

Behaviour Symposium

Fanning the Flame of Hope

22 - 23 May 2025

Full Programme, Keynotes and Workshops Synopsis



Consent & Respectful
Relationships Education
A Commonwealth Government Funded Initiative



Australian Government

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Symposium Information

2025 Behaviour Symposium: Fanning the Flame of Hope

Catholic Schools NSW is proud to invite you to the 2025 Behaviour Symposium this May, a premiere multi-day event tailored to the Catholic education sector in NSW.

The symposium will feature Tom Bennett OBE, a leading expert in behaviour management both at a classroom and a whole-school level.

Additional speakers for the event include Andrew Fuller, Dr Jacqueline Amos, representatives from the Australian Education Research Organisation (AERO), and Alex Kohn.

Thursday 22 May

Day 1 – Classroom and School Behaviour Management

Amora Hotel Jamison, 11 Jamison Street, Sydney NSW 2000

Designed for Early Career Teachers and those who are looking to enhance their professional practice, this day focuses on practical classroom behaviour management strategies. The day will also provide opportunities for Assistant Principals to engage in a dedicated Masterclass on school behaviour management with Tom Bennett. Finally, the program will appeal to those leading respectful relationships education programs as there will be a keynote and workshop stream dedicated to this topic.

Friday 23 May

Day 2 – System Approaches for Behaviour Management

Four Seasons Hotel, 199 George St, The Rocks NSW 2000

System, school and wellbeing leaders will participate in discussions on policies and procedures in order to shape and maintain positive, safe and respectful learning environments. This day includes dedicated breakout sessions on respectful relationships, school safety and mental health.

Programme Day 1

THURSDAY 22 MAY 2025

Theme: Classroom and School Behaviour Management

Location: Amora Jamison Hotel, Sydney

7:45 - 8:30

Registration

8:30 - 9:15

Introductions

9:15 - 10:05

Building Resilience: How Schools and Young People Rise to Social Challenges

Tom Bennett

10:05 - 10:55

Unpacking Consent and Respectful Relationships Education in Schools

Karen Doyle, Choiceez Media

10:55 - 11:30

Morning tea

11:30 - 12:20

A1

Early Career Teacher and Developing Teachers Behaviour Management Workshop
AERO

B1

Assistant Principals – Managing Problematic Behaviours Masterclass
Tom Bennett

C1

Relationships After Technology: A Philosophical Response
Dr Matthew Tan

12:20 - 1:10

C2

Practical Considerations for Teaching CRRE in Catholic Schools – empowering classroom teachers
Matthew Turner, Jenn Sharp & Liam Nicholls (CEDoW)

1:10 - 2:00

Lunch

2:00 - 3:15

Aligning Neural Activity with Student Actions – The Science of Behaviour

Andrew Fuller

3:15 - 3:45

Closing Remarks & Wrap-up of Day 1

Tom Bennett and CSNSW Wellbeing Team

3:45

Day 1 concludes

Programme Day 2

FRIDAY 23 MAY 2025

Theme: System Approaches for Behaviour Management

Location: Four Seasons Hotel, Sydney

7:45 - 8:30	Registration		
8:30 - 9:15	Introductions		
9:15 - 10:05	<i>Unlocking Excellence: Key Systems Shared by the World's Most Successful Schools</i> Tom Bennett		
10:05 - 10:55	<i>A Distinctly Catholic Approach to Educating the Whole Child (Pre-recorded Video)</i> Melodie Wyttenbach & Molly McMahon Roche Centre for Catholic Education – Boston College, USA		
10:55 - 11:30	Morning tea		
11:30 - 12:20	CONSENT A1 <i>Consent and the Law</i> Alex Kohn	SCHOOL SAFETY B1 <i>Understanding the Roots of Problematic Violent Behaviour</i> James March	MENTAL HEALTH C1 <i>Interventions to Address Complex Behaviours</i> Andrew Fuller
12:20 - 1:10	A2 <i>School Case Study – “Tell the truth - A case study in failing and forming the Stannies Man”</i> Lindsay Luck – Principal St Stanislaus’ College, Bathurst	B2 <i>Social Cohesion Case Study – Key Learnings from Challenging Schools in the UK</i> Tom Bennett	C2 <i>Supporting complex needs through a therapeutic care approach</i> Dr Jacqueline Amos
1:10 - 2:30	Lunch		
2:30 - 3:20	<i>Panel Discussion - Topic: What next for behaviour management? The impact on student achievement.</i> Chair: Dallas McInerney Panel Members: Tom Bennett, Lindsay Luck (St Stanislaus’ College), Dr Nicole Archard (Loreto Kirribilli)		
3:15 - 3:45	Closing Remarks & Wrap-up of Day 2 Tom Bennett and CSNSW Wellbeing Team		
3:45	Day 2 concludes		

Keynotes and Workshops

Synopsis - Day 1

Thursday 22 May 2025 – The Amora Jamison Hotel

Tom Bennett

Keynote

Building Resilience: How Schools and Young People Rise to Social Challenges

In this powerful keynote, Tom Bennett - renowned global expert in behaviour and education policy - explores how schools and students can develop the resilience needed to thrive amid an increasingly complex and uncertain world. Drawing on his extensive work with school systems across the UK, Australia, the Middle East, and beyond, Tom examines the global macro environment and how major social, economic, and technological shifts are impacting student behaviour, wellbeing, and engagement.

Tom will address a range of societal challenges that schools are currently navigating, including the erosion of authority and trust in institutions, the impact of digital saturation and social media on attention and behaviour, the increase in mental health issues among young people, and the growing polarisation of public discourse. He will also reflect on how these external pressures often manifest within classrooms - as disengagement, defiance, or anxiety - and the implications for educators trying to create calm, focused learning environments.

With his trademark clarity, evidence-informed perspective, and deep understanding of schools, Tom will offer compelling reflections on how education can not only adapt to social change - but lead through it. This is a timely and inspiring session for school and system leaders seeking to build resilient communities that empower young people to flourish, no matter the challenges they face.

Karen Doyle

Keynote

Unpacking Consent and Respectful Relationships Education in Schools

In this insightful keynote, Karen Doyle draws on over a decade of experience to explore the evolving landscape of Consent and Respectful Relationships Education (CRRE) in Australian schools. Offering a macro perspective, Karen traces the historical development of CRRE, identifying the key cultural, educational, and legislative shifts that have shaped how schools approach this complex and sensitive topic.

Karen will share how Choicez Media has worked in partnership with schools and systems to deliver age-appropriate, values-aligned resources that support both educators and students. Grounded in a Catholic understanding of the human person, Karen explores how CRRE can be authentically integrated within a Catholic educational framework, upholding the dignity of the person while equipping young people to form healthy relationships.

The keynote also addresses the real-world challenges schools face in implementing CRRE, including cultural tensions, curriculum integration, and ensuring consistency with faith-based teachings. With clarity, compassion, and practical insight, Karen invites educators to engage with CRRE not just as a policy requirement, but as a vital opportunity to shape the character, choices, and flourishing of young people.

AERO

Workshop

Early Career Teacher and Developing Teachers Behaviour Management Workshop

This 2-hour workshop delivered by the Australian Education Research Organisation (AERO) will introduce participants to a new national suite of evidence-based classroom management resources designed to support Australian teachers and school leaders. Titled Early Career Teacher and Developing Teachers Behaviour Management Workshop, the session is tailored to meet the needs of recent university graduates who are learning to embed professional practice in real classroom settings. Further, more experienced educators will also benefit from the opportunity to refresh and enhance their behaviour management approach.

Drawing on the latest research and classroom-tested strategies, AERO's presentation will equip educators with practical tools and frameworks to promote positive behaviour, establish consistent routines, and foster student engagement.

Attendees will access AERO's newly released toolkit, which provides step-by-step guidance and flexible strategies to help educators build a calm, orderly, and supportive learning environment. This session will be an invaluable opportunity for teachers at all stages of their career to strengthen their confidence and capability in one of the most important areas of classroom practice.

Tom Bennett

Masterclass

Assistant Principals – Managing Problematic Behaviours Masterclass

This highly practical masterclass, delivered by world-renowned behaviour expert Tom Bennett OBE, is designed for Assistant Principals and system leaders who manage day-to-day student behaviour issues.

Focusing on real-world solutions, Tom will equip participants with practical strategies they can immediately apply in their schools. The masterclass will cover how to confidently address challenging behaviours, as well as how to support teachers to manage classrooms more effectively.

Key areas covered will include:

- Practical techniques for de-escalating incidents and resolving conflicts
- Structuring clear, consistent behaviour expectations across the school
- Coaching and supporting staff in daily behaviour management

With a focus on actionable strategies rather than theory, this session will empower Assistant Principals to lead behaviour management with clarity, consistency, and confidence.

Dr Matthew Tan

Workshop

Relationships After Technology: A Philosophical Response

In this thought-provoking workshop, Dr Matthew Tan explores the foundational role of human relationships in the formation of ethical and respectful communities, particularly before any conversation around consent and respectful relationships can be meaningfully engaged. Drawing on a Catholic anthropological lens, Dr Tan contends that authentic relationships - rooted in presence, vulnerability, and reciprocity - must be intentionally cultivated to counteract the isolating effects of technology and social media.

Despite the promise of increased connectivity, the digital age has, paradoxically, undermined deep human connection. Dr Tan will explore how technology often reduces human interaction to transactional engagement, weakening our capacity for empathy, responsibility, and ultimately, love. This workshop will also integrate key insights from post-modern philosopher Byung-Chul Han, whose critique of the “society of performance” and the commodification of the self offers a compelling lens through which to assess our current relational landscape.

Participants will be invited to reflect on how schools and educators can foster environments that prioritise the development of the whole person, emphasising relationship, encounter, and dignity as essential conditions for any formation in consent and respectful relationships education.

Matthew Turner, Jenn Sharp & Liam Nicholls (CEDoW)

Workshop

Practical Considerations for Teaching CRRE in Catholic Schools – empowering classroom teachers

In this breakout workshop, Matthew Turner, Jenn Sharp and Liam Nicholls from Catholic Education Diocese of Wollongong (CEDoW) will explore the practical realities faced by teachers delivering Consent and Respectful Relationships Education (CRRE) in Catholic schools. Aimed at System Leaders, this session will highlight the types of support, professional learning, and classroom resources that educators require to confidently and faithfully engage with more contentious or sensitive aspects of the CRRE curriculum.

The workshop will also feature a case study from CEDoW, showcasing their system-wide framework designed to help schools and teachers navigate complex topics while remaining anchored in Catholic teaching and anthropology. Participants will leave with a clearer understanding of the tools and supports that empower teachers to deliver CRRE effectively and appropriately within a Catholic context.

Andrew Fuller

Keynote

Aligning Neural Activity with Student Actions – The Science of Behaviour

In this compelling keynote, Andrew Fuller unpacks the neuroscience behind student behaviour and explores how aligning neural activity with student actions can transform classroom practice. Drawing on the latest research in brain development and behavioural psychology, Andrew will guide educators through the underlying drivers and impulses that influence how young people act and react in learning environments.

This session aims to empower teachers by deepening their understanding of the cognitive and emotional processes that shape behaviour. With practical insights and relatable examples, Andrew will offer strategies to help teachers respond to behavioural challenges with greater empathy, clarity, and effectiveness. Participants will leave equipped with a fresh lens through which to view student behaviour; one grounded in science and aimed at fostering positive, supportive classroom relationships.

Keynotes and Workshops

Synopsis - Day 2

Friday 23 May 2025 – The Four Seasons Hotel

Tom Bennett

Keynote

Unlocking Excellence: Key Systems Shared by the World's Most Successful Schools

In this compelling keynote address, renowned behaviour expert Tom Bennett explores the foundational systems and practices that underpin some of the most successful schools around the world. Drawing on his extensive international work with education systems and school leaders, Tom will unpack the key policies, procedures and frameworks that drive excellence in behaviour management - an essential pillar of school improvement and student achievement.

This presentation will examine how high-performing schools cultivate a strong, consistent culture through clear expectations, whole-school alignment, staff training, and deliberate routines. Tom will share powerful case studies and practical insights from his advisory work in the UK, Australia, and other education systems, highlighting the common threads that successful schools share, regardless of context.

Attendees will leave with a deeper understanding of how effective systems, rather than reactive strategies, are the true drivers of long-term behavioural improvement and academic success. This keynote is a must for leaders seeking to implement sustainable and scalable approaches to building safe, calm and focused learning environments.

Dr Melodie Wyttenbach & Dr Molly McMahon (Roche Centre for Catholic Education – Boston College, USA)

Keynote

A Distinctly Catholic Approach to Educating the Whole Child

This video keynote presentation will be delivered by Dr Melodie Wyttenbach and Dr Molly McMahon from the Roche Centre for Catholic Education at Boston College, and will explore A Distinctly Catholic Approach to Educating the Whole Child. At the heart of this address is the Whole Child Framework developed by the Roche Centre, a research-informed and mission-driven model designed to support the holistic formation of students - academically, physically, spiritually, socially, and emotionally.

Grounded in the teachings of St Ignatius of Loyola, the framework draws on core Catholic values such as cura personalis (care for the entire person), discernment, and the formation of conscience. The presenters will unpack how these Ignatian principles guide schools in fostering environments where human flourishing is not only possible, but prioritised.

Wyttenbach and McMahon will also underscore the significance of system-wide adoption of such a framework, particularly for school leaders seeking a coherent and values-aligned strategy for student wellbeing and development. Through real-world examples and international insights, this keynote will invite leaders to reflect on how a distinctly Catholic and integrated approach to education can transform school communities and better serve the needs of all learners in their care.

Alex Kohn

Workshop

Consent and the Law

This breakout workshop, Consent and the Law, presented by legal expert Alex Kohn, will provide educators with a clear and practical understanding of key legal concepts relevant to consent and respectful relationships education. Drawing on current legislation, the workshop will explore topics such as the age of consent, capacity to consent, and legal implications of consent-related behaviours.

Designed in response to requests from teachers, particularly those delivering PDHPE; this session aims to build confidence and clarity for educators navigating complex and sensitive content in the classroom. Participants will gain a solid legal grounding to support accurate, age-appropriate, and responsible teaching of consent education, aligned with both curriculum requirements and legislative frameworks.

James March

Workshop

Understanding the Roots of Problematic Violent Behaviour

This breakout workshop, led by Senior Forensic Psychologist James March, explores the complex psychological and social factors that contribute to problematic violent behaviour in young people. Drawing on his extensive experience in forensic assessment and behavioural intervention, James will unpack the developmental, environmental, and cognitive drivers that can lead to aggression, antisocial conduct, and, in some cases, radicalisation.

Delivered as part of the Countering Violent Extremism and School Safety project, this workshop will equip educators, school leaders, and wellbeing staff with the insights needed to identify early warning signs, understand behavioural risk profiles, and implement preventative strategies. Attendees will gain a deeper appreciation of the root causes of violence and how schools can play a protective and rehabilitative role through early intervention and targeted support.

Andrew Fuller

Workshop

Interventions to Address Complex Behaviours

This practical and insightful workshop, led by renowned Clinical Psychologist Andrew Fuller, will explore evidence-informed interventions designed to support students who exhibit complex and challenging behaviours. Drawing on his extensive clinical experience and work with schools across Australia, Andrew will unpack the underlying drivers of these behaviours and offer targeted strategies that support students' emotional regulation, learning engagement, and social development.

Designed for Wellbeing Leaders, Counsellors, Diverse Learning Teachers, and staff who work closely with students requiring higher levels of support, this session will empower participants with tools to respond effectively and compassionately to behavioural complexity. The workshop will also explore how to embed these interventions within whole-school and individualised approaches, helping educators foster environments that are both inclusive and responsive to the diverse needs of all learners.

Lindsay Luck (Principal, St Stanislaus' College, Bathurst)

Workshop

School Case Study – “Tell the truth - A case study in failing and forming the Stannies Man”

In this workshop, Lindsay Luck will share an honest and insightful case study on the challenges and successes of shaping a culture of respectful relationships at St Stanislaus' College, Bowral. Titled Tell the Truth – A Case Study in Failing and Forming the Stannies Man, this session will explore the realities of implementing change within a traditional boys' school environment. Lindsay will reflect on early setbacks, key learnings, and the deliberate strategies used to form young men of character through a whole-school approach. Participants will hear how truth-telling, relationship-building, and a renewed vision of masculinity have been central to the school's cultural transformation. This workshop will offer practical lessons for leaders committed to strengthening school culture and forming students with integrity and respect.

Tom Bennett

Workshop

Social Cohesion Case Study – Key Learnings from Challenging Schools in the UK

In this timely and practical workshop, Tom Bennett OBE – internationally recognised expert on behaviour management and school culture – will share key insights from his work supporting schools in some of the most socially and politically complex areas of the United Kingdom. Drawing on real-world case studies, Tom will highlight how strong school leadership, clear behavioural expectations, and a focus on community values can foster resilience, reduce polarisation, and strengthen social cohesion among students. This session is particularly relevant for System Leaders, Principals, and those with responsibilities in school safety and duty of care.

Participants will explore the strategies used to mitigate the risk of radicalisation and violent behaviours, while building inclusive and respectful school communities. Tom will discuss how understanding the social dynamics of at-risk school environments, embedding whole-school approaches that foster respect and belonging, and taking early action to address warning signs of social fragmentation are all critical to maintaining a safe and cohesive school culture.

Drawing from success stories and real-world interventions, he will outline practical leadership actions that can be taken to strengthen school safety and unity. This workshop offers both strategic insights and practical tools that attendees can adapt to support their own diverse school communities.

Dr Jacqueline Amos

Workshop

Supporting complex needs through a therapeutic care approach

In this powerful and practical workshop, Dr Jacqueline Amos will share insights from her work alongside colleagues at Centacare Catholic Family Services in South Australia. The session will explore a therapeutic care approach grounded in humanistic principles to support children and young people with complex needs, particularly those who have experienced significant trauma.

Participants will be introduced to the therapeutic care framework developed and implemented by Centacare, which emphasises relationships, emotional safety, and the healing power of consistent, compassionate support. Drawing on case studies and frontline experience, Dr Amos will illustrate how this model fosters trust, restores dignity, and strengthens the capacity of educators, carers, and school systems to provide trauma-informed support.

This workshop is ideal for school leaders, wellbeing staff, and educators seeking to deepen their understanding of therapeutic practice and apply it in educational settings to better meet the needs of vulnerable students.

Chair: Dallas McInerney

Panel Members: Tom Bennett, Lindsay Luck (St Stanislaus' College), Dr Nicole Archard (Loreto Kirribilli)

Panel Discussion

What next for behaviour management? The impact on student achievement.

This thought-provoking panel discussion will explore the future of behaviour management in schools and its critical link to student achievement. Chaired by Dallas McInerney, Chief Executive Officer of Catholic Schools NSW, the session will bring together a distinguished panel of education leaders: Tom Bennett OBE, internationally renowned behaviour management expert; Lindsay Luck, Principal of St Stanislaus' College, Bathurst; and Dr Nicole Archard, Principal of Loreto Kirribilli.

Drawing on their extensive experience in Catholic education and school leadership, the panel will examine current challenges, emerging trends, and innovative approaches to cultivating positive student behaviour. Together, they will discuss how effective behaviour management not only improves classroom environments but also drives stronger academic outcomes and long-term student success. Delegates will gain valuable insights into shaping school culture, supporting teachers, and sustaining high standards in an evolving educational landscape.



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