



# Implementing the Stronger Smarter Approach

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Results of the  
2024 Stronger Smarter Census



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# Survey completion

The 2024 survey was  
the 5<sup>th</sup> Census survey.

Two separate surveys  
were used.

- ▶ **Survey A:** Alumni who had not previously completed a Census survey received the full survey.
- ▶ **Survey B:** Alumni who had completed a previous survey received a shorter version with some more in-depth questions.

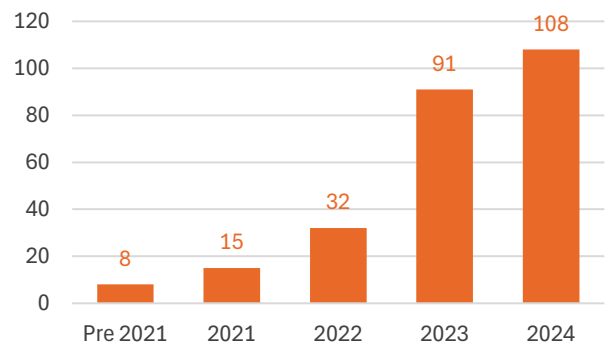
## Survey A

**97%**

of respondents

Had completed the SSLP/SSJP in  
the last 4 years

Survey A- Year of SSLP/ SSJP



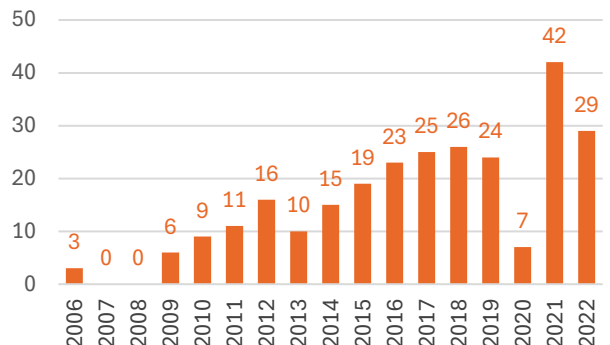
## Surveys 2016 - 2024

**44%**

of all SSLP and SSJP  
alumni

Have responded to at least  
one survey

Survey B - Year of SSLP/ SSJP



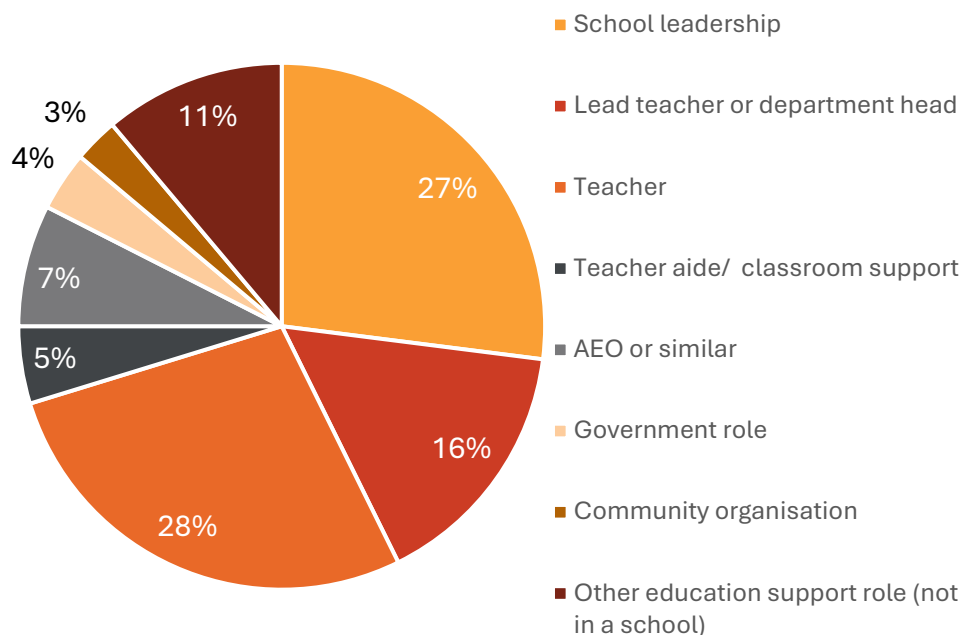


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# Demographics

## Current role

*Surveys A and B*



*Survey A and B*

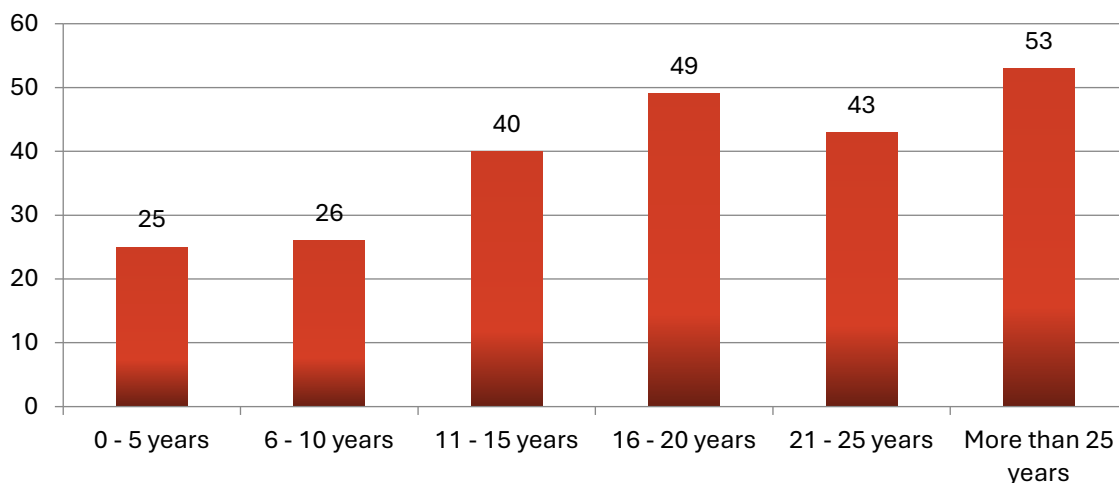
**44%**

of  
respondents

Were employed at  
principal or school  
leadership level

## How many years have you been in the teaching profession?

*Survey A 2024*





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# Workplace challenge

A high percentage of SSLP/SSJP participants complete a Workplace Challenge.

*Surveys 2016 - 2024*

**85%**

of respondents

Had either completed or were still working on their workplace challenge

*Surveys 2016 - 2024*

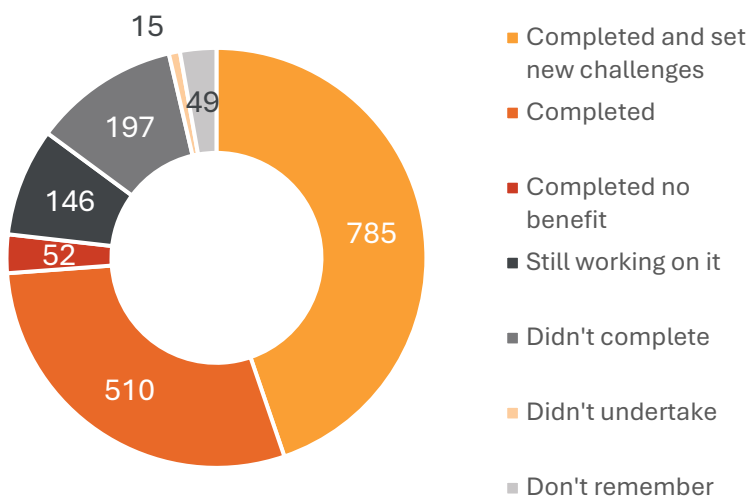
**45%**

of respondents

Report that they completed their original challenge and went on to set themselves new challenges.

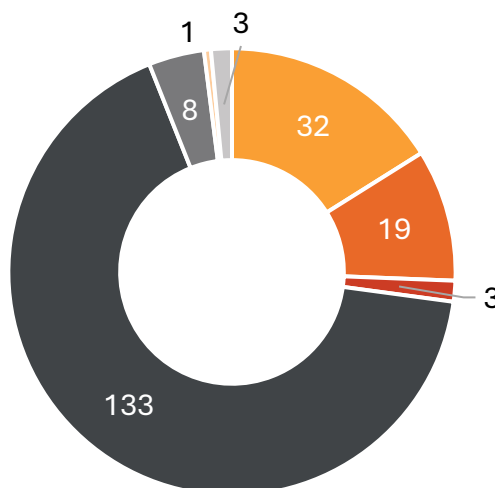
Workplace Challenges

*2006 - 2022*



Workplace Challenges

*2023 - 2024*





## From the Workplace Challenge



- Increased staff collegiality with shared understandings of high expectations and strength-based approaches.
- More empathy, increased morale, more energy in the workplace.
- Broader understanding of Aboriginal perspectives and how to embed them in the curriculum

- Improved behaviour, attendance, engagement and performance.
- Students more ready to learn and passionate about their work.
- Happier students, sense of trust, respectful relationships.
- Students proud of who they are, with greater connection to culture.

- High-Expectations Relationships bringing greater cohesion and inclusion.
- Culturally safe classrooms.
- Increased embedding of Indigenous Knowledges in curriculum

- Community more comfortable with the school, feeling that their voice is heard.
- Greater involvement in events such as NAIDOC week.
- Deepened participation in decision making.



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# Support

For the Workplace Challenge

The most important factors in a successful Workplace Challenge are the support from school leadership and colleagues.

## Planning

- Building collective goals
- Taking manageable steps
- Clear plan of action
- Knowing that change is slow and not giving up
- Stronger Smarter networks

## Personal

- Finding confidence in myself
- Reflecting and shifting personal mindsets
- Celebrating success
- Putting myself in other's shoes
- Relational leadership skills

## School leadership / Colleagues

- School focus on high standards
- Willing to listen
- Latitude for staff to try new ideas
- Collective goals
- Team approach
- Shifting deficit language and biases
- Open to change

## Stronger Smarter values and tools

- High-Expectations Relationships
- Strength-based approaches
- Relational aspects of school leadership
- Stronger Smarter values and underlying philosophical beliefs
- Stronger Smarter language
- Posters and processes



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# Implementation

Some Workplace Challenges are individual and relate to changes in the classroom.

Other Workplace Challenges involve sharing thoughts and ideas with other staff.

*Survey A*

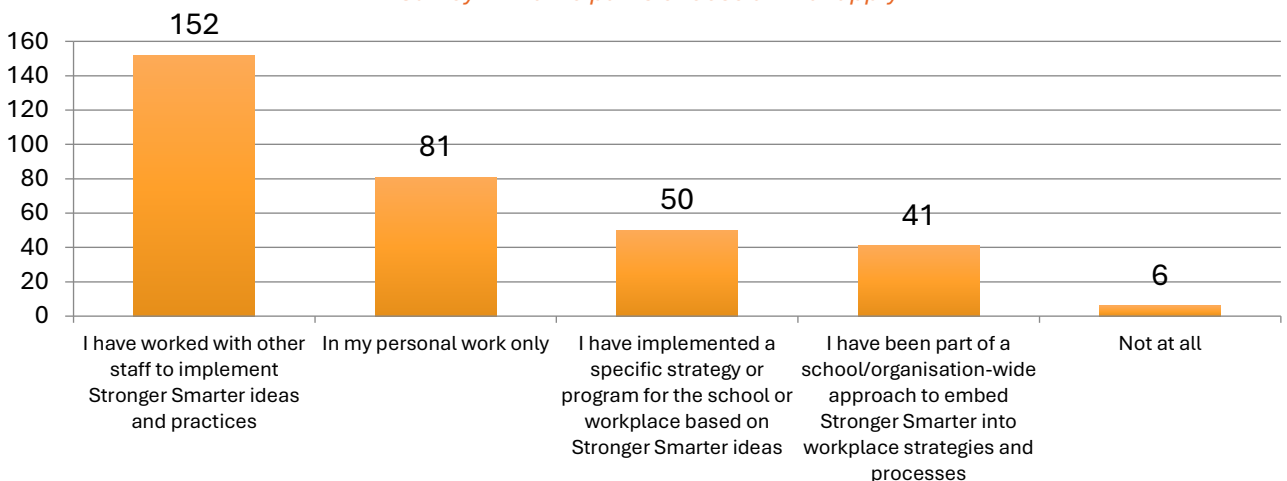
**76%**

of respondents

Had worked with others to implement elements of the Stronger Smarter Approach

To what extent have you personally implemented elements of the SSA in your workplace?

*Survey A - Participants choose all that apply*





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# Changes in the workplace

Respondents in leadership positions were more likely to have been able to make changes in the workplace).

Survey A

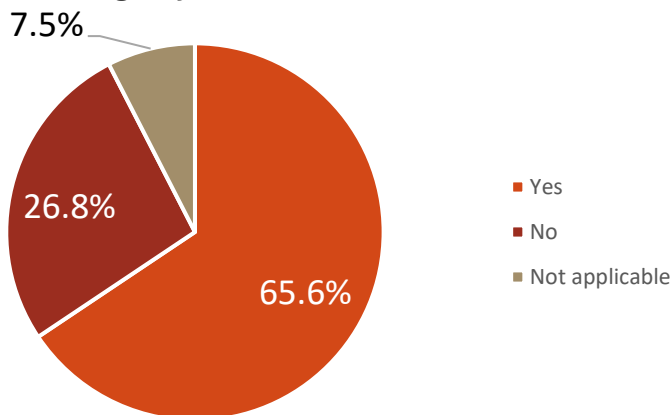
**66%**

of respondents

had been able to make the changes they wanted to make in the workplace

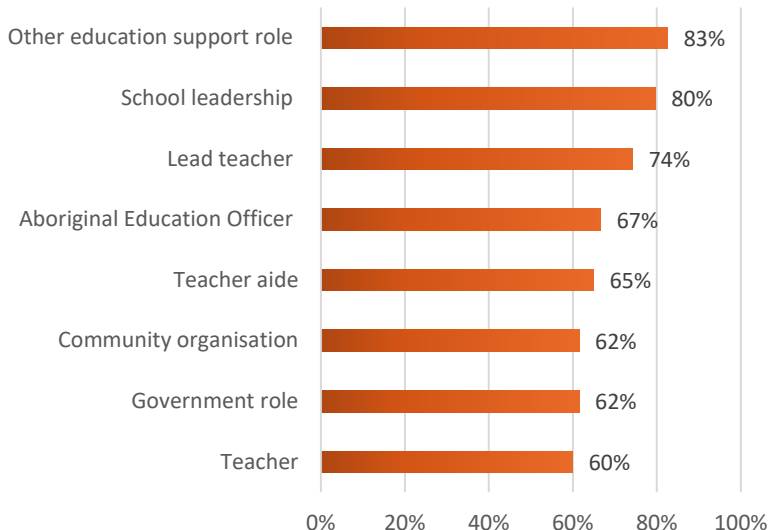
2024 Survey A and B combined

Have you been able to make the changes you wanted to make?



Percentage able to make changes.

2024 Survey A and B combined







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# With Community

Respondents describe being more proactive in building relationships and listening to community.

Combined surveys 2016 - 2024

## 78%

of respondents

had been ongoing changes in the way they interacted with parents.

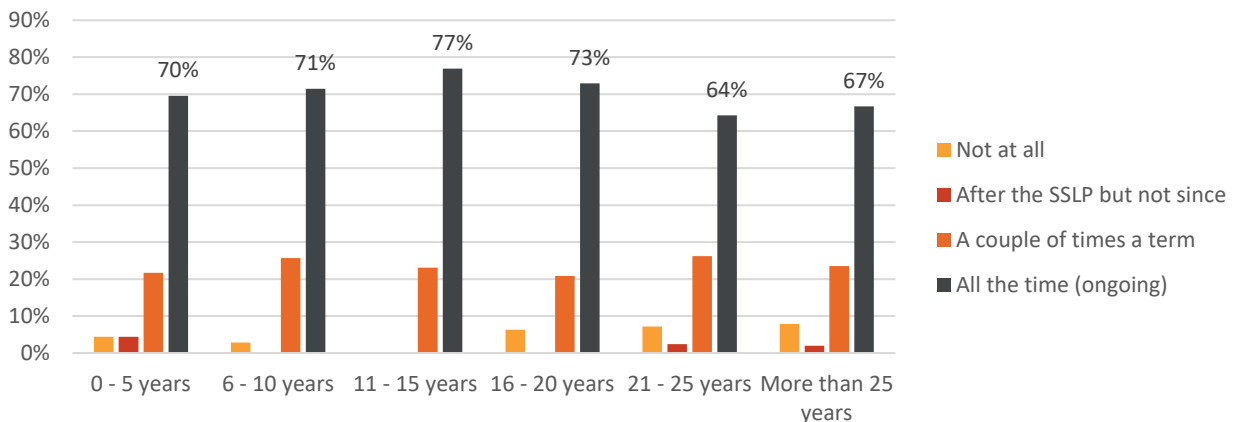
*The strategies I gained from the workshops have been so valuable. I have been able to connect more effectively with parents and they are more willing to talk to me. As a result, we have been able to work together, to assist my students to settle into the school environment.*

**Teacher, NSW**

## Community

- Greater pride, more trust
- More voices heard
- More parents coming into the school
- Greater involvement in events
- More powerful interactions
- Deepened participation in decision making

### With parents





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# In the classroom

## Classroom

- Maintaining high expectations through relationships
- Embedding culture
- Greater priority on wellbeing
- Listening to students
- Building on previous knowledge
- More student ownership in learning

Survey A

**96%**

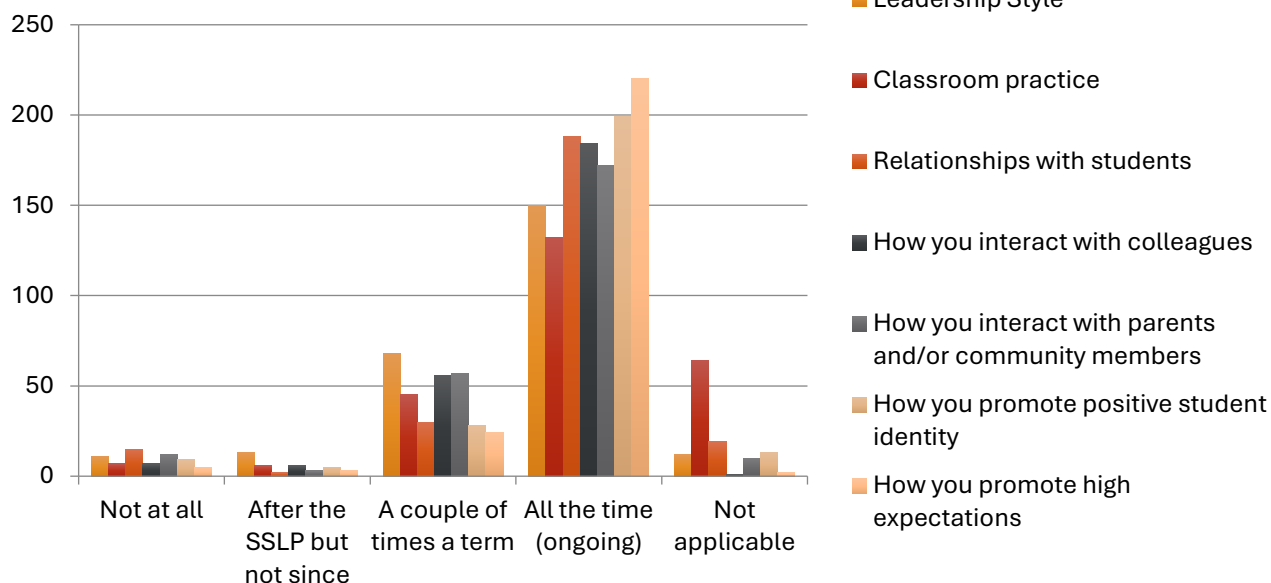
of respondents

Had made some level of change to their teaching practice.

*It [the SSLP] really made me stop and think about ways to change my and others' behaviours and attitudes towards teaching and learning.*

*Assistant Principal, NSW*

## Changes to practice





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# Leadership

Changes in the workplace often begin with personal reflections on assumptions, preconceived ideas and unconscious bias.

*Since my stronger smarter journey, I have been given the confidence to challenge people perspective when dealing with staff. I have implemented numerous Indigenous programs at my school. Through this I have been able to give our Indigenous students a voice that is heard and respected.*

Aboriginal Education Worker, NSW

## Survey A

# 61%

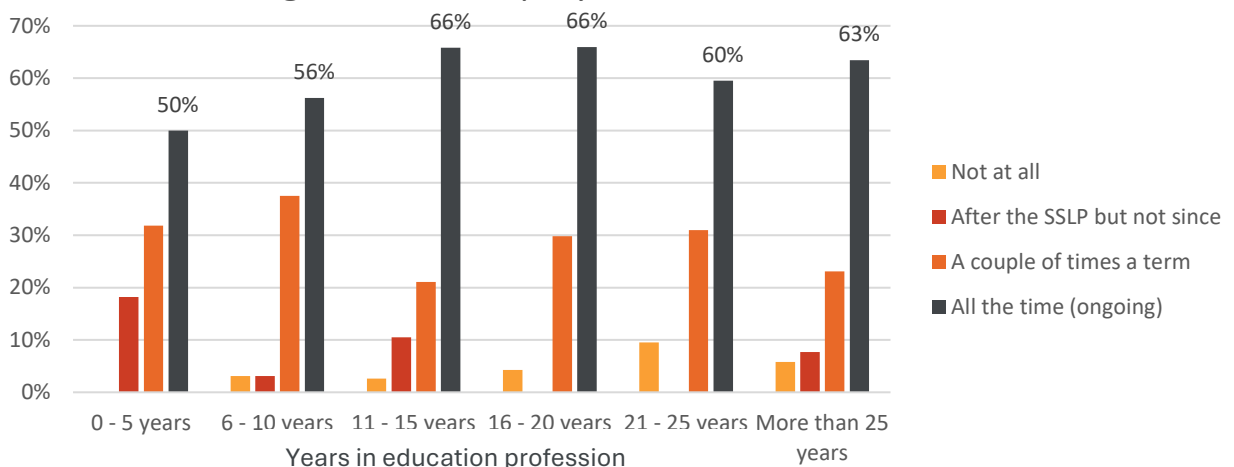
of respondents

Said the changes they had made ongoing changes to their Leadership practice.

## Leadership changes

- Distributed leadership
- Encouraging others
- Motivating staff
- Conversations on difficult topics
- Greater listening
- Consistent language and expectations

Changes to leadership style





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# Colleagues

For many alumni, their  
Workplace Challenge begins  
with working with colleagues.

Survey A

**72%**  
of respondents

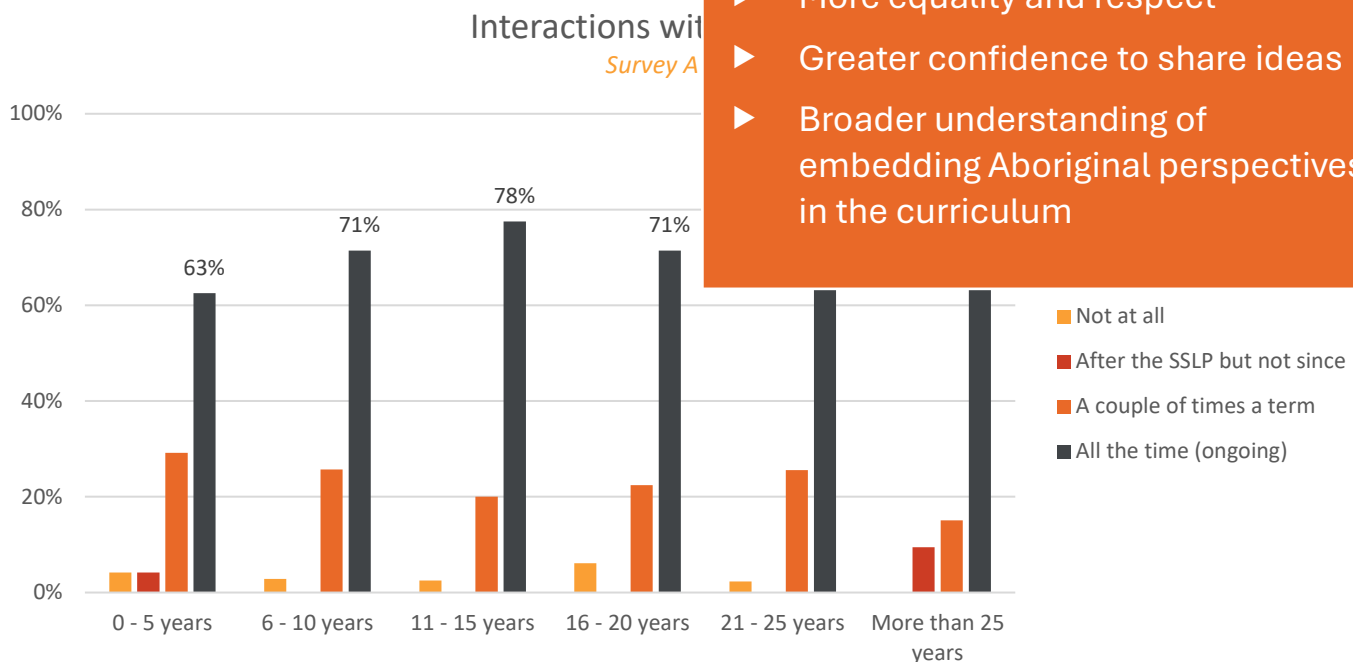
Had made ongoing changes to  
the way they interacted with  
their colleagues.

*Challenging deficit has been one  
of the most critical workplace  
practices we have undertaken.*

Principal, NSW

## Colleagues

- ▶ Increased staff collegiality
- ▶ Shared understandings of high expectations
- ▶ Increased morale and energy in the workplace
- ▶ More equality and respect
- ▶ Greater confidence to share ideas
- ▶ Broader understanding of embedding Aboriginal perspectives in the curriculum





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# Outcomes

*Participants reported improvements in attendance, enrolments, engagement, performance, motivation, sense of belonging, respect, resilience, and ownership of learning.*

A learning environment where students can reach their full learning potential

Collaborative, high expectations, whole school culture

Explicit high expectations with targeted support

Staff open to change

High-expectations relationships

Personal Sphere

Culturally responsive pedagogies and curriculum

Improved staff knowledge of local First Nations culture

School Sphere

Community Sphere

Deepened community participation in decision-making



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# The Program

Still the best PL I have ever participated in, in all my years with the department nearly 30 years.

Aboriginal Education & Engagement Officer, NSW

The Stronger Smarter Professional Development I had all those years ago is still one of the most important in terms of my understandings and knowledge in Aboriginal education.

Teacher, WA

Your program is one of the best to guide teacher pedagogy. It is great for all students and if all teachers did it as part of their pre-service training there would be less behaviour issues in schools and teachers would have a clearer path to implementing high quality teaching.

Teacher, Queensland

Stronger Smarter was a fantastic learning experience that has shaped my teaching practice moving forward.

Teacher, NSW

The SSLP had a profound impact on me personally and professionally. It totally changed my way of leading a school to the extent that each time I look at implementing something new I think, which Stronger Smarter process can I use that will achieve the results so as to make a difference for all students.

Principal, Queensland