

Positive Psychology in Schools: Positive Education Boosts Wellbeing and Achievement

What is the purpose of Education?

According to the United Nations Right of the Child Convention (UNICEF), education should seek to develop each child's personality and character as much as it develops numeracy and literacy. This same idea is proposed by the World Health Organization (WHO), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the Organization for Economic Development Co-operation (OECD), who are all placing emphasis on students learning wellbeing skills at school.

Calls from these high-profile international bodies have led to an alliance between researchers in the two areas of positive psychology and education – a field known as *positive education* – to help schools find ways to develop both academic skills and wellbeing skills in their students.

“A school curriculum that incorporates wellbeing will ideally prevent depression, increase life satisfaction, encourage social responsibility, promote creativity, foster learning and enhance academic achievement.” (Dr Lea Waters, 2014)

In this presentation, Lea Waters PhD shares the trends, evidence and advancements occurring in the rapidly growing field of positive education. She'll share her extensive research which not only confirms the beneficial impact of positive psychology programs on student wellbeing and achievement but also on staff.

Having helped schools to implement positive education in Australia, New Zealand, Denmark, Hong Kong and China, Lea Waters PhD weaves together her science with concrete school examples and best practices to provide the audience with the compelling case for adopting positive education in schools.

Audience take aways:

- Key research findings that clearly links wellbeing and academic achievement;
- Best practices for introducing and taking the journey to practicing positive education in their school; and
- Practical methods for how to embed positive education into the classroom.

FORMAT: 45 to 60-minute keynote; half and full-day workshops.

IDEAL AUDIENCE: Principals, School Administrators, Teachers, Teaching Assistants, School Counselors, Psychologists, Schools Nurses, Mental Health Staff, and Parents.

ABOUT LEA:

[Lea Waters](#) PhD is an Australian academic, researcher, psychologist, author and speaker who specializes in positive education, parenting and organizations.

Professor Waters is the Founding Director and holds the Gerry Higgins Chair in Positive Psychology at the Centre for Positive Psychology, University of Melbourne where she has held an academic position for more than 20 years. Lea holds affiliate positions at Cambridge University's [Well-Being Institute](#) and the University of Michigan's [Center for Positive Organizations](#). As a researcher, she has published over 100 scientific articles and book chapters.

Lea's TEDx talk, [Warning: Being positive is not for the faint hearted!](#), explores how, with small positive steps, we can make a huge impact on our wellbeing. Her first book, *The Strength Switch: How The New Science of Strength-Based Parenting Can Help Your Child and Your Teen to Flourish*, was released May 2017 (Avery/The Penguin Group).

In 2015, Professor Waters was listed as one of Australia's Top 100 Women of Influence by the Financial Review and Westpac Bank. She has been listed in the Marques 'Who's Who in the World' since 2009 and has been included in the 2017 edition of Who's Who of Australian Women. Lea was featured in the ABC TV documentary *Revolution School* and is frequently featured in print and on the radio, including The Washington Post, Wall Street Journal, NPR, The Guardian Newspaper, Success Magazine, Tec Review, Live Happy Magazine, and The Australian.

Lea is the 2017-2018 President of the International Positive Psychology Association and serves on the Council of Happiness and Education for the [World Happiness Council](#). She lives in Melbourne, Australia, with her husband, son and daughter.

"One of the best decisions we made as a school in Hong Kong about to implement a whole-school move towards Positive Education, was to work with Lea. Lea was more than inspirational. She provided a depth of knowledge in science and research, as well as resourcing teachers and school leaders in practical ways to teach students, support growth and impact the wider community. The effect of Lea's training was immediately noticeable in staff and students' attitudinal shifts. We continued to work with Lea over a 3-year period within which time our school culture was significantly changed for the better."

**Su Fenwick, Head of Student Support, School Counsellor
Chinese International School, Hong Kong**

