



Mustering growth

Resilience and Wellbeing Program for Students in Regional and Rural Australia

Growing up in rural Australia gives children special experiences that urban kids don't get, but also comes with unique challenges. Research has demonstrated that young people living in non-urban areas may experience poorer mental health, especially those impacted by natural disasters, such as bushfires and drought (Usher, et al., 2021), and are more likely to be exposed to natural disasters compared to those living in urban areas.

A review of evidence-based wellbeing programs in 2020 revealed that there were no wellbeing programs specifically designed and delivered to students attending regional and rural schools, internationally or in Australia (Berger et al., 2020). In response to this gap, **Rural Aid** commissioned researchers from **Monash University** to design and evaluate a specialised program to improve resilience and coping of children in regional and rural Australia : **Mustering Growth**.

Mustering Growth aims to celebrate all that is great about growing up in the bush; strengthening kids innate resilience, normalising mental health experiences and decreasing stigma, increasing mental health literacy, and building skills and strategies to cope with challenges that are unique to the experience of rural children. The program is fun, interactive, flexible and includes nature- based activities.

How can you be involved?

Rural Aid is seeking expressions of interest from rural schools across Australia to participate in **Mustering Growth**. Registering your school's interest will assist with our planning & resourcing.

To register your school's interest please contact:

Myf Pitcher | Manager of Mental Health & Wellbeing at mhwb@ruralaid.org.au