



## PRESS RELEASE

### Mindfulness a part of daily school practice

#### How one Noble Park school is benefitting from Smiling Mind School Program

- ◆ Frasers Property and Smiling Mind partnership reaches **72 schools, 2,600 teachers and 55,800 school children**
- ◆ St Anthony's Primary School reports **dramatic improvement in student behaviour**

#### MELBOURNE, 8 OCTOBER 2020

St Anthony's Primary School in Noble Park, Victoria, believes in the benefits of mindfulness so much it changed its timetable to introduce daily mindfulness practice.

The school allocates time for mindful breaks after each recess and lunch break, when school children re-enter the classroom.

"This is when they have an opportunity to choose a mindful activity that re-focuses their attention after they have come in from the energy of the playground," St Anthony's Principal **Patrika Rowley** explains.

"It works. We have noticed a significant improvement in behaviour and what's amazing is that students are better equipped to self-regulate, which means fewer visits to my office."

"We have even been able to include mindful moments in the online learning environment during the pandemic and have been able to share Smiling Mind's mindful meditations with the whole school community to give them tools to support their mental wellbeing throughout Victoria's lockdown."

St Anthony's adopted the Smiling Mind School Program three years ago. It is one of 72 schools across Australia who have accessed the program for free through a charitable partnership between Smiling Mind and Frasers Property Australia. Ms Rowley says the program has been extremely successful at improving classroom behaviour, readiness to learn and student engagement.

As part of the program the school was given free access to Smiling Mind's professional development training for all teachers as well as a set of its Mindfulness Curriculums, a framework and resource that equips teachers with the skills they need to practically teach social and emotional learning capabilities in the classroom.

"Mindfulness has become part of the culture of the school now," Ms Rowley says. "It's as much an accepted part of the curriculum as maths or English and when we talk about taking mindful moments, all teachers and students know exactly what it means and what's required."

"It has been incredibly beneficial to have access to this program at no cost to the school."

**Victoria Gelberg** is a performing arts teacher at St Anthony's Primary School and has been instrumental in rolling out the program. She says ensuring that teachers are supportive of the program is crucial to its success.

"Once teachers understand what's involved, how improved classroom behaviour helps them do their job, and what benefits they might receive themselves from a daily meditation practice, then the whole school really sees the impact mindfulness can have," Ms Gelberg says.

"The Smiling Mind School Program makes it easy for teachers to build their confidence around mindfulness and it's flexible enough that teachers can adapt it to suit their own teaching style and classroom atmosphere. We are so grateful to have access to Smiling Mind – it's the best school program that has been developed in Australia."



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A survey of schools that have participated in the Smiling Mind program under the Frasers Property partnership found 100 per cent of teachers reported that the training received through Smiling Mind gave them confidence to demonstrate mindfulness to students by leading through example.

The survey also found the top three benefits for students, as noted by educators using the Smiling Mind program, included:

- ◆ Social and emotional learning
- ◆ Calmness levels
- ◆ Engagement with learning

The results at St Anthony's are no surprise to **Dr Addie Wootten**, Chief Executive Officer at Smiling Mind. Dr Wootten says the benefits of mindfulness for young people are far reaching and when students benefit, teachers benefit too.

"We know that mindfulness contributes to improved management of emotions and self-regulation; reduction in stress levels; greater development of emotional intelligence; enhanced creativity; improved resilience and engaged and focused students. Students with these attributes are easier to teach," Dr Wootten says.

"But a by-product of the program is teachers also learn mindful tools that enable them to look after their own wellbeing. They then bring that to the classroom as well.

"Teachers learn the skills they need to guide their students through the program, and they can apply the techniques to manage their own stress."

**Ranna Alkadamani**, General Manager People & Culture, Frasers Property says she hopes all schools that have been able to adopt the program under Frasers Property's partnership with Smiling Mind will achieve similar results to St Anthony's Primary School.

"We wanted to help young Australians have access to the tools that build mental health resilience and we admire the work Smiling Mind does around mindfulness with schools. It means a lot to Frasers Property that through our help, more than 60 Australian schools have been able to benefit with access to the program," Ms Alkadamani says.

"Our work is about building resilient communities from the ground up and schools are a huge part of well-connected communities, so this is one way we have been able to bring long-term benefits to children."

To find out more about how to register your school, visit:

<https://www.frasersproperty.com.au/smilingmind/about>.

For more information on Smiling Mind, visit [www.smilingmind.com.au](http://www.smilingmind.com.au) and for more information on Frasers Property Australia's developments nationally, visit [www.frasersproperty.com.au](http://www.frasersproperty.com.au).

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### About Smiling Mind

Smiling Mind is a whole lot more than Australia's #1 mindfulness app.

It's a not-for-profit that is helping make future generations happier and healthier through the practice of mindfulness meditation – a proactive approach to maintaining positive mental health.

Since launching in 2012, Smiling Mind has helped 5 million people's minds thrive with hundreds of free meditations, activities, tools and resources.

For more information about Smiling Mind, visit [smilingmind.com.au](https://smilingmind.com.au)

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