



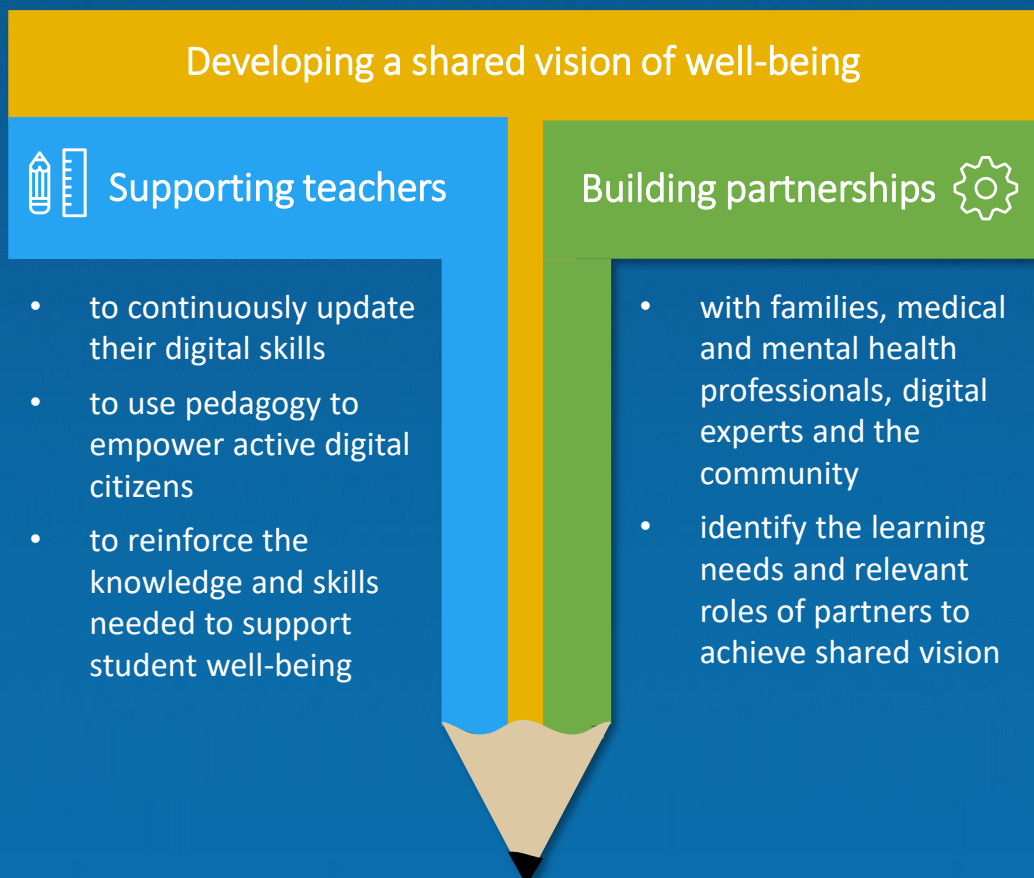
21ST CENTURY CHILDREN

SUPPORTING TEACHERS AND BUILDING PARTNERSHIPS

Educators play an important role in empowering children to thrive in a digital world. In addition to developing academic skills and competencies, they also support students' physical and emotional well-being. This includes building resilience to cope with risks and challenges, both on and off line.

To enable schools and teachers to play this role, a shared vision is necessary. This vision underpins:

- teacher development and professionalisation
- partnerships and collaborations



POLICIES SUPPORTING TEACHERS

Education systems take three main approaches to supporting teachers in developing digital skills and resilience in students.

Curriculum reform and extension

- Create a new or extend existing national curriculum
- Provide models of how to use technology in the classroom
- Include focus on implementation and resources to help schools
- Identify pedagogies that can usefully support digital skills and ensure the well-being of students

Network approaches to teaching and learning

- Build networks to develop and scale up coherent pedagogical approaches, support materials, professional sharing and learning and leadership

Formal teacher education and training

- Develop digital learning resources and Massive Open Online Courses
- Design professional development programmes



It is crucial to assess the quality, delivery and timing of training provided to teachers, to ensure that it is tailored and effective. We still know too little of what works, why, and in which contexts. Despite this, many policy initiatives are still not evaluated, or evaluated only partially.

SPECIAL FOCUS: DIGITAL SKILLS IN TEACHERS

Teachers need access to digital technologies as well as adequate support to strengthen and develop their own digital skills for teaching and learning. According to [TALIS 2018](#), only:



of teachers in OECD countries received training in the use of ICT for teaching as part of their formal education or training.



felt well or very well prepared for using ICT in teaching when they had completed their initial teacher education.

Teachers have access to ongoing professional development in the use of technology in teaching in the majority of systems. However, training in competences such as fostering digital citizenship and assessing online risks for students is not always available, and professional development opportunities for teaching with ICTs is consistently ranked as a high-need area.



There is a need to adequately prepare and support teachers throughout their careers in using, teaching with and teaching about digital technologies.

SCHOOLS AS COLLABORATION HUBS

Schools can establish different forms of collaboration with the community:

Schools as anchor institutions

creation of basic partnerships and collaborations with individual initiatives.

Schools' entrepreneurial relationships

creation of dynamic and highly collaborative partnerships with different members of the community, based on joint initiatives.

Schools' involvement in communities' lives

creation of strong partnerships based on a shared vision, initiated jointly by schools and their communities.

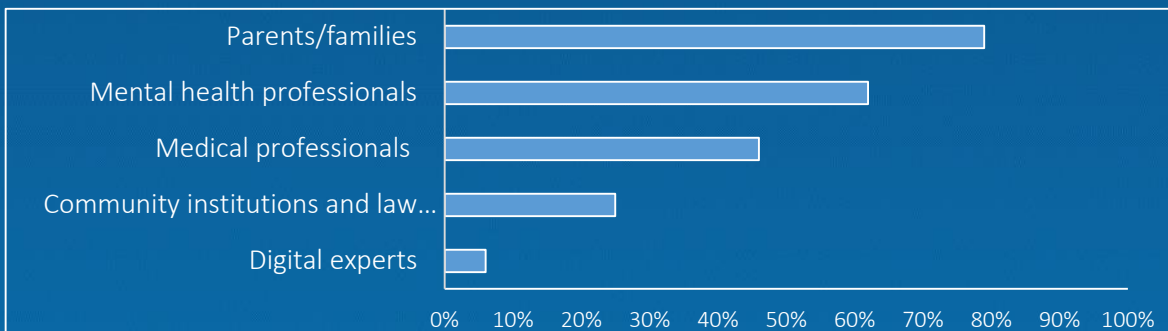
BUILDING PARTNERSHIPS

Education cannot go it alone. Partnerships are strategic collaborations that expand the capacity of schools to improve how they reinforce well-being and build digital skills. They help to avoid increasing the burden on teachers that comes with responding to increasingly complex demands, and avoid diluting the role of teachers.



Teachers first and foremost are education specialists. They are also key players to connect and collaborate with other specialists and services.

Yet not all schools partner with others. And even when partnership is common, it tends to be with a limited set of actors. Across the 26 education systems that responded, partnerships with families are required or present in most schools. Partnerships with digital experts were rare:



Source: Chapter 12 in Burns, T. and F. Gottschalk (eds.) (2020), *Education in the Digital Age: Healthy and Happy Children* <https://doi.org/10.1787/81f75503-en>.

Partnerships can range from ad hoc discussions between different actors to designing, evaluating and improving programmes together. They are strongly dependent on the authority and expertise of the actors involved and on the resources mobilised to make it happen.

Mechanisms to support the collaboration of different partners and institutions include:

- establishing formal feedback loops or accountability measures
- collaborative learning practices
- dedicated time and ongoing funding
- developing professional responsibility, agency and trust.

INSIGHTS ON KEY PARTNERSHIPS

FAMILIES



School-family partnerships are widespread across OECD countries, and can help students thrive. Key factors for success include:

- ensure participation of all families, especially those from disadvantaged backgrounds
- work to remove barriers to parental participation (e.g., conflicting work schedules, lack of transportation, language barriers)



Moving towards school-family partnerships aimed at the wider community rather than the school itself may help the development of continuous mutual exchange. In community-based models, parents become leaders and collaborators in setting the school agenda and work as members of a community .

DIGITAL EXPERTS



Given the speed of technological change, strong partnerships with researchers, industry, digital security experts and others will be increasingly important in order to:

- effectively integrate technology in teaching and learning
- safeguard against data and privacy breaches, and
- educate and protect students against cyber risks.



Forming partnerships with private sector actors can be challenging, due to different agendas and expectations of the sectors. However, overcoming these challenges is essential: Schools that use technology effectively tend to establish strong partnerships with stakeholders from universities, technology companies and other organisations.

MENTAL HEALTH AND MEDICAL PROFESSIONALS



The traditional connection between education and physical health is becoming increasingly augmented by mental health specialists, as awareness grows about the importance of emotional well-being. Examples of these partnerships include:

- access to specialist support in schools
- well-being teams work with teaching staff and provide support to schools
- fostering holistic approaches to well-being.



Partnerships can use the power of schools to detect and reach vulnerable students to better target health and social programmes.

Further reading

- Burns, T. & Gottschalk, F. eds. (2019). *Educating 21st Century Children: Emotional Well-Being in the Digital Age*. Educational Research and Innovation, OECD Publishing, Paris, <https://doi.org/10.1787/b7f33425-en>.
- Burns, T. and F. Gottschalk (eds.) (2020), *Education in the Digital Age: Healthy and Happy Children*, Educational Research and Innovation, OECD Publishing, Paris, <https://doi.org/10.1787/1209166a-en>.