

# The Cognizance Project

Empower your students to take ownership of their learning by teaching them how the brain works.

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# Overview

## What is Cognizance?

The Cognizance Project provides students with the tools to take charge of their own learning. Students learn how the brain works, what rules guide its function and how to leverage these rules in study and life.

Cognizance also allows teachers to improve their ability to coach students on metacognition.

This research project is a collaboration between Independent Schools Victoria (ISV) and renowned educational neuroscientist and Harvard graduate, Dr Jared Cooney Horvath from the University of Melbourne.

## Why focus on metacognition?

Metacognition is the awareness and understanding of one's own thought processes.

It also includes self-regulation, or the ability to orchestrate one's learning: to plan, monitor success and correct errors when appropriate. These tools are all necessary for effective intentional learning (National Research Council, 2000).



**Dr Jared Cooney Horvath**

**Renowned educational neuroscientist and Harvard graduate**

Jared Cooney Horvath (PhD, MEd) is a neuroscientist, educator and author of the best-selling book *Stop talking, start influencing: 12 Insights from brain science to make your message stick*. He has conducted research and lectured at Harvard University, Harvard Medical School, the University of Melbourne and over 200 schools internationally.

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## Aims

The project aims to teach Year 9 students the fundamentals of metacognition and neuroscience to:

- Help increase students' understanding of metacognition and to explore their own thinking and learning processes
- Enable teachers to understand the science of learning and improve their teaching pedagogy
- Encourage a metacognitive culture in schools and shape the culture of learning in the classroom.

## How much does it cost?

Cognizance is an important project for ISV and, in recognition of your involvement and support, there is no cost to Member Schools. This includes Dr Horvath's time, the involvement of ISV staff to conduct the program, as well as the costs of training your school staff. We ask for your commitment to help evaluate the project's effectiveness at your school.

Jared has published five books, over 30 research articles, and his work has been featured in numerous popular publications, including *The New Yorker*, *The Atlantic*, and ABC's *Catalyst*. He currently serves as Director of The Science of Learning Group: a team dedicated to bringing the latest brain and behavioural research to teachers, students and parents.

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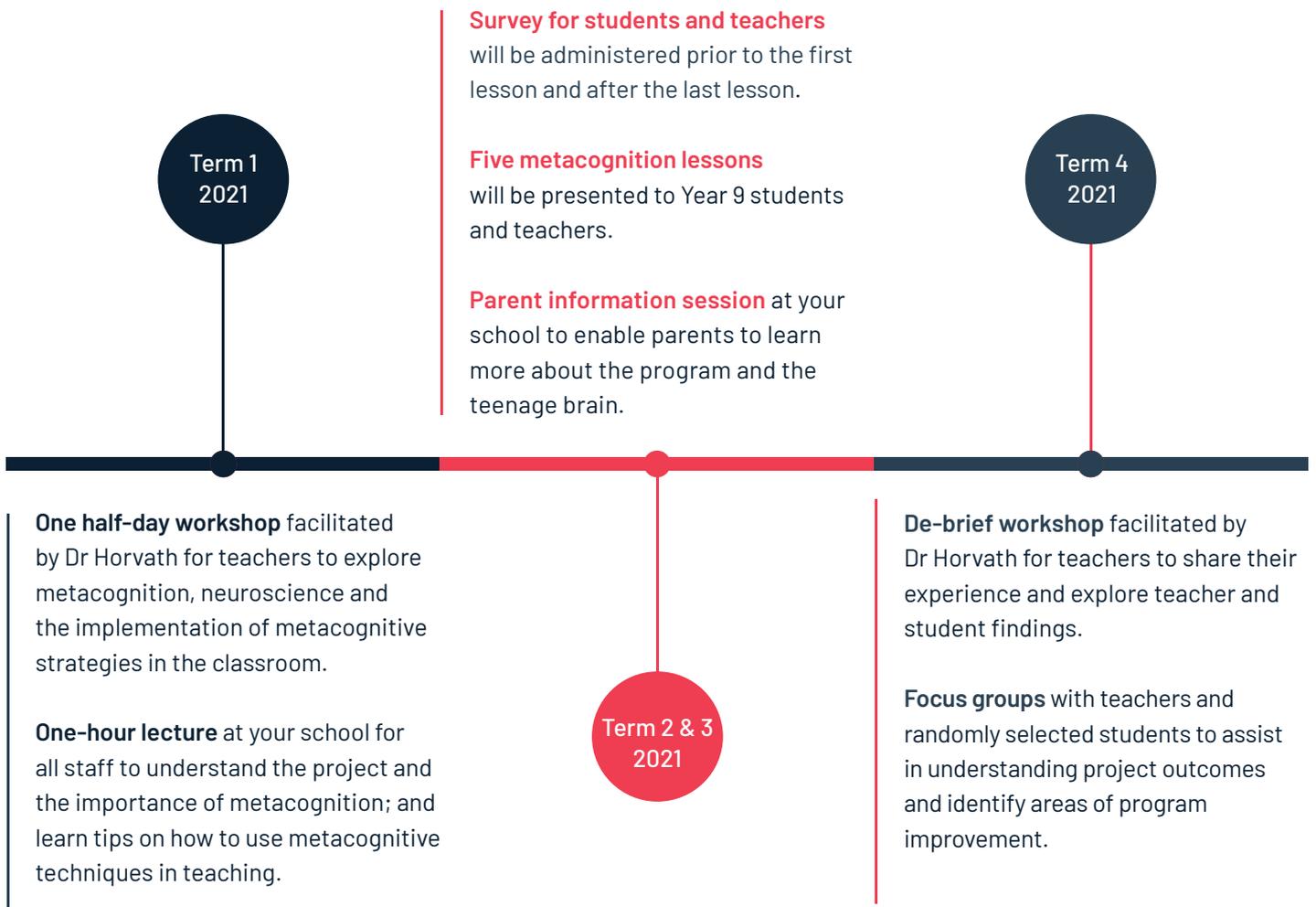
# How the program works

The program involves five, 90-minute lessons delivered to students and teachers by Dr Horvath. Teachers will receive guidance on metacognitive teaching strategies and have an opportunity to co-create the lessons with Dr Horvath.

Cognizance will run over the whole of 2021, with the bulk of it completed over terms 2 and 3. This is to ensure teachers and students have time to plan, consolidate and apply what they learn. This approach also aims to create and strengthen a metacognitive culture in your school.

This research project also assesses the outcomes of the program for students and teachers. All de-identified findings on student learning will be reported back to your school at the end of the program.

## Project timeframe



# Metacognition lessons

## Session 1 Get your mind right

- How the brain makes sense of reality
- The true power of our stories and the impact of these stories on learning, errors and mistakes
- Facilitated by Dr Horvath



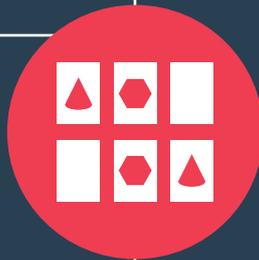
## Session 2 Master the hardware

- The brain is not 'fixed' – rather, it is malleable
- All skills and ideas are open to us and the 'machine' will adapt to whatever we ask from it
- Facilitated by Dr Horvath



## Session 3 Gaming the system

- Six key principles of how memory works and how, not how each principle aligns with students' own study and learning practices
- Facilitated by teachers (with Dr Horvath's guidance)



## Session 4 Owning your learning

- Students are in control of their learning
- What is required to take control of and master their learning?
- Facilitated by Dr Horvath



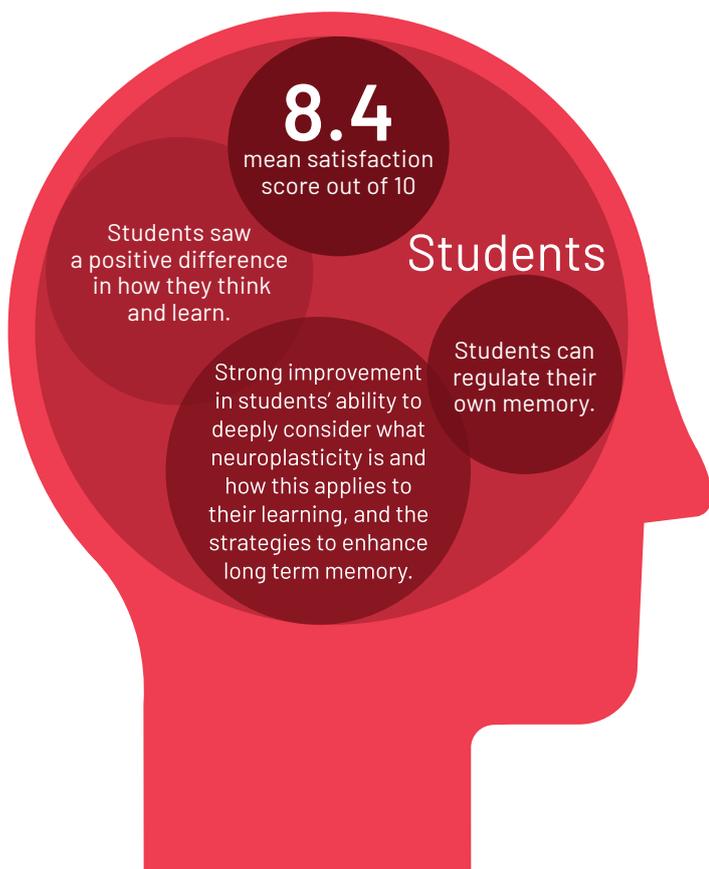
## Session 5 Follow-up discussion

- Concepts of transfer and deep learning
- Students discuss their experience of the project and share any observations or changes in learning
- Facilitated by Dr Horvath and teachers



# Research highlights

The 2019 research was conducted with 631 students and 39 teachers across all 10 participating schools. The research design consisted of a pre and post-program survey and qualitative focus groups. The research findings demonstrate a positive impact on students and teachers.



**“** I have come to realise that I am literally able to do anything I put my mind to (I used to only think it was an expression).

*Student, Oakleigh Grammar*

I didn't know much about the brain and the concept of learning at all even though we covered this in class. I now know what truly drives us, how we remember and recall things, the way our perception changes with our memories and what metacognition is and how it relates/is important to us.

*Student, Southern Cross Grammar*

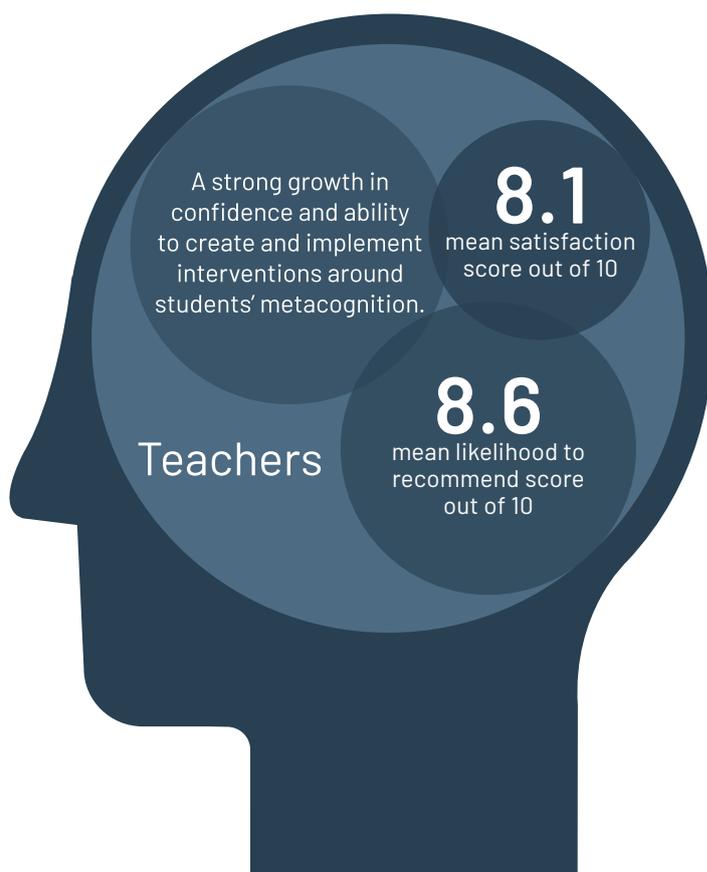
I have a deeper understanding of how I think and how I can put strategies into use.

*Student, Bayview College*

The explicit teaching of metacognition resonated strongly with teachers as they saw a strong alignment with the course content and the school's curriculum, and real positive shifts in their students as a result of this project.

**“** (The program) inspired me to find ways to encourage deeper thinking in my classes. Given me tools to use with senior students to help them with studying effectively for exams etc.

*Teacher, Bayview College*



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