expressive  
therapists**



**Registered charity**

# 02 THE IMPACT OF REFUGEE TRAUMA IN YOUNG PEOPLE

*The physical, mental, emotional and material stressors of forced displacement and the refugee journey to Australia has a significant impact on young people's wellbeing.*

## TORTURE AND TRAUMA HISTORIES

Trauma manifestations in adolescents (aged 11-18) can include:

- Anxiety, worries and fears, intrusive thoughts and memories
- Pessimism, despair, hopelessness, disillusionment
- Relationship difficulties with peers, family and teachers including difficulties with authorities and rebelliousness
- Poor attention and concentration
- Poor school performance, school avoidance or refusal
- Impulsivity and reckless, risk-taking behaviour including alcohol or drug use
- Other conduct problems, which may be antisocial or self-destructive
- Engagement with the juvenile justice system

(Kaplan, I. (2020) Rebuilding Shattered Lives)

## INTERGENERATIONAL TRAUMA

Refugee trauma is intergenerational. The Building a New Life in Australia Longitudinal Study (2015-16) has found that young people who are children of refugees have more problems with their peers than other Australian children.



## MENTAL HEALTH STIGMA

A recent study of Australian children with mental health disorders showed that children from non-English speaking backgrounds are the least likely to access mental health services. (Hiscock et al, 2019).

Cultural community leaders frequently highlight that families do not want their children to access support in fear they will be negatively labelled with long-term consequences.

## BARRIERS TO ACCESS & LEARNING

Newly-arrived families are often unable to access mental health support due to financial, language and transport barriers.

Traumatic events during the refugee journey can have major developmental effects for children and young people. The stress of settling into a new country can also affect a young person's wellbeing and their ability to engage with learning.



HEAL art therapists Jane Griffin OAM and Bethany Mahadeo (Milpera State High School) explain some of the impacts of trauma for young people in the classroom and how HEAL responds.

CLICK THE IMAGE TO WATCH THE VIDEO, OR USE [THIS LINK](#)



## WHY EXPRESSIVE THERAPIES? 03

Expression through creative activity has been found to assist in physical, emotional and cognitive functioning as well as social integration.

Because they are sensory-focused and often non-verbal, expressive therapies (art, music, dance, play, drama etc.) can make it easier for young people to convey their experiences, thoughts and feelings in ways that may be difficult to express with words, especially for participants from diverse language and cultural backgrounds.

“Coming to HEAL has really helped me. Before, I used to fight and get angry. Now I know how to calm myself down.”

— HEAL participant



HEAL art therapists Jane and Bethany explain why expressive therapies are effective for trauma recovery in young people from refugee backgrounds.

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# 04 HEAL'S SCHOOL MODEL

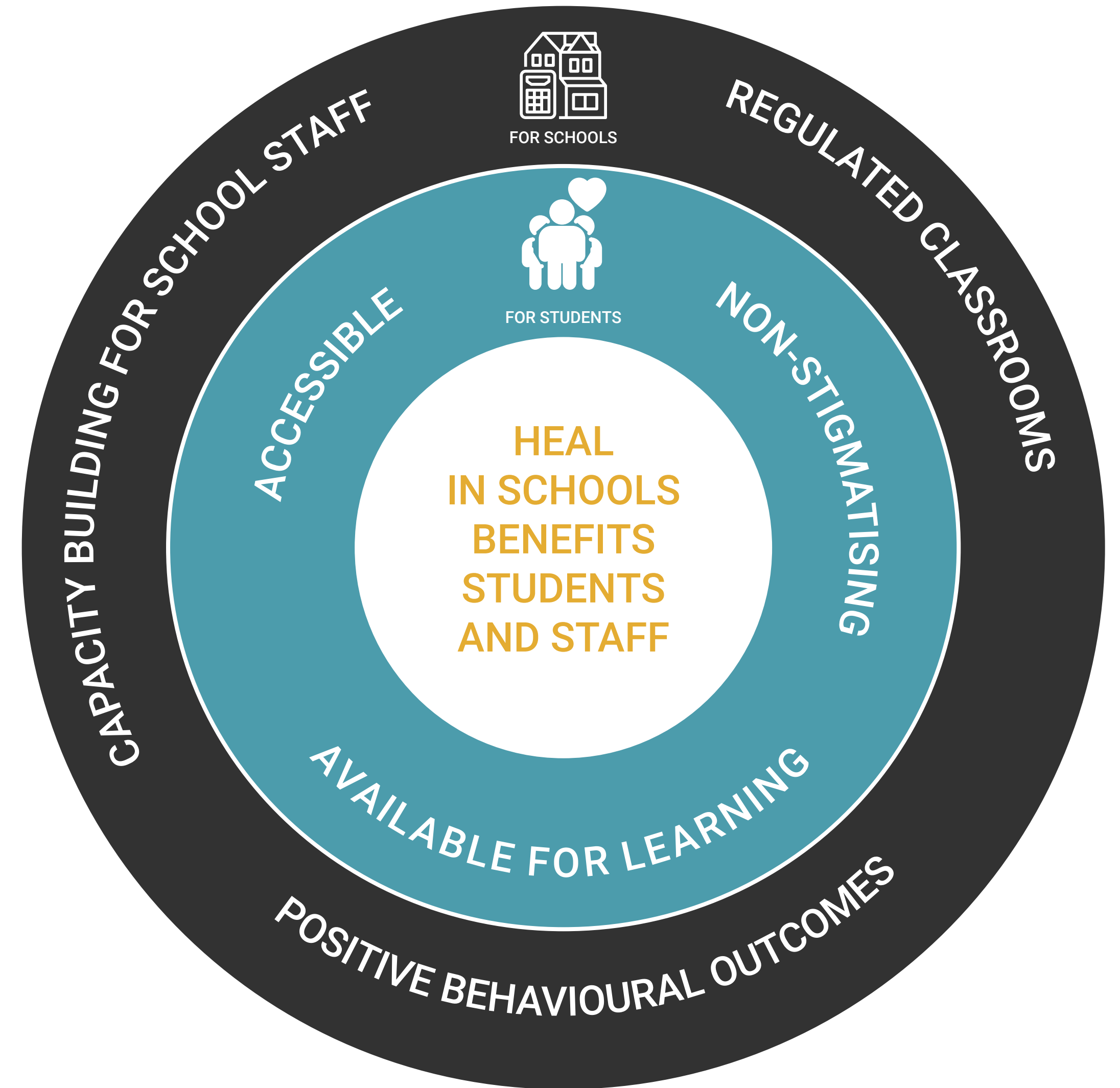
*HEAL is a program embedded in schools, addressing the impacts of trauma for individual students and building the capacity of schools to be refugee trauma-informed.*

## SCHOOL-BASED IS BEST FOR STUDENTS AND STAFF

- Embedding HEAL in schools enables close collaboration between therapists and school staff to ensure each student's experience of trauma is not a barrier to their learning and wellbeing.
- School-based programs are accessible for students, especially those experiencing disadvantage including language, cost and transport barriers to accessing private treatment.
- Importantly, school-based interventions are less stigmatising, particularly where the school is nurturing a culture of wellbeing.

## CAPACITY-BUILDING FOR SCHOOLS

- HEAL works in partnership with the school community including teachers, guidance officers, principals and wellbeing team staff to support cultures of wellbeing, inclusion and learning.
- HEAL offers free professional development courses on becoming trauma-informed for school staff through QPASTT (the Queensland Program of Assistance to Survivors of Torture and Trauma).



## 05 PARTNER WITH HEAL

***The refugee journey often deprives young people of access to the educational opportunities and wellbeing supports available to most Australian children.***

Through community donations and philanthropy, HEAL has been able to establish our program in three Queensland high schools and restore equity for children and young people who have experienced war, displacement and trauma.

With your support, we can reach more young people and give them the support they need to learn and flourish in school and in life.

*Any level of support enables us to keep reaching vulnerable Queensland young people.*

*We can tailor a partnership opportunity that meets the philanthropic and social responsibility goals and capabilities of individuals and organisations. If you prefer to make a one-off donation, please [click here](#).*

### SUGGESTED PARTNERSHIP LEVELS

**\$5,000**

- Funds a year's supply of resources (e.g. art and music supplies) for young people in the HEAL program.

**\$12,000**

- Funds a HEAL expressive therapist in a school to support children and young people for 1 school term (2 days per week).

**\$50,000**

- Funds a HEAL expressive therapist in a school to support children and young people for 1 year (2 days per week).



Mashallah was a HEAL participant in 2011. He shares how HEAL gave him the skills to manage his negative thoughts, anxiety and depression.

CLICK THE IMAGE TO WATCH THE VIDEO, OR USE [THIS LINK](#)



Madina was a HEAL participant in 2011. She shares how HEAL increased her confidence and helped her handle the pressure of school as a young refugee.

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# CONTACT US



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