

Positive Psychology

Psychology Month, 2018

What is Positive Psychology?

Positive psychology "Is the study of the conditions and processes that contribute to the flourishing of optimal functioning of people, groups, and institutions" (Gable & Haidt, 2005).

Why is Positive Psychology different?

Positive psychology takes a different approach to helping individuals. It focuses on elements that make life worth living, rather than focusing on diagnosis and treatment of disorders (Gable & Haidt, 2005).

Why focus on the positives vs. negatives?

We have a bias to perceive negative information more readily than positive information. However, positive experiences

occur more often than negative experiences and their long-term impact may be greater (Gable & Haidt, 2005).

Positive Psychology identifies 24 character strengths and works to cultivate them.

Each individual has their own unique set of character strengths, and positive psychology seeks to cultivate them. Some character strengths include: creativity, bravery, love, teamwork, forgiveness, and gratitude.

How can positive psychology be applied in educational settings?

Positive psychology strives to improve mental well-being by teaching children resilience, social commitment, and a sense of meaningfulness (Pluskota, 2014).

Research in the field has shown that positive education programs have helped improve student well-being and reduce symptoms of depression; these effects are maintained over time (Seligman et. al, 2009).

Information presented is adapted from the Gable and Haidt (2005) article.

For further information, contact the psychology staff at your child's school, or Dr. Debra Lean, Chief Psychologist, at 905-890-0708, x24330.