



**livingripples**

Empower • Support • Connect

# Practitioner Guide:

## In-school and community launch

The Living Ripples process works best when all in the school community are prepared and informed. For all the students and their families this is often done through a launch event. Sharing the reasons why the school has decided to participate or is already participating in Living Ripples provides the foundation for all within the school community to get involved. A launch event in your school will build understanding and support and is especially important as each year, new students, families and staff will be involved.

A launch event is given a title that is easily understood among those the school wishes to invite. Some schools call it a presentation, others call it an in-school launch, and some refer to these forums as an intergenerational workshop. The launch can be part of a broader orientation program or welcome to the school or as its own event.

Common for all introductory and framing sessions within a school community is the importance of engagement. Often this means a face-to-face event, but an online event can be just as vital based on your community and school. The goal is maximum participation so there may need to be a blended approach. Do consider how to increase access from the time of the event, if food will be available through to providing care for younger children/ younger siblings to maximise attendance.

Having a lively and clear presentation and the opportunity to ask questions increases engagement. What is encouraged is to ask all the participants to get involved so try and time the first Living Ripples activity, usually the annual survey, close to the workshop or launch date. This way, the reason and aims for the school with Living Ripples is fresh in the minds of students and their families which will increase the quality and quantity of the responses.

Launch events may be a P&C meeting, community event, assembly or start of school year event.

# Participants

Allow a good lead time to invite the school and wider community to an in-school launch. Share the invitation widely, online and with physical copies/ posters in relevant places (high use community facilities).

If possible, ask interested participants to register to help know who is in the physical or virtual room.

It may be that name tags are helpful, or participants use the 'chat' function to name themselves on Teams/Zoom.

This approach of inclusion is a practice called Universal Design for Learning or UDL. UDL states that for equity and inclusion, cater to the edge. In practice this means removing barriers to learning. Some of the barriers may be obvious and others not.

Some people may not remember names well, the name tags will help them. Name tags also allow connections between participants to be more meaningful as conversations are more purposeful when you know who you are talking to. As the host, having name tags means you can thank individuals and ask for contributions by name, and everyone knows exactly who is talking. It makes engagement personal and contributes to a safe and supported space.

## In-person seating and set up

For a face-to-face delivery Living Ripples Ltd encourages a community of inquiry approach, a theoretical framework that encourages collaboration by connecting social, cognitive and coaching practice. If possible, participants are seated in a circle.

## Other usual run tips on the day include:

- check that the room has all the equipment needed
- turn on and check all devices are in good working order
- play the presentation and make sure all material is easily visible from all the chairs where participants will be sitting
- check cords and wires to ensure that these are safe and do not cause a trip hazard
- have name tags ready and displayed
- ensure bathrooms are accessible and open
- have a table for water and food (if offered)

## For online delivery:

- make sure your face will be well lit and able to be seen clearly by all participants
- remove any distractions or personal items for privacy
- set a background and/or blur your background for privacy
- test your microphone and speaker
- ensure you have the slides in an accessible format
- practice 'share screen'

- have breakout rooms planned (names and or number of participants for each session)
- review how you change your name on Zoom or Teams to be able to instruct participants to do the same.

## **At the session**

As soon as participants walk in or log on, you are 'on'. You are the host, the facilitator, the enabler. It is your energy, actions, words, tone and body language that create the atmosphere for learning.

### **Top tips:**

- be ready and waiting
- welcome participants
- introduce yourself to all participants, greet as appropriate
- if face-to-face, point out the facilities, tea/ coffee
- use inclusive language, be warm

### **Time to start**

Start the session on time. Do so even if all participants are not present. If you know participants are on their way or having trouble logging in and they are only minutes away, start with a general welcome, a greeting, a story. This shows the participants present you respect their time. It also allows you to begin building connections and allows those who are late, for whatever reason, to easily engage.

### **Content delivery**

Often the presentation includes school developed resources, strategy documents and program updates along with Living Ripples Process content.

Living Ripples Ltd has a range of resources available for schools to use in their presentations [these are to be developed].

With the aim to make learning easier for all participants, remember every group is different, and it is important to respond and engage with the audience in front of you.

### **Icebreaker purpose and management**

After your initial welcome, starting with an Icebreaker that helps connect and focus people will help orientate participants on the subject/ topics of the session.

What is essential is that you convey those instructions clearly to all participants. Being the first activity, it is vital you show all participants your capability in guiding their learning.

### **So, for instructions (and this works for all activities and sessions):**

- explain why the activity is being done
- explain what the activity is
- explain how it is to be done, the practicalities (individually, working in pairs for example)

- check in and ask participants if the instructions are clear
- give a timeframe for the activity
- move among the participants when they are working on the task and check in/ listen/ ask how they are going
- let participants know when the timeframe is almost up, for example, another two minutes
- call the participants back in time
- thank all the participants for completing the activity
- when all participants are resettled, ask 'how was that?' (encourage a response, a nod, thumbs up/ down)
- ask for feedback, usually someone will volunteer.
- When seeking feedback or responses, ask for volunteers and allow space and time to wait. Don't rush in. And don't start at one side and go from one person to the next in order. This is called 'creeping death' and is not engaging. Let people nominate/ volunteer. If you have established a good relationship, they will volunteer. Remember some learners will be more reserved and that is OK.

With the Icebreaker done, your next task is to help create a structure or contract around the school's intention with the Living Ripples Process as part of its wellbeing and resilience initiatives.

## **Creating agreement**

The purpose of creating agreement is to help curate engagement to support the school's wellbeing and resilience programs. Participants need to contribute to this contract. And the contract made needs to be relevant for all those in the room.

A useful way to introduce the learning contract could be by sharing an appropriate and relevant story or an analogy and highlight the importance of a whole of community approach to support all young people. Having participants agree to supporting the initiative and being willing to advocate on the school's behalf and share the story is the goal.

## **Presentation management**

In facilitating the presentations, here are some general tips:

- for the Living Ripples Process, draw on provided resources
- show all the elements, allow participants to interact with the material
- have regular eye/ visual contact with all participants (there may be cultural sensitivities in specific groups, but the intention is to appropriately connect with each person)
- don't rush but be aware of time
- check in with participants at the end of a section/ briefing/ instruction to ensure they know what is expected of them (reflection activities). Options include: thumbs up thumbs down, ask participants to repeat instructions, list steps on a whiteboard, have a reference on the presentation
- thank participants for their engagement
- do reflection activities as participants need to be actively involved, not presented 'at'

- remind participants of the learning contract as needed (participants appreciate being kept on task)
- summarise feedback and check in if your summary reflects what the learner said, record on a whiteboard, butchers' paper, use online polls, QR codes
- keep session to time
- be approachable
- observe and continue to build relationships and rapport with all participants
- give breaks as needed, not necessarily when the session is scheduled to end, a five- minute brain break can re-energise and can be needed
- gauge your audience, mix up the activities if they look distracted
- be present

## **Commit to action**

At the end of the session, advise participants of the next steps. For most it will be to complete the survey. Explain the timing and how the information will be delivered and when there will be updates.

## **Follow up**

Report back through the school's newsletter with a photo or two (taken with permission) of the launch and include a link to further information at school and/or the Living Ripples website. This helps those not at the launch be across what's happening and help grow interest.