

Lea Waters

Order of Australia recipient, Professor Lea Waters holds a PhD in Organisational Psychology and has been a psychology researcher at The University of Melbourne for 27 years, initially in the Business Faculty and then the Melbourne Graduate School of Education.



Professor Waters has worked with DE schools for more than a decade including work with the former Bastow Institute and being the Director of the Masters in School Leadership, a partnership between Melbourne Graduate School of Education and the Department of Education.

Her Visible Wellbeing program is being used by schools in Australia, Canada, South Africa, The Netherlands, India, Belgium, Hong Kong, UAE, China, and New Zealand. Visible Wellbeing is on the Victorian Department's Schools Mental Health Menu and is approved as an evidence-based program by Beyond Blue and the South Australian Department of Education. DE schools have been using Visible Wellbeing since 2015 beginning with Kambrya College and spreading to other metro, regional and rural schools.

Professor Waters was the Founding Director of the Centre for Positive Psychology at the University of Melbourne and is a world leader in this field with over 120 research publications. She has been the Ambassador of the Positive Education Schools Association for a decade.

Lea's best-selling book 'The Strength Switch' was the top release on Amazon, listed among the Top Reads by Berkeley University's Greater Good Science Center and one of the Top Five Books for Parents and Children in the UK's Top Five site. It has been translated into 10 languages, including Chinese, Japanese, Korean, Taiwanese, Hungarian, Arabic, Spanish, French and Russian.

In 2015, Professor Waters was listed as one of Australia's Top 100 Women of Influence by the Financial Review and Westpac bank. In 2017 she was listed in the Who's Who of Australian Women. In 2020, Lea was honoured by the Governor General of Australia and named a Member of the Order of Australia (AM) for her leadership in psychology, education and the mental health sector.

Lea has written for The Wall Street Journal, TIME, The Atlantic, and The Guardian and her work is featured in The New York Times, The Washington Post, The Toronto Globe, Huffington Post and more.