The Application of Whole School Positive Education in Hong Kong Primary Schools

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Positive education

• Application of positive psychology to the education setting.

• Assist students to strengthen their relationships, build positive emotions, enhance sense of accomplishment, promote engagement, acknowledge meaning of life, and encourage a healthy lifestyle.
Flourishing Wheel

Positive Emotion

Character Strength

Justice

Wisdom & Knowledge

Engagement

Transcendence

Temperance

Courage

Meaning

Relations

Accomplishment

Humanity
Five ways to FLOURISHING

- Increase positive emotions
- Nurture engagement
- Establish positive relationships
- Establish meaning in life
- Cultivate sense of accomplishment
Increase positive emotions
Develop engagement, establish sense of satisfaction
Establish positive relationships
Build up purpose and meaning of life
Establish sense of accomplishment

Five Methods Step Toward Positive Life
Positive Accomplishment

• Accomplishment is an important element that contributes to our ability to flourish. A person strives to better self in some ways, whether he or she is seeking to master a skill, achieve a valuable goal, or win in some competitive event.
Growth mindset

• Talents can be developed and great abilities are built over time. Your qualities can be cultivated through your efforts.
• Anyone can increase their intelligence through efforts
• The harder you try, the more you will learn
Fixed mindset

• Talents are set in stone. You must prove yourself over and over, trying to look smart and talented at all costs.

• How smart I am is all genetic and so I don’t have any control over it.

• I can’t change who I am. My personality is inborn.
## Impact of mindset on behavior

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fixed mindset</th>
<th>Growth mindset</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Avoid challenges</td>
<td>Welcome challenges</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Give up when faced with setbacks</td>
<td>Persevere when faced with setbacks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resist seeking help</td>
<td>Ask for help</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ignore advice and constructive criticism</td>
<td>Learn from advice and constructive criticism</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Positive Engagement

- Engagement depicts that when a person concentrates on a thing that he or she genuinely enjoys and values, the person would enter a state that is fully “absorbed” in the things he or she is doing; we call this state as “flow” in positive psychology.
Positive Engagement

- Anxiety
- Arousal
- Control
- Relaxation
- Worry
- Apathy
- Boredom

Challenge Level

Skill Level

High

Low
Characteristics of FLOW

• Intrinsically rewarding
• Challenge-skills balance
• Action-awareness merging
• Clear goals
• Clear and immediate feedback
• Concentration on the task at hand
• Sense of control
• Loss of self-consciousness
• Time transformation
Positive relationship

- Positive relationship is associated with happiness
- Sense of belonging, being loved, valued and accepted is human being’s basic needs
- Intimate relationship has positive impacts on our emotions and wellbeing.
Positive relationship of students

- Peer
- Positive relationship
- Family
- Teachers
Effective communication:
I-message

• Your behavior
• Its consequences
• My feelings
• My expectations
# Active constructive responding

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Constructive</th>
<th>Destructive</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Active</strong></td>
<td>Genuine interest, <strong>enlarges</strong> the experience</td>
<td><strong>Minimizes</strong> the good news</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Passive</strong></td>
<td>Understated support, conversation <strong>stops</strong></td>
<td>Ignores the event and <strong>overrides</strong> the conversation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Positive Emotions

Increase positive emotions

- HOPE
- Optimism
- Gratitude
Positive Emotions

- Gratitude
- Optimism
- Joy
- Love
- Hope
- Pride
- Interest
- Inspiration
Positive emotions

- Emotions impact all areas of our lives
- Negative emotions are valid and important
- Positive emotions broaden and build our capacities and resources and can undo the effect of negative emotions
- The balance between positive and negative emotions is critical to wellbeing
- LOVE is the most powerful positive emotion
Four steps of Gratitude

• Eye: View things from a thankful perspective
• Brain: Reflect on what others have done for you
• Heart: Thankful for others in a genuine way
• Hand: Do something or act to express your gratitude to others
Ways to express gratitude

- Gratitude letter
- Gratitude journal
- Gratitude present
- Gratitude poster
- Gratitude 365 (picture, photo, phrase)
- Gratitude language
Optimism

• A broad expectation that good things will be plentiful in the future and bad things scarce
• Encourages continued effort towards one’s goals
• Optimists tend to explain bad events in terms of external, temporary and specific causes
HOPE

- Goal-directed thinking: Conceptualization of the goals
- Pathway thinking: Developing specific strategies to reach the goals
- Agency thinking: initiating and sustaining the motivation for using the strategies
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Specific</strong></th>
<th>明確詳盡</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Measurable/ Observable</strong></td>
<td>可量度/觀察到的</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Achievable</strong></td>
<td>現實的能力可達到的</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Time-bound</strong></td>
<td>有時間限制的</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Relevant to your situation</strong></td>
<td>符合自己的情況</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Evaluate</strong></td>
<td>檢討成果</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Reward</strong></td>
<td>達標時獎勵自己</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Positive Meaning

- Meaning and purpose in life refers to an individually constructed, culturally based cognitive system that influences an individual’s choice of activities and goals, and endows life with a sense of purpose, personal worth and fulfilment.

- The identification of valued, overarching goals which provide fulfilment and help people to grow and attain their potential.
Altruism: brings a sense of purpose and meaning

- Allows us to:
  - Refrain from indulging in wild, self-oriented actions
  - Care for the quality of life of those around us
  - Consider future generations and not blindly sacrifice the world that we hand down to them in favour of our short-term wants and desires
**Whole School Approach to Positive Education**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Positive Education</th>
<th>Learn it</th>
<th>Live it</th>
<th>Reflect / conceptualize it</th>
<th>Apply it</th>
<th>Embed it</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Students</strong></td>
<td>- Positive education activities&lt;br&gt;- Formal/informal curriculum activities&lt;br&gt;- Positive education programs/projects</td>
<td>- Classroom activities&lt;br&gt;- Extra-curricular activities&lt;br&gt;- Co-curricular activities&lt;br&gt;- Daily life activities</td>
<td>Drawing, reflection, journals, facebook, whatsapp, sharing and discussion, presentation, debriefing, workshops</td>
<td>- Positive education ambassador programme/project to spread the concepts and culture to schoolmates and family members</td>
<td>- At home&lt;br&gt;- In school&lt;br&gt;- With peers&lt;br&gt;- In the community</td>
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<tr>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>Positive education workshops/seminars/local/overseas/books/website resources</td>
<td>-Self enhancement</td>
<td>Reflection, sharing and discussion, presentation, documentation, lesson observation and debriefing, workshops</td>
<td>-Formal / informal curriculum</td>
<td>School policy/management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-Study group</td>
<td></td>
<td>-Extra-curricular/co-curricular activities</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-Wellbeing Staff Club</td>
<td></td>
<td>-Positive education programs/projects</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-Hardware (facilities) / software (mutual support) at school</td>
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</table>

Note: The table above outlines a Whole School Approach to Positive Education, focusing on various learning and application strategies for teachers. This approach emphasizes the integration of self-enhancement workshops, study groups, wellbeing initiatives, and hardware/software resources to support a positive educational environment. It also highlights the importance of reflection, sharing, and discussion, as well as documentation and debriefing, to conceptualize the practices. Furthermore, the table mentions the application of these strategies through formal and informal curricula, extra-curricular activities, and positive education programs/projects, ultimately embedding the approach into the school's policy, management, and culture.
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</thead>
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<tr>
<td>Parents</td>
<td>Positive education workshops/seminars/groups/programs</td>
<td>-Self enhancement</td>
<td>Reflection, sharing and discussion, debriefing, workshops</td>
<td>Apply to children, other students, spouse, relatives, other parents, colleagues at work</td>
<td>-Positive family environment -Positive work environment -Positive community</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Positive Education - Whole School Approach

• To promote students’ and staff’s wellbeing with a focus on nurturing their positive emotions, engagement, relationship, meaning, accomplishment and health that enable them to live a happy and flourishing life.
Establish an action team for wellbeing matters

• Set up an action team responsible for the overall school wellbeing issues
• Appoint one or two experienced teachers who are interested and committed in the subject to lead the team
• Identify students’ needs and school’s focus (using Appreciative Inquiry or SWOT analysis) to formulate an action plan that apply the framework of “learning and practicing positive lifestyles”, “strengthening positive teaching and learning”, and “fostering a positive school culture and environment”
Establish an action team for wellbeing matters

- The plan should be endorsed by the School Management Committee
- Ensure all school members are aware of and support the approach
- Review and evaluate its effectiveness at different time periods for monitoring and improvement
Learn and practice positive lifestyles

• Provide all **staff** with a complete PosEd course for them to explore and experience the science of positive psychology

• Offer PosEd course and programmes to **parents** to share the common language and to enhance their own wellbeing which may indirectly enhance that of their family and children

• Foster a **positive workplace** to encourage school staff to actively nurture their own wellbeing and to be authentic and positive role-models to the students
Learn and practice positive lifestyles

Provide staff with a complete PosEd training course

• Geelong’s training courses “Discovering Positive Education”

• Positive Education Laboratory, Department of Applied Social Science, City University of Hong Kong

• Other guest speakers
Learn and practice positive lifestyles

Offer Positive Education course and programmes to parents

• Talks, workshops, parenting groups
• Pamphlets, newsletters
• Website, whatsapp, facebook
• Video messages
• Parent-child activity day, family day
Learn and practice positive lifestyles

- **Foster a positive workplace**
- **Build a positive school image**
- **Aware of teachers’ wellbeing (e.g. work capacity vs burnout)**
- **Human resources: recruitment, selection, retention and promotion to attract and retain staff with similar missions**
- **Nurture positive leadership (e.g., leadership style, decision making process)**
- **Internal communication: Encourage two-way and open communication**
- **Training and development: coaching, mentoring and peer learning**
- **Build up an harmonious staff relationship**
Strengthen positive teaching and learning

• Review existing school curriculum and try to incorporate the **6 domains of wellbeing elements**

• Design and deliver **both explicit and implicit teaching** of PosEd to all students

• Deliver explicit PosEd **in timetabled classes** as well as in **annual theme-based occasions**
Strengthen positive teaching and learning

• Teach wellbeing concepts implicitly within traditional academic subject areas as well as in co-curricular activities or extra-curricular activities

• Review and plan for continuous professional development of teachers and parent education for chosen themes
Strengthen positive teaching and learning

- **Explicit teaching**: Design PosEd curriculum
- **Implicit teaching**: Yearly or quarterly theme to deepen students’ learning, e.g. positive emotions, positive relationships, meaning of life.
- Incorporation of PosEd elements in extra-curricular and co-curricular activities, e.g. sports day, swimming gala, congregation, student exchange activities, student leaders training, camping, green school
Strengthen positive teaching and learning

• Professional development of teachers
• Teachers’ self-directed learning, e.g. study groups
• Learn positive classroom management and facilitation skills:
  • Positive classroom reward system (for application of character strengths)
• Design lessons that can engage students (use of story telling, experiential activities, games, movies, role play, art, music, discussion, debates, effective questioning, debriefing skills)
Foster a positive school culture and environment

• Review and update school policy and procedural documents (e.g. staff appraisal, student recognition policies) in light of the principles of wellbeing

• Strengthen collaboration with parties like school social workers, guidance and discipline teachers, parent-teachers association to adopt the same mission
Foster a positive school culture and environment

• Use the **common language** with students whether in the classroom, on the sport field or on the stage

• Display **wellbeing messages in classrooms and school buildings**

• Reinforce the message through different **communication channels** such as school website, newsletters and assemblies
Foster a positive school culture and environment

• **Use the common language with students**
• Daily interactions with students
• Teachers’ and parents’ feedback on assignment
• Students’ handbooks, students’ yearly reports
• Parent-child assignment on PosEd topics
• Application of PosEd elements in Parents day
Foster a positive school culture and environment

• Display wellbeing messages in classrooms and school buildings
• Wall painting of character strengths
• Written in Chinese and English
• Easily visible
• Attractive design
• Teachers of different subjects can use it in classes
Foster a positive school culture and environment

• **Display wellbeing messages in classrooms and school buildings**

• **World map/ Hong Kong map**

• Build up a global mind of wellbeing, e.g. showing the Happiness index of different countries or districts in Hong Kong, places where our donation is distributed, happening of world events

• Relationship building in class, e.g. Places that bring us happiness, nearby facilities kids are curious about
Foster a positive school culture and environment

- Display wellbeing messages in classrooms and school buildings
- **Accomplishment Centre**
- Awards – personal, class & school-based
- Accomplishment, e.g. baked a cake, learned riding a bike, sharing from PosEd assignment
- Any good news from students, parents and teachers, e.g. graduation, new born, wedding
- Community service experience of students
Foster a positive school culture and environment

- Display wellbeing messages in classrooms and school buildings
- What Went Well Board
- Praise and appreciation
- Recent happy events
- Gratitude journals
- Wishes/ dreams
Foster a positive school culture and environment

• Display wellbeing messages in classrooms and school buildings
  • Classroom Board
  • Our character strengths
  • Our birthdays
  • Meaning of our names
  • Our families
  • Our favorites
Foster a positive school culture and environment

- Display wellbeing messages in classrooms and school buildings
- Design of Positive Kids
- As visualized icons / rewards
- Use of quotes/ mottos
- Displayed in classrooms, handbooks, etc.
Curriculum content
Character strengths

• To be aware of and spot their own and others’ character strengths
• To learn to use character strengths appropriately (not overuse or underuse)
• To explore new ways in using strengths, applying strengths to achieve goals and make contribution to others
Positive emotions

• To understand positive and negative emotions, and ways of expressing emotions
• To enhance positive emotions (e.g. savouring, gratitude)
• To learn to manage negative emotions
• To understand self-compassion and forgiveness
• To have empathy on others’ emotions
Positive engagement

• To understand and develop intrinsic motivation, including sense of competence and autonomy
• To understand, experience and cultivate the state of “flow” (e.g. balance between skills and challenge, instant feedback and reward)
Positive relationship

• To understand the importance of relationship
• To enhance positive communication and learn appropriate communication skills, including verbal/non-verbal, one-way/two-way communication, self-disclosure, active constructive responding
• To develop teamwork and build mutual trust
Positive meaning

• To understand uniqueness of self and enhance self-esteem by designing autobiography and strength inventory
• To develop altruism by doing volunteer services.
Positive accomplishment

• To develop growth mindset and self-efficacy by self-appreciation and self-validation
• To understand and apply hope theory (SMART goal setting, nurturing agency and strategic thinking)
• To identify success and failure attribution for growth mindset
Positive health

• To develop healthy habits for good physical and mental health (e.g. relaxation exercises, good diet)
• To explore and understand optimistic and pessimistic explanatory styles
• To promote optimistic thinking and help seeking
Featured activities
Character Strengths

• P.3 session,
• title: “Everyone has Strengths!!”
• Procedure:
  – TV program about a physically disabled sportswoman
    • Discussion with students about which strengths she possessed in her training and struggles
  – Strengths Detective
    • Students are split into small groups and receive a profile of famous person, e.g: “Mother Teresa”, “Thomas Edison”
    • Sharing about the signature strengths of these persons
  – Extended activity
    • Each student designs their own name card that is decorated with the strengths which they believe they have.
Positive Emotions

• P.2 session, title: “Observing Happiness”

• Procedure:
  – Focus and perceive the classroom with 5 senses
  – Sensory Detective: Selecting a place in school (garden, fountain, etc...), students experience a mindful journey with different senses
  – Extended activity
    • Report the new findings they spot in the Sensory Detective activity
Relationship

• P.3 Session, title “Water bucket”
• Procedure
  – Storybook about “Water Filler” & “Water Dipper”
  – Students make bucket Origami
  – Write “water-filling” sentences on yellow paper; “water-dipping” sentences on blue paper
  – Role-play on both communication patterns, rewrite “water-dipping” to “water-filling”
  – Make Origami of different shapes with yellow paper and exchange with each other as water-filling action
Meaning

• P.1 session, title “Autobiography: Meaning of my Name”

• Procedure
  – Students complete “Meaning of my name” worksheet with parents’ assistance
  – Interpret the Chinese characters in each name with different positive psychology pillars, e.g.: blessing, strengths, etc.
  – Use drawing or other expressive art methods (e.g. magazine collage) to design autobiographies with reference to each name and its meaning
Accomplishment

• P.5 session, title “SMART Goal-setting”

• Procedure
  – Students are divided into small groups while each group has five pieces of papers of different textures to make five paper planes
  – Distance markers are put on the range
  – Before each trial, the group has to set an ‘expected distance’, paper planes that fly to the expected distance could get the highest score
  – After 1st round, students are taught to evaluate the result and negotiate with group members with S.M.A.R.T. goals concept
  – After 2nd round, students are encouraged to relate goal-setting with life-planning
Positive Health

• P.1 session “Finger mountain and relaxation”

• Procedure
  – Stary-route-drawing:
    • Single-handed, draw a line between 2 stars without touching any lines.
    • Debriefing on the emotional arousal
  – Finger-mountain: (relaxation exercise)
    • Imagine the hand as 5 mountains
    • Use another finger to follow the outline of hand, and focus on the rhythm of breathing
Quantitative findings

• P.1 students have significant increase in their sense of belonging to the schools as rated by the parents
• P.2 students perceive significant improvement in teacher-student relationship
• Teachers have significant improvement in relationship among colleagues
Quantitative findings

• P.3 students have significant improvement in parent-child relationship, their positive experiences in school, their independent learning capacity and values placed on school work.

• P.3 students also have significant improvement in perseverance as rated by their parents
Qualitative findings

• Learn different levels of emotion, e.g. 80 degree is like driving a car at full speed
• Learn how to relate with classmates, e.g. help others, say “thank you”, forgive others
• Understand that efforts are needed for accomplishment
• Appreciate other classmates’ strength, e.g. perseverance, kindness
Qualitative findings

• Apply own character strength, e.g., sense of humor to make others happy
• Understand the meaning of altruistic behavior, e.g. mentors’ assistance on the junior grade students is an example of “Life impacts life”
• Learn to set realistic and specific goals
• Understand the importance of co-operation and complementarity in a team
## Summary: Positive education projects

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Target</th>
<th>Project</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pre-primary</td>
<td>Application of positive psychology to promote whole child development in pre-primary education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Junior primary</td>
<td>An emotion coaching program for children with anxiety features</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior primary</td>
<td>A hope and gratitude project for senior primary school students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary students</td>
<td>Integrating positive psychology and elements of music therapy for students with dyslexia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The application of positive education to nurture wellbeing and promote mental health of primary school students</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Summary: Positive education projects

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<th>Target</th>
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<tr>
<td>Junior secondary</td>
<td>Applying gratitude and character strength to students with anxiety and depression</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Integrating positive psychology and elements of music therapy for treating adolescents with suicidal ideation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Personal growth and well-being promotion project</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior secondary</td>
<td>Happiness enhancement project: Application of positive psychology to alleviate adolescent anxiety</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University</td>
<td>Enhancing university students’ well-being and positive learning experiences</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Positive Psychology project for pre-primary students
快樂幼苗培育計劃
研究報告暨教師實務手冊

承辦機構:
香港城市大學
City University of Hong Kong

協辦機構:

資助機構:
Goals of the project

• To apply positive psychology framework to cultivate and nurture character strengths in pre-school children for whole person development.
• To teach parents positive parenting approach so that they can help build up character strengths in their children.
• To promote positive education in school so that the school can provide a positive culture and environment to nurture and cultivate character strengths in pre-school children.
Positive psychology

Children

School
Positive education

Family
Positive parenting
The structure of different character strengths

- **Emotion** (Heart)
  - Hope
  - Love
  - Kindness/Altruism
  - Forgiveness

- **Intrapersonal**
  - Creativity
  - Bravery
  - Authenticity/Honesty

- **Interpersonal**

- **Cognition** (Mind)

The diagram illustrates the relationship between different character strengths, categorized into four main quadrants: Intrapersonal, Interpersonal, Hope, and Cognition, with specific strengths nested within each quadrant.
Happiness

Satisfaction and Achievement

Creativity + Bravery +
Gratitude + Love + Hope
+ Altruism + Forgiveness +
Honesty
Project

• Funded by Quality Education Fund
• Collaborate with 5 nurseries and 3 kindergartens from Chinese Rhenish Church Early Education Section
• Participants:
  Positive education : whole school (800 students)
  Positive psychology groups: K2 students (200 students)
  2 positive parenting workshops: 410 parents
  3 training workshops for teachers: 100 teachers
Findings of the project

There are a significant increase in forgiveness and a significant decrease in anxiety among the pre-school students
Positive Psychology project for junior primary school students
Content of project

1. Collaborate with Student Guidance Team in Tung Wah Group of Hospitals
2. Parallel groups: Parents group and Children group (6-8 years old)
3. Each group has 4 sessions: 2 hours for parents and 1.5 hours for children group per session (except 4th session)
4. The two groups have activities together in the 4th session
5. 6-8 parent-child dyads participate in the project
6. Social workers or teachers select the children who have mild anxiety to participate in the project
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Main Content</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1&lt;sup&gt;st&lt;/sup&gt; Session</td>
<td>Aware and accept one’s own emotions (Nurture Courage Spirit)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2&lt;sup&gt;nd&lt;/sup&gt; Session</td>
<td>Learn how thinking affect emotions (Capture the “anxiety monsters”)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3&lt;sup&gt;rd&lt;/sup&gt; Session</td>
<td>How to deal with anxiety? (learn “Five Strategies”)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt; Session</td>
<td>Group-combination: consolidate knowledge</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Courage Spirit
Positive Psychology projects for senior primary school students
正向心理学之
積極人生計劃

研究報告暨實務手冊
Enhancement of Hope and Gratitude
Goals of the project

• To enhance hope among the students, cultivate a sense of agency and goal attainment, and facilitate the students’ design of different pathways to achieve the goal.

• To promote self-gratitude, as well as gratitude and emotional expression to others.
Procedure

• Five groups of 6 to 8 p. 4 to p.5 students from five primary schools
• The students have Hospital Anxiety and Depression Scale (HADS) Depression score 9 to 11, and matched control groups were also recruited.
• A total of 8 sessions were conducted for each group weekly, with each session lasted for one and a half hour.
Design of activities

• A variety of activities were used in the groups, including experiential exercises, simulation games, story-telling, role play, drawing, guided imagery, discussion and sharing.

• Cognitive-behavioral coaching was incorporated in the design of activities.
## Design of activities

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<tr>
<th>Steps</th>
<th>Activities</th>
<th>Focuses</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Students shared the stories of successful people and attributed their success to clear goal setting and persistence in achieving the goals</td>
<td>cognitive insights</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Students set their own short term and long term goals in different areas</td>
<td>behavioral implementation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Students experienced the difficulties in achieving the goals and viewed the difficulties as challenges</td>
<td>behavioral experiences</td>
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### Design of activities

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<td>4</td>
<td>Students brainstormed different strategies to achieve the goals and weighted the pros and cons of those strategies</td>
<td>cognitive insights and problem solving process experiences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Students felt the satisfaction and sense of achievement in reaching the goals through guided imagery and drawing of mind maps</td>
<td>emotional experiences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Students recognized their own strengths, as well as others’ strength and contribution</td>
<td>cognitive insights</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Design of activities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Steps</th>
<th>Activities</th>
<th>Focuses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Students showed their gratitude to themselves and others after they helped one another in overcoming difficulties</td>
<td>behavioral experiences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Students recognized their own emotions, as well as their impacts on behaviors and others</td>
<td>Emotional awareness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Students expressed their emotions verbally and non-verbally in appropriate manners</td>
<td>emotional experiences and expression</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Findings of the project

- There are a significant increase in life satisfaction, a significant decrease in depression, a significant increase in hope and gratitude among the participating students.
Positive Psychology projects for primary and secondary schools students
Project Goals

• To increase opportunities in decision making and problem solving for children & adolescents, enhance individual autonomy and environmental mastery, strengthen their resilience
• To assist children & adolescents to develop positive relationships with others, enlarge their social and supportive network
• To help children & adolescents to find out and establish positive purpose toward their lives, and strive for a flourishing life.
Figure: Theoretical Framework of the Project

Psychological Well-being

- Autonomy
- Purpose in life
- Self-acceptance
- Positive relations with others
- Environmental Mastery
- Personal growth

Flourishing life

Character Strength
Project Content

• Co-operated with Rhenish Church Social Services
• 8-12 students in a group, a total of 5 groups
• 8 sessions per group, 90 mins per session
• Interactive games, positive activities, experiential exercise, role play, video appreciation, sharing within the group
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Content</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Personal Growth</td>
<td>Understand oneself, establish relationship with one another</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Personal Growth</td>
<td>Understand one’s feeling and emotion, establish positive emotions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Accept oneself</td>
<td>Appreciate and accept oneself</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Positive relations</td>
<td>Identify different roles in the group and appreciate others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Environmental mastery</td>
<td>Understand the source of anxiety, learn to transform negative emotions into positive ones</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Environmental mastery</td>
<td>Learn to transform one’s emotions and apply into daily life</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 Purpose in life</td>
<td>Search for happiness and establish sense of accomplishment, learn to set goals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 Purpose in life</td>
<td>Integrate experiences in group and look forward to the future</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Positive Psychology project for junior secondary school students
SUN Teens
青少年精神健康計劃
成效研究暨實務手冊
Goals of the project

- To help depressed adolescents aware, learn, experience and apply gratitude so as to raise their positive emotions and help them develop a positive life orientation.

- To teach adolescents effective emotion management skills so as to change negative thinking and emotion into positive ones.
Goals of the project

• To increase adolescents’ awareness on their own character strengths so as to raise their self-esteem.
• To facilitate the adolescents to act as ambassadors and spread the messages of developing positive emotions and positive life orientation to other adolescents.
Gratitude

Positive psychology

CBT

Positive thinking & emotions

Character strengths

Positive psychology
Gratitude Project

• Collaborate with four secondary schools served by St. James Settlement
• Randomized controlled trial
• Participants: 92 Grade 8 to Grade 9 students
  Experimental group = 46
• Control group = 46
Gratitude project

• Led by four school social workers in four secondary schools
• A total of 10 group sessions
• Each session lasts for one and a half hour
• Pre-test and post-test questionnaires are completed by students from both the experimental and control groups
## Program content

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Session</th>
<th>Theme</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 &amp; 2</td>
<td>Emotion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Character strengths</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 to 7</td>
<td>Gratitude</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Emotion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 to 10</td>
<td>Revision and integration</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Findings of the project

• There are a significant increase in gratitude and emotional competence, a significant decrease in anxiety and depression among the participating students.
Positive Psychology projects for junior secondary students
整合正向心理學與音樂治療元素——正向大使計劃
研究報告暨實務手冊
Goals

• To increase hope, emotional competence and problem solving skills of Grade 8 and Grade 9 students by integrating elements of music therapy and positive psychology.

• To decrease anxiety and increase happiness of students
Project

• Nine 10-session groups integrating positive psychology and music therapy was conducted for 60 students in three secondary schools.
• Another nine 10-session groups with only positive psychology elements was implemented for about 63 students in another three secondary schools.
• Pre-test and post-test measures were collected, while comparison was made with students in the control school.
## Sessions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Session</th>
<th>Objectives</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>To facilitate the students to learn the application of different musical instruments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>To facilitate the students to learn the six steps of problem solving</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>To facilitate the students to learn the three principles of problem solving (effectiveness, efficiency and economy)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>To raise students’ awareness on their character strengths</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>To facilitate students to express their emotions through art and music</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# Sessions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Session</th>
<th>Objectives</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>To facilitate students to express their inner world through art and music</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>To facilitate students to express their inner world through art and music</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>To facilitate students to learn and practice hope and gratitude</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>To facilitate students to learn and practice hope and gratitude</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>To facilitate students to consolidate what they have learned, hence enhancing their self-esteem</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Findings of the project

• There are a significant increase in hope and happiness, and a significant decrease in anxiety and depression among the students participating in the experimental groups.
Positive Psychology project for senior secondary school students
快樂巨升
經減學生焦慮計劃
教材套
Project Content

• Co-operated with ten secondary schools
• The project included various types of student activities (classes, workshops in upper forms, school-based activities), trainings for teachers and parents
• Relieve anxiety by incorporating character strength, optimism and hope.
Theoretical Framework

- Develop Character strength
- Optimism
- Hope
- Happiness
- Anxiety
Findings of the project

• There are a significant increase in hope and happiness, and a significant decrease in anxiety and depression among the students participating in the experimental groups
Positive Psychology projects for families
Aims of Games

• Understand the level of differentiation of oneself and family members
• Promote in-depth sharing, cooperation and interactions among family members

Family Libra
Bowen Board Game
Aims of Games

• Promote communications and interactions among family members
• Strengthen self-awareness, enhance understanding among family members
• Help family members establish more intimate relationships by learning effective communicating skills
Satir Computer Game
http://www.dr-studio.com.hk/cityusylviakwok/Game%20(Satir)/SatirGame.html
Aims of Games

- Identify one’s own communication stances when faced with pressure
- Learn appropriate ways to express love to the family members
Bowen Computer Game
http://www.dr-studio.com.hk/cityusylviakwok/Game%201(Bowen)/BowenGame.html
Aims of Games

• Understand intergenerational emotional transmission in family and their impacts
• Understand marital relationships and general dynamics of the whole family

Family Time Adventure
Bowen Computer Game
Website on Positive Parenting
Computer game on building character strengths
小朋友「正」冒險

開始遊戲

設置
Positive Psychology Intervention to Alleviate Child Depression and Increase Life Satisfaction: A Randomized Clinical Trial

Sylvia Y. C. L. Kwok¹, Minmin Gu¹, and Katrina Tong Kai Kit¹

Abstract

Purpose: The study aims to examine the effectiveness of a positive psychology group-based intervention program, incorporating elements of hope and gratitude, in decreasing depression and increasing life satisfaction among primary school students in Hong Kong. Methods: A total of 68 children, with the Depression and Anxiety Scale for Children and Children's Depression Scale from 9 to 11, were randomly assigned to the intervention and control groups. An eight-session intervention group-based program was conducted in five primary schools. Results: Participants of the intervention groups showed a significant decrease in depression and significant increase in life satisfaction, partially mediated by hope and gratitude, after the intervention when compared with those of the control groups. Discussion: As positive psychology intervention teaches children ways to increase their positive cognitions, emotions, and behaviors, it may help children cope with current emotional problems and enhance their capability to deal with future stress and adversities.

Keywords

positive psychology, hope, gratitude, depression, children, intervention, life satisfaction

Childhood depression has become a serious public health concern, which affects about 1–2% of preschool-aged children (Costello et al., 1996). Chinese children experience an equal, or even higher, level of depression in comparison to their Western counterparts. One survey with 1,598 children aged 7–11 in Hong Kong, using the CDRS-R, showed that the overall prevalence of internalizing problems, that is, depression and anxiety, in children was 11.40% (Siu, 2006). Early onset depression increases the risk for subsequent depressive episodes in adolescence and adulthood (Weissman et al., 1990). Child depression also plays a role in the development of anxiety disorders, conduct disorders, and substance use disorders in later developmental periods (Cheng & Myers, 2005; Seligman & Omennick, 1990).

Research on positive psychology intervention has proliferated. Positive psychology interventions are "treatment methods or intentional activities that aim to cultivate positive feelings, behaviors, or cognitions, rather than fixing negative or pathological feelings, thoughts, and behaviors" (Siu & Lyubomirsky, 2009, p. 468). Positive feelings, behaviors, and cognitions, for example, hope, gratitude, optimism, and resilience, are regarded as psychological resources (Hofmann, 2002). In addition to nourishing psychological resources and increasing well-being, positive psychology intervention is an option for treating mental disorders such as depression (Seligman, Steen, Park, & Peterson, 2005). A meta-analysis revealed that positive psychology interventions were effective for enhancing well-being (mean effect size = .29) and ameliorating depressive symptoms (mean effect size = .31; Siu & Lyubomirsky, 2009). The findings were impressive, given that many of these interventions were brief and self-administered activities.

The first objective of the current study was to assess the efficacy of a positive psychology program for preventive intervention (O’Keefe & Hogearty, 1994) for depression in Chinese children. The study was conducted in Hong Kong, China, with a sample of primary school students (aged 9–11). Hope (Snyder, 1994) and gratitude (McCullough, Emmons, & Tsang, 2002), two psychological resources, were chosen as the major themes of this intervention program. There is now an accumulating body of evidence on the effectiveness of hope and gratitude intervention (e.g., Berg, Snyder, & Hamilton, 2008; Froh, Kashdan, Oettinger, & Miller, 2009). Hope and gratitude intervention not only builds up human strengths of hope and gratitude but also contributes to greater life satisfaction and.
The roles of emotional competence and social problem-solving in the relationship between physical abuse and adolescent suicidal ideation in China

Sylvia Y.C.L. Kwok, Jeef W.K. Yeung, Andrew Y.T. Low, Herman H.M. Lo, Cherry H.L. Tam

Department of Applied Social Sciences, City University of Hong Kong, Tat Chee Avenue, Kowloon, Hong Kong

ABSTRACT

The study investigated the relationship among physical abuse, positive psychological factors including emotional competence and social problem-solving, and suicidal ideation among adolescents in China. The possible moderating effects of emotional competence and social problem-solving in the association between physical abuse and adolescent suicidal ideation were also studied. A cross-sectional survey employing convenience sampling was conducted and self-administered questionnaires were collected from 527 adolescents with mean age of 14 years from the schools in Shanghai. Results showed that physical abuse was significantly and positively related to suicidal ideation in both male and female adolescents. Emotional competence was not found to be significantly associated with adolescent suicidal ideation, but rational problem-solving, a sub-scale of social problem-solving, was shown to be significantly and negatively associated with suicidal ideation for males, but not for females. However, emotional competence and rational problem-solving were shown to be a significant and a marginally significant moderator in the relationship between physical abuse and suicidal ideation in females, respectively, but not in males. High rational problem-solving buffered the negative impact of physical abuse on suicidal ideation for females. Interestingly, females with higher empathy and who reported being physically abused by their parents have higher suicidal ideation. Findings are discussed and implications are stated. It is suggested to change the attitudes of parents on the concept of physical abuse, guide them on appropriate attitudes, knowledge and skills in parenting, and enhance adolescents’ skills in rational problem-solving.

INTRODUCTION

China is a country with one of the highest suicide rates in the world, with 22.2 per 100,000 people committing suicide each year (Centre for Disease Control and Prevention, 2011). Suicide is the leading cause of death among young Chinese adults aged between 15 and 34 (Phillips, Li, & Zhang, 2002). The rate of adolescent suicidal ideation increased from 15.0% in 2008 to 13% in 2012 in Beijing (Yang, Han, Zhao, & Su, 2012). Previous studies have shown that suicidal ideation is an important predictor of suicidal acts and completed suicide (Kwok, 2011; Thompson et al., 2012). Hence, this problem deserves attention.
Future development

• Positive education can be embedded in the school curriculum and extra-curricular activities.
• The theme of positive education should be integrated into the school development plan.
• Schools need to use multiple pathways to foster the wellbeing of their staff. Efforts need to be made to develop strengths and psychological capital of the school staff and cultivate their engagement and commitment to the school.
Future development

• Evidence-based research is needed to examine systematically the conceptual framework and implementation approaches of positive education, and to provide evidence for the effectiveness of positive education for individual well-being and well-being in the community.

• Education policy should put well-being as the core focus, rather than emphasizing solely on teaching and learning.
Future development

• **Continuous discovery and innovation** in positive teaching and learning, positive training, positive research, positive organization, positive resources, positive knowledge development.

• Sharing of ideas and **collaboration** among different schools, social welfare agencies, universities

• Involvement of **students** in the design and implementation of positive education
Future development

• **Promotion** of positive education both locally and internationally

• **Establishment** of Positive Education Association / Institute

• Certification / authentication of schools promoting positive education
Positive Education Laboratory

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