

"Are you feeling the weight of managing the responsibility for students with complex needs within an environment of high expectation and low support?"

**bower(schools)**<sup>™</sup> offers a comprehensive, multi-system protocol designed to address behavioural, emotional, and cognitive dysregulation in schools. Using a structured framework the protocols of **bower(schools)**<sup>™</sup> address the inequalities, disadvantages and fundamental differences that high and complex (support) needs carry.

Schools, as our most flexible socio-political institution, have absorbed the emotional and behavioural impact of societal shift from exclusion to inclusion. The current state of the Education Sector is complex and the population of students with high and complex needs is ever increasing with the political agenda of inclusion. If teachers and schools are responsible for inclusion, they must be equipped in the practice and pragmatics of inclusion, not simply its ideology and theory.

Working with schools across all education sectors including Independent, Catholic, and Government schools, the **bower(schools)**<sup>™</sup> protocols and framework reduce staff anxiety by providing a structured approach to managing difficult matters both inside and outside the classroom. **bower(schools)**<sup>™</sup> fosters an inclusive, collaborative school community, enabling better outcomes for all involved.

## Outcomes for Schools

- ✓ Saves schools money and reduces administration time
- ✓ Provides clear structures and protocols
- ✓ Establishes clear boundaries
- ✓ Documents, stores and manages information
- ✓ Reduces complaints and disputes
- ✓ Manages misunderstandings and miscommunications
- ✓ Manages inequality and reduces anxiety
- ✓ Creates shared memory
- ✓ Produces collaboration
- ✓ Legally protective

## Protocols

**bower(note)**<sup>™</sup> is a practical, transparent, and contemporaneous system for documenting and communicating in complex needs matters. It helps prevent misunderstandings and misrepresentations that can lead to conflicts, enabling smooth collaboration and engaging all stakeholders. Protocols assist in preventing crisis through early intervention and collaboration.

**bower(method)**<sup>™</sup> is a framework for thinking through complexity and provides a systemic view of problems and symptoms within individuals and systems. It provides a standardized template for delivery in educational, health, and human services, facilitating coordination across various sectors to serve students holistically.



### **Malcolm Robinson: Bower Place Executive Director**

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Expert in clinical practice with high and complex (support) needs and author of the bower(note)<sup>™</sup> protocol used in bower(schools)<sup>™</sup> and all clinical practice at Bower Place. Qualified Social Worker, Clinical Family Therapist, and Mediator with 50+ years therapeutic, teaching, supervision, management, and consulting experience with fractured, fragmented, families across the mental health, child protection, education, disability, justice and correctional systems - acquired brain injury, intellectual disability, major mental health, criminal behaviour, addictions, violence, and child abuse. Malcolm teaches family therapy and systemic practice, has held numerous key positions in family therapy in Australia, and presented 400+ papers and workshops in Australia, NZ, UK, and USA.

### **School feedback:**

*"The integration of bower(schools)<sup>™</sup> protocols has significantly transformed our school community by enhancing leadership and strengthening family engagement. Our team has embraced this framework, which has improved decision-making in areas like enrolment, learning plans, behaviour support, and family connections. By following bower(schools), we make consistent, data-driven choices, improving outcomes for students and building trust, especially with families facing trauma, poverty, and addiction.*

*One notable example is a parent who was initially reluctant to participate but now actively engages, bringing "bower notes" and contributing to the agenda. This growth exemplifies bower(schools)'s ability to foster meaningful family involvement, equipping both parents and students with essential communication and decision-making skills."*

*Leader - Calvary Lutheran School, Morphett Vale, South Australia*



## **Lisa Wolff: Director of Management**

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A family therapy and systemically qualified Teacher, Counsellor and School Leader seasoned in working with students and families with high and complex (support) needs, trauma, grief, dysregulation, violence, neurodiversity, mental health, and learning difficulties. 24 years' hard-end experience in Independent and Government schools in Australia and the UK; in Special Education, Aboriginal Education, as Teacher, Wellbeing Coordinator, and Student Counsellor. Lisa trains school leaders and staff in the bower(schools) protocols to manage complexity, complex problems, complex families, and complex systems; specifically, in the management of diversity, difference, and dysregulation. Lisa is passionate about fairness, justice, inclusion, positive outcomes for young people, strengthening families, and transforming education.

### **School Feedback:**

*"With bower(schools)<sup>TM</sup>, our school has achieved a sustainable culture of clarity, accountability, and collaboration, benefiting staff, students, and families. We encourage school leaders across Australia to consider adopting bower(schools)<sup>TM</sup> protocols to transform their communities."*

*Leader - Our Saviour Lutheran School, Aberfoyle Park, South Australia*

*"This authenticity, transparency and compassion woven throughout the Bower approach brings people together."*

*Teacher, Unity College, Murray Bridge, South Australia*



## **Paula Skinner: Director of Engagement**

Paula is a school principal on secondment to bower(schools) with 35 years' experience across public and private, primary and secondary education systems in both urban and rural communities. Her roles have spanned classroom teaching, learning support, expressive arts, mentoring, and 15 years as principal.

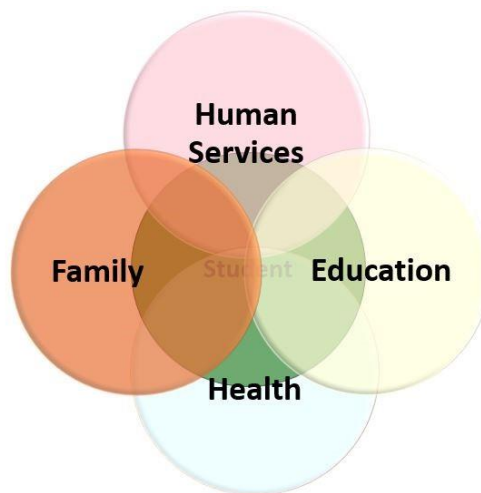
Paula holds postgraduate qualifications in Educational Leadership, Gifted Education, and a Master's in Special Education. She brings expert knowledge from all areas of teaching, curriculum, wellbeing, administration, finance, human resources and management.

As principal, Paula piloted bower(schools) protocols in her school and has a practical understanding of the transformative power of bower(note) at all levels of the school system.

## Complexity

The responsibility of the school and the teacher has expanded exponentially over the past 20 years to include educating students with myriad challenges, differences, and diversity. The authority to deliver on that responsibility is now shared with the family and other service providers. This is a socio-political shift in society which has significantly impacted schools.

## Shared Responsibility for the Student



bower(schools)<sup>TM</sup> provides a structure for the fair and equitable sharing of responsibility and authority over student participation, dysregulation, behaviour management, violence, safety, and inclusion. bower(schools)<sup>TM</sup> enables leadership and teachers to safely navigate this high dispute and complaint space, saving schools both administrative time and money. bower(schools)<sup>TM</sup> equips educators and administrators with tools to navigate the challenges of increased diversity and student support needs.

bower(schools)<sup>TM</sup> has expertise in multi-system collaboration, including education, the family, health, and the human services systems. bower(schools)<sup>TM</sup> brings all relevant parties together to share responsibility and authority over student wellbeing, health, and learning outcomes. bower(schools)<sup>TM</sup> partners with bower(paediatrics)<sup>TM</sup> in this multi-system work.

### **School feedback:**

*“The bower(schools)<sup>TM</sup> protocols shift our focus from assumptions about family backgrounds to data-driven decisions, empowering staff to prioritize teaching and learning. Teachers lead efficient meetings with clear goals, reducing the need for repeated discussions and dedicating more time to student support. As a result, student engagement has risen, and learning environments are safer. Parents appreciate the structure and often bring their own notes, enriching discussions.”*

*Leader - Our Saviour Lutheran School, Aberfoyle Park, SA*



## Crisis

bower(schools)<sup>™</sup> has expertise in high and complex (support) needs. Schools now find themselves managing multi-system, multi-problem crises of behaviour and family dysfunction, violence, disruption, suicidal ideation, self-harm, school refusal, mental illness, and school-student-family-external agency disputes.

Schools and teachers now have primary responsibility for managing inequality, diversity, and difference in behaviour, emotions, and cognition not previously central to the scope of the vocation – education has transformed to accommodate this. This takes education to a very complicated interface with the health, mental health, disability, justice, corrections, child protection, and family law systems.

An escalation in student mental health, violence, non-attendance, parent dysregulation, teacher dissatisfaction, exodus from the profession and plummeting enrolments in teaching, is an education system in crisis.

bower(schools)<sup>™</sup> works with school leadership and teachers to manage the crisis, align responsibility with authority, and upskill staff in the use of the bower(schools)<sup>™</sup> protocols.

Specialising in helping school leaders to manage the increased emotional and behavioural complexities in students, leaders engage in experiential learning throughout the crisis situation.

### **Includes:**

**Case management and consultation**

**Analysis of high and complex (support) needs crisis**

**Mentoring and coaching in the use of bower(schools)<sup>™</sup> protocols**

**Document preparation for stakeholder engagement**

**Meeting preparation, attendance, and support as required**

### **School feedback:**

*“Helping our school through crises has transformed our ability to handle complex situations. The tools and strategies that they have shared, I use on a daily basis.*

*bower(schools)<sup>™</sup> specialise in helping schools deal with complex matters that involve multiple systems. As they work with you, they train you in certain protocols and practises that ensure that when future situations arise, you are better prepared to manage them.”*

*Educator/Leader - Faith Lutheran College, Tanunda, SA*

*“If I was to give a score out of 10 for working with bower(schools)<sup>™</sup> I would give it a 10! We have worked with bower(schools)<sup>™</sup> for the last 2 years. bower(schools)<sup>™</sup> reduces stress for educators and leaders, particularly regarding school avoidance and undiagnosed learning complexities and PDA. They provide a road map to work with students with complex learning profiles. We have used bower(note)<sup>™</sup> to effectively facilitate collaboration. They have helped us to put together a village of people to support students to find success in their learning. I am really confident that it has allowed us to ensure all of our students in the school have the potential to achieve to their best and to use their God given potential”.*

*Leader - Hills Christian Community School, Verdun, SA.*

## Bower Place

Since 1986, **Bower Place** has been recognized for its expertise in working with children, families and the wider world that contains them. Expertise has been developed in work with multi-system, multi-problem, difficult to resolve situations. These services are offered locally, interstate and to rural and remote locations, expanding to the Riverland and Port Pirie in 2025, using the most professional and latest technology with practitioners trained in psychology, psychiatry, family therapy, mental health counselling, dispute resolution, and mediation.

**Bower Place Complex Needs Clinic** is a centre for **research** in complex needs matters. This research informs bower(knowledge) and all practice at Bower Place. It is the basis of current projects in **data** collection, tools, and **software** development.

Bower Place is a **Registered Training Organisation (RTO 0080)** and offers unique education and training opportunities in mental health, counselling, and family therapy and systemic practice. Training is delivered face to face and online across Australia, India, and other parts of the world, assisted by state-of-the-art technology. Bower Place holds regular workshops, provides placement and internship opportunities for students from Australian and European universities, and has regular free newsletters, **Education Note** and **Director's Note**.



**bower(knowledge)™** is the Bower Place textbook that enables teachers and practitioners to keep up to date with the latest Bower Place research, practice, and knowledge, enabling best practice of Bower protocols in schools. A self-service portal to access resources and templates to support professional learning and ongoing implementation of bower(note)™ and bower(method)™ for dealing with inequality, justice, and fairness – at the heart of all human symptoms and problems.



### **Michelle Lindblom: General Manager**

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A family therapy and systemically trained educator and practitioner with 40+ years' experience at the hard-end of high and complex (support) needs, major mental health, addictions, disability, violence, and homelessness. Michelle coordinates the Bower Place clinical teaching programme in India, and the Bower Place development programme in Riverland South Australia, New South Wales and Victoria. Michelle leads bower(training), manages the Bower Place RTO, all VET programmes, and co-ordinates the

Bower Place Family Therapy and Systemic Practice Training Programme. Michelle is an NDIS expert and knows every constraint and boundary in its application to disability and schools. Michelle has powerful record working with culturally and linguistically diverse people and in the Aboriginal community.

## Paediatrics/ Family Therapy

bower(paediatrics)<sup>™</sup> comprises a group of practitioners at Bower Place, each with expertise in working with families in the pre-natal stage through to 18-year-olds. Each has accredited family therapy training through Aaft and focused expertise working with bower(method)<sup>™</sup> and bower(note)<sup>™</sup> the theory and protocols that guide all practice at Bower Place. A willingness to work with all levels of system engaged with the family is fundamental to this work.

The specialist bower(paediatrics)<sup>™</sup> service is located in the new Bower Place, designed for work with children and families including a warm and inviting child and family room equipped for fully hybrid delivery. Services are delivered to rural and remote locations to include teachers, counsellors, doctors and others working with families.



### **Catherine Sanders: Bower Place Director**

[catherine.sanders@bowerplace.com.au](mailto:catherine.sanders@bowerplace.com.au)

APS Clinical Psychologist, Adelaide, Calgary, and Norway trained Clinical Family Therapist, Bower Place clinical lead in the Australian and Indian Family Therapy and Systemic Practice Training Programmes. Catherine has presented 200+ papers and workshops to family therapy and psychology meetings in Australia, NZ, and the UK, and has published extensively in peer reviewed journals and books including the chapter, “Including children in family therapy” in *A Practical Guide to Family Therapy*, Rhodes

and Wallis (eds), 2024. Extensive public and private sector experience with an enduring interest in therapeutic work with children and their relationships with family, friends, school, and their wider world. Catherine is a clinical supervisor and lecturer at Adelaide and Flinders Universities.

## **Bower Place Practitioners**



John Karatzas



Melissa Hopper



Michelle Lindblom



Josephine Colella



Erin Levy

### **Client feedback:**

*“Chris, aged 12 years, rated our process a 20/10. He explained that he did not believe we would believe him, trust him, or listen to him. He said his family have changed their thinking since coming to the Bower Place -Complex Needs Clinic”  
(name protected for anonymity)*

## **Professional Development**

### **bower(note)<sup>TM</sup> for Complexity and Crisis (suitable for leaders) – full day**

bower(note)<sup>TM</sup> is a protocol for the conduct of all meetings. It provides structure and process for meetings that maximises the quality of information produced in a meeting, the documentation of that information, and protection against information being lost. This shields all parties in the process. bower(method)<sup>TM</sup> is a framework for thinking through complexity and provides a systemic view of problems and symptoms within individuals and systems.

*Learn the practice and theory of bower(note)<sup>TM</sup> in a full-day, face-to-face workshop. Participants will have the opportunity to analyse a case study that directly relates to their school context through the bower(method)<sup>TM</sup> framework for thinking through complexity.*

#### **School Feedback:**

*“Essential training for people having high-stakes conversations.”*

*Year Level Coordinator, Unity College, Murray Bridge, SA*

### **bower(note)<sup>TM</sup> for teachers – 3hr**

Bower(note)<sup>TM</sup> is a protocol for the conduct of all meetings. It provides structure and process for meetings that maximises the quality of information produced in a meeting, the documentation of that information, and protection against information being lost. This shields all parties in the process.

*Learn the practical application of bower(note)<sup>TM</sup>*

### **bower(note)<sup>TM</sup> for administration staff – 1hr**

Bower(note)<sup>TM</sup> is a protocol for the conduct of all meetings. This specialised and reduced training targets the specific needs of administration staff with a focus on establishing request, agenda, and understanding and managing inequality.

#### **School feedback:**

*“Attending the bower(note) workshop was a truly enlightening experience. Examining complex issues through diverse lenses gave me a fresh perspective that I hadn’t considered before. I left equipped with valuable tools and insights that I can immediately apply to my work, which is incredibly rewarding.”*

*Educator/ Leader- Southern Montessori School, Christies Beach, SA*

### **Introduction to Systemic Practice for Schools – weekly for 1 term (2hr p/wk after school hours)**

Schools are vital interprofessional hubs for the support of all children, including those with complex needs, despite never being designed to function as such. This course helps educators and leaders move beyond looking at a problem as located inside an individual, in isolation, with short-term strategies and solutions and aims to develop systemic thinking to navigate the complexities.

*Learn the protocols and method that underpins the bower(schools) approach to managing the inclusion of complex needs within schools.*



## **bower(nine)<sup>TM</sup> for Direction Finding – full day (suitable for teachers and leaders)**

A 9-minute direction-finding, consultation protocol, designed for schools in the management of high and complex (support) needs students and families; a protocol to help school staff to get *unstuck* and establish the next steps in managing a complex situation.

*Participants will have the opportunity to analyse a case study that directly relates to their school context through the bower(method)<sup>TM</sup> framework for thinking and analysing in high and complex needs matters.*

## **Parent Workshop – 1.25hr**

Parents are central to the education of students within schools. A child's education and wellbeing are a shared responsibility of the school system, the family system, the health system and human services system.

*A workshop for parents as partners with schools to understand the complexity of this shared responsibility and authority and how the bower(schools) protocols guide collaboration in multi-system meetings.*

## **Staff meeting workshops – 1.25hr**

Workshops designed for staff meetings, about high and complex (support) needs.

### **Topics include:**

- A socio-political historical analysis of the crisis in the Education System (gain an understanding of how the socio-political shift from exclusion to inclusion has resulted in high and complex needs being a multi-system problem with multi-system support)
- Socio-relational interaction - Mapping the pattern of interaction
- Authority and responsibility - The politics of multi-system sharing
- Time and turning points - Inventing the future
- Development and identity construction

## **Monthly online “Problem and Symptom” workshops – 1hr**

Each monthly workshop focuses on a specific problem and symptom category, looking at up-to-date research, unpacking case studies, analysis through the bower(method)<sup>TM</sup> and recommendations for schools.

*“Through bower(schools)<sup>TM</sup>, our team now has the knowledge and confidence to handle complex cases. With a clear understanding of our roles and responsibilities, we can effectively collaborate with all stakeholders involved in a child's education. This clarity fosters accountability around time, resources, and financial considerations, ensuring everyone understands their role in supporting each student.”*

*Educator/Leader - Our Saviour Lutheran School, Aberfoyle Park, SA*