

# Guide to *Thrive*

## Program Overview



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# Program Development



- was generated to support practices around transitioning from primary to secondary school
- is grounded in existing and new, up-to-date best practice research
- involved conscious transfer of research to practice
- was funded by the Australian Government

# Research & Evidence

Guide to Thrive was informed by extensive research undertaken by the Australian Council of Education Research (ACER) on behalf of Life Ed.

*Existing*

- Review of existing research literature including an environmental scan
- Review of existing resources

*New*

- Life Ed Student Forums (conducted in 2021) included:
  - **82 forums** (small group interviews)
  - **15 schools**
  - **444 students**





# Research Findings

The ACER research found:

- 46% of upper primary students feel fear, uncertainty, and sadness about the move to secondary school, with girls more likely to feel fear or sadness about the leap compared to boys.
- about half (49%) were mostly concerned about academic workload, including difficulty and volume of schoolwork, as well as higher expectations from parents and teachers.
- 26% of students perceived adjusting to secondary school systems and culture as their biggest challenge.
- and almost a quarter of students surveyed (21%) said managing social challenges was their biggest concern, which included difficulty making new friends, fitting in with peers, or worries about other students.

To access the full report:

What Australians students say about transition to secondary school:

Visit [https://research.acer.edu.au/well\\_being/18/](https://research.acer.edu.au/well_being/18/)



Guide to Thrive was explicitly designed to use the research evidence base to bridge the gap between research and classroom practice, and to ensure student voice was clearly present.



## Process

### Students want to manage change by:

- Working at their own pace
- Actually trying new things
- Learning from peers
- Using technology

### Solutions for Students

- **Academic work** – Learning-to-learn skills
- **School systems** – Learning about organising systems
- **Friendships** – Learning social and adaptation skills
- **Self-discipline** – Learning reflection and self-awareness skills

### Solutions for Schools

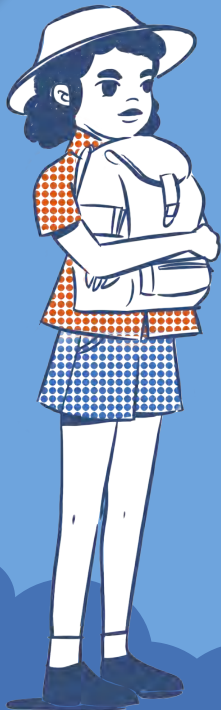
- **Academic work** – Teaching learning-to-learn skills
- **School systems** – Teaching about organising systems
- **Friendships** – Teaching social and adaptation skills
- **Self-discipline** – Teaching reflection and self-awareness skills



The research resulted in five recommendations for new resources that:

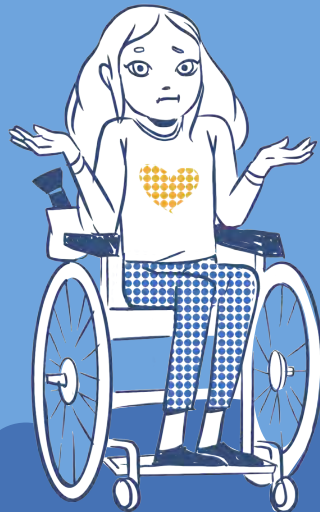
1

Are useful in both  
pre & post primary  
to secondary school  
transition stages



2

Help students  
manage uncertainty  
and change in life



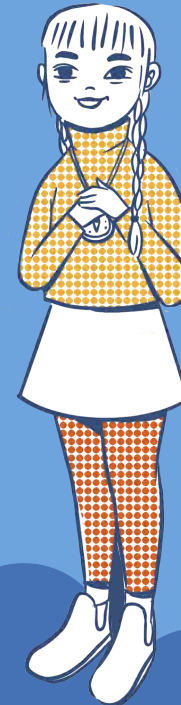
3

Build upon  
students' emerging  
responsibility  
and agency



4

Are centred on the  
solutions identified  
by students



5

Leverage students'  
preferred learning  
pathways

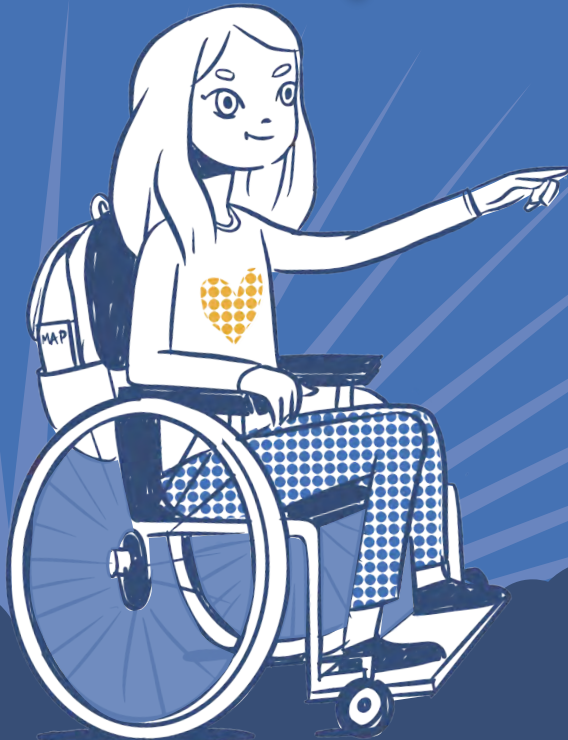


# Research to Practice

To transfer the research recommendations and content into resources suited to a classroom environment, we used the expertise of people who had knowledge & experience in both research & classroom teaching.

We worked  
closely with:

- **Researchers**  
with classroom-teaching experience
- **Teachers**  
who wanted to engage further with the research



When designing the content, students were held at the centre of considerations. Classroom teachers were seen as the primary audience, who would access the resources and then facilitate the student-centered activities. Once young people were encouraged to engage with the activities, the focus was on student agency and students taking responsibility for self-management and growth in school transition.



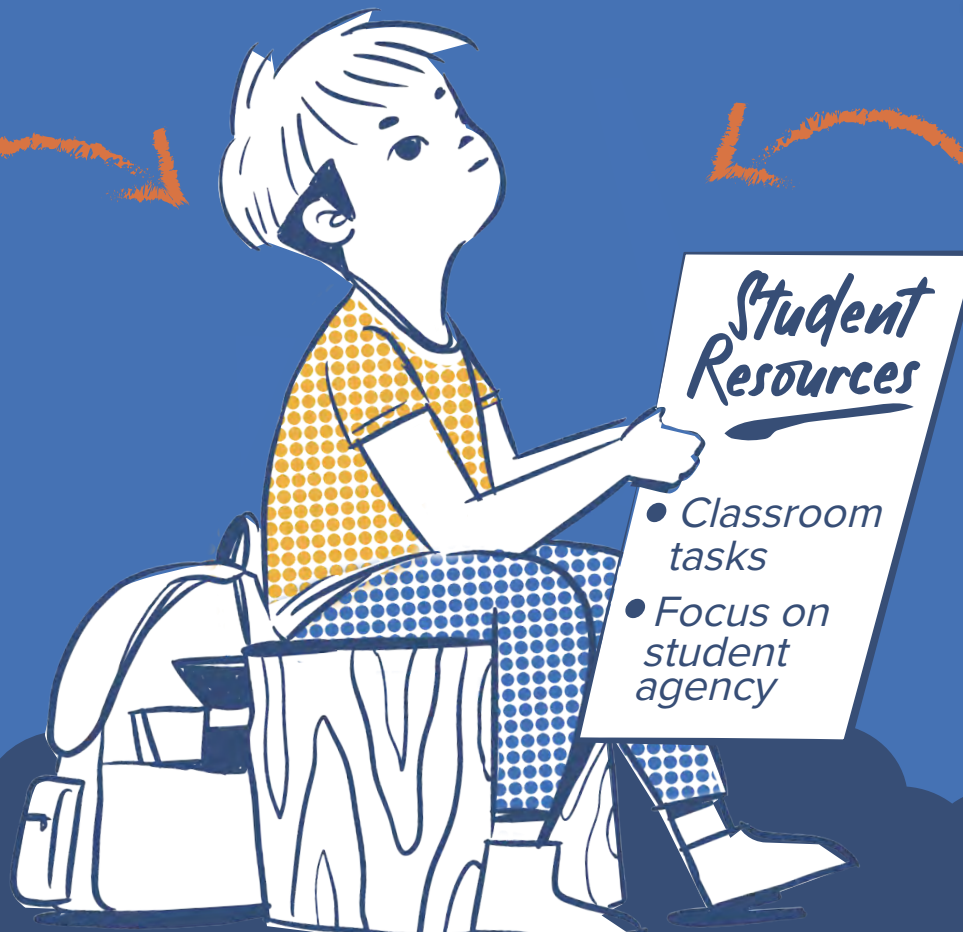
The main goal of Guide to Thrive is for students to take responsibility for their self-management & growth. The resources address the challenges identified by students in the research phase, the classroom activities introduce the challenges and support students in finding their own solutions.

## Teacher Resources

- PD focus
- Background to classroom tasks

## Support for Parents & Carers

- Information
- Joint activities with students





After an extensive research and design process, and converting the research to practice, the Guide to Thrive toolkit was launched.

## The toolkit contains over 45 evidence based online resources.

Included are:

- 1) Teacher Professional Development
- 2) Classroom Activities
- 3) Support for Parent & Carers  
At home resources



# Content & Resources

School transition was viewed from the teacher, classroom and home perspective to ensure a whole community approach. The three portals developed on the Guide to Thrive website directly link to the content areas that emerged from the research. Each portal has five categories or modules to access.

## Professional Development

**Term 1**

Introduction to transition

**Term 2**

Communication & social skills

**Term 3**

Managing schoolwork expectations

Change & uncertainty

**Term 4**

New school environment

## Classroom Activities

**Term 1**

Introduction to transition

**Term 2**

Communication & social skills

**Term 3**

Managing schoolwork expectations

Change & uncertainty

**Term 4**

New school environment

## At home Resources

**Term 1**

Introduction to transition

**Term 2**

Communication & social skills

**Term 3**

Managing schoolwork expectations

Change & uncertainty

**Term 4**

New school environment





What's covered

## Teacher Professional Development

### Introduction to transition

- Research overview
- Organising transition in your school

### Communication & social skills

- Communication strategies
- Social interaction & starting a new school
- Recognise, respond, report

### Managing schoolwork expectations

- Managing secondary school expectations

### Change & uncertainty

- What causes me distress?
- Coping with stress
- What can I control?
- Change charts

### New school environment

- Introducing google maps
- Navigating school timetables
- New school mapping – scavenger hunt



# Guide to Thrive

What's covered

## Classroom Implementation

Introduction to transition

- Diagnostic exercise
- Interviews about transition

Communication & social skills

- Bullies, bystanders & upstanders
- What makes me special?

Managing schoolwork expectations

- Managing my time
- Academic expectations
- Behaviour expectations

Change & uncertainty

- What causes me distress?
- Coping with stress
- What can I control?
- Change charts

New school environment

- Introducing google maps
- Navigating school timetables
- New school mapping – scavenger hunt



# Guide to Thrive

What's covered

## Support for Parents & Carers

### Introduction to transition

- Understanding school transition - written information
- School transition overview – video
- School transition checklist
- Parent/Carer and child interviews

### Communication & social skills

- Written information about bullying
- Anti-bullying video
- Making new friends video

### Managing schoolwork expectations

- Managing schoolwork expectations – written information
- Extra-curricular activities video

### Change & uncertainty

- Change & uncertainty video

### New school environment

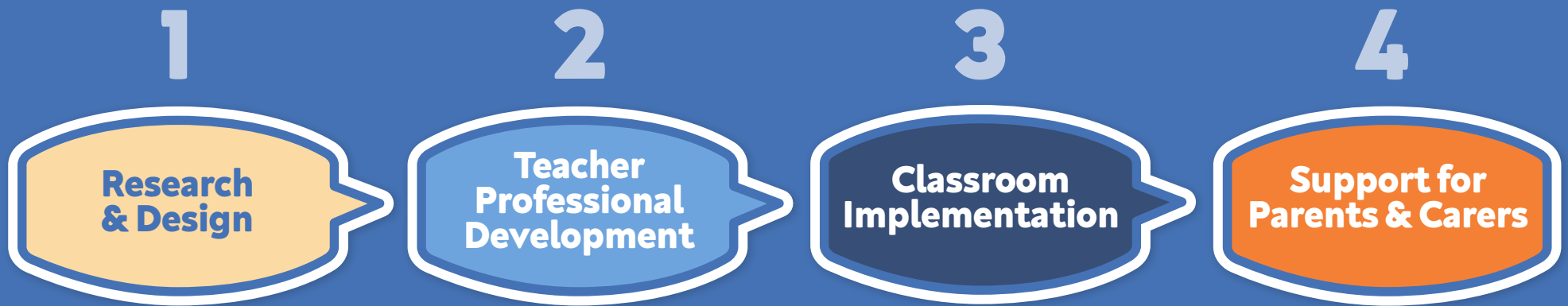
- Navigating the new journey to school - activities
- New school environment overview video



# Teacher / Student Learning Process

To help time-poor teachers get started using Guide to Thrive, we have created 4 simple steps.

These can be easily accessed on the homepage of the website. Teachers can use as many or as few resources as they like and choose what is relevant for their students.



*4 Simple Steps*

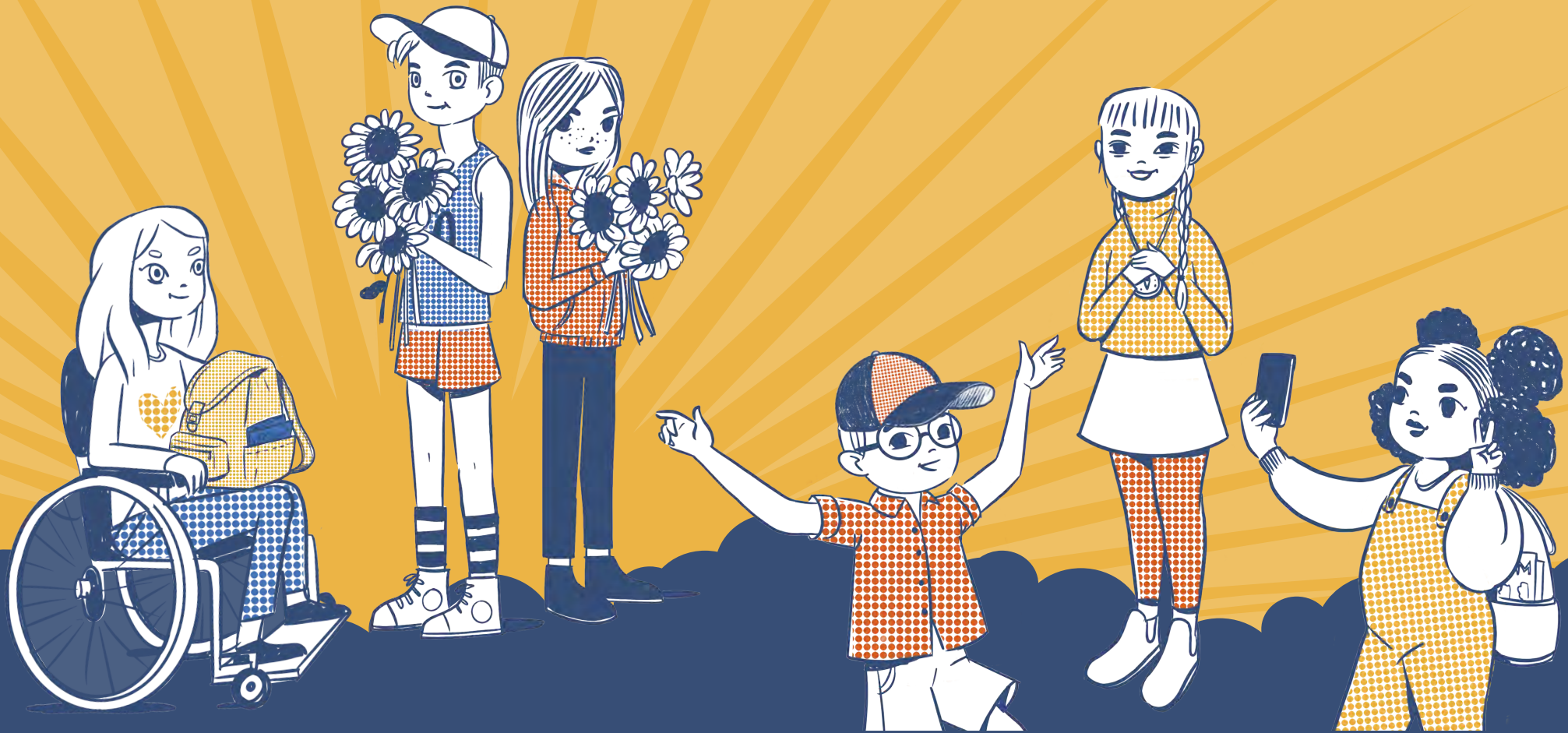
# Life Ed is confident



- will deepen teachers' knowledge and understanding of the issues facing young people in the transition to secondary school
- will help build capacity of teachers to support students to develop change management skills
- will provide easy-to-use, Australian-curriculum-aligned lessons that can be used alongside mainstream learning
- will demonstrate a strengths-based approach to transition
- will promote the importance of engaging parents & carers in the process

# Opportunity for Positive Change

Life Ed is proud to offer Guide to Thrive, as part of our continued commitment to supporting children with their social and emotional learning journey from the early learning years right through to the secondary school transition. Together we can help students make a successful transition from primary to secondary school, setting them up to thrive academically and socially.





# Guide to Thrive

