**Innovation
Design
Entrepreneurship
Academy**

IDEAcademy
Social Impact Report

Improving the wellbeing of young creatives, innovators and entrepreneurs

December 2022

Contents

Disclaimer

All photography sourced from IDEA, 2022.

Huber Social acknowledges the traditional owners and custodians of country throughout Australia and acknowledges their continuing connection to land, waters and community. We pay our respects to the people, the cultures and the elders past, present and future.

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This report was prepared and written on the lands of the Gadigal and Cammeraygal people of the Eora Nation. Data was collected on Whadjuk Noongar boodja.

Report

Background

Empowering Students Through Meaningful Learning Pathways

Education has traditionally been approached using a 'one size fits all' model. This has informed the way schools have taught, assessed and characterised student success. Rather than being attributed to student fault, under-engagement in schooling is now being harnessed as a magnifying glass to assess the existing systems and structures in Australia's education sector and the level of accessibility they offer for all student learning styles.

There needs to be a shift in Australian schooling towards a "what might work for whom, in what context and under what circumstance" agenda where more of the same model is no longer productive.[1,2] If the aim is to create successful learners positioned to live fulfilling and productive lives,[3] this requires the education sector to reconsider how all student demographics within a national cohort of over four million are positioned for this shared goal of success.[4]

IDEAcademy stands as an alternative education model borne with the purpose to counterweigh what success in education is defined as and what it is to learn, particularly for the student demographics most struggling and under-engaged within the traditional schooling model. IDEA aligns with the argument that "issues of equity do not lie with students, but around systems and structures, resulting in some groups and individuals benefitting more than others."[5] Led by the mission to empower students to know their value and to understand what and how they can contribute to the world, IDEA works to broaden learning pathways so students can demonstrate a deeper range of

capabilities and are equipped to contribute to society as confident, creative and capable individuals.[6]

With their doors open for 18-months and having reached the milestone of their first Year 12 cohort graduation in October 2022, IDEA is continuing to grow with an expanding student body of young innovators, entrepreneurs and creatives who seek a contemporary, customised approach to education.

To best support its growing student community, IDEA has partnered with Huber Social to measure the social impact of its unique education model. This report presents the findings from the 2022 pilot assessment, and lays the foundation for measuring IDEA's impact across each individual student's education journey. These results further strengthen IDEA's position as a thought-leader within the education innovation agenda, and provide other alternative learning models with indicative best practices to support all students' wellbeing.

1. *Varadharajan et al., 2021.*
2. *Milligan et al., 2020.*
3. *SCRGSP, 2020.*
4. *ACARA, 2022.*
5. *Gonski Institute for Education, 2018.*
6. *Milligan et al., op. cit.*

MISSION

IDEA re-engages learners by empowering students to know they have value and to understand what and how they can contribute to the world.

IDEAcademy
Program Overview

Based on best-practice research which recommends tailoring opportunities and experiences to individual students,[7] IDEA co-creates personalised learning and wellbeing plans with their students to maximise learning engagement. This provides opportunities to immerse students in real-world learning and enable their active participation, and sense of purpose and achievement throughout their education journey.

IDEA offers three over-lapping programs for their students:

ACADEMY: The Full-Time Program

A four-semester flexible-fulltime program, this program is co-designed around individualised student learning goals, talents and aspirations. This program focuses upon transferable work skills, industry experience and networking (IDEA's Real World Learning Program), and the attainment of nationally recognised qualifications (including the Western Australian Certificate of Education (WACE), Certifications II-IV, micro-credentials, diplomas and apprenticeships.)

PATHWAYS: A Transition Support Program

A case-management approach program supporting students transitioning from home-education, online learning or those recently having left schooling. This program includes mentorships, skill-building, 1-day a week on-campus community-building, support accessing services and providers for university, vocational or apprenticeship opportunities.

FUTURE READY: A vocational education and training program

A project-based program that combines real-world learning with a nationally-recognised VET qualification with the goal to upskill students for the world and workforce upon graduation.

Table 1. IDEA Programs

	Academy	Future Ready	Pathways
Year 10 or equivalent			✔
Year 11 or equivalent	✔	✔	✔
Year 12 or equivalent	✔	✔	✔
Recent school leaver		✔	✔

7. *Varadharajan et al., op. cit.*

About IDEAcademy
Student Personas

A leading purpose of IDEA is to capture the groups of students who need their education needs met more broadly and outside of the traditional models of secondary schooling within Australia. IDEA seeks to meet the needs of young innovators, entrepreneurs, and creatives who seek a contemporary, individualised approach to education.

IDEA has a full-time enrolled cohort of students aged 15-18 years across a two-year enrolment period with a wider part-time enrolled cohort through the Pathways program which may see students engaged for up to four years, both before their arrival and after their graduation from IDEA.

The IDEA Student Personas

IDEA recognises three overarching personas students at IDEA cluster into:

Ambitious Overachiever

Students who desire meaningful experiences beyond the classroom. These students often present as academically capable in a mainstream setting, but they are often under-engaged and uninspired with traditional curriculum and pathway offerings. As a result, they may have high levels of absenteeism within traditional settings.

Creative Innovator

Students whose niche skillset is often overlooked in traditional settings and are often categorised as having a lack of ability where they benefit from a personalised program to regain confidence and engagement.

Connection Seeking Independent

Independent students who have already left traditional education for TAFE courses, or online/home schooling who require a reconnection with learning cohorts, networks and culture.

Measurement
Approach

Why Measure Social Impact?

Huber Social has been engaged to measure the social impact of IDEAcademy's education model on student wellbeing to better understand IDEA's areas of strength and ways to improve as an emerging alternate model. Measurement has also identified opportunities for IDEA to better direct its resources so that the program can maximise its impact on the wellbeing of young learners.

1. Measure

To measure the impact of IDEA, Huber Social measures the shift in overall wellbeing and outcomes for enrolled students.

Measurement provides a data-driven approach for IDEA to articulate their social impact to their partnering stakeholders and to contribute data about this emerging model of alternate education in an under-researched field.

2. Maximise

Beyond a focus on outcomes, Huber Social's approach considers the holistic needs of a person to be in the best position to fulfil their potential.

Through this measurement approach, opportunities are identified for improved resource allocation to maximise the potential impact that IDEA can have on their students' overall wellbeing.

Why Wellbeing?

Measures overall progress and supports the systematic solving of social issues

Ultimately, the goal of all social impact is to put people in the best position to fulfil their potential and achieve wellbeing. It is therefore important to measure wellbeing to ensure that overall, programs are having a positive impact. To measure social impact, Huber Social therefore measures a shift in overall wellbeing and the specific program outcomes that contribute to it.[*]

Taking a wellbeing approach also provides a whole-of-life understanding of a person's needs. Instead of starting with the issue at hand, which tends to focus on the crisis end of a problem and place artificial limitations on the needs of people, strengthening wellbeing supports building a person's capability and opportunity to fulfil their potential, thus working to systematically address social issues.

For details of how Huber Social measures wellbeing, refer to Appendix 1, the Huber Social Wellbeing Measurement Framework

IDEAcademy
Social Impact Model

The IDEAcademy Social Impact Model outlines how IDEA impacts their enrolled students. By measuring multiple levels of impact, IDEA uses a data-driven approach to demonstrate what currently works and what may be required to maximise impact and outcomes.

1. Impact

To connect under-engaged and disengaged learners back into an inclusive and empowering learning community to improve these students' holistic subjective wellbeing so they are in the best position to achieve their potential and live a life they value.

▼

2. Outcomes

IDEA achieves this impact by targeting outcomes that not only address learning achievement but also empower students to achieve responsible independence, including:

- **Self-belief and sense of purpose**
- **Connection and belonging**
- **Safe and stable environment**
- **Re-engagement as life-long learners** – *students can actively participate, express themselves and feel a sense of achievement in education*
- **Practical life and entrepreneurial skills**
- **Transition readiness** – *skills, knowledge and sense of direction to pursue post-school pathways of interest, with opportunities lined up to support successful transition.*

▼

3. Outputs

The service delivers the following outputs:

- Co-designed, customised student study plans, learning goals and wellbeing plans
- Completed industry-based work experience placements, project briefs, and apprenticeships/ traineeships
- Student-built portfolios
- Student attendance, retention and graduation

- Completion of micro-credentials and degrees, including:
–WACE: Western Australian Certificate of Education
–Certificates II-IV
–Diplomas
- Volunteer community service
- Pitch Night exhibition

▼

4. Activities

The service involves the following activities:

- Teaching of nationally recognised qualifications and micro-credential courses
- Access to opportunities for industry work placements and project briefs
- Apprenticeship placements
- Creation of learning portfolios

- Development of individualised learning and wellbeing plans
- Mentorship between staff and students
- Voluntary community service
- Connections with external partners
- Exhibition Night

▼

5. Resources

The above impact requires the following inputs:
- IDEA staff incl. registered teachers, qualified vocational trainers, facilitation staff
- Relationships with external providers, industry partners and community organisations
- External certificates, courses and micro-credentials
- Educational resources incl. technological resources and campus facilities
- Partnership with registered partner school and registered training organisation

Pilot Measurement Approach

Design

To understand the social impact of IDEAcademy, Huber Social measured the overall wellbeing (impact) and levels of capability and access to opportunities (outcomes) for its students. At the inception of this pilot project, a co-design workshop was held to identify outcomes critical for inclusion in the measurement framework. For future measurements, this framework should be reviewed and refined each year to ensure that no emerging outcomes are missed.

The pilot study was submitted to the Huber Social Ethical Review Board for ethical assessment (Committee No. EC00473). It was granted approval on 5 October 2022.

Measurement Tools and Timing

All data were collected through self-report surveys, created by Huber Social and developed and tested with IDEA staff and students.

For this pilot measurement, participants were grouped according to time in IDEA's programs:

- Existing 2021-2022 cohort with current full-time experience of IDEA (experimental group), and;
- The incoming 2023 cohort who have not yet had any experience with IDEA (control group).

Data was collected in October 2022. For current students, surveys were completed at IDEA during class; for incoming students surveys were distributed via email. Parental consent was provided for any participating student under 16 years old.

Limitations

Given project timeline constraints and that this is a pilot measurement, collecting baseline and comparative data from two separate student groups was the preferred evaluation design. Future measurements will aim to collect data across individual students' journeys through IDEA, e.g., at the start of their time with IDEA and upon exit. This will allow for more robust data analysis and greater confidence in the results.

Additionally, while desired response rates were achieved for current IDEA students, incoming IDEA students were under-sampled; therefore, pilot measurement results should be considered indicative only. Routine data collection as each student cohort progresses through IDEA will strengthen the confidence level of future impact assessment results.

"[IDEA] has catered to my personal learning styles [and] given me a social life."

- Current IDEA Student

Survey Participant
Demographics

A total of 26 students participated in the 2022 IDEA student wellbeing measurement pilot, including 19 current and 7 incoming students.* The following provides a snapshot of the demographic distribution across students' responses. Analysis includes both incoming and current IDEA students.

Measurement Groups

Of all participants in this pilot measurement, 27% of responses came from the incoming student group whilst 73% of responses came from the current IDEA student cohort.

2022 Participants, by Measurement Group

Incoming student
26.9%

Current students
73.1%

n= 26
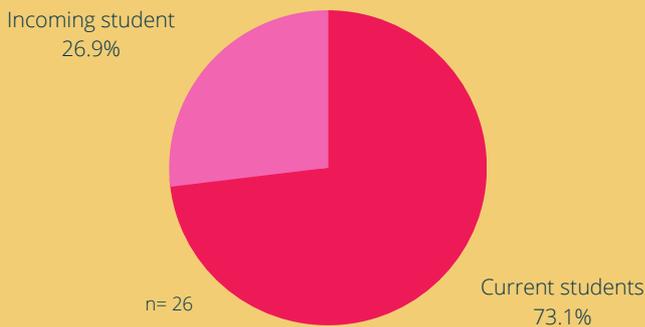
Cultural Heritage

All respondents identified as Australian with 50% also identifying with an additional cultural background which are grouped below. When asked about Indigenous identity, one out of the 24 participants identified as Aboriginal.

2022 Participants, By Cultural Heritage

Ethnicities: Australia, United Kingdom, Europe, Asia, Oceania, Africa

students (n=24)
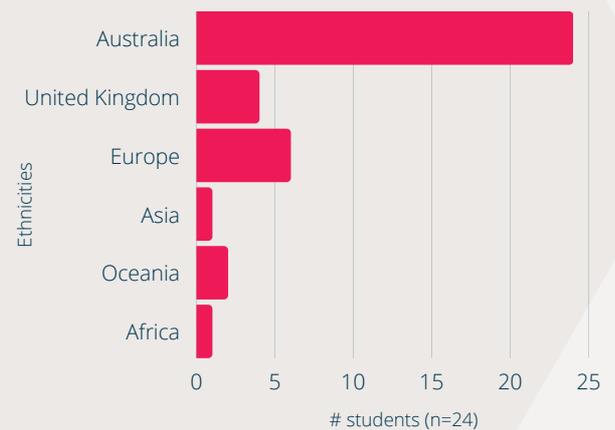
Gender and Age

There were 15% more male participants than female participants in this pilot survey. Of a student cohort aged between 15-18 years, half of the participants were 16 years old.

2022 Participants, By Gender

No response
7.7%

Male
53.8%

Female
38.5%

n= 26

2022 Participants, By Age

Age: 15 years or younger, 16 years, 17 years, 18 years, No response

# of students (n = 26)
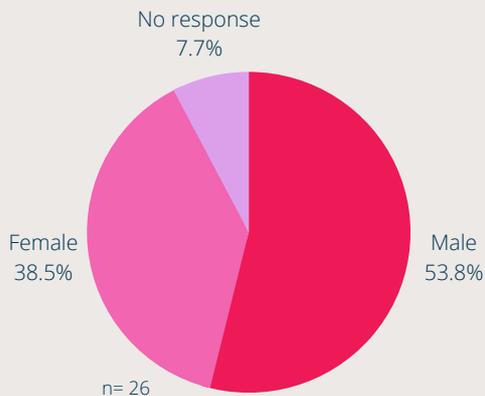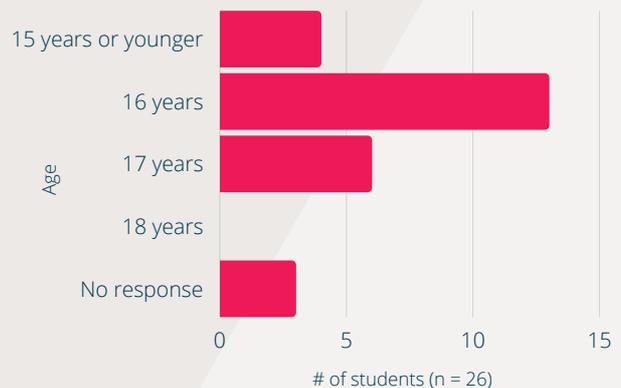
*Note that two incoming students have already been exposed to IDEA, either through the Pathways program or other means of engagement. This has been taken into account across the various data analyses presented in the report.

2022 **Findings**

Key
Findings

1. IDEA students report having a more positive learning experience

Four out of five of current IDEA students reported having a positive learning experience at IDEAcademy; no incoming students could say the same of their non-IDEA education experience over the past year. While there was no significant difference detected in overall wellbeing between the student groups, these qualitative results are a strong indication of the positive impact of the IDEA model. Further quantitative data collection will strengthen these findings in following years. See pages 17-19 for more details.

2. IDEA prepares students for future success

Compared to incoming students, current IDEA students scored significantly higher across key factors related to their readiness to take the next step post-secondary school, in particular their ability to think creatively (+103%), sense of clarity of their post-education pathway options (+48), and independence (+46). These results indicate that the IDEA approach successfully prepares its students to enter and thrive in the 'real world'. See page 22 for more details.

3. IDEA creates a safe learning environment for students

Out of all factors measured, current IDEA students scored significantly higher across three out of six factors relating to the 'Safe Spaces' outcome. Feeling safe in their learning environment was found to have a positive statistical relationship with overall wellbeing, suggesting that the IDEA approach successfully achieves those outcomes which are most important to student wellbeing. See page 23 for more details.

4. Improving self-belief is a priority need for all students

Across both cohorts, students' sense of self-belief - as measured by their sense of achievement, source of self-worth, and self-acceptance - received relatively low scores, despite self-belief being a key driver of student wellbeing. These results present an opportunity for IDEA to reflect upon its strategies for supporting students to navigate their self-identity journeys as they transition to a new education model. See page 31 for more details.

5. Curious and creative thinking is a strength among IDEA students

Access to creative learning environments was one of the lowest-scored factors among incoming students, thus indicating a challenge for this cohort. Not only did current IDEA students score significantly higher with respect to opportunities for creative thinking, but it was identified as a strength among the cohort. This is just one example of how the IDEA model has the potential to successfully transform challenges into strengths for its students. See page 34 for more details.

The Impact of IDEAcademy

Overall wellbeing is our lighthouse measure for determining the social impact of a program.

This section explores the impact of IDEAcademy in terms of changes in the overall wellbeing of its student body.

IDEAcademy Offers Students a Positive Learning Experience

The overall impact of IDEAcademy was assessed using two metrics: students' overall wellbeing score and qualitative feedback on their past year of learning experiences.

Overall Student Wellbeing
On average, incoming IDEA students were found to have 10% higher wellbeing than current IDEA students; however, this finding is not statistically significant (p>0.1).*

It should be noted that current IDEA students were found to have similar overall wellbeing scores when compared to students in alternative education programs.[8] This indicates that within the alternative education sector, IDEA is achieving comparable - and certainly not negative - social impact for its students.

While these findings suggest that current IDEA students may have unmet wellbeing needs, considerations should also be made regarding the underrepresentation of incoming students in the data sample as well as the non-linear wellbeing journey that students experience, particularly when transitioning between learning models.

At the time of measurement, incoming students also reported feeling significantly more hopeful (+15%, p<0.15) and explicitly mentioned their positive anticipation for the upcoming school year at IDEA. As 'hope' is significantly correlated with student wellbeing, this optimism may also be contributing to incoming students' higher wellbeing. Additional data collection of students' individual learning journeys at IDEA, will further provide greater confidence in these quantitative results.

Students' Qualitative Experience at IDEA
Compared to the preliminary quantitative findings, the qualitative feedback from students paints a clear dichotomy between the IDEA model and other schools. When asked to describe their education environment over the past year, **82.4% of current IDEA students stated they had an overall positive learning experience,** whereas the majority of incoming students reported having negative experiences.

These findings underscore the positive impact of the IDEA model, as well as shortfalls of other learning environments as described by incoming students. The following page explores the juxtapositions of student feedback in greater detail.
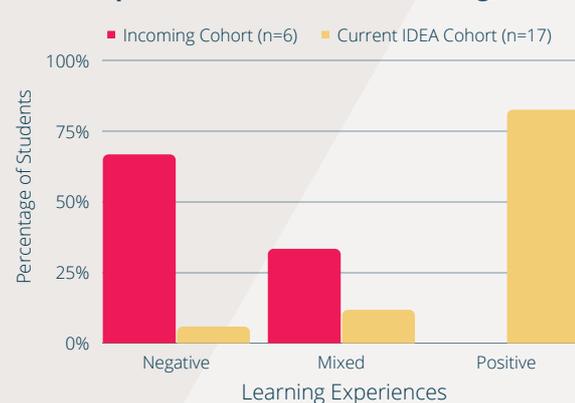
Average Overall Wellbeing Across Alternative Education Programs
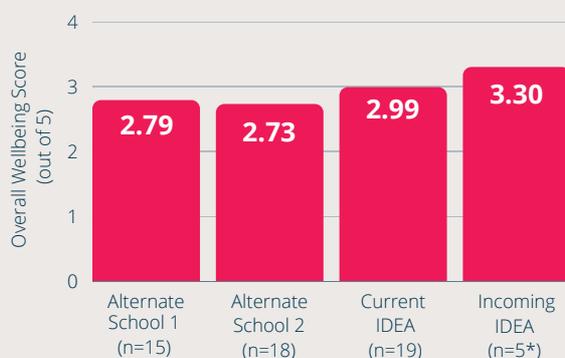
Incoming IDEA sample excludes two student with prior exposure to IDEA. Note that comparison schools vary from IDEA in terms of location, models, etc.
8. Huber Social Global Wellbeing Database, 2022.

Description of Past Year of Learning Experiences, Current vs Incoming, 2022

Perceived Positive Wellbeing from IDEA Students

Within the IDEA Student Wellbeing Survey, all students were given the opportunity to list words which best describe their past 12-months of learning experiences.

Between current and incoming IDEA students, there is a notable contrast in the tone of responses. Frequently-used words that students used to describe their learning experiences, include:

Current IDEA students describe their learning as:

real-life experiences   innovative

helpful   amazing

motivating   exciting   safe

valuable   fun

supportive   independent

Incoming IDEA students not yet attending IDEA describe their learning as:

haven't   not treated with respect

learnt much   too repetitive

useless   boring

zone out   tests

needlessly stressful

It is worth noting the binaries between lists including: "exciting" and "boring"; "valuable" and "useless"; "helpful" and "haven't learnt much". This qualitative feedback from students adds further evidence to the positive impact that the IDEA model has for its students' holistic wellbeing.
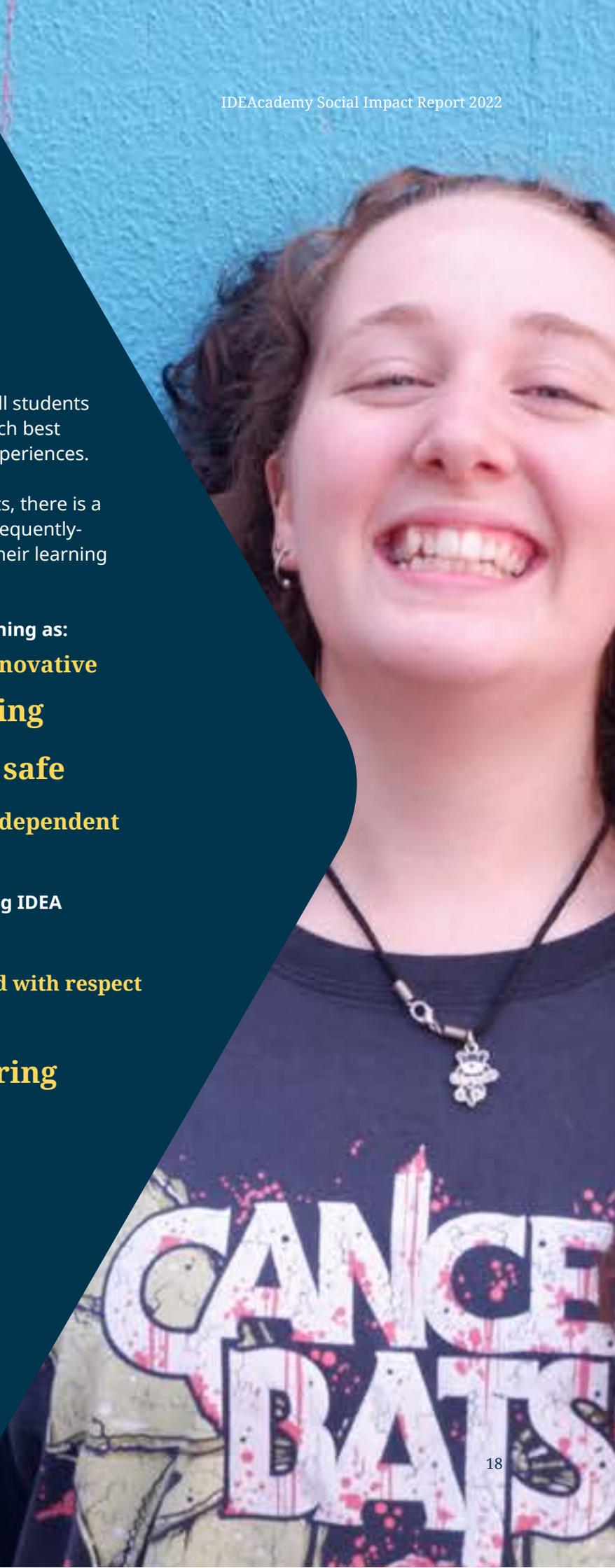
Students Value the
IDEA Approach

As well as responding to questions about specific factors relating to IDEAcademy's target outcomes, current IDEA students also had the chance to offer open feedback on their learning experiences at IDEA and suggest any feedback for the program moving forward.

100%
of IDEA students who provided open feedback spoke positively about their experiences at IDEA.

The responses from current students were overwhelmingly positive and suggest that the students at IDEA strongly value the different education approach IDEA takes. Words used to describe their learning experiences included:

"Challenging, opportunistic, innovative"

"Real life experiences, freeing, responsibility"

"Flexible, valuable, and relevant"

"Exciting, nervous, meaningful, value"

Students like IDEA just as it is
When asked how they would like to change IDEA, the majority of students responded that they didn't want IDEA to change:

"Nope, keep up what you're doing!"

"I think IDEA is amazing."

Suggestions for improvement
Suggestions for improvement were themed around increased frequencies of what is already in place. Requests included:

- *More mental health activities "like the clay therapy art... I really enjoyed a lot"*
- *Mental health/life progress check ins*
- *"More self-guided work"*

An opportunity: Words such as 'nervous', 'hectic', 'eventful', and **'has been a rollercoaster'** changing schools were mentioned by three students in addition to their positive feedback. This suggests that some students may face potential wellbeing setbacks when transitioning between education models.

There is an opportunity for IDEA to consider the existing structures in place for successfully transitioning new cohorts into IDEA and consider additional ways they can support and normalise students' challenges within this emotional transition.

"**[IDEA] have given me a safe space to make mistakes and grow from them.** When I was at regular schools, often I felt like school was a competition and I would feel shameful and humiliated when I would get something wrong. It warped how I viewed myself but **now that I'm at IDEA I've grown to like myself a lot more.**"

- Current IDEA student

Top Program Outcomes

To understand how IDEAcademy creates its positive social impact, students' wellbeing was assessed across 49 factors measuring seven key program outcomes.

This section dives into the specific program areas where IDEA students are making the most progress. It will compare results according to exposure to IDEA programs, before commencing and during enrolment, to provide evidence for where IDEA is creating the most change.

IDEA Prepares Students for Future Success

When analysing the progress made by IDEA students, many of the highest positive shifts occur largely within the outcome 'transition-readiness', in addition to 'safe spaces', 're-engagement with learning' and 'life skills'. Given that these four outcomes underpin IDEA's goals as an alternative education model, this indicates that IDEA successfully addresses the goals which they set out to achieve.

Creative Thinking

+103%

IDEA students are able to be creative and think creatively when learning

Post-Education Pathways

+48%

IDEA students have clarity and confidence with post-graduation pathways

Independence

+46%

IDEA students feel confident that they can lead an independent life

Access to Professional Experiences

+21%

IDEA students have access professional experiences relevant to their interests

Access to Professional Mentorship

+20%

IDEA students know who to turn to for guidance on their career and learning goals

Employment Skills

+20%

IDEA students are confident in their ability to secure future employment

> "[IDEA has] allowed me to have **a vision of where I want to be in the future** as well as give me confidence and a guide to where success is."
>
> *- Current IDEA Student*

Data includes:
- *19 responses from currently enrolled IDEA students*
- *5 responses from incoming cohort enrolled for 2023 with no prior experience at IDEA.*

All outcomes shifts reported are found to be statistically significant (p<0.2), meaning that observed changes in these outcomes may in part be attributed to program impact and are not due entirely to chance.

IDEA Creates a Safe Learning Environment for Students

Overall, current IDEA students scored 17% higher with respect to feeling that they have access to a 'safe space' learning environment as compared to incoming students. Moreover, four out of ten of the highest scoring positive shifts fall under the umbrella of 'safe spaces,' providing further evidence for IDEA's success in providing safe environments for student learning and growth.

Given that this outcome was found to have an overall positive relationship with wellbeing for all students, these results demonstrate that the IDEA model not only achieves its program goals but that these goals are also well-aligned to address what matters most to student wellbeing.*

Safe Space to Learn
+53%
IDEA students feel safe in their learning environment

Accountability for Behaviour
+42%
IDEA students are held accountable for their attitudes and behaviours

Environments that Promote Self-Respect
+32%
IDEA students feel that their opinions are heard and respected

Support Figure in Learning Environment
+15%
IDEA students have someone to talk to at IDEA when they feel upset, angry or worried

> **"I feel a whole lot more safer and supported. I feel I am becoming more stable."**
>
> *- Current IDEA Student*

> **"I've been a lot less stressed and more supported ever since leaving traditional schooling."**
>
> *- Current IDEA Student*

Data includes:
- *19 responses from currently enrolled IDEA students*
- *5 responses from incoming cohort enrolled for 2023 with no prior experience at IDEA.*

*The outcome 'safe spaces' was found to be positive correlated with overall student wellbeing ($r=0.368$, $p<0.1$). Average safe spaces score for current students was 3.88, compared to 3.31 for incoming students. All shifts reported are found to be statistically significant ($p<0.2$).

"IDEA's **improved my wellbeing** because they listen to their students, and **cater to what we need to learn and feel safe.**"

- Current IDEA student

Predictors of Wellbeing and Priority Needs

To understand where IDEA should focus its resources to have the greatest impact on the wellbeing of its students, we first need to understand what matters most to young peoples' overall wellbeing.

This section will present the 'predictors of wellbeing' for the combined cohort groups, and identify any opportunities for IDEA to address priority wellbeing needs for young people throughout their learning experience.

Predictors of Wellbeing for IDEA Students

Huber Social has identified which of all 49 factors measured have the strongest positive relationship with IDEA students' wellbeing. A positive change in these factors is statistically more likely to lead to an increase in overall wellbeing as compared to factors which do not have a strong association with wellbeing.

The following are the top five factors identified as the strongest predictors of wellbeing for 2022 measurement participants:*

Healthy Relationships at Home

Ability to get along well with parent(s) and or/siblings

Happiness

Feeling happy

Encouragement

Having people in life who encourage and praise them

Stability of Home Life

Feeling safe at home

Respect

Treating others with respect in most interactions

Across both current and incoming cohorts, students who get along well with family members at home, feel safe in their home, have people in their lives who offer encouragement and praise, frequently feel happy, or have the ability to treat others with respect are more likely to have higher wellbeing as compared to their peers who did not score as strongly across these areas.

Of the key student wellbeing needs identified, current IDEA students scored significantly lower across the top three drivers – family relationships, happiness, and access to supportive relationships that offer encouragement and praise – relative to other outcomes measured, suggesting that these are priority needs for this cohort (see page 28 for more details).

While improvements in any one of these areas are more likely to accompany an increase in wellbeing for students, it is important to note that family relationships and safety at home both fall outside of the scope of IDEA's anticipated outcomes and scope of work. These insights reinforce the importance of using a holistic lens to understand the wellbeing needs of a target population, which looks beyond specific program outcomes. IDEA may wish to use this initial evidence to advocate for holistic approaches to support student health and wellbeing to government.

*Note that entire data sample (19 current IDEA students, 7 incoming IDEA students) is considered when determining predictors of wellbeing and priority needs. See Appendix 4: Significance Tables for a complete list of Predictors of Wellbeing.

Student Attendance and Wellbeing

In addition to program outcomes, statistical testing is also used to determine if any demographic factors have a significant relationship with wellbeing.

Analysis identified a significant, positive relationship between total days at school and level of wellbeing amongst both student groups. These results suggest that **students with higher school attendance rates are more likely to have higher overall wellbeing.***

The 2022 Average Attendance Level at IDEAcademy is:

93%[**]

Previous Education Models for IDEA Students

Home School
17.6%

Public
35.3%

Independent
47.1%

n= 17
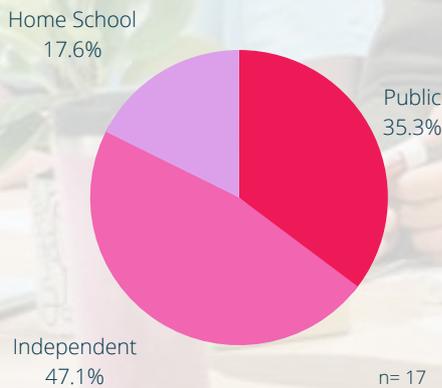
Previously, the existing cohort at IDEA transitioned from three main education systems: public education (35.3%), home schooling (17.6%), and independent (47.1% where a quarter of these were Catholic independent schools). Overall wellbeing among IDEA students did not vary significantly by previous education model attended.

"I was a bit doubtful but also hoping that it was a lot better than normal schools. It has been amazing so far. I have grown a lot and feel a lot more confident in myself and my abilities."

- Current IDEA Student

*Results are statistically significant ($p<0.1$).
**National attendance rates for the 2022 school year have not yet been published at time of this report's publication, student attendance in 2020-21 was affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. Due to the alternate arrangements put in place in response to health advice, attendance data was not consistent across states and territories. As a result, national student attendance data was not published for 2020-21.[9]
9. ACARA: Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority, op. cit.

Priority Needs for Current IDEA Students

A priority need is a factor that has a statistically strong correlation with high overall wellbeing (see page 26), but which scored low among students. This need is therefore not being satisfied, and can be considered a priority need that, when improved upon, is more likely to lead to an increase in overall student wellbeing.

The top three priority needs for current IDEA students are:

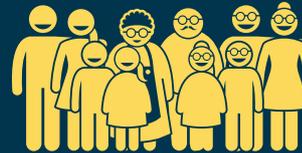### Feelings of Happiness
3.26
out of 5

Current students have lower frequency of feelings of happiness over the past month

Encouragement
3.47
out of 5

Current students feel they have limited people who praise and encourage them

Family Relationships
3.53
out of 5

Current students feel they struggle to easily get along well with parent/s and/or siblings

While not objectively low, the scores for these three factors were within the lowest third of overall factor score distribution, and also correspond with the three strongest predictors of student wellbeing. Should IDEA focus on increasing student happiness and access to relationships that offer positive critical feedback, student wellbeing will be more likely to improve as well.

While family relationships is beyond the scope of IDEA's expected outcomes, these results still provide key insights into what may be influencing student wellbeing. IDEA may wish to broaden their existing social-emotional curriculum so that their students can develop transferable positive relationship skills across different contexts and settings.

A recommendation: It is worth considering the priority need for increased access to people who offer encouragement and praise within the context of students' low sense of self-belief (see page 31). Providing authentic opportunities for encouragement and feedback should be offered in conjunction with supporting students' own affirmation of their sense of self and sense of success.

See Appendix 4: Significance Tables for a complete list of Predictors of Wellbeing against each cohorts' wellbeing scores.
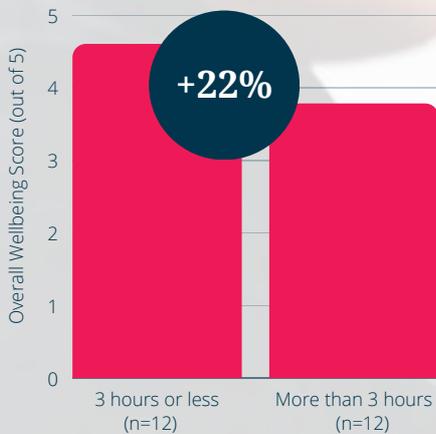
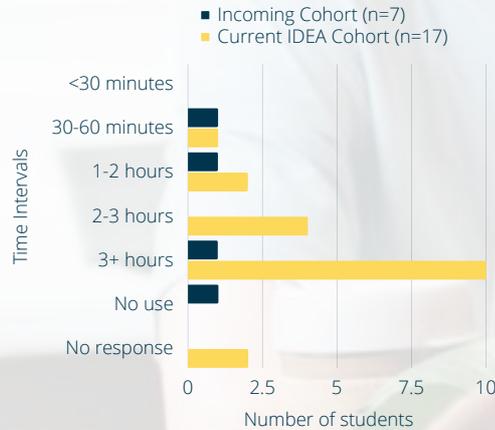# Less Social Media Use is an Indicator of Higher Wellbeing

On average, current IDEA students were found to use social media significantly more often than incoming students. 83% report using social media at least three hours a day or more per day, compared to just 17% of incoming students.

Statistical analysis found that **students who use social media for less than 3 hours per day on average have significantly higher overall wellbeing than students using social media for more than 3 hours per day.*** Given this negative correlation between wellbeing and social media use, this may likely be contributing to the lower wellbeing scores observed among current IDEA students and could be considered a priority need for this cohort.

Overall Wellbeing Score and Social Media Use

+22%

Overall Wellbeing Score (out of 5)

5
4
3
2
1
0

3 hours or less (n=12)   More than 3 hours (n=12)

Social Media, Daily Use Average

■ Incoming Cohort (n=7)
■ Current IDEA Cohort (n=17)

Time Intervals

<30 minutes
30-60 minutes
1-2 hours
2-3 hours
3+ hours
No use
No response

0   2.5   5   7.5   10
Number of students

These findings are well-aligned with results from the 2020 National Youth Mental Health Survey.[10] More than half of young people surveyed (57%) believe their mental health is getting worse and cited social media as the main reason for this decline (42%).

For discussion: how can IDEA co-create strategies with their students to reduce daily social media use?

Average wellbeing of students with <3 hours daily social media use is 4.60 out of 5; average wellbeing of students with >3 hours daily social media use is 3.78 out of 5 (p<0.1).

10. Headspace, 2022.

Priority Needs for Incoming IDEA Students

Understanding the priority needs for the incoming student cohort provides a roadmap to guide IDEA in supporting the wellbeing of their growing student community.

The top two priority needs for incoming IDEA students are:

Environments for Self-Respect and Self-Expression

3.14
out of 5

Incoming students struggle to be themselves around others in their learning environment

Sense of Belonging to Community

3.29
out of 5

Incoming students don't feel as connected to a community

Self-expression in particular corresponds with IDEA's ability to provide safe spaces for learning, an outcome which has a significant relationship with overall wellbeing. Given that current students scored significantly higher across four factors which measure safe spaces (see page 23), this suggests that IDEA is well-placed to support this priority need for its incoming cohort.

However, current IDEA students did not score significantly higher with respect to their sense of belonging as compared to incoming students,* indicating that there may be an opportunity for IDEA to focus on new approaches to fostering community with its 2023 cohort.

For discussion: In what ways can IDEA intentionally build community amongst new students?

"[At my school] I have also felt like an outsider and that I'm different to everyone else."

- Incoming IDEA student

*With respect to sense of belonging, incoming students scored 3.29 out of 5 compared to current students' score of 3.53 out of 5; results were not found to be statistically different (p>0.01). Results based on responses from 7 incoming students. See Appendix 4: Significance Tables for a complete list of Predictors of Wellbeing against each cohorts' wellbeing scores.

Supporting All Students'
Sense of Self-Belief

Across both cohorts, students' holistic sense of self-belief was found to be one of the strongest predictors of wellbeing.* However, both groups reported low scores across key factors measuring this outcome, in particular with respect to their self-acceptance, self-perception, and self-pride.

Self-Acceptance	**Self-Perception**	**Self-Pride**
3.57 | 2.89	**3.57 | 3.42**	**3.43 | 3.61**
out of 5	**out of 5**	**out of 5**
All students struggle to like who they are	How students' feel about themselves somewhat depends on what others think of them	All students struggle to feel strong pride in their achievements

Incoming IDEA students (n=7)   *Current IDEA students (n=19)*

Challenges to IDEA students' sense of self

All young people face challenges in sustaining a positive sense of identity. When any student transitions between education models, additional barriers may also present themselves.

Considering that IDEA students have sought out this program to 'better engage' with their education, they may have residual feelings of shame or guilt from being "educationally rejected"[11] by more traditional education pathways. Sector leaders often indirectly blame students for their learning disengagement, rather than recognise the system deficits within existing educational structures and policies.[12] Research has identified the particular need, therefore, for students entering alternate education models to be able to "re-create their own identities as learners in positive ways."[13]

IDEA's mission for students to 'find their value'

IDEA's mission works to empower students with their sense of value and purpose. By the time they join, IDEA students they have already existed within at least one other model for at least 77% of their education journey, one that has potentially promoted negative or harmful self-perceptions of a young person's student identity. IDEA presents a unique opportunity for students to redefine their sense of identity, a process which may challenge one's vulnerabilities regarding their sense of pride and self-acceptance as a learner but can ultimately help strengthen their overall wellbeing.

An opportunity: In light of these findings, IDEA may wish to interweave resilience skill-building to heal long-held setbacks some students may have continually faced as learners in order to equip students to affirm themselves and increase their self-acceptance.

As an outcome overall, self-belief was found to have a strong, positive correlation with overall wellbeing (r=0.699, p<0.01). For a complete list of predictors of wellbeing related to self-belief, see Appendix 4.

11. Best, 2015
12. Bottrell, 2007
13. Plows, Bottrell, & te Riele, 2016, as cited in MacDonald, Bottrell, & Johnson, 2018

"[IDEA] has made me see my true potential and believe in myself way more. [IDEA] has surrounded me with people who see things from my perspective."

- Current IDEA Student

Strengths and
Challenges

Strengths and challenges offer an opportunity to celebrate achievements of all students and understand in which areas they are facing the greatest difficulties.

The following section explores where incoming and current IDEA students are scoring highest and lowest respective to all factors measured.

Increased Opportunities for Creativity at IDEA

Amongst incoming students, a lack of opportunity for curious and creative thinking was identified as a present difficulty.

It is worth noting the contrast here; current IDEA students scored 103% higher in opportunities for creativity as compared to incoming students, and it was one of their highest scoring factors out of all measured. This finding illustrates the opportunities for creative thinking IDEA provides for their target audience of young creatives and innovators.

A CHALLENGE for Incoming IDEA students

Opportunities for Creative, Curious Thinking

2.20

out of 5

A STRENGTH for Current IDEA students

Opportunities for Creative, Curious Thinking

4.47

out of 5

+103%

increase in current IDEA students

"[IDEA] has impacted my wellbeing a lot in a positive way, I have improved my mental health and my creativity has flown a lot and finding my own person has helped a lot because of IDEA."

- Current IDEA student

Data includes:
- *19 responses from currently enrolled IDEA students*
- *5 responses from incoming cohort enrolled for 2023 with no prior experience at IDEA.*

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Current IDEA Students' Strengths and Challenges

Strengths and challenges offer an opportunity to celebrate achievements of current IDEA students and understand in which areas they are facing the greatest difficulties.*

Strengths

Of the 49 factors measured, IDEA students reported feeling strongest across factors related to their sense of safety and friendship in their learning evironment, and opportunities for creative thinking. **The following represent the three highest-scoring factors where IDEA students feel the most confident in their current conditions:**

Safe Spaces to Learn
4.58
out of 5

Students feel safe in their learning environment

Creative Thinking
4.47
out of 5

Students are able to be creative and think creatively when learning.

Positive Friendships
4.37
out of 5

Students have the opportunity to make new friendships in their learning environment

Challenges

Liking who they are and ease at communicating thoughts and feelings were two of the lowest-scored factors this year. It is worth noting the wider results' context that having their thoughts and feelings heard and respected (+32%) and the presence of a support figure for students to discuss feelings when they are ready (+15%) were amongst the top-scoring outcomes for IDEA students. Self-acceptance, while one of the lowest scoring factors, falls in the cluster of self-belief indicators previously flagged as a priority need for all students (see page 31). Accessing regular, restful sleep is a present challenge experienced by this cohort.

Communication Skills
2.68
out of 5

Students have difficulty sharing thoughts and feelings with others

Self-Acceptance
2.89
out of 5

Students struggle to like who they are

Sleep
3.16
out of 5

On most days, students struggle to get enough sleep or feel well-rested

Data includes 19 responses from current IDEA students.

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Incoming IDEA Students' Strengths and Challenges

Each student and cohort has individual needs. By unpacking the strengths and challenges faced by incoming students in their current environment, this identifies the areas they are feeling most confident in whilst flagging the areas for IDEA to offer additional support and intervention upon this cohorts' commencement in 2023.*

Strengths

Of the 49 factors measured, **the following represent the three highest-scoring factors where incoming students feel the most confident in their current conditions:**

Respectful Interactions
4.86
out of 5

Students treat others with respect in most interactions

Passions and Interests
4.71
out of 5

Students feel they have things they are interested in or passionate about

Access to Supportive Relationships
4.57
out of 5

Students have someone in life who helps them and shows them care

Challenges

Both current and incoming students have one of their lowest wellbeing scores around their communication skills at sharing thoughts and feelings with others. Incoming students find opportunities for creative thinking and clarity of post-graduation pathways a present challenge. As these indicators are amongst the highest shifts contrasted between groups (see page 22), it suggests exposure to IDEA's programs will work to address these challenges.

Creative Thinking
2.57
out of 5

Students have limited opportunities to be creative and think creatively when learning

Communication Skills
2.71
out of 5

Students have difficulty sharing thoughts and feelings with others

Transition Readiness
2.86
out of 5

Students have limited clarity of which education and employment pathways to pursue after graduation

Data includes 7 responses from incoming IDEA students.

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"IDEA has had **a huge positive impact on my wellbeing** and has helped me figure out who I want to be when I leave school."

- Current IDEA student

What's **Next**

Reflections and
Recommendations

Time and time again the 'one-size-fits-all' approach to education has been proven an ineffective and potentially harmful model for some of our most creative and innovative students. There is a well-recognised need for a student-centred, wellbeing-driven model to ensure that students can excel in all aspects of life within and beyond the education sector.[14] Such models have shown that one of the most effective ways for improving academic outcomes is by focusing on strengthening student wellbeing.[15]

In this way, IDEAcademy is at the forefront of the education innovation agenda, with their portfolio-based pathways approach which enables students to transition effectively into university, training and employment on their own terms.

The IDEA model has a positive impact on key drivers of student wellbeing, most significantly on creating a safe environment for learning and growth of its students. This approach has successfully re-engaged young learners, as IDEA students report feeling more open and motivated to engage with creative thinking and more confident in their post-school plans.

Perhaps most importantly, IDEA students report just having an overall better time at IDEA. Not only do they report significantly better learning experiences when compared to their past involvement with other education models, but even incoming IDEA students are excited and optimistic about what their next year at IDEA has to offer.

IDEA is not only committed to providing a holistic education model for its students but making sure that it is best addressing its student's wellbeing needs. Its impact measurement has identified key priority needs for its current and incoming students, particularly with respect to improving students' sense of self-belief and self-identity as engaged learners. It also reinforces the connection between the home and school environment, and provides further evidence of the need for holistic, integrated support services as a key driver of better learning outcomes and student wellbeing.

This study's findings present a number of opportunities for IDEA to maximise its students' wellbeing, such as reducing social media use, broadening their existing social-emotional curriculum, and developing strategies for resilience and self-management of students' emotional responses to life changes, big and small. It is strongly recommended that these should be considered by and developed with students to ensure that any new processes are student-centred and led.

These insights can also be shared with the broader education sector, to confirm existing research and further inform best practices for supporting student wellbeing. By using a data-driven wellbeing approach, IDEA will be well-equipped to advise and advocate for what is really needed to invoke systems-level change to improve academic and wellbeing outcomes for secondary students across Western Australia and beyond.

14. Dix et. al., 2020.
15. Ibid.

Get in **Touch**

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Huber Social

Huber Social is an independent third party and expert in social impact measurement. Recognising the goal of all social impact is the wellbeing of people, Huber Social has developed a universally applicable framework that measures not only overall wellbeing but also the driving factors to maximise it.

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Report Appendices

1. Huber Social
Wellbeing Measurement Framework

To be able to fulfil their potential and achieve wellbeing, each individual needs to have the capability and the opportunity to do so. Everyone has different needs within these categories depending on their context.

When it comes to measuring the social impact of a service, Huber Social measures the 'shift' the service creates in terms of wellbeing and the specific programs outcomes achieved to create this. Results are then consolidated at a sector, community and global level.

The goal for each of us is the same; wellbeing. The part that differs, are our individual needs.

Longitudinal measurement monitors effectiveness of programs to meet these needs; ensuring resources are directed to have the greatest impact. The vision is a wellbeing measurement system that delivers us the whole picture, to put each of us in the best position to achieve Wellbeing and leave no one behind.

The Huber Social Wellbeing Measurement Framework

IMPACT

Wellbeing

To be in the best position to fulfil your potential and live a life of value. The overall goal for all services working with people.

OUTCOMES

Through building
Capability

Resilience
Life skills
Wellness
[physical, mental, spiritual]

OUTCOMES

and providing
Opportunity

Resources
Self development
Societal structures
Relationships

2. Data Transparency Page

To ensure the integrity of findings always, Huber Social includes a Transparency Page for every project. This ensures both the rigour of evidence and rigour of analysis is clear for each project, across every stage of the data lifecycle.

DATA LIFECYCLE   1. Design → 2. Data Collection → 3. Cleaning → 4. Analysis → 5. Reporting

Phase		Questions on the Treatment of the Data	Points allocated	Yes or No
Design	SAMPLE	Everyone in the intervention included in the measurement	2	Y
		OR Survey sample population designed to be representative of group	1	N
		Sample description : *19 students who are currently enrolled full-time at IDEA (current)* *7 students who are registered to begin full-time at IDEA in 2023 (incoming)* *Note that 2 of the incoming students have prior experience with IDEA (one as a Pathways student, one in an informal capacity); these two students have been excluded from the incoming student group with respect to impact and outcomes analyses to account for existing exposure.*	N/A	N/A
	BASELINE	Control group (independent of the intervention)	3	Y
		Group baseline measured (pre-intervention)	2	N
		Baseline inferred from time in intervention (e.g. 1 vs. 3 years)	1	N
	EXCLUSIONS	Details of people specifically excluded from the measurement: *N/A*	N/A	N/A
Data Collection	DISTRIBUTION	Online surveys		Y
		OR hardcopy surveys		N
		Data collection supervised by Huber Social consultant	1	N
		Translation or guidance provided	N/A	N/A
	DATA SOURCES	Data mining of other sources	1	Y
		Data included from previous years/measurements	1	N
		Details of additional data sources: *Attendance rates and additional demographic data from IDEA database*		
Cleaning	CLEANING	Partial responses removed or no partial responses	1	Y
		Details of any responses removed: *Partial responses removed if missing >50% Satisfaction with Life Scale data and/or >50% of outcomes data.*	N/A	N/A
Analysis	SHIFT MEASUREMENT	Calculated on time in intervention		Y
		Calculated on group average	1	Y
		Calculated based on individual scores	2	N
	TEST APPLIED	Basic analysis	1	Y
		Statistical Correlation Test	2	Y
		Multiple Regression or Lasso Regression Test	3	N
Reporting	REPORTING	Client published Outcomes Report (prove)	1	N
		Client received Social Performance Report (improve)	2	N
		Client published full Social Impact Report	3	Y
RIGOUR SCORE: LOW: 1-9; MED 10-14; HIGH 15-19			***MED***	**14**

3. Predictors of Wellbeing

To inform the education sector in how best to support the wellbeing of students, correlation analysis is used to identify which factors measured have a significant relationship with students' overall wellbeing; these are known as predictors of wellbeing.

The predictors of wellbeing can be found listed in the following table in order of statistical strength. The stronger the relationship between an outcome and overall wellbeing, the more confidence there is that a change in the outcome will correspond with a change in wellbeing.

Relationship strength is based on both the statistical significance (p-value) and beta coefficient value (r). All predictors listed are statistically significant to $p < 0.001$ (unless otherwise noted), meaning there is 99% confidence that the relationship identified between the predictive outcome and wellbeing is true, rather than produced due to sampling error or chance. The beta coefficient (r) describes how closely each outcome and wellbeing are likely to move together in relation to each other.

For the purposes of this study, a strong relationship between an outcome and overall wellbeing is defined as any outcome with a beta coefficient value greater than 0.7; a moderate relationship is between 0.699 and 0.4; a weak relationship less than 0.4. Even though a relationship may be weak, there is still a significant association between the outcome and overall wellbeing.

The following page presents all predictors of wellbeing that have a significant relationship with overall wellbeing for both student cohorts used in this pilot measurement.

4. Significance Tables

Table 1. All Predictors of Wellbeing for Both Cohort Groups

Indicator	Outcome	R	Strength	Score - Current Students (n=19)	Score - Incoming Students (n=7)
Healthy relationships at home	Additional Factors	0.859	Strong	3.53	4.14
Feelings of enjoyment and happiness	Self-Belief	0.744	Strong	3.26	3.86
Access to words of support (Encouragement)	Connection & Belonging	0.704	Strong	3.47	4.29
Access to quality adult relationships	Connection & Belonging	0.698	Strong	3.95	4.57
Stability of home life	Additional Factors	0.679	Strong	4.11	4.43
Relationship skills – Respectful relationships	Life Skills	0.676	Strong	4.11	4.86
Ability to pursue interests (via relevant education and training)	Transition Readiness	0.621	Strong	3.89	4.43
Determination / self-discipline	Self-Belief	0.597	Moderate	3.79	4.00
Sense of belonging	Connection & Belonging	0.592	Moderate	3.53	3.29
Environments for self-respect and self-expression	Safe Spaces	0.555	Moderate	3.42	3.14
Sense of purpose	Self-Belief	0.554	Moderate	4.00	4.43
Physical wellness	Additional Factors	0.542	Moderate	3.37	3.14
Self-acceptance and self-love	Self-Belief	0.539	Moderate	2.89	3.57
Access to mental health services	Additional Factors	0.496	Moderate	3.67	4.14
Sleep	Additional Factors	0.494	Moderate	3.16	3.29
Self-belief	Self-Belief	0.48	Moderate	3.89	4.14
Optimism / hope for the future	Self-Belief	0.478	Moderate	3.63	4.29
Nutrition	Additional Factors	0.465	Moderate	4.21	4.57
Cognitive skills	Re-engagement with Learning	0.433	Moderate	4.26	4.14
Self-respect / self-perception	Self-Belief	0.432	Moderate	3.42	3.57
Self-pride	Self-Belief	0.411	Moderate	3.61	3.43
Access to role-modelling	Safe Spaces	0.398	Weak	3.89	4.57
Communication skills	Re-engagement with Learning	0.393	Weak	2.68	2.71
Confidence and clarity of post-IDEA pathways	Transition Readiness	-0.43	Moderate	3.84	2.86

Note: Data for incoming students includes all students who completed a survey and have not had a full year of full-time enrolment at IDEA.

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