Positive Psychology in Schools

Facilitated by: Brian Plummer, Susan Martinov and Robyn Hromek

Positive Psychology: Positive Psychology is the scientific study of the strategies and circumstances which enable individuals, groups and communities to thrive. It is an approach which is consistent with other whole school approaches such as MindMatters, KidsMatters and Positive Behaviour for Learning. It also supports a strengths-based approach to counselling and student wellbeing as well as curriculum programs aimed at resilience building (eg: Bounce Back). Positive Psychology defines specific strategies which build psychological strength and wellbeing.

Course description: Specific positive psychological strategies are explored. These are broadly grouped into those which enhance pleasure or enjoyment, those which promote engagement and those which build character and meaning.

These will be explored in relation to interventions with individual students, targeted groups and whole-school interventions. Examples are given from existing primary and secondary schools that have successfully incorporated these principles into various aspects of ongoing school practice. These include examples of positive psychology in strengths-based assessment, transition support, peer support, roll call, theme days and imbedded into actual classroom lessons across the curriculum.

The day will include a theoretical and research overview, presentation of specific interventions, some experiential exercises, opportunity to share strategies and ideas, time to ask questions and to examine some resource materials (including examples of school made and youtube video clips used with students).

Target Audience:
This course is designed for staff with an interest in promoting Positive Psychology in primary and secondary schools, including: principals, deputy principals, student welfare consultants, head teachers welfare, year advisers, classroom teachers, school counsellors and child and adolescent mental health workers.
Registrations
To register for this workshop, please complete the 2014 Workshop Application Form (can be downloaded from our website at www.nswiop.nsw.edu.au or ask us to send you one) and return the completed form with your payment details to the Registrations person.

Learning outcomes:
The workshop will provide participants with the opportunity to:
• Complete a pre-course reading and self-administered individual activity,
• Gain an overview of positive psychology research in educational settings,
• Explore new ideas about motivation, engagement & life satisfaction,
• See outlines of actual individual and whole school interventions,
• View sample classroom and individual resources and lessons based on Positive Psychology.

About the facilitators:
Brian Plummer, BA Dip Ed, M.A (Counselling Psych), M.Ed (Spec Ed), Susan Martinov, BA, Dip of Teaching, M.A (School Counselling) and Robyn Hromek, B.Sc, Grad. Dip. Ed., M.Psych (Ed) are registered Psychologists and District Guidance Officers with NSW Department of Education and Communities.

Each of them has over 25 years experience. They have integrated Positive Psychology into school-based programs and have provided training on this topic, including at Principal’s conferences and for school development days.

Brian has also worked with non-government agencies and in private practice.

Susan was a recipient of the Premier’s Anika Foundation Youth Depression Awareness Scholarship in 2007 which enabled her to review international programs.

Robyn has written books and articles with a focus on Positive Psychology, eco-systemic approaches and games-based learning. Robyn presented at last year’s Positive Psychology conference in Copenhagen and is an Honorary Associate of The University of Sydney.