

SEPLA-CON18



Building Emotional Literacy within a Trauma Sensitive Classroom

Mr Matthew Di Domenico¹

¹*Austin Hospital School, Heidelberg, Australia*

We know that students who struggle to self-regulate often can internalise or externalise their feelings and emotions in inappropriate ways. This can cause significant stress and poor relationships within not only schools but families as well.

This session will focus on our specific cohorts in the Social Education Program at the Austin Hospital School, being students who present with school refusal or behaviours of concern. The session will present students' general history and background and some common threads as to why these students may be disengaging from school. The session will aim to cover what trauma looks like in schools and its impacts in the early years, what trauma sensitive environmental approaches we use in our setting and adjustments we make to our curriculum as positive preventative strategies for our students.

The second half of the session will showcase our Social Education Program. A new and exciting program that was completely overhauled in 2017 to better meet the needs of our students. It will look into its early development, as well as some of the evidence-based frameworks and programs that were used to influence and form the program. We will discuss how a program such as this can be developed and implemented into other school settings as part of the daily routine or as a supplementary program that supports emotional literacy and social skill development. The session will present student case samples across their time within the program and also look into what assessment tools are used to measure overall effectiveness and student outcome development.